STUDIA PATRISTICA

VOL. XCV

Papers presented at the Seventeenth International Conference
on Patristic Studies held
in Oxford 2015

Edited by
MARKUS VINZENT

Volume 21:
The Fourth Century
Cappadocian Writers

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LEUVEN – PARIS – BRISTOL, CT
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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.

The Fourth Century

Pseudo-Justin's *Cohortatio ad Graecos* and the Great Persecution

Elizabeth DePalma Digeser, Department of History, University of California, Santa Barbara, CA, USA

Abstract

As with many works of unknown authorship and provenance, the significance of the *Cohortatio ad Graecos* is difficult to appreciate. Although it used to be mistakenly included with the writings of Justin Martyr, Christoph Riedweg (1994) argued that Marcellus of Ancyra had authored the *Cohortatio*, a thesis that is now widely accepted (Arcari [2011], Pouderon [2003], Simonetti [2011]). The author's focus on monotheism may fit Marcellus' preoccupations in the context of the Council of Nicaea (Arcari, 2011), but this perspective does not explain the author's overarching apologetic aim, namely to convince 'Hellenes' or 'pagans' of the truth of monotheism against the way that they read their traditional canon of poets, philosophers and oracles. The author argues, not on the basis of Scripture, but through references in Greek literature and philosophy. Building on the work of Robert Grant (1958), I will argue that a careful comparison with Lactantius' *Divine Institutes* shows the *Cohortatio* to be responding to the same late Platonist theology that motivated the Latin author and surfaced in the period before the Great Persecution. The measured tone of the *Cohortatio*'s author suggests that Grant's third-century date may be correct. Nevertheless, the possibility that the treatise was written after the persecution remains.

The *Cohortatio ad Graecos* is an odd little piece. Attributed with several other texts to Justin Martyr in the earliest extant manuscripts, careful reading reveals that the author wrote at least several decades after the second-century Greek apologist's death.[1] Understanding and appreciating anonymous texts is difficult, however, because they have floated away from their context.[2] In the

[1] *De monarchia*, *Oratio ad graecos* and *Cohortatio ad graecos*, all erroneously attributed to Justin Martyr, do not share a common author. Miroslav Marcovich (ed.), *Cohortatio ad Graecos, De monarchia, Oratio ad Graecos* (Berlin, 1990), 3.

[2] It is striking how R.M. Grant, 'Studies in the Apologists', *Harvard Theological Review* 51 (1958), 123-34, 130, M. Simonetti, 'In margine alla polemica antiplatonica della *Cohortatio* ps. Giustinea', in *Scritti in memoria di Angelo Brelich* (Rome, 1982), 577-89, 579, A. Puesch and J. Geffcken can disparage the author's lack of originality despite the work's lacking a secure context. For Geffcken, see P. Siniscalco, 'Caratteri espressivi ed estetici della profezia Vetero-Testamentaria secondo la *Cohortatio ad graecos* attribuita a Giustino', *Studi storico-religiosi* 4 (1980), 29-44, n. 8. For Puesch, see M. Marcovich, *Cohortatio* (1990), 3.

Studia Patristica XCV, 3-12.
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1990s, Christoph Riedweg attempted to solve this problem by suggesting the bishop Marcellus of Ancyra as the *Cohortatio*'s author (using the *Thesaurus Linguae Graeca*, Riedweg identified verbal similarities between the two).[3] Because Marcellus was active during and after the Council of Nicaea, most readers of the *Cohortatio* now assume it to be a mid-fourth-century text. Some readers have also assumed that the 'calm tone' of the text meant that its author could not have written during persecution.[4] This assumption, however, misreads the *Cohoratio*. Evidence within the text, especially compared against the *Divine Institutes* of the Latin author, Lactantius, suggests a date of composition during the so-called Great Persecution of 303-311/13. If so, the *Cohortatio* enriches our understanding of the issues leading up to the persecution and how Christians responded to them.

Those interested in the *Cohortatio* benefit from four relatively recent editions and translations.[5] Thanks to their efforts, the manuscript tradition for this 38-chapter text in Greek is clear.[6] Although the earliest manuscripts attribute the text to Justin Martyr, the author's citation (*Coh*. 9) of the early third-century chronicler, Julius Africanus, makes this attribution incorrect.[7] This citation is thus a firm *terminus post quem*.[8] Cyril of Alexandria's *Against Julian* (1.18-9) provided a firm *terminus ante quem* by citing the *Cohortatio* in the 430s.[9] Can we be even more precise? One indication of a date potentially before 306 is Eusebius' treatment of the *corpus* of Justin Martyr in his *Ecclesiastical History*

[3] Christoph Riedweg, *Ps.-Justin (Markell von Ankyra?), Ad Graecos de vera religione (bisher 'Cohortatio ad Graecos'): Einleitung und Kommentar* (Basel, 1994).

[4] *E.g*., Adolph von Harnack quoted in M. Marcovich, *Cohortatio* (1990), 4; Bernard Pouderon, 'Marcel d'Ancyre et la "Cohortatio ad Graecos" attribuée à Justin', in Benoît Gain, Pierre Jay and Gérard Nauroy (eds), *'Chartae caritatis': Etudes de patristique et d'antiquité tardive en hommage à Yves-Marie Duval* (Paris, 2004), 260.

[5] M. Marcovich, *Cohortatio* (1990); C. Riedweg, *Ps-Justin* (1994); Bernard Pouderon *et al*. (eds), *Ouvrages apologétiques / Pseudo-Justin; Introduction, texte grec, traduction et notes* (Paris, 2009); Manuel Andrés Seoane Rodríguez (trans.), *Pseudojustino: Discurso contra los griegos; Sobre la monarquía; Exhortación a los griegos* (Leon, 2008).

[6] See M. Marcovich, *Cohortatio* (1990), 19-21.

[7] The citation regards Moses' antiquity. M. Pellegrino (1947) and A. Casamassa (1934-44) in L. Alfonsi, 'Traces du jeune Aristote dans la *Cohortatio ad gentiles* faussement attribueé à Justin', *VC* (1948), 65-88, 65; Harnack in M. Marcovich, *Cohortatio* (1990), 3. See also Martin Walraff (ed.), *Iulius Africanus: Chronographiae. The Extant Fragments* (Berlin, 2007).

[8] Eusebius, *PE* 10.10.18, 15-8 cites the same passage. Julius' *Chronicle* ends in 221 (or 217). See J. Donaldson, E. Schürer in M. Marcovich, *Cohortatio* (1990), 3, B. Pouderon, 'Marcel d'Ancyre et la "Cohortatio ad Graecos" attribuée à Justin' (2004), 259.

[9] R.M. Grant, 'Studies in the Apologists' (1958), 128; B. Pouderon, 'Marcel d'Ancyre et la "Cohortatio ad Graecos" attribuée à Justin' (2004), 259; Jerome, *De viris illustribus* 23 and the *Suda* s.v. 'Ioustinos' depend on Eusebius. See M. Marcovich, *Cohortatio* (1990), 3; C. Riedweg, *Ps.-Justin* (1994), 43-4. See now Christoph Riedweg (ed.), *Kyrill von Alexandrien. Gegen Julian. Buch 1-5* (Berlin, 2015).

(although Eusebius revised this work into the 320s).[10] In listing the second-century apologist's work (*HE* 4.18.4), he refers to an *Elenchos*. Much later, Photius (*Bibl.* 232) cites a work by Stephanus Gobarius which quotes from the *Cohortatio* (*Coh.* 23) as the *Elenchos* by Justin.[11] Pouderon and Riedweg have questioned whether Photius' reference meant that Eusebius knew our *Cohortatio* by this title.[12] Nevertheless, this ambiguity need not be resolved in order to consider the text's context further.

The *Cohortatio*'s author gives other hints for an early fourth-century date in his familiarity with the works of Porphyry, whose death the *Suda* (*s.v.* 'Porphurios') sets during the reign of Diocletian. Our author cites an oracle that Porphyry included in his *Philosophy from Oracles*,[13] thus making the *Cohortatio* at least indirectly dependent upon him. Our author's familiarity with Porphyry, together with his use of Hermes Trismegistus and the Sibyl, led A. Puesch to conclude that the *Cohortatio* belonged more appropriately in the era of Lactantius, the Latin scholar whose reliance upon those two sources to prove the truth of Christianity is famous.[14] This was the *Cohortatio*'s accepted date before Riedweg's edition.[15] Indeed if we compare the *Cohortatio* with the *Divine Institutes*, the parallels are striking. While there are obvious differences in scope, aim, and argument, the similarities suggest that our author and Lactantius were responding to the same situation.

The structure of the *Cohortatio* is straightforward.[16] The author begins, echoing Demosthenes' *De corona*, by invoking the attention of 'Hellene men'.[17]

[10] R.W. Burgess, 'The Dates and Editions of Eusebius' *Chronici canones* and *Historia ecclesiastica*', *JTS* 48 (1997), 471-504.

[11] R.M. Grant, 'Studies in the Apologists' (1958), 128.

[12] M. Marcovich, *Cohortatio* (1990), 3 (drawing on W. Gaul, 26-7) thinks Eusebius provides an unequivocal *terminus ante quem*. Indeed, he thinks that Photius depends on Eusebius. B. Pouderon, 'Marcel d'Ancyre et la "Cohortatio ad Graecos" attribuée à Justin' (2004), 257, acknowledges that Eusebius' description of Justin Martyr's corpus potentially challenges Riedweg's attribution of the *Cohortatio* to Marcellus of Ancyra. 'If Eusebius had' the '*Cohortatio* in his hands when he wrote Book Four of the *Historia ecclesiastica*, there is an end to Riedweg's demonstration'. In deducing this problem, he sets 300-310 as the probable debut of Marcellus' career, and 312-313 as the probable date for the *HE*'s redaction. (It is important to note, however, that Richard Burgess has dated the first draft of the *HE* to 306 (see n. 10). Pouderon thinks that Eusebius would not have perceived a new pseud-epigraphical work as authentic. Following Riedweg, Pouderon (259) thus doubts that the *Elenchos* that Eusebius lists under Justin Martyr actually *was* the *Cohortatio*, even though Stephanus Gobarius (*ap.* Photius 232) quotes from our *Cohortatio* under the title *Elenchos*. I think this reasoning defies Occam's razor. See also Christoph Riedweg, 'Iustinus Martyr II (pseudo-Justin. Schriften)', *Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum* 19 (Stuttgart, 2001), 848-73.

[13] *Ap.* Eus., *PE* 9.10.4 and *DE* 3.3.6; R.M. Grant, 'Studies in the Apologists' (1958), 130-1.

[14] Puesch in M. Marcovich, *Cohortatio* (1990), 4. Riedweg (57 n. 174 and 155 n. 639) also considered parallels with Lactantius.

[15] M. Marcovich, *Cohortatio* (1990), 4, who shared this view with J. Geffcken and many others.

[16] Despite the perception of R.M. Grant, 'Studies in the Apologists' (1958), 132, that it is 'chaotic', M. Marcovich, *Cohortatio* (1990), 6 sees the 'unity' of structure that I set out here.

[17] R.M. Grant, 'Studies in the Apologists' (1958), 129. Trans. NPNF (with some modifications).

It is in your interest, the author claims, to abandon the errors of your inherited religion, even if it came from your ancestors (*Coh.* 1).[18] The author then discusses the erroneous 'speculations' of Greek poets and philosophers to demonstrate not only that they are illogical, but also that they are internally and mutually contradictory (2-7).[19] From the demonstrations of error, the author turns to what he deems the 'true religion' (8-13). Although, as we shall see, he uses the authority of Moses primarily (12), references to Christ coming only at the very end (38), Christianity is the true religion for this author (13). He then turns back to the poets and philosophers, armed with this knowledge (14-34). Having the truth of monotheism in hand, our author sets out to demonstrate what the poets and philosophers, Plato in particular got right (20-33).[20] Indeed, he argues, they knew the true religion (14),[21] but were afraid to speak it openly, lest they face the same fate as Socrates (20).[22]

Although the *Divine Institutes* is a much longer work, the overall structure is similar. Lactantius dedicates the first three books to *falsa religione*, the origin of error and *falsa sapientia*. Here too, he aims to show how poets' and philosophers' speculations are illogical and contradictory, both internally and between one another (*Inst.* 1.5; 2.5; 3.7-8, 17, 18, 20-3, 27). He then turns in Book 4 to *vera sapientia et religione*. Unlike the author of the *Cohortatio*, Lactantius focuses here on the life and teaching of Christ (esp. 4.12-26). Book 5 is an excursus on Justice and Book 7 is an account of the end times. In Book 6, however, Lactantius sets out the precepts of *vero cultu*.

Another striking resemblance between the *Divine Institutes* and the *Cohortatio* is that both authors state that their goal is to teach the true religion. For the *Cohortatio*, this is *tê alêthê theosebeia* (*Coh.* 1.2).[23] One learns it, he asserts, through the Holy Spirit's inspiring prophets and 'sainted men', especially

[18] For M. Marcovich, *Cohortatio* (1990), 12, this pragmatic approach shows the author's concern for feelings of piety toward traditional religion. See also Bernard Pouderon, 'Μυθωδῶς, μυστικῶς: L'herméneutique de la *Cohortatio ad graecos* restituée à Marcel d'Ancyre', *Revue d'études augustiniennes et patristiques* 49 (2003), 267-83, 268.

[19] L. Alfonsi, 'Traces du jeune Aristote dans la *Cohortatio ad gentiles* faussement attribueé à Justin' (1948), 66; R.M. Grant, 'Studies in the Apologists' (1958), 130.

[20] R.M. Grant, 'Studies in the Apologists' (1958), 132; B. Pouderon, 'Μυθωδῶς' (2003), 272. Thus M. Simonetti, 'In margine alla polemica antiplatonica della *Cohortatio* ps. Giustinea' (1982), 577 is incorrect to claim that ps. Justin is 'wholly negative' toward Greek philosophy.

[21] Suggesting that the 'true religion' can be discerned from texts only through *mustikê theôria*, R.M. Grant, 'Studies in the Apologists' (1958), 133, sets the *Cohortatio*'s author in a tradition beginning (among Christians) with Origen (*Comm. in Ioh.* 13.25; *Cels.* 2.6). M. Simonetti, 'In margine alla polemica antiplatonica della *Cohortatio* ps. Giustinea' (1982), 581 finds a further debt to Origen, namely, the *Cohortatio*'s use of *Ex.* 25:20 as a passage that inspired Plato's theory of the forms (see Orig., *Hom. Lev.* 13.1).

[22] The way the *Cohoratio*'s author engages with the problem of Greek error leads M. Simonetti, 'In margine alla polemica antiplatonica della *Cohortatio* ps. Giustinea' (1982), 588 to conclude that he is working firmly within an Alexandrian tradition.

[23] Greek text is from Markovich's edition.

Moses (8-13).[24] Hence these were the ultimate sources for Plato, Homer and others (14-34).[25] Lactantius' approach is a bit more sophisticated. For him, *vera religio*, a real connection with God, entails *vera sapientia* (not the false wisdom of the philosophers) and *verus cultus* (leading a life of virtue) (*Inst.* 4.4-5). The similarities in structure – moving from what is false to what is true, are far from definitive, but they are what one would expect if two authors were responding to a source that had, in turn, argued against Christianity by pointing out logical and internal contradictions before launching into a discussion of 'true religion', as some combination of true wisdom, true cult, and virtue.

Both Lactantius and the *Cohortatio* seek to demonstrate the superiority of monarchy over polyarchy, as they inveigle against polytheistic cult. The *Cohortatio*'s emphasis on this theme led Riedweg to explore Marcellus as the potential author, as his own monarchian theology earned his condemnation at the Synod of Tyre in 335.[26] Thus, if Marcellus is the author, the *Cohortatio* would have been an early work. Lactantius spends much of Book 1 (*Inst.* 1.3, 5-23) and Book 5 (5.10-1, 20-1) addressing the same issue. Both authors also indicate that the possibility of bodily resurrection is a contemporary problem (*Inst.* 7.20-3; *Coh.* 27-8). This issue is particularly striking, since Methodius of Olympus, writing, like Lactantius, in the first decade of the fourth century, responded to Porphyry's views against the resurrection of the flesh.[27]

Another similarity between the Latin and Greek texts is how the authors argue for the falsity of traditional cult and Greek philosophy and in favor of 'the true religion'. In both cases, they consider persuasive only evidence their opponents consider to be authoritative (*Coh.* 8-11; *Inst.* 1.5-7).[28] Both authors refuse to point to the Gospels to demonstrate the truth of the Christian message.[29] Instead, they turn to the logic of chronology and authority of history. In the case of the *Cohortatio*, the author first establishes that Moses, according to Diodorus especially, lived before any of the Greeks' religious teachers (*Coh.* 9).[30] Everyone acknowledges that Moses was an ancient lawgiver, and Diodorus – in

[24] P. Siniscalco, 'Caratteri espressivi ed estetici della profezia Vetero-Testamentaria secondo la *Cohortatio ad graecos* attribuita a Giustino' (1980), 31, 35.

[25] In the view of B. Pouderon, 'Μυθωδῶς' (2003) this chain of knowledge denies the Greeks any originality.

[26] C. Riedweg, *Ps.-Justin* (1994), 167-82.

[27] Hendrick S. Benjamins, 'Methodius von Olympus, „Über die Auferstehung": gegen Origenes und gegen Porphyrius?', in W.A. Bienert and Uwe Kühneweg (eds), *Origeniana septima* (Leuven, 1999), 81-90.

[28] For ps. Justin's sources, see M. Marcovich, *Cohortatio* (1990), 4; for a rather conservative view of Lactantius' see R.M. Ogilvie, *The Library of Lactantius* (Oxford, 1978).

[29] For ps. Justin, see P. Siniscalco, 'Caratteri espressivi ed estetici della profezia Vetero-Testamentaria secondo la *Cohortatio ad graecos* attribuita a Giustino' (1980), 31, M. Marcovich, *Cohortatio* (1990), 13.

[30] M. Marcovich, *Cohortatio* (1990), 8, 12, noting that our author has too easily equated Diodorus' 'man of great soul' (1.94.1) with Moses.

our author's reading – says that he learned at the feet of Egyptian priests, although he also came from Chaldaean stock (10). Knowing that tradition had Orpheus, Homer, Pythagoras and Plato all visiting Egypt, the *Cohortatio* claims that they all learned the true religion from his teachings,[31] but veiled their understanding out of fear of the civil authorities (14-34).

Lactantius also openly rejects Scripture as a tool for undermining traditional religion and Greek philosophy or for demonstrating the veracity of the true religion. Indeed he criticizes his African forebears for their failure to recognize its deficiencies in such a project (*Inst*. 5.4). Like the *Cohortatio*'s author, Lactantius invokes the logic of chronology and history, drawing heavily on Euhemerus and Ennius' *Sacred History* (*e.g*., 1.11-4, 22). This technique of stepping outside Christianity to demonstrate its truth in what appears to be a historically objective way is a phenomenon of the early fourth century. Lactantius notes his new approach (5.4), and we can see the same phenomenon in Eusebius' *Preparation for the Gospel* (esp. 1.5). Again, if the author of the *Cohortatio* and Lactantius were responding to the same critique, we might expect to see this approach in their opponent.

Not only do Lactantius and the author of the *Cohortatio* avoid using Scripture to make their arguments, but they also turn to the same oracular authorities and cultures (namely, Egypt and Chaldaea) to assert their opponents' errors and the truth of their own beliefs. Repeatedly, the author of the *Cohortatio* affirms Moses' connection to Egypt and that locale as the place where the most important Greek religious authorities accessed the truth as well (*Coh*. 9, 10, 14, 22). On top of Moses' Egyptian formation, he also boasted a Chaldaean heritage. To emphasize the importance of that connection, our author says,

> having now … abandoned the philosophers, as formerly you abandoned the poets, you will turn to the deceit of the oracles; for in this style *I have heard some speaking*. Therefore, I think it fit to tell you at this step in our discourse *what I formerly heard among you* concerning their utterances. For when one inquired at your oracle – it is *your own story* – what religious men had at any time happened to live, you say that the oracle answered thus: 'Only the Chaldaeans have obtained wisdom and the Hebrews who worship God Himself, the self-begotten King'. … [T]herefore, you think that the truth can be learned from your oracles…[32]

Here (11) the *Cohortatio* cites an oracle of Apollo that Porphyry included in his *Philosophy from Oracles*.[33] He also invokes the Sibyl (16, 37-8) whom he

[31] P. Siniscalco, 'Caratteri espressivi ed estetici della profezia Vetero-Testamentaria secondo la *Cohortatio ad graecos* attribuita a Giustino' (1980), 29; M. Marcovich, *Cohortatio* (1990), 8.

[32] Italics are mine.

[33] Porph., *Phil. Or. ap*. Eus., *PE* 9.10.4; *DE* 3.3.6. See Luca Arcari, 'Memorie monoteistiche "pagane" nella "Cohortatio ad graecos" ps.-giustinea: L'Unicità divina come strumento di autodefinizione e/o di attacco', in *Temi e forme della polemica in età Cristiana (III-V secolo)* (Rome, 2011), 283-315, 289.

identifies as the Cumaean oracle that inspired Plato and guided the Roman polity.[34] And at the end, he invokes the authority of the Egyptian sage Hermes Trismegistus (38).[35]

Lactantius also draws heavily on oracular authorities, who are his chief 'non-Christian' witnesses to the 'true religion'. The *Divine Institutes* is replete with testimony from oracles of Apollo, and says that the opposition considers him to be especially authoritative (1.7). As for Chaldaean wisdom, Lactantius asserts the Erythraean Sibyl's origins in Babylon, and he cites her testimony copiously (1.6). Finally, Lactantius is our best Christian source for Hermetic wisdom,[36] which he argues is Egyptian (1.6.2-5). Given Lactantius' uniqueness among Latin authors for citing these particular sources with such frequency, it is striking to find such strong parallels in the *Cohortatio*. Again, if our two authors are responding to the same opponent, we might find that opponent to be a person indebted to the authority of Egyptian wisdom and Apolline or Sibylline and Chaldaean oracular testimony.

Let us set this insight against the other conjectures we have made about our opponent. First, we imagined our opponent to have written against Christianity's cult and doctrine by pointing out logical and internal textual contradictions. One key problem emerges: the resurrection of the flesh. After this discussion, the opponent turned to a discussion of 'true religion', however defined. In doing so, our opponent put less faith in the religious teaching of the poets and even the philosophers, than he did the testimony of oracles, especially those of Apollo. This author found Egyptian and Chaldaean wisdom especially compelling.

As it happens, this outline describes some of the oeuvre of the late Platonist philosopher Porphyry, whom Christians, starting with Eusebius of Caesarea, labeled as Christianity's chief opponent.[37] In this context, most important are Porphyry's writings that now bear three titles. First, the fragments attributed to *Against the Christians* show that the philosopher worked his way through Scripture pointing out logical inconsistencies and textual contradictions, while using historical evidence to argue against passages that Christians read prophetically.[38] As we know from Methodius, Porphyry rejected the notion of the

[34] *Or. Sib.* Fr. 1.7-9; 3.72103 (Geffcken); M. Marcovich, *Cohortatio* (1990), 12 highlights the *Cohortatio*'s elision of *Meno* (99c11-d5) to say that Plato had the Sibyl in mind when calling diviners divine persons.

[35] *Corpus Herm.* Frg. 1.1; 12-6.

[36] Garth Fowden, *The Egyptian Hermes: A Historical Approach to the Late Pagan Mind* (Princeton, 1993), 10.

[37] See Eus., *HE* 6.19.2. According to Jerome, *Vir. ill.* 81, Eusebius wrote 30 books against Porphyry. See also idem, *Ep.* 70.3.

[38] See Olivier Munnich, 'Recherche de la source porphyrienne dans les objections "païennes" du *Monogénès*: l'enjeu des citations scripturaires', in Sébastien Morlet (ed.), *Le Traité de Porphyre contre les chrétiens: Un siècle de recherches, nouvelles questions* (Paris, 2011), 75-106. The adversary in Macarius Magnes' *Apokritikus*, one source for which is Porphyry, speaks to Christians as if they do not understand their own texts. He argues on the basis of Christian texts alone.

resurrection of the flesh.[39] Porphyry's *Philosophy from Oracles* was also known to early fourth-century Christians. Eusebius, in particular, quotes from it copiously in his *Praeparatio evangelica* (*e.g.*, 4.7-23), which he began in 313.[40] This work seemed to be engaged in using oracular testimony – especially Apolline – to understand traditional cult practices. Finally, Porphyry's *Return of the Soul* – although again very fragmentary – seems to suggest that the practice of theurgy (indebted to the *Chaldaean Oracles*), but especially a life of virtue will ultimately allow the soul to return to its divine source (*ap.* Aug., *Civ.* 10.9-10, 21, 23, 26-9, 32). Although Egyptian wisdom does not feature prominently in Porphyry's surviving fragments, his student Iamblichus took on the persona of an Egyptian priest in answering Porphyry's objections to his own doctrines (*Myst.* 1.1.3) – suggesting that this was an approach that his teacher would have respected.

The testimony of early fourth-century Greek and Latin authors such as Lactantius, Arnobius and Eusebius, makes clear that Porphyry's writings against Christianity as a false religion and his own approach to 'true religion' were somehow involved in making the case for the persecution.[41] Lactantius responds to these events in the *Divine Institutes*. From internal evidence, the text's most recent editors date it between 305 and 310.[42] It seems likely that the author of the *Cohortatio* wrote during the same period, responding to the same events.[43]

Although Harnack and Pouderon suggested that the author's calm tone could not reflect a context of upheaval,[44] the text itself suggests the threat of persecution. First is the deliberate invocation of Demosthenes' *De corona*. Although every analysis of the *Cohortatio*, to my knowledge, has simply read this echo as a display of our author's learning,[45] it is instructive to remember that Demosthenes took some risk when he wrote his most famous oration. Indeed, he wrote in defense of the Athenian democrats when the sitting government

[39] See n. 27.

[40] Aaron P. Johnson, *Ethnicity and Argument in Eusebius'* Praeparatio evangelica (Oxford, 2006), 11.

[41] E. DePalma Digeser, 'Lactantius, Eusebius and Arnobius: Evidence for the Causes of the Great Persecution', *SP* 39 (2006), 33-46.

[42] Eberhard Heck, 'Die dualistischen Zusätze und die Kaiseranreden bei Lactantius', *SP* 13 (1975), 185-8; *id.*, *Die dualistischen Zusätze und die Kaiseranreden bei Lactantius* (Heidelberg, 1972).

[43] R.M. Grant, 'Studies in the Apologists' (1958), 133 underscores 'the striking resemblance between' the *Cohortatio*'s interests 'and those reflected in the titles of many of Porphyry's works': philosophy from oracles and from Homer, the life of Pythagoras, divine names, and the unity of Plato and Aristotle.

[44] For the perspective that the peaceful tone means that the *Cohortatio* is 'purely academic' see Harnack in M. Marcovich, *Cohortatio* (1990), 4; for B. Pouderon, 'Marcel d'Ancyre et la "Cohortatio ad Graecos" attribuée à Justin' (2004), 260, the absence of references to persecution means that the *Cohortatio* appeared between 260 and 303 or well after 312.

[45] R.M. Grant, 'Studies in the Apologists' (1958), 129; M. Marcovich, *Cohortatio* (1990), 4.

was pro-Macedonian.[46] In invoking Demosthenes' situation, our author may be drawing attention to his own dangerous position. Next is the attribution to Justin Martyr. Although Grant argued that the *Cohortatio* was anonymous and not pseud-epigraphic,[47] under what name would it be better to circulate such a tract than that of the first apologist and eventual martyr, Justin?[48] In this view, the choice of name was a kind of wink at the audience. If Eusebius included this text among Justin's corpus, he either did not see through the pseudonym, or he played along with the fiction.[49] Finally, our author is keenly aware of the dangers that voicing the 'true religion' faced under hostile regimes. Repeatedly he blames fear for Homer's and especially Plato's veiled speech.[50] In this case, our author has veiled not his truth, but his name.

Does an early fourth-century date preclude Marcellus of Ancyra as the *Cohoratio*'s author? Most have conceded the logical possibility that Marcellus could have written the text this early.[51] I do not find the textual parallels that Riedweg and Pouderon have discovered between the *Cohortatio* and the few extant fragments from Marcellus to be particularly convincing.[52] In particular, the phrase '*achôristos dunamei*' that Pouderon sees as characteristic of both authors is also common to most fourth-century authors steeped in a Platonist tradition.[53]

[46] Pat Easterling, 'Actors and Voices: Reading between the Lines in Aeschines and Demosthenes', in Simon Goldhill and Robin Osborne (eds), *Performance Culture and Athenian Democracy* (Cambridge, 1999), 154-66, 155.

[47] R.M. Grant, 'Studies in the Apologists' (1958), 128.

[48] In addition to Eusebius, Justin was known to Irenaeus of Lyon, *Haer*. 1.29.1, Hippolytus, *Haer*. 8.9 and Methodius of Olympus, *Res*. 3.6 among others.

[49] Eusebius did something similar with a work by Methodius. See E.D. Digeser, *A Threat to Public Piety: Christians, Platonists and the Great Persecution* (Ithaca, 2012), 133.

[50] Drawing from Posidonius *ap*. Cicero, *Nat*. 1.85 and Numenius, according to R.M. Grant, 'Studies in the Apologists' (1958), 132. P.W. van der Horst, 'Plato's Fear as a Topic in Early Christian Apologetics', *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 6 (1998), 1-13, 9-11 wondered why the *Cohortatio* broached the topic of Plato's fear. His conclusion was that highly critical remarks about the Christian appeal to Plato 'must have come from the pagan side'. He may be correct, or it may be more complicated – note the esoteric elements in Porphyry's *Phil. Or*. Van der Horst also notes the Alexandrian tradition that attributes fear to the Platonist school (Clem., *Prot*. 6.61; Orig., *Cels*. 4.39) and Numenius *ap*. Eus., *PE* 13.5.1-2. He does not think that the *Cohortatio* drew on this tradition, however.

[51] See reviews by H. Chadwick, *The Journal of Theological Studies* 46 (1995), 720-2 and Jacques Schamp, *L'Antiquité classique* 66 (1997), 470-2 as well as B. Pouderon, 'Μυστικῶς' (2003), 267, 279.

[52] Epiphanius preserves one letter and Eusebius cites several passages. B. Pouderon, 'Marcel d'Ancyre et la "Cohortatio ad Graecos" attribuée à Justin' (2004), 236. Reviewers also remain unconvinced. See P.W. van der Horst, *Mnemosyne* 50 (1997), 366-7; M.B. Trapp, *The Classical Review* 46 (1996), 15-6; and W.H.C. Frend, *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 48 (1997), 302-13.

[53] The *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae* online identifies Gregory of Nyssa, Epiphanius, Athanasius, Basil of Caesarea, and Didymus the Blind on the Christian side, together with Themistius on the other.

Moreover, authors have been added to the TLG since Riedweg and Pouderon did their analyses.[54] And the tool is incapable of making comparisons between Latin and Greek texts.[55] The TLG now also allows the construction of n-grams and parallel browsing.[56] The former finds similarities in two texts or by comparing a single text to an author's entire corpus. The latter allows a reader to see places where two texts correspond. Such tools would not require the researcher to select words and look for overlaps; they would find all overlaps. It may be that this kind of analysis will point to another potential author for the *Cohortatio*, a task beyond the scope of this article. Thus, I think it is wise, until someone applies these tools to the *Cohortatio*, to allow the possibility that our author may be Marcellus, but to be open to other candidates as well.[57]

Situating the *Cohortatio ad Graecos* in the context of the Great Persecution, 303-311/13 is significant for several reasons. First, the analysis points to a lacuna in the history of apologetics. While the analysis of one author's style and approach is very common, it is surprisingly rare for people to compare Latin and Greek authors from the same period to investigate contemporary topics of concern. The analysis of Lactantius and the *Cohortatio* demonstrates the potential fruitfulness of this approach. More importantly, however, if this argument carries weight, the *Cohoratio* helps further clarify the issues and concerns to Platonists and to Christians writing in the context of the Great Persecution.

[54] <http://stephanus.tlg.uci.edu/tlgauthors/post_tlg_e.php>, accessed 16 December 2015.

[55] As Giancarlo Rinaldi, '"Contumeliae communes": Circolazione di testi e argomenti nelle controversie religiose di età romana imperiale', in *Lessico, argomentazioni e strutture retoriche nella polemica di età Cristiana (III-IV sec.)* (Turnhout, 2012), 3-66, 3 notes, the lack of systematic comparisons among authors has hampered our understanding of religious issues and the dynamics of apologetics.

[56] <http://stephanus.tlg.uci.edu/helppdf/par.browse.pdf>, accessed 16 December 2015.

[57] Sara Parvis, *Marcellus of Ancyra and the Lost Years of the Arian Controversy, 325–45* (Oxford, 2006), does not link Marcellus with pseudo-Justin.

The 'Conversion' of Constantine the Great: His Religious Legislation in the Theodosian Code

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ABSTRACT

As a non-Christian Japanese, belonging to a study group to translate the laws in the *Theodosian Code* into Japanese, I aim at showing what our chronological attentive reading of the religious laws issued by Constantine the Great would reveal concerning the nature of his 'conversion'. This article also brings the notion of 'conversion' itself into question, from my own 'pagan' perspective.

I. Introduction

For a non-Christian Japanese, it is very daring and challenging to write a paper on this theme for the International Conference on Patristic Studies, because the 'conversion' of Constantine is so important as the starting point of Christian Europe that there has been a tremendous accumulation of historiography and around 2012, the 1700th anniversary of the battle of the Milvian Bridge, another spate of publications came out.[1] Still, there are two reasons why I set this title. One reason is related to the *Theodosian Code* in the title. I have long engaged in translating the *Code* into Japanese with several Japanese

[1] *E.g.* Klaus Martin Girardet, *Der Kaiser und sein Gott: Das Christentum im Denken und in der Religionspolitik Konstantins des Grossen* (Berlin, 2010); Timothy Barnes, *Constantine: Dynasty, Religion and Power in the Later Roman Empire* (Chichester, 2011); Jonathan Bardill, *Constantine: Divine Emperor of the Christian Golden Age* (Cambridge, 2011); Raymond Van Dam, *Remembering Constantine at the Milvian Bridge* (Cambridge, 2011); Jill Harries, *Imperial Rome AD 294 to 363: The New Empire* (Edinburgh, 2012), 106-84 (chs. 5-7); John Noël Dillon, *The Justice of Constantine: Law, Communication, and Control* (Ann Arbor, 2012); David Potter, *Constantine the Emperor* (Oxford, 2013). The Books by K.M. Girardet, T. Barnes, J. Harries, and R. Van Dam (with Paul Veyne, *When Our World Became Christian, 312-394*, tr. J. Lloyd [Cambridge, 2010]) are reviewed by Richard Flower, 'Visions of Constantine', *JRS* 102 (2012), 287-305, which is a useful review article on the latest historiography on the 'conversion' of Constantine. J.N. Dillon offers a brief look at the long historiography on the Christianity of Constantine since Norman Baynes, *Constantine the Great and the Christian Church* (first published in 1931 in Vol. X of the Proceedings of the British Academy; repr. with new preface by Henry Chadwick [London, 1972]), but his book itself is 'an essentially secular study', 2-4. J. Bardill's book examines into the 'ambiguity' of Constantine's faith, making much use of material evidence and combining it with textual evidence.

Studia Patristica XCV, 13-26.
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colleagues and we finished translating all laws issued in the reign of Constantine in 2012.[2] Therefore, I thought that I might be able to show what his religious legislation would tell us about his 'conversion'. Another reason is related to the quotation marks put on the word, conversion. Since I began to grapple with the problem of 'Christianizing the Roman Empire', I have often had some uncomfortable feeling about the word 'conversion' and I have surmised that it might be related to the religious environment in which I have grown up.

Needless to say, there are Christians in Japan, but I am not. If asked, I will say that I have no religion, as many contemporary Japanese do. Still, like many Japanese families, my family belongs to a Buddhist sect and since my father died, it has become my mother's routine to chant a sutra before breakfast and supper toward a tiny family altar, which contains Buddhist memorial tablets not only of my dead father but also of his parents. Although I am not a Buddhist, whenever I visit my mother, I sit in front of the altar, light a taper, offer incense sticks, and ask my dead father in my heart to protect his living family and relatives. Like many Japanese families again, my family has made it a habit to get together to celebrate the New Year festival and the mid-summer Bon festival. During the New Year festival, many Japanese visit a Buddhist temple or a Shinto shrine to pray for the safety and prosperity of the year ahead. The chaotic polytheism of Shinto and the orderly cosmos of Buddhism ought to be incompatible, logically; but in Japanese practice, they are not. Thus my family sometimes visited a Shinto shrine on the New Year's Day, simply because it was the nearest from the house we lived in at that time. Most Japanese know how to behave at a temple or a shrine: washing hands with purification water; tossing a coin into the offertory box; clapping hands twice at a Shinto shrine while no clapping at a Buddhist temple; holding hands together in prayer, bowing heads. After that, we may purchase talismans to safeguard our family members or collect divination lots which are believed to foretell our fortunes. The Bon festival was originally held for repose of the souls of a family's ancestors, so it is still customary for many families to visit the graves of their ancestors. But now, to most families, it is merely an occasion for family reunions.

Such is the 'religious' environment in which I have grown up. There must be many people, however, who would not describe it as 'religious', for it puts much more emphasis on the actions than on belief. As far as I am concerned,

[2] Theodosian Code Study Group (Rep. Nobuo Hayashi), 'Codex Theodosianus: Translation and Notes (1)-(4)', *Sensyu Hogaku Ronsyu* (*Journal of Legal Studies at Sensyu University*) 59 (1993), 151-70; 60 (1994), 239-54; 61 (1994), 165-91; 63 (1995), 107-31; *id*., 'Codex Theodosianus: Translation and Notes (5)-(11)', *Rikkyo Hogaku* (*St. Paul's Review of Law and Politics*) 43 (1996), 195-217; 45 (1996), 227-49; 47 (1997), 229-46; 50 (1998), 336-53; 53 (1999), 179-204; 56 (2000), 127-59; 58 (2001), 240-63; Theodosian Code Study Group (Rep. Atsuko Gotoh), 'Codex Theodosianus: Translation and Notes (12)-(21)', *Hosei Shigaku* (*Journal of Hosei Historical Society*) 57 (2002), 45-61; 59 (2003), 23-40; 62 (2004), 81-108; 64 (2005), 39-57; 66 (2006), 34-54; 68 (2007), 78-97; 70 (2008), 72-88; 72 (2009), 77-97; 77 (2012), 59-72; 78 (2012), 56-74.

it is not a 'religion' but cultural and social habits, the rhythm embedded in my annual calendar. I repeat the above-mentioned actions at temples or shrines almost spontaneously, expecting only vaguely to get divine favors by it. The pagan world of the Roman Empire was much more diversified and complicated than this, with traditional cults, indigenous cults in provinces, the mystery cults, the so-called imperial cult, and the tendency toward henotheism under the influence of Neoplatonism. But the essence of Roman traditional cults has been often said to be the *ortho-praxis*, the right doing, rather than the *ortho-doxa*, the right teaching. I feel some affinities with this aspect of paganism, probably more acutely than the people who have grown up in Christian environments, which might make me feel somewhat uncomfortable with the word 'conversion', as mentioned above. I would like to return to this big problem in the concluding part of this article.

II. The translation of the *Codex Theodosianus* in Japan

In the 1990s a boom on the *Theodosian Code* began. In the UK, it was triggered in 1993 by the publication of *The Theodosian Code* edited by Jill Harries and Ian Wood.[3] Quite independently from this boom, with a Japanese specialist of late Roman law, I started a research group to translate the *Theodosian Code* into Japanese in 1992. The principles we set up in starting this project were as follows:

1. Our translation is based on the text of Mommsen's edition.[4] If necessary, we refer to Gothofredus' and Krüger's editions as well. We aim at a literal translation as close as possible to the Latin text.
2. We do not translate the *Interpretationes*, because these are the explanatory comments on the laws in the Code added at the beginning of the sixth century by the compilers of Alaric's *Breviarium* or *Lex Romana Visigothorum*. As for the fundamental problem of whether the text in the *Theodosian Code* as we have it now reflects accurately the original text of each law, we follow Tony Honoré, who argued in his article that the compilers of the *Code* intended to preserve the exact wording of the operative part of the laws.[5]
3. We read the laws chronologically, not selectively based on Titles or Books. This is a difference from another and much bigger translation project of the *Code*, which is now going on in France.[6] We thought that a chronological

[3] Jill Harries and Ian Wood (eds), *The Theodosian Code: Studies in the Imperial Law of Late Antiquity* (London, 1993; 2nd ed. 2010).

[4] *Theodosiani libre XVI cum constitutionibus Sirmondianis et leges novellae ad Theodosianum pertinentes*, ed. by Theodor Mommsen with Paul Meyer and Paul Krüger (Berlin, 1905; repr. 1962).

[5] Tony Honoré, 'The Making of the Theodosian Code', *ZSS RA* 103 (1986), 133-222, 159-61.

[6] The translation of Book Five came out in 2009 as its first volume: Sylvie Crogiez-Pétrequin, Pierre Jaillette and Jean-Michel Poinsotte (tr.), *Codex Theodosianus: Le Code Théodosien V*

reading would be more useful for us both to understand the historical circumstances under which each law was produced and to elucidate the various aspects of the late Roman Empire at a given period and their evolutions in the progress of time. As is well known, however, the chronology itself is often problematic so that, while we read the laws following the chronological order in Mommsen's edition, we have put detailed footnotes to our translation when there are conflicting opinions about the issue date and/or place of each law.

4. At a monthly meeting, we discuss the interpretation of the Latin text shown by its Japanese translation and the content of the law in a brainstorming style. At every meeting, we have at hand Mommsen's text, Gothofredus' commentary,[7] Latin Dictionaries, and our basic reference books.[8]

We finished publishing our translations and footnotes of all laws issued in the reign of Constantine in the autumn of 2012, and I had been in charge of translating and putting footnotes to most of his religious laws. Now I would like to see what our chronological reading could tell about the 'conversion' of Constantine.

III. Constantine's religious legislation in the *Theodosian Code*

The following is the list of the laws of Constantine in the *Code* which I thought useful to think about his religion. The issue date and the addressee are added to each law when they are clear or inferable from the law's *inscriptio,* giving the names of the emperor(s) and the addressee, and *subscriptio*, giving the consular date of issue.

(A) Exemption of the Christian clerics from *munera*
(1) 16.2.1: 31 Oct 315 (Gothofredus, Seeck[9]); 319 (Mommsen). No addressee. (2) 16.2.2: 21 Oct 313 (Seeck, Barnes); 319 (Mommsen). To Octavianus, *corrector Lucaniae et Brittiorum*. (3) 16.2.3: 1 July 320 or 326 (Mommsen); 329 (Seeck). To Bassus, *praefectus praetorio Orientis* (hereafter abbreviated

(Turnhout, 2009). The English translation of Mommsen's text is: Clyde Pharr, *The Theodosian Code and Novels, and the Sirmondian Constitutions* (Princeton, 1952).

[7] *Codex Theodosianus cum perpetuis commentariis Iacobi Gothofredi* (Leipzig, 1736-45; repr. Hildesheim, 1975).

[8] Otto Seeck, *Die Zeitfolge der Gesetze Constantins* (Milano, 1983 [in *ZSS* 10, 1889]); *id*., *Regesten der Kaiser und Päpste für die Jahre 311 bis 476 n. Chr*. (Stuttgart, 1919); A.H.M. Jones, J.R. Martindale and J. Morris, *The Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire, Vol. I: AD 260-395* (Cambridge, 1971); Timothy D. Barnes, *The New Empire of Diocletian and Constantine* (Cambridge, Mass. and London, 1982); O. Gradenwitz, *Heidelberger Index zum Theodosianus* (Berlin, 1925; repr. Hildesheim, 1999); H. Heumann and E. Seckel, *Handlexicon zu den Quellen des römischen Rechts*, 11th ed. (Jena, 1907; repr. 1971); A. Berger, *Encyclopedic Dictionary of Roman Law* (Philadelphia, 1953); A.H.M. Jones, *The Later Roman Empire 284-602: A Social, Economic, and Administrative Survey*, 3 vols. (Oxford, 1964).

[9] As for the names in the parentheses, see our basic reference books in n. 7. The name of Seeck refers to his *Regesten*.

as PPO). (4) 16.2.6: Posted at Carthage on 1 June 326 (Gothofredus) or 329 (Seeck). To Ablavius, PPO. (5) 16.2.7: 5 Feb 330. To Valentinus, *consularis Numidiae*.

(B) Heretics and schismatics
(1) 16.5.1: Posted *Gerasto* on 1 Sept 326. To Dracilianus. (2) 16.5.2: 25 Sept 326. To Bassus.

(C) Judaism
(1) 16.8.3: 11 Dec 321. To *decuriones Agrippiniensibus*. (2) 16.8.1: 18 Oct 315 (MS); 329 (*PLRE*, Barnes); 339 (Seeck). To Evagrius. (3) 16.8.2: 29 Nov 330. To Ablavius, PPO. (4) 16.8.4: 1 Dec 331. To *hierei et archisynagogi et patres synagogarum et ceteri, qui in eodem loco deservint*. (5) 16.8.5: Issued on 22 Oct at Constantinople; posted on 8 May 336. To Felix, PPO. (6) 16.9.1: Issued on 21 Oct at Constantinople; posted at Carthage on 8 May 336. To Felix, PPO.

(D) Miscellaneous
(1) 1.27.1: 23 June 318? (Seeck). No addressee. (2) 8.16.1: 31 Jan 320. To *populus*. (3) 4.7.1: 18 Apr 321. To Hosius *episcopus*. (4) 16.2.4: Posted at Rome on 3 July 321. To *populus*. (5) 2.8.1: Posted at Caralis on 3 July 321. To Helpidius. (6) 13.5.7: Accepted on 1 Dec 334. To *navicularii Orientis*.

(E) *Haruspices*
(1) 9.16.1: Posted at Rome on 1 Feb 319 (MS); 320 (Seeck). To Maximus. (2) 9.16.2: 15 May 319. To *populus*. (3) 16.10.1: Issued at Serdica on 17 Dec 320; Accepted at Rome on 8 Mar 321. To Maximus. (4) 9.16.3: 23 May 321 (Mommsen); 318 (Seeck). To Bassus, *praefectus urbi* (abbr. as PU). (5) 16.2.5: 25 May (MS, Gothofredus); 25 Dec (Seeck, Barnes) 323. To Hepidius.

(F) Gladiatorial Games
(1) 15.12.1: Posted at Berytus on 1 Oct 325. To Maximus, PPO. (2) 6.4.1: 9 Mar 326? (Mommsen); 327 (*PLRE*). To Aelianus (Iulianus: Mommsen, *PLRE*), PU. (3) 6.4.2: 6 Mar 327. To Iulianus, PU.

(G) Constantine's Voice?
9.1.4: Posted at Nicomedia on 17 Sept 325. To *universi provinciales*.

(H) So-called imperial cult
(1) 13.3.3: Posted at Constantinople on 27 Sept 333. To *populus*. (2) 12.1.21: 4 Aug 335; 334 (Seeck). To Felix, PPO. (3) 4.6.3: Lecta at Carthage on 21 July 336. To Gregorius. (4) 12.5.2: Posted at Carthage on 21 May 337. To *concilium provinciae Africae*.

There are some differences between my list and that of the French translation of the religious laws in the *Theodosian Code*.[10] For example, they omit the laws

[10] Jean Rougé (tr.), *Les lois religieuses des empereurs romains de Constantin à Théodose II (312-438)*, Vol. I: *Code Théodosien XVI*, SC 497 (Paris, 2005); Jean Rougé and Roland Delmaire (tr.), *Les lois religieuses des empereurs romains de Constantin à Théodose II*, Vol. II: *Code*

mentioning emperors with the title *divus*, *divinus*, *divalis*, and the laws mentioning the games, but I included both of them. I did not include the laws relating to marriage or divorce, or those showing 'humanitarian' attitudes to slaves, the poor and the weak, because I could not discern in the texts of these laws any 'decisive' influence of Christian ethics. The French translation does not include them, either.

The laws in Group (A) are relevant to the exemption of the Christian clergy from *munera*, the compulsory public services. The law (1), whose addressee is missing, orders the protection of this privilege granted to *ecclesiae catholicae clerici* from the disturbance by *haeriticorum factio*. As is well known, one of the actions Constantine took during his stay in Rome after the victory over Maxentius was to intervene in the Donatist dispute by sending two letters to Anullinus, *proconsul Africae*. These letters are recorded in Book Ten of Eusebius' *Church History*. The first letter orders Anullinus the restoration of confiscated property of the Catholic Church (*HE*, 10.5.15-7). The second one orders him to make sure that the clergy serving the God in the Catholic Church, over which Caecilianus presides, would be exempted from all *munera* (*HE*, 10.7). Therefore, the first law in Group (A) is the confirmation of the content of this second letter. The law (2) in this group does not use the word 'Catholic', but exempts the Christian clergy from all *munera*, mentioning the sacrilegious envy of some people. The law (3), however, confirms the previous law which prohibited those who should and could be *decuriones*, members of municipal councils, from becoming clerics to evade the municipal *munera*. The law (4) also forbids those who should be given to the municipal *munera* by birth or by wealth to become Christian clerics. Incidentally, the concluding passage of this law says that the rich should assume the needs of the age, and the poor should be supported by the wealth of churches: *Opulentos enim saeculi subire necessitates oportet, pauperes ecclesiarum divitiis sustentari*. It shows at least one reason why Constantine granted the right of inheritance to the Catholic Church by the law (4) of Group (D). Meanwhile, the law (5) of Group (A) says that the clergy bound to the municipal *munera* by the injustice of heretics, in this case Donatists, should be liberated from it. Thus these laws are very revealing to consider not only the aspect of Constantine as emperor, but also the way how imperial laws were utilized in religious disputes.

From Group (B) to (D), I have to restrict myself to an outline. The law (1) of Group (B) excludes heretics and schismatics from the privileges granted to the Catholic clergy. The law (2) allows the Novatians to possess church buildings and graveyards. The laws in Group (C) are related to Judaism. The law (1) annuls the former prescription which allowed the Jews not to become members of municipal councils, while the laws (3) and (4) exempt the Jewish clerics

Théodosien I-XV, Code Justinien, Constitutions Sirmondiennes, SC 531 (Paris, 2009). As for the list of translated laws in Book 1-15 of the *Code*, see Introduction to Vol. II by R. Delmaire, 8-10.

from *munera*. The laws (2) and (5) protect the converts from Judaism to Christianity from any attack. The law (2) also prohibits the conversion to Judaism. The law (6) prohibits the Jews from owning Christian slaves.

The laws (1)-(5) of Group (D) are quite famous. The law (1) is on *episcopalis audientia*. The law (2) annuls the legal disadvantages which had been imposed since Augustus on celibacy and childlessness. The law (3) is concerning the manumission of slaves in churches. The law (4) grants the Catholic churches the right to inheritance, as mentioned above. The law (5) prescribes the legal actions permissible on Sunday, expressed as *dies solis veneratione sui celeber*, the Sun's Day honored by the veneration of the sun. This expression of Sunday could be taken as syncretic, but it is noteworthy that these obviously pro-Christian laws were issued in a quite short span from probably 318 to 321. I added the law (6) to this group, because it refers to Constantinople as *urbis, quam aeterno nomine iubente deo donavimus*, the city to which we endowed the eternal name following the order of the God.

Now I would like to direct our attention to the laws, which might be revealing in considering Constantine's attitudes to paganism.

The laws (1)-(3) in Group (E) are related to *haruspicium*. The law (1) prohibits the *haruspex* from entering private houses for any reason, and says that any person who allows him in his house by requests or by rewards shall be banished to an island after the confiscation of his property: *Nullus haruspex limen alterius accedat nec ob alteram causam, … et illo, qui eum suasionibus vel praemiis evocaverit, post ademptionem bonorum in insulam detrudendo*. Then the law says that those who daringly like to serve their *superstitio* can perform their own rite publicly: *superstitioni enim suae servire cupientes poterunt publice ritum proprium exercere*. The content of the law (2) is the same, just adding the priests (*sacerdotes*) and those who have customarily presided over pagan rites (*eos, qui huic ritui adsolent ministrare*) to *haruspices*. It says that they should not enter private houses, but that you who think it useful to you, go to the public altars and shrines and celebrate the rites of your custom, for we do not prohibit the ceremonies of the past usage to be conducted in broad daylight: *Qui vero id vobis existimatis conducere, adite aras publicas adque delubra et consuetudinis vestrae celebrate sollemnia: nec enim prohibemus praeteritae usurpationis officia libera luce tractari*. Obviously, *haruspices* were forbidden to enter private houses not so much for the religious reason as for the political reason, that is, the suspicion of high treason. And in the law (3), Constantine orders, in accordance with old customs, the consultation with haruspices when it became clear that some part of their palace or other public buildings was struck by lightning. *Si quid de palatio nostro aut ceteris operibus publicis degustatum fulgore esse constiterit, retento more veteris observantiae quid portendat, ab haruspicibus requiratur…* To Constantine, in my opinion, it was almost a spontaneous reaction to lightning and not contradictory to his own belief in Christianity.

Similarly, the law (4) which I included in this group says: the expertise of those who are revealed to be equipped with magic arts, to have worked against the safety of men or to have turned chaste minds to lust shall be punished and avenged rightly with severest laws; but remedies sought for human bodies shall not be involved in criminal accusations; and the prayers innocently employed in rural districts in order that rains may not be feared for the ripe vintage or that the harvests may not be beaten by sweeping hailstones shall be free from any accusation. It is because by such prayers no person's safety or reputation would be injured; rather, their actions would be useful not to make divine gifts and labors of human beings ruined.[11] Needless to say, divination like *haruspicium* and traditional rural praying for a good harvest were originally linked inseparably with pagan sacrifices and pagan gods. Judging from the laws in Group (E), however, I think that Constantine did not regard them as 'religious', namely 'pagan' activities. Rather, it seems to me that he regarded them as customary practices, harmless to Christianity. The law (5) included in this group prescribes the punishment, not such a serious one, of those who attempt to coerce the Christian clergy into celebrating pagan rites: if someone should suppose that those who serve the holiest law ought to be compelled to the rites of inimical superstition, he shall be beaten with clubs in public, if his social state permits; if the consideration of his official rank keeps such an outrage away from him, he shall be punished with a heaviest fine, which shall be imposed by municipalities.[12] The opening part of the text explains the reason of this law, saying that since we have learned that certain ecclesiastics and others serving the Catholic sect have been compelled by men of opposing religions to perform the lustral sacrifices: *Quoniam conperimus quosdam ecclesiasticos et ceteros catholicae sectae servientes a diversarum religionum hominibus ad lustrorum sacrificia celebranda conpelli*. The lustral sacrifices also had a long history since the Republican times. It has been thought since Gothofredus that the lustral sacrifices mentioned in this law were celebrated to pray for the victory of Constantine over Licinius. Still, it is noteworthy that what Constantine regarded as a problem was the participation of the Christian clergy under coercion, not the lustral sacrifices themselves.

The laws in the Group (F) are related to public games. The *ludi circenses et scaenicis*, the games in the circus and theatrical performances, had long

[11] *CTh*. 9.16.3: *Eorum est scientia punienda et severissimis merito legibus vindicanda, qui magicis adcincti artibus aut contra hominum moliti salutem aut pudicos ad libidinem deflexisse animos detegentur. Nullis vero criminationibus inplicanda sunt remedia humanis quaesita corporibus aut in agrestibus locis, ne maturis vindemiis metuerentur imbres aut ruentis grandinis lapidatione quaterentur, innocenter adhibita suffragia, quibus non cuiusque salus aut existimatio laederetur, sed quorum proficerent actus, ne divina munera et labores hominum sternerentur.*

[12] *CTh*. 16.2.5: *si quis ad ritum alienae superstitionis cogendos esse crediderit eos, qui sanctissimae legi serviunt, si condicio patiatur, publice fustibus verberetur, si vero honoris ratio talem ab eo repellat iniuriam, condemnationem sustineat damni gravissimi, quod rebus publicis vindicabitur.*

been held as a part of the festivities dedicated to various pagan gods. The *munera*, here meaning gladiatorial games, had been originally held at private funerals of aristocratic families, supposedly based on the belief that the blood should be shed to placate the souls of the dead. And as is well known, both had become very popular entertainments throughout the Roman Empire. The gladiatorial games and beast shows held in amphitheaters had got so popular that they become forms of the capital punishment, as is shown by the law (*CTh*. 9.18.1) issued on 1 Aug 315 and addressed to Domitius Celsus, *vicarius Africae*. This law says that when, however, someone was brought to court as a suspect of such a crime (*i.e*. kidnapping), after his guilt has become evident, if he is a slave or has been given freedom, he shall be thrown to beasts at the first public spectacle; if he is freeborn, he shall be given to a gladiatorial game in such a manner as he shall be killed by a sword before he could do anything to defend himself: *Si quis tamen eiusmodi reus fuerit oblatus, posteaquam super crimine patuerit, servus quidem vel libertate donatus bestiis primo quoque munere obiciatur, liber autem sub hac forma in ludum detur gladiatorium, ut, antequam aliquid faciat, quo se defendere possit, gladio consumatur*. Constantine in this law shows no misgivings or hesitation in condemning criminals to the beast show and the gladiatorial game. Incidentally, another law (*CTh*. 9.15.1) issued in the year of 318 also confirms the traditional brutal punishment, *poena cullei*, imposed to the parricide and infanticide. The convict of these crimes should be shut into a hide sack with a snake and the sack should be thrown into the sea or river.

In the year of the Nicene Council, however, it seems that Constantine prohibited the gladiatorial games by the law (1) of Group (F). Its text runs as follows:

Cruenta spectacula in otio civili et domestica quiete non placent. Quapropter, qui omnino gladiatores esse prohibemus eos, qui forte delictorum causa hanc condicionem adque sententiam mereri consueverant, metallo magis facies inservire, ut sine sanguine suorum scelerum poenas agnoscant.

In translating the *Theodosian Code* into Japanese, one of our biggest problems has been how to put Latin technical terms into Japanese. Another big problem has been how to interpret and translate the enigmatic and sometimes corrupt texts. This law is a good example of such texts and scholars' opinions about what it meant have been split into two. Such scholars as Gothofredus, G. Ville, and T.D. Barnes think that Constantine totally forbade the gladiatorial games by this law.[13] Pharr should be added to this group, since he translated

[13] Georges Ville, 'Les jeux de gladiateurs dans l'empire chrétien', *Mélanges d'archéologie et d'histoire* 72 (1960), 273-335, 314-6; Timothy D. Barnes, *Constantine and Eusebius* (Cambridge, Mass. and London, 1981), 53, citing Eusebius, *Vita Constantini* 4, 25, 1 as well (n. 100). Raymond Van Dam can be added to this group, for he simply says that in a law of 325 Constantine had already banned gladiators and their 'bloody spectacles', in his *The Roman Revolution of Constantine* (Cambridge, 2007), 33.

the underlined anacoluthon in the text as 'wherefore, since We wholly forbid the existence of gladiators, You shall cause those persons who, perchance, on account of some crime, customarily sustained that condition and sentence, to serve rather in the mines'. Another group of scholars such as T. Mommsen, J. Gascou, J. Matthews, J. Harries and D. Potter think that this law merely forbade the use of criminals as gladiators.[14] The reason for such a situation is the underlined anacoluthon, especially problematic is *qui* after *quapropter*. As mentioned above, our Theodosian group aims at a literal translation as close as possible to the Latin text in Mommsen's edition. Therefore, we took the first *qui* meaning similar to *quoscumque* and translated the text in question as 'wherefore, since We wholly forbid someone to be gladiators', taking the side of Gothofredus, Pharr, Ville, and Barnes. As is well known, the gladiatorial games continued into the fifth century, but we thought that the continuance of the gladiatorial games after this law could not be a reason strong enough to deny Constantine's desire at this point of time to abolish the gladiatorial games.

Now, related to this law, I think that two laws concerning the senatorial magistrates' duties to hold and attend the public games might be revealing. These are the laws of (2) and (3) of Group (F). Since the law (2) exempts the *quaestores* under 16 from the duty to attend the public games, mentioning the similar privilege granted to *praetores*, and the law (3) exempts the magistrates (evidently, *praetores*) under 20 from the same duty, it is rational to think that the law (3) predated the law (2), even by a few dates. And the law (3) uses such a definite expression as *ludis circensibus ac scaenicis*. Strictly speaking, this expression does not include gladiatorial games. On the other hand, the law (2) goes back to the comprehensive one word, *munera*. It might be possible that the former expression *ludi circenses ac scaenici* reflects the real intention of Constantine at this point, and the latter one *munera* reflects some advice from his entourage.

Under the heading (G), there is only one law. But the Latin of this law is very unique, and its content is very interesting. The text runs as follows:

[14] Theodor Mommsen, *Gesammelte Schriften*, Vol. VIII (Berlin, 1983), 37; Jacques Gascou, 'Le rescrit d'Hispellum', *Mélanges d'archéologie et d'histoire* 79 (1967), 600-59, 649; John F. Matthews, *Laying down the Law: A Study of the Theodosian Code* (New Haven and London, 2000), 291 n. 32; Jill Harries, 'Constantine the lawgiver', in Scott McGill, Cristiana Sogno and Edward Watts (eds), *From the Tetrarchs to the Theodosians: Later Roman History and Culture, 284-450 CE* (Cambridge, 2010), 73-92, 83; David Potter, 'Constantine and the Gladiators', *CQ* 60 (2010), 596-606. J. Gascou discussed the anacoluthon most minutely (649 n. 4), but his argument cannot be fully convincing, because in his interpretation *eos, qui* is the subject of *esse* and *inservire* without any conjunction. D. Potter simply omits the *qui* after *quapropter*, and translates the anacoluthon as: 'For that reason we forbid those people to be gladiators, who by reason of some criminal act were accustomed to deserve this condition and sentence. You shall rather sentence them to serve in the mines so that...' (597). However, even if we omit the *qui* in question, the problem pointed out about Gascou's interpretation still remains.

Si quis est cuiuscumque loci ordinis dignitatis, qui se in quemcumque iudicum comitum amicorum vel palatinorum meorum aliquid veraciter et manifeste probare posse confidit, quod non integre adque iuste gessisse videatur, intrepidus et securus accedat, interpellet me: ipse audiam omnia, ipse cognoscam et si fuerit conprobatum, ipse me vindicabo. Dicat, securus et bene sibi conscius dicat: si probaverit, ut dixi, ipse me vindicabo de eo, qui me usque ad hoc tempus simulata integritate deceperit, illum autem, qui hoc prodiderit et conprobaverit, et dignitatibus et rebus augebo. Ita mihi summa divinitas semper propitia sit et me incolumem praestet, ut cupio, felicissima et florente re publica.[15]

S. Corcoran argues about this law in Appendix E of his book, and says as follows. The emperor's personal commitment is clearly demonstrated in this edict of 325, where not only the singular but the emphatic *ipse* is employed; this personal pledge is further underlined by the emperor's consciousness of his own responsibility (*Ita mihi summa divinita*s…). He adds that singulars are most in evidence in texts connected with specifically Christian issues. Then he cites the text of Constantine's letter to Aelafius kept by Optatus and concludes that the use of the singular in texts directed to or concerning Christians is thus unexceptional, indeed usual.[16]

This law, however, is *not* directed to *nor* concerning Christians. When I read this law for the first time, I thought that here we might be hearing Constantine's own, personal voice in the elevated mood after the Nicene Council and the celebration of his *vicennalia* on 25 July of the same year. At the same time, this law immediately reminded me not only of the text of Constantine's letter to Aelafius cited by Corcoran, but also of the similar expression in the so-called 'Edict of Milan' (Lactantius, *De mortibus persecutorum* 48.2-12). The former text is: *ex quibus forsitan commoveri possit summa divinitas non solum contra humanum genus sed etiam in me ipsum, cuius curae nutu suo caelesti terrena omnia moderanda commisit, et secus aliquid hactenus incitata decernet*.[17] The

[15] As for this law (*CTh*. 9.1.4), I cite Pharr's translation: 'If there is any person of any position, rank, or dignity whatever who believes that he is able to prove anything truthfully and clearly against any judge, count, or any of My retainers or palatines, in that any of these persons has committed some act which appears to have been done without integrity and justice, let him approach Me and appeal to Me unafraid and secure. I Myself will hear everything; I Myself will conduct an investigation; and if the charge should be proved, I Myself will avenge Myself. Let him speak with safety, and let him speak with a clear conscience. If he should prove the case, as I have said, I Myself will avenge Myself on that person who has deceived Me up to this time with feigned integrity. The person, moreover, who has revealed and proved the offense I will enrich with honors as well as with material rewards. Thus may the Highest Divinity always be propitious to Me and keep Me unharmed, as I hope, with the State most happy and flourishing'.

[16] Simon Corcoran, *The Empire of the Tetrarchs: Imperial Pronouncements and Government AD 284-324* (Oxford, 1996), 318-23, 322-3.

[17] *S. Optati Milevitani Libri VII*, CSEL 26 (Wien, 1893; repr. New York and London, 1972), Appendix III, 204-6, 206: 'Perhaps from these (contentions and disputes), the supreme Divinity might get angry not only with the human race but also with Me myself, to whose care He, by His heavenly power, committed the government of all matters on earth, and might be prompted

latter is: *ut possit nobis summa divinitas, cuius religioni liberis mentibus obsequimur, in omnibus solitum favorem suum benivolentiamque praestare* (48.3).[18] As is well known, the text of the so-called *Edict of Milan* in Lactantius is, strictly speaking, a copy of Licinius' letter to the governor of Bithynia which was posted at Nicomedia on the 13 of June in 313. Sixty years ago, however, H. Nesselhauf compared minutely the Latin text of the earlier half of the 'Edict' in Lactantius (48.2-6) and its Greek version in Eusebius (*HE*, 10.5.1-8). He recognized therein the two parts drafted by different authors at different times, and he attributed the part including the expression in question to Constantine.[19] I still think his arguments convincing. Accordingly, when I read this law for the first time, I thought it very interesting that in an edict addressed to all provincials in 325 Constantine still chose a rather vague expression '*summa divinitas*' and showed the same traditional way of thinking about the relationship between the divine and the human world as he had shown, immediately after his victory over Maxentius. Now, I think furthermore that this law is revealing in considering the nature of the 'conversion' of Constantine. I will return to this point in my conclusion.

Finally, Group (H) shows the laws concerning the so-called imperial cult. The law (1) is, however, listed here only because it uses the expression *divorum principum*, the deified emperors. The law (3) merely mentions the provincial and municipal priests of the imperial cult along with senators and the *perfectissimi*. On the other hand, the laws (2) and (4) exempt them from the lower-grade *munera*, here meaning public compulsory services. These laws were issued as late as around 335. At present, I think they should be considered together with Constantine's rescript to Hispellum (Dessau, *ILS* 705), also dated to the early to mid-330s.[20] In this rescript, Constantine approved the request from Hispellum, an Italian town, to construct a temple in honor of his family, with the qualification that the temple should not be polluted by the deceits of contagious superstition: *ea observatione perscripta, ne aedis nostro nomini dedicata*

to decide differently now than before'. Aelafius is otherwise unknown, but it could be inferred from the content of this letter that he was *vicarius Africae* and that this letter was written between the Council of Rome (2 Oct 313) and the Council of Arles (1 Aug 314). See *PLRE*, Vol. I, 16 [AELAFIVS].

[18] Lactantius, *De mortibus persecutorum*, ed. and tr. J.R. Creed (Oxford, 1984), 70. Creed's translation of the cited passage: '… so that the supreme Divinity, whose religion we obey with free minds, may be able to show in all matters his accustomed favour and benevolence towards us'.

[19] H. Nesselhauf, 'Das Toleranzgesetz des Licinius', *Historisches Jahrbuch* 74 (1955), 44-61, 49-53.

[20] T. Barnes, *Constantine* (2011), 20-3 argues that this rescript was granted not by Constantine, but by his youngest son Constans since the new name given to the city of Hispellum was Flavia Constans, not Flavia Constantina or Flavia Constantia. Then he redates the rescript to the summer of 337. J. Harries admits that the rescript was issued by Constans, but says that he issued it as Caesar in Milan and the rescript reflects the policy of his father's government (*Imperial Rome AD284 to 363* [2012], 163 n. 32).

cuiusquam contagiose superstitionis fraudibus polluatur. At the same time, this rescript consents that *scenicus ludus et gladiatorum munus*, the theatrical show and gladiatorial games, be held by the priests of the imperial cult in Italian towns. Having pointed that out, now it is time to conclude this article.

IV. Conclusion: the nature of the 'conversion' of Constantine

More than eighty years ago, A.D. Nock defined the term 'conversion' as 'the reorientation of the soul of an individual, his deliberate turning from indifference or from an earlier form of piety to another, a turning which implies a consciousness that a great change is involved, that the old was wrong and the new is right'.[21] Since then, the conversion to Christianity has tended, in my view, to be told in the vocabulary of conflict with and triumph over ignorance or superstition, and a successful conversion has tended to be judged by the convert's overall rejection of his/her former religious belief and life. I still discern the similar tendency in the chapter 2, dealing with Constantine and his age, of E.J. Watts' latest book.[22] But as I said in the introduction to this article, I have felt some uncomfortable feeling about such a notion of conversion, for I have doubted, as an individual of the above-mentioned 'religious' background, whether the conversion from polytheism or even from henotheism to monotheism could be such a clear-cut and instantaneous change.

Although I have no doubt of Constantine's conviction that the god who gave him the victory over Maxentius in 312 *was* the Christian God, I think that Constantine's choice of his god was made within a very traditional, pagan frame of reference. Concerning the first law in Group (A), I mentioned the two letters sent by Constantine to Anullinus. Because these letters are related to the Donatist dispute, they are sometimes considered to have been written from political calculation. But the second letter, which ordered Anullinus to make it sure that the clergy serving the God in the Catholic Church would be exempted from all *munera*, explains the reason as follows: if the divine worship, by which the highest reverence for the most holy heavenly power is preserved, is neglected, it should bring great disaster to the state, while its lawful restoration and preservation should bring the greatest good fortune to the name of Rome and particular prosperity to all affairs of mankind. Thus this letter and the texts of the so-called *Edict of Milan* and the letter of Constantine to Aelafius, to which I referred concerning the heading (G), reveal very well the nature of the 'conversion' of Constantine after the battle of the Milvian Bridge. Namely,

[21] Arthur D. Nock, *Conversion: The Old and the New in Religion from Alexander the Great to Augustine* (Oxford, 1933), 7.

[22] Edward J. Watts, *The Final Pagan Generation* (Berkeley, 2015), Ch. 2: Education in an Age of Imagination, esp. 38-51.

Constantine chose the Christian God within a very traditional, pagan frame of reference, which itself has been pointed out since long before.[23] We should *not*, however, assume that after choosing the Christian God in this way, Constantine progressed steadily toward 'perfection' as a Christian. As we saw above, the law under the heading (G) issued in 325 still demonstrated that Constantine had not yet freed himself totally from such a deeply ingrained notion.

Then, should we say that Constantine had plural identities and practiced a situational selection of those identities, as Éric Rebillard has shown about the Christian laymen living in late Roman North Africa?[24] Of course, Constantine had plural identities, one of which being certainly the ruler of the empire where Christians were still a minority group. As to Constantine as a Christian, however, I would rather say that it took time for him to understand and decide which aspects of what he had formerly taken for granted were allowable as a Christian and which were not. I think that the laws of Group (H) and the rescript to Hispellum are reflecting such attempts of Constantine to draw and redraw boundaries between the permissible and the unpermissible. And in regard to the distinction between these two, it is *not* obvious that Constantine reached the same conclusion that a modern Western Christian would.

A Western author of a book on religion in contemporary Japan told an interesting story. When he asked a young Japanese man who had converted to Mormonism what he did at the Bon Festival, his answer was that he went with his family to pray to the ancestors, satisfied that this was a cultural and social action and thus did not conflict with his religious beliefs.[25] Unfortunately, we cannot ask Constantine the same sort of questions. But we should not imagine that we *know* how he would have answered. And in order to begin thinking about what the answer might be, we need to put aside any assumptions about who Constantine was, and about what his Christianity was. We need to look as closely as possible at the word of his pronouncements. This is why the slow and patient approach of our *Theodosian Code* project could be very important. We have been reading the laws in the *Code* chronologically, and translating each law as closely as possible to its text. It took us almost twenty years to finish the 343 laws issued in the reign of Constantine. There are 2530 laws in the *Theodosian Code*. Calculating how long it would take us to reach the laws issued in the reign of Theodosius the Great, we feel overwhelmed. Still, we should go on, believing it worthwhile.

[23] *E.g.* A.H.M. Jones, *Constantine and the Conversion of Europe* (London, 1948); Joseph Vogt, *Constantin der Große und sein Jahrhundert* (München, 1949).

[24] Éric Rebillard, *Christians and Their Many Identities in Late Antiquity, North Africa, 200-450 CE* (Ithaca and London, 2012).

[25] Ian Reader, *Religion in Contemporary Japan* (London, 1991), 13.

Arius Conservativus?
The Question of Arius' Theological Belonging*

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ABSTRACT

This article provides a brief overview of the scholarship on the questions of Arius' theological belonging. The main thesis of the article is that Arius himself was not an innovator but rather a conservative (traditionalist) and that as such, in contrast to Alexander and Athanasius (who are identified as innovators), he belonged to the older Alexandrian theological tradition. This interpretation might offer a potential solution for some so far unresolved questions, such as the question of the rapid spread of Arianism.

Ingemuit totus orbis, et Arianum se esse miratus est[1] – 'the whole world groaned and was amazed to find itself Arian'. These are the words that Jerome used to describe the situation at the Council of Rimini, which took place in 360 A.D., approximately forty two years after the so-called 'Arian controversy'[2] had begun and twenty five years after the council of Nicaea began to establish *homoousios* as a fixed norm of Orthodox Christology. In terms of the time normally required for the spread of such a large and global movement like Arianism, these are both remarkably short periods. The main question that will be addressed in this article is how it was possible for this 'heresy' to extend itself through the entire known world so quickly and so widely.[3]

What makes this question even more intriguing is that, if we are to believe modern church historians, 'Arianism', in the sense of a homogeneous movement, never actually existed.[4] This assertion is based mainly on the fact that

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[1] Sophronius Eusebius Hieronymus, *Altercatio Luciferiani et Orthodoxi* 19 (CChr.SL 79b, 48).

[2] Hanson finds the notion of 'Arian Controversy' to be a 'serious misnomer'. See Richard P.C. Hanson, *The Search for the Christian Doctrine of God* (Edinburgh, 1997), xvii, xviii.

[3] In order to grasp how inexplicable this rapid and wide-ranging spread truly was, we need to be reminded that we are dealing with the fourth century, a time in which there was obviously no global media sources, no social networking websites and finally, no spam emails.

[4] See for example a very interesting lecture on this topic by Hanns Christof Brennecke with the title '"Arianismus" Inszenierungen eines Konstrukts', Erlanger Universitätsreden 83/3 (Erlangen, 2014).

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there was so very little homogeneity between the different groups labelled as 'Arian' and that practically none of the individuals involved with them wanted to be labelled as follower of Arius. Naturally, such reluctance was also connected with the fact that at that time the label was mainly employed with rather negative connotations, primarily as an abusive tag which the Nicenes applied to most of their adversaries[5] and as a curse-word used for all who rejected their Christological teachings. Alexander provides a good example when, in his *Epistola Encyclica*, he describes Arius as πρόδρομος τοῦ ἀντιχρίστου[6] – a forerunner of the Antichrist.[7] As for the 'Arians' as a collective group, Alexander describes them as πονηρευομένων σύνοδος[8] – a gang of evildoers. His pupil Athanasius continued to employ similar vocabulary[9] and in some cases actually went a step further by using some even more extreme (and admittedly more original) epithets such as Ἀρειομανίται[10] – the Ario-maniacs. Also other Nicene theologians followed this pattern and accused Arians of being were beguiled by the subtlety of the devil,[11] suggesting that they are more impious than demons,[12] and are blasphemers against Christ.[13] In such writings, Arius is portrayed as presumably the first heretic in history to be compared to none less than Judas Iscariot.[14]

Unfortunately, none of these colourful titles assist us in resolving the question of who Arius really was. They actually make this whole question much more intriguing, because if someone was so vehemently hated, he must surely have been quite a remarkable personality and hence deserves greater and continued attention. Because of this, let us explore what we know about Arius and his belonging.

The question of belonging

Although Arianism was without doubt a fiction, Arius himself did indeed exist, which is unfortunately one of the few things that we can say about him

[5] R.P.C. Hanson, *Search* (1997), 19.

[6] Alexander Alexandrinus, *Epistula encyclica* 3 (Opitz 3.1.1, 7).

[7] This seems a rather extreme wording for a fellow Christian whose only fault lay in his support for a different type of Christology.

[8] Alex. Al., *Epistula ad Alexandrum Thessalonicensem* 36 (Opitz 3.1.1, 25).

[9] The evidence does suggest that Athanasius was one of the most pugnacious theologians in the entire history of the church which is probably one of the main reasons why he nonetheless managed to achieve so much in circumstances that were so often against him.

[10] Athanasius Alexandrinus, *De synodis Armini in Italia et Seleuciae in Isauria* 13, 2 (Opitz 2.1, 240), 41, 1 (Opitz 2.1, 266), 54, 1 (Opitz 2.1, 277).

[11] See Socrates Scholasticus, *Historia ecclesiastica* 1, 9, 21 (GCS 1. n.F., 32).

[12] Alex. Al., *Epistula ad Alexandrum Thessalonicensem* 43 (Opitz 3.1.1, 26).

[13] *Ibid*.

[14] See Archer Taylor, 'The Judas Curse', *American Journal of Philology* 42 (1921), 234-52, 244.

with the absolute certainty. We also know that he was born around 256 A.D. and that his origins lay somewhere in what is now coastal Libya.[15] As for his writings, only a (presumably small) portion of his *Thalia* and three of his letters have survived[16] – not a great deal to start with.[17] Because of this serious absence of information and primary writings, the question of Arius' theological belonging becomes so important: if we might be able to discern with greater accuracy which school or tradition he belonged to, we would perhaps be better able to understand his motives and in doing so place his teachings within a more historically accurate and broader context.

Due to its importance, this question has received a great deal of attention from several patristic scholars in the past. Unfortunately, there is little universal agreement with regard to their answers: almost all of them assign Arius to a different theological or philosophical tradition. Stead, for example, thought that Arius was a Middle-[18] or Neo-Platonist,[19] based on the fact that 'in this period the influence of Plato was predominant everywhere'[20] but also because Arius used some typically platonic teachings, such as the idea of 'pre-temporal time'.[21] In contrast to Stead some earlier authors such as Loofs and Newman believed that Arius was clearly under the influence of Aristotelianism.[22] This assertion was based on the fact that Arius used Aristotelian concepts, *e.g.* the concept of ἀγενησία.[23] This theory concerning Arius' Aristotelian roots, of course, first appeared long before the time of Loofs and Newman, and can be found already in Jerome, who argued that Arianism *et argumentationum rivos de Aristotelis fontibus mutuatur*[24] – borrows the streams of its arguments from the springs of Aristotle. To add to this already extensive list, Gregg and Groh offered detailed theories concerning the concept of a distinctive Arian soteriology (and actually demonstrated the existence of such in the first place) which

[15] This is confirmed not only through the testimony of Epiphanius, see Epiphanius Constantiensis, *Panarion/Adversus haereses* 69, 1, 2 (GCS 37, 152), but also through the huge support which Arius enjoyed in this area, see Rowan Williams, *Arius: Heresy and Tradition* (Grand Rapids and Cambridge, 2001), 29-30.

[16] Constantine also mentions another letter that did not survive. See Epiphanius, *Panarion* 69, 9 (GCS 37, 159-60).

[17] Hanson sees this as a proof that Arius was not such a significant figure at his time. See R.P.C. Hanson, *Search* (1997), xvii.

[18] See Christopher Stead, 'The Platonism of Arius', *JTS* 15 (1964), 16-31 and R. Williams, *Arius* (2001), 3.

[19] See C. Stead, 'Was Arius a Neoplatonist?', *SP* 32 (1997), 39-52.

[20] C. Stead, 'The Platonism' (1964), 17.

[21] See also R.P.C. Hanson, *Search* (1997), 86.

[22] See Friedrich Loofs, 'Arianismus', in Albert Hauck (ed.), *Realencyklopädie für protestantische Theologie und Kirche* (Leipzig, 1897), 6-45, 10; and John Henry Newman, *The Arians of the Fourth Century*, 7th ed. (London, 1890), 29.

[23] They also suggested that Arius' argumentation shows clear signs of sophist methodology often used by Aristotelians.

[24] See Hieronymus Stridonensis, *Dialogus contra Luciferanos* 11 (PL 23, 174).

led them to propose that Arius was inspired and influenced by Stoicism, suggesting that 'an acquaintance with Stoic philosophy lay behind the soteriology of Arianism'.[25]

As for the question of Arius' *theological* belonging, here we also have a plethora of divergent opinions. Lorenz for example, in his renowned book 'Arius judaizans?: Untersuchungen zur dogmengeschichtlichen Einordnung des Arius' asserted that Arius was under the influence of Judaic groups in Alexandria and that he theologically belonged to the circle of Origenists.[26] Eduard Watts assigned Arius to the Alexandrian school[27] and again Newman, as well as Pollard were certain that he belonged to the Antiochian theological tradition.[28] One of course needs to speculate as to where Arius himself might have placed his own theological ideas. According to one sentence from Epiphanius' *Adversus haereses*, he considered himself to be a Lucianist[29] but alas this is also disputed by modern scholarship (*e.g.* Williams).[30]

Now, unless we are to accept that all of these theories are simultaneously correct and by doing so pronounce Arius to be possibly the most versatile theologian in the whole of history, it seems that the question of Arius' theological and philosophical belonging, in spite of its treatment by able scholars in the past, is worth taking up again. Furthermore, it is worth returning to this question because I believe that in shedding some light upon it, we might equally gain further clarity with regard to that aforementioned rapid spread and popularity of Arius' ideas (even if 'Arianism' as a formal movement never did exist). However, before exploring that specific question further, I wish to offer some additional considerations with regard to Arius' theological belonging.

When it comes to Christology the core question in relation to Arius' theological belonging comes down to whether he belonged to the so-called Alexandrian or the Antiochian 'school'. Of course, before even raising this question, one needs to address the issue of the very existence of these 'schools'. Modern scholarship is at the very least sceptical and disputes that their existence can be based on the 'sharp distinctions drawn between the exegetical methods of the two schools',[31] as older generations of scholars proposed. Furthermore, the traditional

[25] Robert C. Gregg and Dennis E. Groh, *Early Arianism – A View of Salvation* (London, 1981), 89.

[26] See Rudolf Lorenz, *Arius judaizans? Untersuchungen zur dogmengeschichtlichen Einordnung des Arius*, Forschungen zur Kirchen- und Dogmengeschichte 31 (Göttingen, 1979), chapter 9.

[27] See Eduard Watts, *City and School in Late Antique Athens and Alexandria* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1975), 173.

[28] See J.H. Newman, *The Arians* (1890), 27-9; and Thomas E. Pollard, 'The Origins of Arianism', *JTS* 9 (1958), 103-11.

[29] See Epiph., *haer*. 69, 6, 7 (CGS 37, 157).

[30] See R. Williams, *Arius* (2001), 31.

[31] See John J. O'Keefe, 'Christianizing Malachi: Fifth-Century Insights from Cyril of Alexandria', *VC* 50 (1996), 136-58, 138.

distinction between 'typology' and 'allegory',[32] as well as labelling Antiochene exegesis as 'historical' and Alexandrian as 'unhistorical' is, in contemporary theology, (rightfully) considered to be inadequate.[33]

Nonetheless, if we look at the patterns of development of Christology in Alexandria and Antioch in Late Antiquity, it is at least very hard not to recognize a clear *dichotomy between the Christologies* of these two cities as well as to acknowledge a substantial *unity* on questions of Christology *within* each of them. Nobody would for example dispute the fact that a high level of continuity exists in the Christologies of Diodore of Tarsus, Theodore of Mopsuestia and Theodoret of Cyrus on one hand and those of Alexander, Athanasius and Cyril of Alexandria on the other. This same continuity is also perceptible in the Christologies of some more extreme representatives of these traditions such as Apollinaris,[34] Eutyches and Dioscorus for the Alexandrian and Nestorius for the Antiochian side. This continuity could suggest that while the above mentioned 'schools' did not exist in the sense of educational institutions sharing one and the same exegetical method, they might have existed in the sense of theologians (or lose groups of theologians) sharing the same or broadly similar Christological views. A wider definition of the term 'school' used by art historians perhaps helps explain my point here further:

> Sometimes a group of artists works in the same style at the same time and place. Art historians designate such a group as a school. 'School' does not mean an educational institution. The term connotes only chronological, stylistic, and geographic similarity.[35]

If we apply this formula to Alexandrian and Antiochian 'schools' this would not only explain above-mentioned similarities in Christology but, by the same token, it would also provide sufficient room for the aforementioned *diversity* in exegetical methods. Nevertheless, I intend to avoid using the term 'school' in this article to avert possible misunderstandings. As a viable alternative for

[32] See for example Charles Kannengiesser, 'A Key for the Future of Patristics: The "Senses" of Scripture', in Paul M. Blowers *et al.* (eds), *Dominico Eloquio – In Lordly Eloquence: Essays on Patristic Exegesis in Honor of Robert L. Wilken* (Grand Rapids, 2002), 90-106, 101-2.

[33] A valuable overview of the newer scholarship on this theme can be found in Elizabeth A. Clark, *Reading Renunciation: Ascetism and Scripture in Early Christianity* (Princeton, 1999), 72-8. See also Frances Young, 'The Rhetorical Schools and Their Influence on Patristic Exegesis', in R. Williams (ed.), *The Making of Orthodoxy: Essays in Honour of Henry Chadwick* (New York, 1989), 182-99 and Donald Fairbairn, 'Patristic Exegesis and Theology: The Cart and the Horse', *Westminster Theological Journal* 69 (2007), 1-19.

[34] History has largely concluded that Apollinaris indeed went too far with his '*Logos-Sarx Christology*' but the direction in which his thought proceeded was further down a pathway that had already been set out upon by Athanasius. In this sense, we can see Apollinaris' christology as an extreme version of the (already extreme) christology of Athanasius.

[35] See Sharon Adams Poore (ed.), *Fred S. Kleiner, Gardner's Art through the Ages: A Global History*, 13th ed. (Boston, MA, 2008), 8.

this term, Adam M. Schor suggests 'social networks'.[36] Although this term describes the lose connections between the individual members of these groups in a satisfying way, and although methodologically social networks will without doubt play a significant role in Patristic scholarship for some decades to come,[37] I still prefer the term 'tradition' because it better reflects the nature of social relationships and characteristics of these groups.[38]

For the sake of argument, let us assume that these two theological 'traditions' did indeed exist. The question we need to ask next is to which of them Arius belonged because there are valid reasons to assign him to either of them. On one hand, he was born in Libya and was a presbyter in Alexandria, which could suggest that he belonged to the Alexandrian 'tradition'.[39] On the other hand, he probably studied under Lucian and unless he abandoned Lucian's theology (which he probably did not, because he prided himself on being his disciple)[40] we could just as easily assign him to the Antiochian 'tradition'. Another very important aspect that needs to be taken into consideration when deciding where he belonged is that Arius was a theological adversary of Alexander and Athanasius. If he indeed belonged to the Alexandrian tradition, this would mean that Alexander and Athanasius did not, because their Christology was completely divergent to his.

Before proposing a possible solution to this conundrum, it is necessary to look at the difficulties that come with some widely established interpretations of the aforementioned questions.

Difficulties with the classical interpretations

The classical explanation for the 'Christological crisis' of 4th century is that Arius advocated an 'easily recognised heresy in contrast to a known and universally recognised orthodoxy'.[41] This heresy managed to spread widely, and the 'orthodox' church was forced to combat it. After an extensive period of time and significant resources invested in this goal, they ultimately managed to defeat the 'heretics' and orthodoxy once again shone in its full light.

Now, besides being too simplistic, this explanation entails quite a few difficulties and actually leaves several important questions unanswered. I choose

[36] See Adam M. Schor, 'Theodoret on the "School of Antioch": A Network Approach', *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 15 (2007), 517-62, 527.

[37] See for example a very interesting project entitled 'The Migration of Faith: Clerical Exile in Late Antiquity'. Online at <http://www.hrionline.ac.uk/sites/clericalexile/> (last accessed: 01.02.2017).

[38] A future generation of patristic scholars who grew up with Facebook will probably find the term 'social networks' much more acceptable.

[39] After all it is difficult to conceive of him playing such a significant role in Alexandria if he had not belonged to its own theological milieu.

[40] See above note 29.

[41] R.P.C. Hanson, *Search* (1997), 95.

to present these questions as separate theses in order for them to be more easily distinguished and discussed on an individual basis:

1. *The question of authority*

As one looks into the problem of the (rapid) spread of Arianism more deeply, one of the first questions to emerge is: How was it possible for a small and relatively insignificant presbyter from Alexandria like Arius, to lead so many bright theologians astray and among them more than a few bishops,[42] not to mention several councils?[43] Certain presbyters did indeed play quite a significant role in Alexandria[44] and could perhaps be compared to 'coadjutor bishops' that we have in some Christian churches today, but, their influence was limited within the city itself. They had very little, if any, impact outside of it. Furthermore, as Arius probably did not write very much,[45] his written corpus cannot be offered as the key reason for his authority outside of the city and potential source for the widespread of Arianism.

In fact, we have several instances in various documents from that time which indicate that Arius possessed little if any authority outside Alexandria, even among those who were charged with having been seduced by him and who shared some or all of his doctrinal positions. For example, we see this in the words of Eastern bishops gathered at the council of Antioch in 341 who stated: ἡμεῖς οὔτε ἀκόλουθοι Ἀρείου γεγόναμεν (πῶς γὰρ ἐπίσκοποι ὄντες ἀκολουθήσομεν πρεσβυτέρῳ;)[46] – we are not the followers of Arius (for how could we who are bishops follow a presbyter?). A similar example can be found in the apology of two Western bishops, Palladius and Secundianus, who at the council of Aquileia (381) defended themselves with the words: *Arium nec vidi, nec scio qui sit*[47] – 'I have never seen Arius nor do I know who he is', and *qui fuerit Arius ignoro, quid dixerit nescio*[48] – 'I do not know who he was, I am ignorant of what he said'.

[42] Arius himself details the list of Bishops that supported him. See Theodoretus Cyrrhensis, *Historia ecclesiastica*, 1, 5, 2 (GCS 5. n.F., 26). Philostorgius also mentions some of them; See Nicetas Choniates, *Thesaurus orthodoxae fidei - Liber quintus* 5, 7 (PG 139, 1367-8). In his *Letter to Eusebius of Nicomedia* he even suggests that all of the bishops agree with him except for Philogonius (of Antioch), Hellanicus (of Tripoli) and Macarius (of Jerusalem); see R.P.C. Hanson, *Search* (1997), 139.

[43] The councils that restored Arius are: Synod of Bithynia (320), Synod of Caesarea (321/322), First Synod of Tyre (335) and Synod of Nicomedia (327/328).

[44] About the role of presbyters in Alexandria see Christopher Haas, 'The Arians of Alexandria', *VC* 47 (1993), 234-45.

[45] See above note 16.

[46] August Hahn and Ludwig Hahn (eds.), *Bibliothek der Symbole and Glaubensregeln der Alten Kirche*, 3rd ed. (Hildesheim, 1962), 183.

[47] Ambrosius Mediolanensis, *Gesta episcoporum Aquileiae adversum haereticos Arrianos* 14 (CSEL 82.3, 334).

[48] *Ibid*. 66 (CSEL 82, 364).

If we look further at these statements from Palladius and Secundianus, another (sub)question emerges: how can someone even be called an 'Arian' if he has never heard anything about Arius or his teachings? Allegedly Marx, talking about Marxism in France, once said to Lafargue: 'ce qu'il y a de certain c'est que moi, je ne suis pas Marxiste'[49] – 'what is certain is that I myself am not a Marxist'. Could this also be applied on those who were accused that they were 'Arian' but did not consider themselves to be such or perhaps even on the Arius himself?[50]

2. *The question of the rapid spread of Arianism*

This finally brings us back to the question introduced at the outset: how was it possible for Arianism to spread so rapidly? Without repeating earlier reflections, allow me to observe here that many Arius scholars have also asked themselves this very same question.[51] Newman for example writes:

> So much I take for granted on starting; and then the question follows, which is my proper subject. If the case is as I have stated it, how came it about, that in the face of a tradition of doctrine so strong and so clear, Arianism had such sudden, rapid, and wide-spread successes?[52]

If we consider that even Christianity *in toto* took four centuries or more to be accepted in all of the distant corners of the Roman Empire, it becomes even more difficult to explain how Arianism supposedly managed to do the same within just a few decades.

3. *The question of the extraordinary geographical reach of Arian ideas*

In close relation to the previous question,[53] another issue arises, *viz*. the extraordinary *geographical* reach of Arian ideas. In the classical interpretation of Arianism. This perceived 'heresy' supposedly started out as a very local phenomenon, but its ideas were soon accepted by a wide population throughout the entire known world.[54] That neighbouring Palestine and Syria were affected is somewhat understandable (although Lienhard for example finds even this to

[49] Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *Werke* 35 (Berlin, 1985), 388.

[50] After all, the same question has been raised with regard to other perceived heretics. Kyle for example asks whether Nestorius himself was Nestorian, Richard Kyle, 'Nestorius: The Partial Rehabilitation of a Heretic', *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 32 (1989), 73-83.

[51] See for example R.C. Gregg and D.E. Groh, *Early Arianism* (1981), ix.

[52] J.H. Newman, *Tracts Theological and Ecclesiastical*, The Works of Cardinal Newman 37 (Westminster, 1974), 163.

[53] These two questions are distinct because the first addressed was the speed of 'Arianism's' spread in terms of time and the second question addresses the diversity and range of its geographical reach.

[54] See Epiph., *haer*. 69, 2, 1 (CGS 37, 153).

be difficult to explain),[55] but the fact that 'Arianism' succeeded in planting itself among the inhabitants of Spain, southern France, and even among the wild Gothic tribes is perplexing. What exactly made 'Arianism' to be so widely acceptable across such differing context?

This contextual variety might, of course be explained with a fusion of 'Arian' low Christology combined with what has been called a 'naïve' soteriology.[56] Such a fusion could have given this 'heresy' a broad appeal amongst the so-called 'common peoples' mainly because they were able to understand and relate to these doctrinal interpretations in contrast to the more philosophically complex Nicene Christology, but, it remains nonetheless difficult to explain how a local Alexandrian teaching could found fertile ground in so many different cultural and social settings. If we examine the pattern of other 'heresies' before and after Arianism, we are unable to find anything similar to its success. Other 'heresies' remained mostly local phenomena and only rarely did some managed to find appeal beyond their home soil.[57] What was so different about Arianism to warrant its unique success and universal appeal?

4. *The question of origins*

Modern church historians often emphasize the fact that 'Arians' as such did not constitute a monolithic bloc and that not only did they lack a common Christology, but those labelled with this name expressed diverse teachings on many other matters, too. The scholarship usually accounts for such diversity between different 'Arian' groups by presuming that the diverse ideas all originated from the teachings of Arius himself, which subsequently evolved and developed certain idiosyncratic specifics as they were disseminated among his followers.[58] But, as already mentioned, it is very hard to prove the connection of any of these groups or individuals to Arius both historically or theologically.

Again, Christianity *in toto* can, itself, again, here serve as an excellent parallel: today we have several hundred different Christian denominations and for

[55] See Joseph T. Lienhard, 'The "Arian" Controversy: Some Categories Reconsidered', *Theological Studies* 48 (1987), 415-37, 415.

[56] Assuming that such existed, which, according to Gregg and Groh, it did. See R.C. Gregg and D.E. Groh, *Early Arianism* (1981).

[57] Exiles played quite a significant role in the spread of 'heresies'. In most cases, such teachings would remain a local phenomenon unless their originators were exiled by the authorities. Yet the same can be said for key examples of what became 'orthodox' doctrinal interpretations. The best example is that of the teachings of Athanasius who, during his periods in exile, managed to create excellent contacts both with the Western church as with the emerging monastic communities.

[58] One of the rare exceptions can be found in Markus Vinzent, *Asterius von Kappadokien, Die Theologischen Fragmente*, SVC 20 (Leiden, New York, Köln, 1993), where the author assumes that Arius took his theological arguments from Asterius (p. 12) and describes him as 'Vordenker des Arius'. I am not persuaded that Asterius had such a profound influence on Arius, bit since I am no expert on Asterius and because of the reasons of space I will restrain myself from further comments.

each we can point to a period in time by which they had significantly diverged from the presumed original corpus of beliefs, teachings and practices. But for Arianism we can do no such thing – *au contraire* – we have evidence for the existence of separate 'Arian' factions right from the beginning of the entire supposed conflict over his teachings. Arius, in the best case scenario, could be taken as representative of but one of these factions but we have absolutely no indication that he really started this teaching and even less evidence that 'Arianism' emerged and evolved directly from his teachings.[59]

5. *The question of non-reception*

In 325 A.D., when the doctrine of *homoousios* was introduced at the Council of Nicaea, only a very few bishops, at most, really believed in it and understood it in a uniform way.[60] As Hanson notes: 'For nearly twenty years after Nicaea nobody mentions *homoousios*, not even Athanasius'[61] – it took over fifty years until Nicene theology was widely accepted.[62] The key question that one needs to ask with regard to this is the following: if this teaching was indeed compatible with the teachings of the pre-Nicene 'church fathers' why was it necessary to fight such a long time for the acceptance of this teaching? Resistance against the adoption of homousian Christology in some Western Roman provinces such as Spain, lasted all until the seventh century![63]

There are, of course, other examples that conciliar teachings or even entire councils were not received and their decisions not implemented, *e.g.* the second council of Ephesus (449 A.D.). But, in this particular case, the non-reception was linked to the unexpected death of emperor Theodosius II who commenced the council. After his death the new emperor Markian (and of course Pulcheria who was the *éminence grise* behind everything) changed the course of action.[64]

[59] Athanasius himself saw Arius as the originator of this teaching but not as an original one, because he claimed that Arius copied his theology from Asterius or, at least, learned from him. See M. Vinzent, *Asterius von Kappadokien* (1993), 22.

[60] A good illustration of such is the letter that Eusebius of Caesarea wrote to the people of his diocese. See Eusebius Caesariensis, *Epistula ad ecclesiam Caesariensem* (Opitz 3.1.2, 42-7).

[61] R.P.C. Hanson, *Search* (1997), 170.

[62] Of course, one should not stick the 'Nicene' tradition to the term 'homoousios'. But this term is convenient to describe the sum of new, non-subordinationist theologies, that emerged from teachings of Alexander and Athanasius. Anatolios in his book *Retreiving Nicaea* more precisely distinguishes between 'homoousians', 'homoiousians' and 'heteroousians' (which would in our case be subordinationists). See Khaled Anatolios, *Retreiving Nicaea, The Development and Meaning of Trinitarian Doctrine* (Grand Rapids, 2011), 21. This is of course a more suitable and more precise terminology, but regardless of terminology the point is, that it took certain time before this new teaching was implemented.

[63] See e.g. *Concilium Toletanum VIII*, can. 8 (Mansi 10, 1218).

[64] For more about this see Wilhelm de Vries, 'Das Konzil von Ephesus 449, eine "Räubersynode"?', *Orientalia Christiana Periodica* 41 (1975), 357-98.

But, in the case of Arius, not only did the emperor Constantine not die but in fact he himself changed his attitude towards Arius, rehabilitated him only two years after the council of Nicaea had ended (in winter 327 A.D.) – allowing him to return to Alexandria.[65]

Before I attempt to offer some tentative answers to these knotty questions, let me first try to propose how a tool from modern theology might be useful in our search for such answers.

The relationship between orthodoxy and heresy

In his famous book *Rechtgläubigkeit und Ketzerei im ältesten Christentum*,[66] Walter Bauer proposed a very interesting theory that 'in earliest Christianity, orthodoxy and heresy do not stand in relation to one another as primary to secondary, but, in many regions heresy is the original manifestation of Christianity'.[67] This theory needs to be tested in relation to the specific case of Arianism.[68]

If one looks at the situation in theology prior to the 4th century and throughout its early years one will notice that, with regard to the Son's nature and his relationship to the Father, every trinitarian theology and consequently Christology was subordinationist.[69] As Hanson argues: 'With the exception of Athanasius virtually

[65] See Norman H. Baynes, 'Athanasiana', *The Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 11 (1925), 58-61.

[66] In English translation, Walter Bauer, *Orthodoxy and Heresy in Earliest Christianity*, ed. by Robert A. Kraft and Gerhard Krodel, 2nd ed. (Philadelphia, 1971).

[67] W. Bauer, *Orthodoxy and Heresy* (1971), xi.

[68] It needs to be mentioned here that the discussion about orthodoxy and heresy has since Bauer moved on a lot. For the reception and development of this discussion see Daniel J. Harrington, 'The Reception of Walter Bauer's "Orthodoxy and Heresy in Earliest Christianity" during the Last Decade', *The Harvard Theological Review* 73 (1980), 289-98; Thomas A. Robinson, *The Bauer Thesis Examined: The Geography of Heresy in the Early Christian Church* (Lewiston, 1988); Andreas J. Köstenberger and Michael J. Kruger, *The Heresy of Orthodoxy: How Contemporary Culture's Fascination with Diversity Has Reshaped Our Understanding of Early Christianity* (Nottingham, 2010); Paul A. Hartog (ed.), *Orthodoxy and Heresy in Early Christian Contexts: Reconsidering the Bauer Thesis* (Eugene, 2015). Judging by the sheer number of studies that discuss Bauer thesis, his ideas about orthodoxy and heresy are far from being dead. Even if they are today not accepted in the form in which he suggested them, they without doubt influenced theological thought after him. For the way in which this occurred see Susan Ashbrook Harvey and David G. Hunter (eds), *The Oxford Handbook of Early Christian Studies* (New York, 2008), 69-71.

[69] Of course, one could point to the fact that some early Roman bishops never thought in terms of subordinationism, but instead maintained a monarchic belief, see *e.g.* Markus Vinzent, 'From Zephyrinus to Damasus – What did Roman Bishops Believe?', *SP* 63 (2013), 273-86. While I agree that the mornarchianism of some Roman bishops was indeed non-subordinationist, I am not quite persuaded that their theology was truly Trinitarian, especially not the one of Zephyrinus. Together with Hippolytus (*Refutatio* 9, 7), I find him to be a modalist, in which case we cannot really talk about the *equality of persons* but instead of *modality of one and the same nature*. Hübner apparently also agrees with this when for Zephyrinus' belief in the full deity of Christ he

every theologian, East and West, accepted some form of subordinationism at least up to the year 355; subordinationism might indeed, until the denouement of the controversy, have been described as accepted orthodoxy'.[70] I attempted to verify this thesis by examining pre-Nicene Christologies and the result indeed confirmed that subordinationism was prevalent in most of the cases[71] – with one notable exception: two passages in writings of Clement of Alexandria.

In chapter ten of his *Protrepticus*, where Clement speaks about the rewards for seeking the life with God he states that the Son is ὁ τῷ δεσπότῃ τῶν ὅλων ἐξισωθείς[72] – made equal to the Lord of the universe. Although the form 'ἐξισωθείς' that he employs here recognizes the Son's equality with the Father, it also implies that the he was not always equal but that he was instead made such. A similar statement can also be found in one of the fragments of his *Comments on the First Epistle of John*, where he actually uses the phrase *aequalitatem substantiae*,[73] which could even be translated as ὁμοούσιος.[74] These two small hints at the existence of a non-subordinationist Christology in Clement's writings could suggest that Alexandria was the homeland of this new teaching.[75] This would also explain why the entire controversy began in Alexandria and during Arius' period because a certain period of time would be required for this new Christology to develop and grow.

points out: 'Niemals hätte er so definieren können, wenn seine Glaubenstradition ein trinitarisches Bekenntnis gekannt hätte', Reinhard M. Hübner, *Der paradox Eine*, SVC 50 (Leiden, Boston, Köln, 1999), XV.

[70] R.P.C. Hanson, *Search* (1997), xix. Similar quote can be found on the page 287.

[71] For some examples of subordinationism in the writings of orthodox authors see: Ignatius Antiochenus, *Epistula ad Magnesios* 13, 2 (SC 10, 90); (Pseudo-)Clemens, *Epistula secunda ad Corinthios* 1, 1 (Schriften des Urchristentums 2, 238), Iustinus Martyr, *Apologia I pro Christianis* 13, 3-4 (SC 507, 160, 162); 63, 15 (SC 507, 298); Irenaeus Lugdunensis, *Adversus haereses* 1, 10, 1 (SC 264, 154-6); Tertullianus, *Apologeticum* 21, 13-4 (CChr.SL 1, 124f); *id*., *Adversus Praxean* 2, 1 (CChr.SL 2, 1160); 4, 1 (CChr.SL 2, 1162); 5, 2 (CChr.SL 2, 1163); 9, 2 (CChr.SL 2, 1168); 26, 6 (CChr.SL 2, 1197); *id*., *Adversus Hermogenem* 3 (CChr.SL 1, 398-340); Novatianus, *De Trinitate* 27, 12 (CChr.SL 4, 65); 31, 5 (CCSL 4, 76); Hippolytus Romanus, *Contra Noetum* 11, 1 (Biblioteca patristica 35, 172). Simonetti goes as far as to find 'una punta di subordinazionismo' even in the early theology of Alexander of Alexandria. See Manlio Simonetti, *La crisi ariana nel IV secolo* (Rome, 1975), 58.

[72] Clemens Alexandrinus, *Protrepticus* 10, 110, 1 (GCS 12, 78).

[73] Clemens Alexandrinus, *Fragmentum in epistula Iohannis prima* 1 (GCS 17, 210)

[74] The question as to which particular Latin expression at that time was the correct translation of *homoousios* is rather complicated and several studies have grappled with it to date. See for example Pier Franco Beatrice, 'The Word "Homoousios" from Hellenism to Christianity', *Church History* 71 (2002), 243-72; James F. Bethune-Baker, *The Meaning of Homoousios in the 'Constantinopolitan' Creed*, Texts and Studies. Contributions to Biblical and Patristic Literature 7.1 (Nendeln, Liechtenstein, 1967); Christopher Stead, *Divine Substance* (Oxford, 1977), 190-223.

[75] Interestingly his successors at the Alexandrian 'school' all held subordinationist views. See *e.g*. Origenes, *Commentarii in Iohannem*, 2, 72 (SC 120, 252). If we are to believe one of the Basil's statements, also Origen's successor in the Alexandrin 'school', Dionysius of Alexandria was subordinationist: Basilius Caesariensis, *Epistula 9,* 2 (Les Belles Lettres 132, 38).

When we examine different theological positions of this period it becomes clear that Arius himself had clearly followed this subordinationist pattern and 'objected to the application of homoousios to the Son on the ground that it represented the Son as equal to the Father, to whom in fact nothing can be equal',[76] while Nicene Christology did not. If this truly is the case, and my research has clearly supported the contention that it is, then the question emerges as to why scholarship today continues to view Arianism as a *novelty*. Indeed, given the foregoing, should we not actually consider it to be a *traditional* teaching? And, if so, should Arius, himself, not be seen rather as a conservative (instead of 'progressive' or 'innovative') theologian?

If we again take a moment to consider the way that Arius identifies himself, we actually find several statements where he stresses that all he does is follow the faith of the (fore)fathers (ἡ πίστις ἡμῶν ἡ ἐκ προγόνων)[77] and in which he claims to be a successor of their teachings.[78] A quotation from one of his works illustrates this point very well:

κατὰ πίστιν ἐκλεκτῶν Θεοῦ, συνετῶν <τε> θεοῦ, παίδων ἁγίων, ὀρθοτόμων, ἅγιον θεοῦ πνεῦμα λαβόντων, τάδε <πάντ'> ἔμαθον ἔγωγ' ὑπὸ τῶν σοφίας μετεχόντων, ἀστείων, θε<ι>οδιδάκτων, κατὰ πάντα σοφῶν τε. τούτων 26.21 κατ' ἴχνος ἦλθον ἐγὼ βαίνων ὁμοδόξως ὁ περικλυτός, ὁ πολλὰ παθὼν διὰ τὴν θεοῦ δόξαν, ὑπό τε θεοῦ μαθὼν σοφίαν καὶ γνῶσιν ἐγὼ ἔγνω.[79]

According to the faith of God's elect, God's prudent ones, holy children, rightly dividing, God's Holy Spirit receiving, have I learned from the partakers of wisdom, accomplished divinely taught, and wise in all things. Along their track have I been walking, with like opinions, I the very famous, the much suffering for God's glory; and thought of God, I have acquired wisdom and knowledge.[80]

Naturally, Nicene theologians disputed such assumptions, and it was obviously in their best interests to do so. But, what if this statement of Arius indicates how he really saw himself and not (just) some form of a self-promotion? Could it be that he indeed 'walked along the track' of his theological predecessors and that he was a true representative of traditional Alexandrian theology and that Alexander and Athanasius were not? Such a contention is supported by Hanson's assertion that 'it would be unwise to regard Alexander as reproducing official Alexandrian theology and that the very fact that he is so much influenced by Origen precludes this conclusion',[81] and the aforementioned fact that both Alexander and Athanasius were not subordinationists in itself

[76] Christopher Stead, *Divine Substance* (1977), 197.
[77] Arius, *Epistula ad Alexandrum Alexandrinum* 2 (Opitz 3.1, 12).
[78] See another similar quote at: Socr., *h.e.* 1, 26, 2 (CGS 1. n.F., 74).
[79] Arius, *Thalia*, in Ath., *Oratio I contra Arianos* 5 (Opitz 1.1.2, 113).
[80] Trans. John H. Newman, *Select Treatises of St. Athanasius in Controversy with the Arians* (London, 1977), 159.
[81] R.P.C. Hanson, *Search* (1997), 144.

disproves their continuity with pre-Nicene Christology. Indeed, there are several other factors that support this claim, which, for reasons of space, cannot be detailed here.[82]

Conclusion and possible solutions

Given all of the above mentioned considerations, we are obliged to come to the conclusion that *the truly novel doctrinal interpretation was an introduction of the Nicene Christology* and that *Arius' teachings should be taken as traditional*.

If we apply this assertion to the question of Arius' belonging, we could postulate that *Arius as a traditionalist belonged to the older Alexandrian tradition while Alexander and Athanasius were innovators*. This would not only elucidate the difference between these diverse Christologies, but would also explain how it was possible for Arius to play such a significant role in Alexandria and enjoy the support of the bishops of the neighbouring provinces while yet holding to a different Christology to his own bishop(s). This would also explain why so many modern theologians identified his theology as Antiochian.[83] Finally, if we accept Arius as traditionalist we would also be able to provide satisfactory answers to each of the questions raised above:

1. *The question of authority*

Bishops did not so much 'follow' Arius's teachings as share the subordinationist Christology with him. This Christology belonged to an era long before Arius.

2. *The question of the rapid spread of Arianism*

It was not necessary for Arianism to spread at all because it was already present all around in the form of 'subordinationism'.[84] This would also explain why those who were accused of being Arians did not accept this designation. In fact, it would take until the middle of the 4th century before any subordinationists in the East would first hear that they were being called 'Arians' by theologians in the West.[85]

[82] I develop this topic much wider in my doctoral dissertation. See p. 27 footnote *.

[83] It is possible that the conservative Alexandrian and Antiochian circles had more in common, before the two traditions separated completely on the question of the number of Christ's natures. The more time passed the more polarised these two traditions were.

[84] Again, the vast majority of bishops and theologians of his time were subordinationist. See for example Roger E. Olson, *The Story of Christian Theology: Twenty Centuries of Tradition & Reform* (Downers Grove, 1999), 149.

[85] See Leslie William Barnard, 'Pope Julius, Marcellus of Ancyra and the Council of Sardica. A Reconsideration', *Recherches de Théologie Ancienne et Médiévale* 38 (1971), 69-79. See also similar testimonies of the participants of Council of Antioch cited above at page 33.

3. *The question of the extraordinary geographical reach of the Arian ideas*

Arius' teachings were not a local occurrence to begin with, but a widespread global teaching (*i.e.* orthodox faith). In my opinion a modification of the following judgment from Williams' is therefore necessary: 'Arians thought of themselves naturally enough as Catholics, or more accurately the very wide spectrum of non Nicene believers thought of themselves as mainstream Christians and regarded Athanasius and his allies as isolated extremist'.[86] We need to replace 'they thought of themselves' with 'they were'. They were not making deluded presumptions but simply reflected the factual status of what was (still) mainstream and orthodox Christological teaching and belief at that time.

4. *The question of origins*

Arians did not constitute a monolithic bloc precisely because those widely held beliefs did not originate from Arius' teachings but from pre-Nicene subordinationism. Arius was not the *originator* of this teaching but a mere *representative*. He may have shaped this teaching slightly in opposition to the novelty of the positions of Alexander and Athanasius but he did not develop it so extensively that it could legitimately be called 'his' teaching. Williams once more appears to be correct – to a certain extent – when he states that 'Arianism as a coherent system founded by a single great figure and sustained by his disciples is a fantasy, – more exactly, a fantasy based on the polemic of Nicene writers, above all Athanasius'.[87]

The problem of such a view is that it might well suggest that Athanasius was a manipulator. But what if Athanasius called all of his adversaries 'Arian' for a good reason? What if the label 'Arian', for him, actually meant 'subordinationist'? That would justify the usage of this label for all the different groups who shared a subordinationist Christology in common.

5. *The question of non-reception*

Last but not least: the doctrine of the council of Nicaea could not be received in so many places *because* it was a novelty and as with any new teaching it would take significant time before it would be accepted more widely. This means that the so-called 'fight against Arianism' was actually a fight for the reception of the Nicene theology.

[86] R. Williams, *Arius* (2001), 82.
[87] *Ibid*. 82.

Eusèbe le grammairien. Note sur les *Questions évangéliques* (À Marinos, 2) et une scholie sur Pindare

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Abstract

A striking parallel between Eusebius, *Quaestiones evangelicae*, Mar. 2, and a scholion on Pindar illustrates the grammatical background of Eusebius' *Quaestiones*. Several suggestions are made in this article to account for this parallel: Is Eusebius remembering a type of explanation he learnt when he was taught by the *grammatikos*? Has he been himself a *grammatikos* at one stage of his life? Did he make use of a commentary on Pindar preserved at Caesarea? Or was he influenced by a lost commentary by Origen already making use of the scholion?

En 1985, lors du colloque d'Oxford, Allan Johnson avait proposé d'analyser la méthode d'Eusèbe dans les *Questions évangéliques* (= *QE*) à l'aide des concepts rhétoriques grecs[1]. Il croyait reconnaître à travers les problèmes affrontés par Eusèbe les différentes catégories de l'*anaskeuê*, la réfutation, dans le corpus hermogénien. Ces problèmes, selon Johnson, reviennent à attaquer les récits évangéliques sous prétexte qu'ils seraient obscurs, invraisemblables, impossibles, inconséquents ou illogiques, inconvenants, et finalement non propices à une discussion publique.

Avant les travaux de C. Zamagni[2], cette brève étude est la seule, à ma connaissance, à avoir cherché à analyser les *QE* dans le contexte de la culture grecque. Elle contribue à donner l'image d'un Eusèbe connaisseur de la rhétorique de son temps. Je ne me prononcerai pas ici sur la validité de cette analyse. Si elle est pertinente, il resterait à savoir si Eusèbe était conscient des catégories rhétoriques identifiées par Johnson, et d'autre part si, dans cette hypothèse, Eusèbe les connaissait à partir de textes païens ou de textes chrétiens qui avaient pu déjà les utiliser.

Il me semble en tout cas qu'à côté de l'arrière-plan rhétorique, qui reste possible, les *QE* doivent être replacées avant tout dans le contexte d'une autre

[1] Allan E. Jonhson, 'Rhetorical Criticism in Eusebius' Gospel Questions', *SP* 18 (1985), 33-9.

[2] Voir par exemple 'Existe-t-il une terminologie technique dans les Questions d'Eusèbe de Césarée ?', dans Annelie Volgers et Claudio Zamagni (dir.), *Erotapokriseis. Early Christian Question-and-Answer Literature in Context* (Louvain – Paris – Dudley MA, 2004), 81-98.

Studia Patristica XCV, 43-50.
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tradition, plus directement concernée par le commentaire des textes littéraires : la tradition grammaticale. Un exemple précis me permettra d'illustrer l'opportunité d'une telle confrontation.

Dans l'Epitomè des *QE* d'Eusèbe, la Question II à Marinos est formulée de la façon suivante :

« Comment se fait-il que la Madeleine qui a contemplé la résurrection le soir du sabbat selon *Matthieu* (28:1-10), est la même que celle qui pleure, selon *Jean*, en se tenant près du tombeau le premier jour de la semaine (20:1.11)[3] ? »

Eusèbe aborde ici une contradiction entre *Matthieu* et *Jean* concernant l'heure du passage de Madeleine au tombeau du Christ : « le soir du sabbat » (ὀψὲ σαββάτων) selon *Matthieu*, « le premier jour de la semaine » (τῇ μιᾷ τοῦ σαββάτου) selon *Jean* :

« Il ne saurait y avoir aucune question à propos de ces passages, si nous supposions que le soir du sabbat ne désigne pas l'heure du crépuscule après le jour du sabbat, comme certains l'ont supposé, mais un moment tardif, avancé, de la nuit après le sabbat. Ainsi en effet nous avons aussi l'habitude de dire qu'une heure, ou un temps ou une affaire sont 'au crépuscule', en n'indiquant pas le soir, ni le temps après le coucher du soleil, mais en signifiant de cette manière 'très tardif'. Pour cette raison Matthieu, comme pour s'expliquer lui-même, après 'soir du sabbat', a ajouté : 'lorsque la lumière de l'aube pointait', c'est-à-dire manifestement à l'heure où le jour commençait déjà et où la lumière de l'aube faisait poindre le jour du Seigneur, l'heure qui était avancée et qui sortait désormais du sabbat. En effet, cette heure a été appelée 'soir du sabbat' par celui qui a traduit le texte, car l'évangéliste Matthieu transmit l'Évangile en langue hébraïque, et celui qui l'a traduit dans la langue des Grecs a appelé 'soir du sabbat' l'heure où la lumière de l'aube pointait vers le jour du Seigneur, de sorte qu'on entend à peu près le même moment, ou un moment très proche, qui est noté chez les évangélistes sous différentes expressions, et qu'il n'y a aucune différence entre Matthieu qui a dit : 'Le soir du sabbat, lorsque la lumière de l'aube pointait vers le premier jour de la semaine, Marie Madeleine et l'autre Marie allèrent pour voir le tombeau', et Jean qui a dit : 'Le premier jour de la semaine, Marie Madeleine vient le matin au tombeau, lorsqu'il y avait encore de l'obscurité'[4]. »

Il n'y a donc pour Eusèbe aucune contradiction entre les deux évangélistes. L'expression ὀψὲ σαββάτων ne désignerait ni le crépuscule, ni le temps qui suit le coucher du soleil, mais le moment le plus avancé de la nuit, juste avant l'aube[5]. Elle correspondrait à l'expression ὀψὲ τῆς νυκτός.

[3] Nos traductions sont empruntées à Claudio Zamagni, *Eusèbe de Césarée, Questions évangéliques*, SC 523 (Paris, 2008), qui édite et traduit l'Epitomè des *QE*. Ce travail est tiré de la thèse du même auteur, *Les Questions et réponses sur les Évangiles d'Eusèbe de Césarée. Étude et édition du résumé grec*, thèse de doctorat dir. É. Junod – A. Le Boulluec, Université de Lausanne – École pratique des Hautes Études (Paris, 2003). La question est connue également par un fragment grec : voir R. Pearse (éd.), *Eusebius of Caesarea, Gospel Problems and Solutions* (Ipswich, 2010), 239-43.

[4] *QE*, Mar., 2, 1.

[5] Même affirmation encore en *Dém. év.*, X, 8, 17-21.

Dans la suite de la question, Eusèbe revient sur les trois façons possibles de comprendre l'expression ὀψὲ σαββάτων :

« Matthieu a donc nommé de cette manière le temps où la lumière commençait à poindre pour l'aube du jour du Seigneur soir du sabbat, ne signifiant pas la soirée du sabbat, ni tard dans le jour du sabbat[6]. »

Eusèbe y revient encore dans la suite :

« Nous n'avons pas l'habitude de cesser les jeûnes le soir du sabbat, mais soit lorsque la nuit est survenue, à minuit même, soit aux cris des coqs, ou autour de l'aube[7]. »

C. Zamagni pense que l'exégèse d'Eusèbe est ici inspirée par une lettre de Denys d'Alexandrie à Basilide, un évêque de la Pentapole[8]. Le prétexte de la lettre de Denys n'est pas à proprement parler le même que celui d'Eusèbe. Denys n'affronte pas le problème de la contradiction des évangiles pour lui-même. Il cherche à répondre à son correspondant, qui lui demande à quelle heure il faut cesser la fête avant Pâque. C'est pour répondre à cette question que Denys cite les passages des évangiles évoquant la découverte du tombeau du Christ. Il considère que ces passages sont concordants et évoquent un moment compris entre le soir et l'aube. L'allusion à la cessation du jeûne et au cri du coq, qui est également évoqué par Denys, est un indice qui tend à démontrer qu'Eusèbe a pu utiliser la Lettre de Denys.

Il existe cependant des différences importantes entre les deux textes :

– La Lettre de Denys envisage les quatre évangiles ; Eusèbe ne traite que du désaccord entre *Matthieu* et *Jean*.
– La Question d'Eusèbe expose trois façons précises de comprendre l'expression ὀψὲ σαββάτων chez *Matthieu* : vers le soir, pendant la nuit, et vers le moment de l'aube. Denys n'évoque pas précisément ces trois moments. À propos de l'expression ὀψέ, il explique seulement qu'on peut comprendre « le soir », ou à une heure plus avancée de la nuit.

L'explication d'Eusèbe à ce sujet n'a pas de correspondant dans la Lettre de Denys, mais trouve curieusement un parallèle très net dans une scholie conservée sur la Quatrième Isthmique de Pindare, dont le vers 58 évoque le suicide d'Ajax, tard dans la nuit, ὀψίᾳ ἐν νυκτὶ : « vous connaissez certes la bravoure d'Ajax, qui, tard dans la nuit, se perça de son glaive meurtrier. » (ἴστε μὰν Αἴαντος ἀλκάν, φοίνιον τὰν ὀψίᾳ ἐν νυκτὶ ταμὼν περὶ ᾧ φασγάνῳ).

[6] *QE*, Mar., 2, 2.
[7] *QE,* Mar., 2, 2.
[8] Voir *Les Questions et réponses sur les Évangiles d'Eusèbe de Césarée* (2003), 181-2. À propos de notre passage, voir encore, du même auteur, 'L'exégèse des récits de la résurrection dans les *Questions à Marinos* d'Eusèbe de Césarée', dans *La résurrection chez les Pères*, Cahiers de Studia Patristica (Strasbourg, 2003), 179-94, 185-6.

La scholie concerne le sens de l'expression ὀψίᾳ ἐν νυκτί :

τὸ δὲ ὀψίᾳ ἐν νυκτὶ τριχῶς νοεῖται· ἢ γὰρ τὴν ὀψίαν τῆς ἡμέρας· ὅτε γὰρ ὀψὲ τῆς ἡμέρας ἐστὶ, τότε ἀρχὴ τῆς νυκτός· οἷον ἀφ' ἑσπέρας· ἢ κατὰ τὸ ὀψὲ τῆς νυκτός, οἷον τὸ μεσονύκτιον, μετὰ τὴν ὀψίαν ὥραν τῆς νυκτός, ὥστε ὅλον ὅμοιον εἶναι τῷ ἐν νυκτὸς ἀμολγῷ, ὅτε ἀμέλγουσι πρὸς ἑσπέρας· ἢ τὸ πρὸς ἕω, ὅτε ἐστὶ τῆς νυκτὸς ὀψὲ πρὸ τοῦ ὄρθρου. τοῖς δὲ τὸν ὄρθρον ἀκούουσι καὶ τὰ ἀπὸ τῆς ἱστορίας συνᾴδει· ὁ γὰρ τὴν Αἰθιοπίδα γράφων (fr. 2 Kinkel) περὶ τὸν ὄρθρον φησὶ τὸν Αἴαντα ἑαυτὸν ἀνελεῖν[9].

« L'expression 'tard dans la nuit' se comprend de trois manières : ou bien à une heure avancée du jour, car, quand il est tard dans la journée, c'est le début de la nuit, comme 'à partir du soir' ; ou bien à un moment avancé de la nuit, comme à minuit, après l'heure avancée de la nuit : par conséquent, l'expression toute entière serait semblable à 'au plus profond de la nuit', lorsqu'on trait vers le soir[10] ; ou bien vers l'aube, lorsqu'il est tard dans la nuit, mais avant le lever du soleil. L'histoire d'Ajax concorde avec ceux qui entendent l'expression du lever du soleil. L'auteur de l'*Aithiopis* dit en effet qu'Ajax s'est tué vers le lever du soleil. »

Il existe trois points communs frappants entre cette scholie et la Question 2 à Marinos :

– l'expression « tard dans la nuit » est expliquée selon trois sens : 1/ vers le soir ; 2/ à une heure avancée de la nuit ; 3/ vers l'aube ;
– dans les deux cas, l'exégète choisit le troisième sens ;
– le scholiaste souligne comme Eusèbe la concorde du texte commenté avec un autre texte qui, lui, situe explicitement l'heure de la mort d'Ajax au lever du soleil : l'autre poète, auteur d'une *Aithiopis*, joue le même rôle que *Jean* dans le texte d'Eusèbe.

[9] Voir Anders Björn Drachmann, *Scholia vetera in Pindari Carmina*, t. III, Isthm. 4, 58b (Leipzig, 1927), 230-1.

[10] À ce propos, voir *Scholies sur l'Odyssée*, IV, vers 841 (éd. Dindorf) : νυκτὸς ἀμολγῷ] ἐν τῇ τοῦ μεσονυκτίου ὥρᾳ, καθ' ἣν ἄρα συμβέβηκεν ἀμέλγεσθαι τὰ ζῷα. τινὲς ἀπὸ ἀμογῶ, ὅταν οὐδεὶς μογεῖ, ὅπερ ἐστὶ κακοπαθεῖ, ἀλλὰ ἀναπαύεται. τινὲς ἀπὸ ἀμολῶ, ὅταν οὐδεὶς μολήσει, ὅ ἐστι βαδίσει. πάντα δὲ ταῦτα εἰς τὴν τοῦ μεσονυκτίου ὥραν καταστρέφει. E.H.Q. ἐν τ. τ. μ. ὥρᾳ. καὶ ἔστι κατὰ τὸ ἔτυμον ἤτοι ἀμολγῷ, καθ' ἣν ὥραν συμβέβηκε μὴ ἀμόλγεσθαι τὰ ζῷα, ἢ κατὰ ἀφαίρεσιν τοῦ γ, ἀμολῷ, καθ' ἣν ὥραν οὐδεὶς μολίσκει, ὅ ἐστι βαδίζει. ἢ κατὰ ἀφαίρεσιν τοῦ λ, ἀμογῷ, καθ' ἣν ὥραν οὐδεὶς μογεῖ, ὅπερ ἐστὶ κακοπαθεῖ, ἀλλ' ἀναπαύεται. ταῦτα δὲ πάντα κ. τ. λ. H.P.V. μέσῳ τῆς νυκτός. νόει δὲ τὸ ἀμολγῷ ἤτοι ὁπότε οὐκ ἀμέλγει τις, ἢ ἡνίκα τις οὐ μολεῖ, ἀμολός καὶ πλεονασμῷ τοῦ γ ἀμολγός (« 'au plus profond de la nuit' : à l'heure de minuit, pendant laquelle il arrive qu'on traie les animaux. Certains font venir l'expression de 'sans travail' (*amogos*), quand personne ne travaille (*mogei*), c'est-à-dire ne souffre, mais qu'on se repose. Certains la font venir de 'qui ne vient pas' (*amolos*), quand personne ne va venir, c'est-à-dire ne va marcher. Et tout cela cesse à l'heure de minuit. E.H.Q. Pendant l'heure de minuit. Et c'est ou bien selon le sens étymologique, '*amolgô*', à l'heure où il arrive qu'on ne traie pas les animaux, ou, par aphérèse du gamma, '*amolô*', à l'heure ou personne ne vient, c'est-à-dire ne marche. Ou bien encore par aphérèse du lambda, '*amogô*', à l'heure où personne ne travaille, c'est-à-dire ne souffre, mais qu'on se repose. Et tout cela etc. H.P.V. au milieu de la nuit. 'Au plus profond' veut dire ou bien quand on ne trait pas, ou bien quand personne ne va venir, '*amolos*' et, par ajout du gamma, '*amolgos*'. »

Les scholies anciennes sur Pindare remontent à une épitomè de Didyme réalisée au II^e^ s. après J.-C. Le fond de ces scholies dérive des philologues alexandrins et la critique actuelle estime qu'elles sont pures d'interpolations tardives[11]. On est donc certain de l'antériorité chronologique de la scholie sur Pindare par rapport à la Question d'Eusèbe. Il est par conséquent tentant de considérer cette scholie comme l'une des sources de la Question II à Marinos.

Ce genre de rapprochement textuel n'est pas fréquent. On connaît, de manière générale, l'influence des théories grammaticales et du vocabulaire grammatical sur l'exégèse chrétienne, mais il est rare qu'on puisse montrer qu'un commentaire grammatical précis ait pu influencer un commentaire chrétien.

Si cette hypothèse est la bonne, comment Eusèbe a-t-il pu connaître ce commentaire ? Première possibilité : Eusèbe, comme tous les lettrés de son temps, a suivi les cours d'un *grammatikos* ou de plusieurs *grammatikoi*. La présence de la scholie sur Pindare dans la Question II à Marinos peut donc être l'effet d'un souvenir de classe.

Deuxième possibilité : Eusèbe avait à sa disposition un commentaire sur Pindare contenant cette scholie, sous cette forme ou sous une autre forme, peut-être le commentaire de Didyme. A. J. Carriker, qui s'est intéressé au fond de la « bibliothèque d'Eusèbe », ne mentionne aucun commentaire grammatical, parce que sa méthode consiste avant tout à faire le recensement des ouvrages cités *explicitement* par Eusèbe[12]. Or ce dernier ne mentionne jamais de texte de ce type. Mais peut-être disposait-il d'un commentaire sur Pindare et d'autres commentaires de ce genre.

La présence de tels textes dans la bibliothèque personnelle d'Eusèbe peut cependant étonner à première vue. Quelle utilité pouvaient-ils présenter pour un savant chrétien, dont l'œuvre est tournée vers l'apologétique, l'exégèse biblique et l'écriture de l'histoire ? Cette question, me semble-t-il, pourrait trouver une réponse si l'on prenait en compte une troisième hypothèse : l'hypothèse selon laquelle Eusèbe aurait été lui-même, à un moment de sa vie, un *grammatikos*. Le fait n'aurait rien d'étonnant en lui-même. Nombreux étaient les lettrés chrétiens qui, avant d'occuper une charge importante dans l'Église, subvenaient à leurs besoins en donnant des cours de grammaire ou de rhétorique. Eusèbe ne parle jamais d'un passé de grammairien. On en saurait plus si l'on disposait de la *Vie d'Eusèbe*, composée par son successeur Acace, et aujourd'hui perdue. Mais l'hypothèse est tout à fait probable et elle mérite d'être gardée à l'esprit. Elle permettrait sans doute, d'ailleurs, de porter un regard neuf sur les passages dans lesquels Eusèbe évoque la grammaire et son enseignement – je pense en priorité au livre VI de l'*Histoire ecclésiastique* dans

[11] Eleanor Dickey, *Ancient Greek Scholarship. A Guide to Finding, Reading and Understanding Scholia, Commentaries, Lexica, and Grammatical Treatises, from the Beginnings to the Byzantine Period* (Oxford, 2007), 39.

[12] *The Library of Eusebius of Caesarea* (Leiden – Boston), 2003.

lequel il décrit les activités d'un autre *grammatikos*, son maître spirituel Origène[13].

Il existe en théorie une quatrième possibilité : qu'il y ait, entre la scholie sur Pindare et Eusèbe, un intermédiaire. Un intermédiaire, par exemple, qui aurait déjà commenté l'expression « tard dans la nuit » chez *Matthieu* en recourant au commentaire sur la Quatrième Isthmique. Dans l'état des textes chrétiens disponibles, il n'existe aucun texte de ce genre et cet intermédiaire, *a priori*, n'est pas la lettre de Denys d'Alexandrie à Basilide. Denys distingue une explication obvie de l'expression « tard », ὀψέ, chez *Matthieu* – le soir – et une explication qu'il juge plus savante – au milieu de la nuit. Il connaissait donc peut-être le commentaire sur la Quatrième Isthmique, ou un commentaire similaire. Mais la Lettre paraît avoir été transmise intégralement. Et elle ne contient pas de développement plus précis sur l'expression ὀψέ.

S'il y a, entre la scholie à Pindare et Eusèbe, un intermédiaire, celui-ci fait partie des textes perdus. Or, sur ce point, il est légitime de penser en priorité à Origène, qui, dans les *QE* comme dans les autres œuvres d'Eusèbe, constitue sa source chrétienne la plus importante.

Il va sans dire qu'Origène devait connaître Pindare, si, comme l'affirme Eusèbe dans l'*HE*, il avait lui aussi exercé les fonctions de *grammatikos*[14]. Le poète est évoqué à deux reprises dans son œuvre, et toujours dans le *Contre Celse*. La première fois, Origène rapporte que Celse a pu tirer l'histoire des prodiges d'Aristéas de Pindare (fr. 284 Bowra) ou d'Hérodote (IV, 14-15)[15]. La seconde fois, Origène commente un mot de Pindare cité par Celse – la loi règne sur tous (fr. 169) – en expliquant que le poète a désigné ainsi non la loi particulière de chaque cité, mais la loi de la nature[16].

À ma connaissance, on ne s'est jamais demandé si Origène pouvait, dans ces deux passages, dépendre de deux commentaires sur Pindare. La vérification est impossible, puisque les deux textes de Pindare sont des fragments et qu'il n'y a par conséquent, sauf erreur de ma part, aucune scholie conservée. Ce qu'on peut dire, en revanche, c'est que les parallèles entre Pindare et Hérodote sont souvent relevés par les scholiastes[17], et que l'identification des « lois » évoquées par Pindare fait l'objet de commentaires dans les scholies conservées[18]. Dans les deux passages où Origène cite le nom de Pindare, il n'est donc pas loin de se comporter en *grammatikos*.

L'œuvre d'Origène n'a, semble-t-il, conservé qu'un seul commentaire de l'expression ὀψὲ σαββάτων en *Mt* 28:1, dans les *Homélies sur l'Exode* (7, 7-8).

[13] Voir VI, 2, 15.
[14] Voir la note précédente.
[15] III, 26-7.
[16] V, 40. cf. Pindare, fr. 169 : νόμος ὁ πάντων βασιλεὺς θνατῶν τε καὶ ἀθανάτων ἄγει δικαιῶν τὸ βιαιότατον ὑπερτάτᾳ χειρί.
[17] Voir, parmi d'autres exemples dans les scholies anciennes : P 4, inscr. b ; I 5, 63a.
[18] Voir : O 7, 61c ; 62 ; P 2, 157a ; N 3, 95b ; N 9, 35a.

C. Zamagni note que, dans ce texte, Origène prendrait l'expression dans le même sens qu'Eusèbe, à savoir, à l'approche de l'aube. En réalité, Origène fait une distinction claire entre le moment du soir, qui est celui de la découverte du *tombeau* (*Mt* 28:1), et celui du matin (cf. *Mc* 16:2 ; *Lc* 24:4), où apparaît cette fois, selon lui, la *gloire du Seigneur* (les anges : *Mt* 28:6-7). Ces deux moments *distincts* auraient été prophétisés par le texte d'*Ex* 16:6-7 : « Au soir, vous saurez que c'est moi le Seigneur, et au matin, vous verrez la majesté du Seigneur. » Lisant le texte de *Mt* 28 à la lumière d'*Ex* 16, Origène prend donc l'expression ὀψέ dans son sens le plus simple, comme signifiant le soir : *Agnitus ergo est per haec in uespera Dominus*. Il a donc, dans ce texte, une interprétation différente de celle d'Eusèbe, qui refuse *explicitement* cette explication (*μὴ* τὴν ἑσπερινὴν ὥραν). L'évêque de Césarée fait peut-être allusion à cette Homélie d'Origène, car il attribue cette exégèse à « certains » (τινες) qui auraient compris à tort la péricope[19].

Origène doit cependant avoir traité le problème au moins une seconde fois, dans la partie perdue du *Commentaire sur Matthieu*. Et cette fois, comme il le fait régulièrement dans ses commentaires sur les évangiles, il devait affronter, comme Eusèbe dans les *QE*, le problème posé par la contradiction des évangélistes à propos de l'heure de la découverte du tombeau. On ignore tout de ce commentaire perdu et on ne peut exclure, selon moi, quelle qu'ait été par ailleurs l'explication d'Origène – semblable ou différente de celle d'Eusèbe –, que ce texte soit la source du développement d'Eusèbe sur les trois façons possibles de comprendre l'expression ὀψέ[20]. Ajoutons que, dans les *Homélies sur l'Exode*, Origène commente avant tout le texte de l'*Exode*. C'est le passage d'*Ex* 16 qui détermine sa façon de lire *Mt* 28:1, dont il ne retient alors que le début, sans tenir compte de la suite, qui indique clairement le matin. On voit mal comment un exégète aussi scrupuleux de la lettre du texte aurait pu, dans son propre commentaire de *Matthieu*, maintenir l'identification du moment décrit par Matthieu au soir. Je fais donc le pari, à mon avis raisonnable, qu'Origène, dans le commentaire sur *Matthieu*, expliquait la péricope *de la même façon qu'Eusèbe*.

Le fait est qu'Eusèbe n'apparaît pas à première vue comme un aussi bon connaisseur de Pindare qu'Origène. Son œuvre contient sept mentions explicites du nom du poète. Mais une seule cependant provient d'un développement personnel ; les autres figurent dans des citations d'autres auteurs[21]. Elle intervient

[19] Autre indice d'une connaissance possible de cette homélie de la part d'Eusèbe : en *QE*, Mar., 2, 3, Eusèbe propose de distinguer la femme évoquée par *Matthieu* et *Jean*, et celles, plus nombreuses, qui sont mentionnées par *Marc* (16:1 *sqq*.) et *Luc* (24:1 *sqq*.). Cette distinction recouvre celle qui est faite par Origène dans l'Homélie 7 sur l'*Exode*.

[20] Il n'existe pas d'autre commentaire conservé d'Origène sur *Mt* 28:1. Ses seuls propos transmis jusqu'à nous sur *Jn* 20:1 se trouvent en *Cels*., II, 55 ; 59 ; 60 et n'apportent rien à la discussion.

[21] *PE*, VIII, 14, 51 : Philon ; X, 12, 27 : Clément ; XII, 29, 3 : Platon ; XIII, 13, 20 : Platon cité par Clément ; XIII, 13, 27 : Clément ; XIII, 13, 56 : Clément.

dans la *Préparation évangélique*, à l'occasion d'une citation de *Pyth.*, 3, 55 ; 57-58. Mais cette citation avait déjà été faite, avant Eusèbe, par Athénagore[22] et par Clément d'Alexandrie[23]. Elle ne permet donc pas de vérifier une bonne connaissance de Pindare de la part d'Eusèbe.

Un argument pourrait cependant donner du poids à l'hypothèse d'un développement personnel d'Eusèbe : dans les textes conservés, la contradiction entre les deux passages de *Matthieu* et de *Jean* n'est pas relevée avant Porphyre, soit après l'époque d'Origène. C. Zamagni pense d'ailleurs que les critiques de Porphyre « peuvent » être à l'arrière-plan de la Question II à Marinos. Cet argument n'est cependant pas totalement décisif. La perte de la section correspondante du commentaire sur Matthieu d'Origène, en effet, ne permet pas de savoir si Origène n'avait pas affronté le problème avant Porphyre. Le contraire serait très étonnant.

Il reste à comparer plus systématiquement les *QE* aux scholies conservées sur les textes classiques. On retrouvera des éléments de méthode communs et peut-être d'autres rapprochements textuels du même genre que celui qui a été présenté ici[24]. Dans le cas présent, il paraît impossible de dire si Eusèbe connaissait cette scholie sur Pindare, ou s'il dépendait sur ce point d'un commentaire perdu d'Origène, quoiqu'on puisse être tenté d'aller dans cette direction[25]. Ce genre d'interrogation ne concerne pas seulement Eusèbe. Les auteurs chrétiens, après Origène, font un emploi important des outils de la critique grammaticale. Il serait intéressant de se demander ce qui, de cette connaissance, pouvait provenir de la littérature « païenne » du temps, et ce qu'ils devaient plutôt aux commentaires chrétiens antérieurs ; autrement dit, d'être capable de faire la part d'un savoir direct de la théorie grammaticale, et de cette science grammaticale que les chrétiens, à partir d'Origène surtout, avaient commencé à s'approprier.

[22] *Supplique*, 29, 2.

[23] *Protreptique*, II, 30, 1.

[24] Dans des publications antérieures, nous avons évoqué d'autres rapprochements entre Eusèbe et les scholies : 1) l'emploi du verbe συμμαρτυρεῖν pour évoquer la concorde des textes qu'on trouve par exemple dans l'*HE*, I, 11, 3-6 et les *QE*, PG 22, 989. 49 et les scholies à Pindare (O I, 127) ou à Apollonios de Rhodes (I, 139) ('La concorde des textes dans l'*Histoire ecclésiastique* d'Eusèbe (= HE) : un motif apologétique ?', dans M. Wallraff (dir.), *Geschichte als Argument ?* [Leuven – Paris – Bristol CT, 2015], 49-78, 65) ; 2) l'usage du verbe παρακούειν pour désigner la mauvaise compréhension d'une source (*DE*, X, 8, 92), qui se retrouve dans les scholies sur Pindare (O 9, 46) ('L'accusation de mauvaise entente [παρακοή] dans la polémique entre païens et chrétiens à la fin de l'Antiquité', à paraître). Le premier article rappelle également que l'usage des verbes συνᾴδειν et συμφωνεῖν, très fréquents chez Eusèbe pour signaler la concorde des textes, se retrouve d'une façon importantes dans les scholies aux textes classiques (63).

[25] Il conviendrait, pour poursuivre cette étude, de prendre en compte la Lettre 120 de Jérôme, qui affronte le même problème qu'Eusèbe. Jérôme, on le sait, était un grand lecteur d'Origène.

Some Hermeneutical Assumptions Latent within the Gospel Apparatus of Eusebius of Caesarea

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Abstract

The presence of Eusebius' gospel apparatus (often incorrectly referred to as 'the Eusebian Canons') in the margins of so many of gospel codices, both in Greek and over the whole range of versions, is sufficient evidence of the importance of that work in the history of gospels' study. At first sight, it appears an unproblematic tool: it allows the reader to note at a glance whether a point being made in one gospel's text (sometimes as long as one of our chapters and on other occasions less than a sentence) is to be found in all four, or just three or two gospels, or nowhere else; and then, if appropriate, to find those 'parallels'. As such it is a gospel 'harmony' which preserves the integrity of each gospel, and of the four distinct gospels in that it avoids creating a fifth text, a diatessaron. However, built into the apparatus is a series of hermeneutical assumptions about how gospel texts relate to history, how the four texts relate to one another, how the four relate to 'the gospel', how the texts were to be read together to provide a single composite history of Jesus, an apologetic before those who would point out their mutual discrepancies (*e.g.* Porphyry), and what constitutes 'a parallel'. Lastly, when we compare Eusebius' assumptions with those used today (*e.g.* regarding 'the Synoptic Problem') we can observe the extent to which his method determined the overall shape of gospel comparison until the eighteenth century whereby there was a notional complete story of Jesus of which the four actual texts were specific redactions / perspectives.

That Eusebius wished to show how the four canonical gospels could be related to one another is so immediately obvious as not to need comment. What is not obvious, given that the parallels he provides are often not cases of verbal agreements – the underlying principle of modern synopses – are what were his assumptions when he provided parallels where this is little or no verbal similarity between sections. Moreover, we cannot a priori speak of Eusebius 'principles' in offering parallels as he offers us little guidance as to his method beyond what is contained in the *Letter to Carpianus* – however that must be our starting point because it offers more than we often imagine when we read it simply as 'operating instructions' for the apparatus.[1] The most informative passages in the letter are these:

[1] The text is taken from Nestle-Aland, *Novum Testamentum Graece*, 28th edition (Münster, 2012), 89*-90*. The translation is my own.

Studia Patristica XCV, 51-63.
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Through a wonderful display of skill and diligence, Ammonius the Alexandrian has left us a text which brings the four gospels into one by placing beside Matthew's gospel the related passages from the other evangelists; but this [procedure] has the effect of destroying the train of thought in the other three gospels in so far as one might seek to read them continuously.
Therefore, in order that you, [Carpianus], can identify in each gospel those passages found elsewhere [among the evangelists] while saving [the integrity of] the text of each one of them, I have taken a hint from my predecessor yet have taken another approach.

[He explains the workings of the marginalia and the tables.]

Now suppose you open one of the gospels and begin reading some heading (*kephalaió*) that attracts you, and then want to know not only which of the other evangelists contain very similar things (*ta paraplésia*) but where exactly it is to be found in their gospels, then note the number identifying your pericope (*perikopes*) and then look that number up [in the tables…]….

This is noteworthy for several reasons. Firstly, it is very often stated that the apparatus' sections go back to Ammonius and so are referred to as 'Ammonian Sections' – a confusion that seems to have its origins in Jerome's preface to the Vulgate, *Nouum opus*, where he states that Eusebius followed Ammonius in the matter of the canons – but it is clear that Eusebius while recognising the value of Ammonius' labour wanted something very different.[2] Ammonius, it appears, had produced some sort of very skilful diatessaron which was viewed by Eusebius as having some serious drawbacks. First, it gave a priority to a single text, in this case *Matthew*'s gospel, as providing the framework of 'the gospel' and as a consequence of this reduced the other three gospels to being quarries for items that could fill out *Matthew*. The text, which as a result, was read was a conflation and this appears to have troubled Eusebius. Second, this process destroyed the distinct trains of thought, what we might refer to as the narrative structure, and Eusebius believed that it was important that this be maintained intact for each of the four gospels. The significance of each detail in a gospel appears to have been understood by him to exist in the passage as an integral unit within a larger frame rather than in the total of all the details that could be bundled together. Moreover, when taken in conjunction with the first point, it seems clear that Eusebius does not view the text as a collection of propositions or discreet facts: the statements – some are less than sentences – are to be retained in their four narratives and are to be understood in those several narratives. Lastly, Eusebius was working with a text which he understands to have significant units of text and he wants to understand what a gospel contains by reading the text in those units. It is significant that he refers not to the numbered sections – which is how we, following Jerome's

[2] On Jerome's adoption of the apparatus, see Thomas O'Loughlin, 'Harmonizing the Truth: Eusebius and the Problem of the Four Gospels', *Traditio* 65 (2010), 1-29.

understanding of the apparatus, view his 'sections' – but to the number linked to 'the heading' (*kephalaion*) and that he expects us to read the similar passages in the other gospel. This implies that Eusebius was working with a text which had already been divided into some sort of sense units, but more importantly for my purpose is this: he does not expect a reader to compare details, but narrative units. He appears to want those who then use his apparatus to move a whole passage to the corresponding sense unit in another gospel – and so compare sense unit with sense unit – and thus through comparison to see more deeply into the content of these passages.

Given the way that Eusebius' work has usually been understood, this presentation of Eusebius' intentions raises an immediate question: did the actual mechanism that he then set out in margins promote such comparisons of passages or, in its detail, encourage other ways of interpreting the gospels and other views about where meaning resides in these four texts? In effect, did Eusebius' work contain its own negation in that while seeking to allow the reader to find related passages, it generated the view that 'the gospel' is a composite text made up of all the details from the other three around the spine of *Matthew* – the mechanism generating the very thing that Ammonius produced and from which Eusebius wished to distance himself. This article is a contribution towards answering that question by taking three examples of related passages. All three examples involve *John* because, as is recognised in the apparatus, that gospel is least like that of *Matthew*, and consequently such examples are of greater value in seeking out hermeneutical assumptions relative to this question.

Example 1: *John* 1:1-14

Examining how Eusebius approaches the prologue to *John*, however we might delimit the extent of the prologue,[3] is an appropriate first case because it is a passage that would not find any parallels in any synopsis produced using modern textual assumptions. However, as these fourteen verses are analysed by Eusebius, they are broken into five sections, all but one of which have parallels in the other gospels. This fact in itself should alert us to any facile description of Eusebius' work as a textual harmony.

John 1:1-5 forms Eusebius' Section 1 for which we are told seek corresponding passages using Canon [Table] 3. There we find this complex set of relationships:

Mt. [section] 1 = *Lk.* [section] 14 = *Jn.* [section] 1

[3] The delimitation adopted here is to an extent arbitrary given that I am concerned with Eusebius' attitudes to the text rather than the text itself, and this is but an essay into a much larger question.

But the same table relates those sections of *Mt*. and *Lk*. to two further sections in the Johannine prologue:

Mt. [section] 1 = *Lk*. [section] 14 = *Jn*. [section] 3
Mt. [section] 1 = *Lk*. [section] 14 = *Jn*. [section] 5

This is virtually a declaration by Eusebius that *Jn*. 1:1-14 is a passage that he believes must be read as a unit of text and perceived in its totality as equivalent to the whole of the Matthaean genealogy and the whole of the Lukan genealogy. So texts that are seen as very different in terms of content (ignoring the discrepancies between *Mt*. and *Lk*.) and 'theological' approach are presented as somehow equivalent within Eusebius' exegetical vision.

These passages read thus:[4]

Mt. 1:1-16	*Lk*. 3:23-38	*Jn*. 1:1-5 * followed by 1:9-10 * followed by 1:14
An account of the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah, the son of David, the son of Abraham, Abraham was the father of Isaac, … and Jesse the father of King David. And David was the father of Solomon by the wife of Uriah, … and Josiah the father of Jechoniah and his brothers, at the time of the deportation to Babylon. And after the deportation to Babylon: Jechoniah was the father of Salathiel, … and Jacob the father of Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom Jesus was	Jesus was about thirty years old when he began his work. He was the son (as was thought) of Joseph son of Heli, … son of Seth, son of Adam, son of God.	In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. * The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world came into being

[4] Biblical translations are taken, for convenience, from the *RSV* – I am not concerned with textual issues in this article and it would be otiose to print them in Greek from a modern edition.

born, who is called the Messiah.		through him; yet the world did not know him. * And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

The first 'gap' in the text of *John*, as we have just read it, is our verses 6-8 and this becomes Eusebius' second section, which is also to be linked to other passages using the third canon table. This translates to *Mt.* 3:1-2 and *Lk.* 3:1-2 and the linkage that Eusebius makes is apparently straightforward: just as *Jn.* turns from the 'background' of Jesus to the appearance of John the Baptist at verse 6, so that is the cue to note the point in *Mt.* and *Lk.* when the Baptist enters the narrative. The first point to note is that if that is the case, then surely there is a case for linking these verses of *Jn.* to all four gospels (*i.e.* Table 1) in that *Mark* also has description of the advent of the Baptist (*Mk.* 1:1-8). However, pursuing those sections of *Mk.* we find that they relate to *Jn.* 1:23 and to other passages in *Mt.* and *Lk.* Taking the evidence together allows us to see that Eusebius makes a distinction between the fact of John the Baptist coming as the forerunner of the Christ and the content of John the Baptist as 'the voice crying in the wilderness' fulfilling a prophecy.[5] This subtle distinction between the appearance of the man and his message is confirmed when we actually look at Canon [Table] 3 as we are directed in the margin of *Jn.* at 1:6. We find:

Mt. [section] 7 = *Lk.* [section] 6 = *Jn.* [section] 2
Mt. [section] 7 = *Lk.* [section] 6 = *Jn.* [section] 25

This complex indicates that Eusebius sees the two verses (1:6-8) in the prologue as linked in context with the later statement in *Jn.* 3:23 that describes John the Baptist's actual work of baptizing which has the effect of adding a detail – indeed an item of geographical precision[6] – to the information about John the Baptist that is contained in *Mt.* and *Lk.* However, it should be noted

[5] On the significance of the notion of prophecy in Eusebius, see Michael J. Hollerich, *Eusebius of Caesarea's Commentary on Isaiah: Christian Exegesis in the Age of Constantine* (Oxford, 1999), 87-94.

[6] This is pointed out by Eusebius in his *Onomasticon*, 'A' 'from the gospels', R. Steven Notley and Ze'ev Safrai (eds), *Eusebius, Onomasticon: A Triglot Edition with Notes and Commentary* (Leiden, 2005), 42.

that here, in pointing out this additional detail, the apparatus serves not to produce a harmonized text of one or other narrative but to allow the reader to gather additional information: it could be described as more 'an exegetical aid' than 'a textual aid.'

Mt. 3:1-2	*Lk.* 3:1-2	*Jn.* 1:6-8 followed by 3:23
In those days John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness of Judea, proclaiming, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near".	In the fifteenth year of the reign of Emperor Tiberius, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and Herod was ruler of Galilee, and his brother Philip ruler of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias ruler of Abilene, during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness.	There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. * John also was baptizing at Aenon near Salim because water was abundant there; and people kept coming and were being baptized

Having interrupted the narrative for the information on John the Baptist, section 2, Eusebius returns to the main 'story line' of the prologue which, as we have seen he presents as the Johannine equivalent of the genealogies in *Mt.* and *Lk.* This set of related narratives is next interrupted by the fourth section of *Jn.* (1:11-3):

> He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

This is marked as belonging to the tenth canon table, and as such is an item that is found only in *Jn*. So this is part of the Johannine narrative but a point that is not made in either the accounts of *Mt.* or *Lk.* Here an item in *Jn.* is highlighted, but it is not one that could be used to harmonize with either of the genealogies and while it fills out the picture of Jesus theologically, it does not add to the text of any other gospel.

Eusebius having made the point about something unique in *Jn*., by identifying section 4 as belonging to canon 10, then resumes the narrative where we have (at least) two distinct perspectives in the canonical gospels: the genealogies in *Mt*. and *Lk*. and the christological hymn in *Jn*. The user of the apparatus is not expected to conflate these accounts but to see the list of forebears in *Mt*. and *Lk*. as a praise of the Christ, while understanding the passage in *Jn*. as relating to a divine providential plan running through the whole of human history (*Lk*.) and the history of Israel (*Mt*.). However, the most significant aspect of Eusebius may be his silence on the discrepancies between the two genealogies: they are simply assumed to be equivalent to one another while be equally equivalent to *Jn*. 1:1-14. The reader is expected to read all three, so differing, texts as a single message belonging to 'the one gospel' of Jesus.[7]

Example 2: *John* 4:46b-54

This example is chosen because it selects an item from the gospels in a way very similar to how we today would divide the text into stories – and so it allows Eusebius' work to be seen by contrast. These verses in *Jn*. are seen as a unit – as they are in modern synopses[8] – and to find their related sections through the third canon table, thus:

Mt. [section] 64 = *Lk*. [section] 65 = *Jn*. [section] 37

Which read:

Mt. 8:5-10	*Lk*. 7:1-9	*Jn*. 4:46-54 (only part of verse 46)[9]
When he entered Capernaum, a centurion came to him, appealing to him and saying, "Lord, my servant is lying at home paralyzed, in terrible distress". And he said to him, "I will come and cure him". The centurion	After Jesus had finished all his sayings in the hearing of the people, he entered Capernaum. A centurion there had a slave whom he valued highly, and who was ill and close to death. When he heard about Jesus, he sent some Jewish	Now there was a royal official whose son lay ill in Capernaum. When he heard that Jesus had come from Judea to Galilee, he went and begged him to come down and heal his son, for he was at the point of death. Then Jesus said

[7] See Martin Hengel, *The Four Gospels and the One Gospel of Jesus Christ* (London, 2000).

[8] See Albert Huck and Heinrich Greeven, *Synopse der drei ersten Evangelien* (Tübingen, 1981), 45-7 (which identifies the Johannine unit as 4:46-53); and Kurt Aland, *Synopsis Quattuor Evangeliorum* (Stuttgart, 1988), 113-6 (same sectioning as in Eusebius).

[9] Eusebius introduces his section exactly at the point that the pericope begins in modern synopses: '46b'.

answered, "Lord, I am not worthy to have you come under my roof; but only speak the word, and my servant will be healed. For I also am a man under authority, with soldiers under me; and I say to one, 'Go', and he goes, and to another, 'Come', and he comes, and to my slave, 'Do this', and the slave does it". When Jesus heard him, he was amazed and said to those who followed him, "Truly I tell you, in no one in Israel have I found such faith".	elders to him, asking him to come and heal his slave. When they came to Jesus, they appealed to him earnestly, saying, "He is worthy of having you do this for him, for he loves our people, and it is he who built our synagogue for us". And Jesus went with them, but when he was not far from the house, the centurion sent friends to say to him, "Lord, do not trouble yourself, for I am not worthy to have you come under my roof; therefore I did not presume to come to you. But only speak the word, and let my servant be healed. For I also am a man set under authority, with soldiers under me; and I say to one, 'Go', and he goes, and to another, 'Come', and he comes, and to my slave, 'Do this', and the slave does it". When Jesus heard this he was amazed at him, and turning to the crowd that followed him, he said, "I tell you, not even in Israel have I found such faith".	to him, "Unless you see signs and wonders you will not believe". The official said to him, "Sir, come down before my little boy dies". Jesus said to him, "Go; your son will live". The man believed the word that Jesus spoke to him and started on his way. As he was going down, his slaves met him and told him that his child was alive. So he asked them the hour when he began to recover, and they said to him, "Yesterday at one in the afternoon the fever left him". The father realized that this was the hour when Jesus had said to him, "Your son will live". So he himself believed, along with his whole household. Now this was the second sign that Jesus did after coming from Judea to Galilee.

This is a very good case of comparing sense units without any attention to the differences in detail. Read as such the similarities between *Jn.* and the other gospels is highlighted, and any divergences that might distract attention deriving from an overly literal reading or a desire to cross-examine the text for veracity are ignored. However, the more significant divergence about the movements of Jesus (*i.e.* this incident in *Jn.* takes place after a trip to Jerusalem, see *Jn.* 2:13) and so of the time-line of Jesus' ministry are also passed over by Eusebius' non-identification of 4:54 – which makes clear the direction of Jesus' travel – as an item unique to *Jn.* Since the apparatus, unlike the modern

synopsis, is not simply a paralleling of texts / narratives but of the message of the four evangelists, this failure to draw attention to a significant different between *Jn.* and the others serves to create an impression of their similarity at the expense of noting their differences.

Example 3: *John* 5:1-23

Jn. 5:1-18 forms as clearly a defined narrative unit in *Jn.* as any: it is the story of a healing in Jerusalem that becomes the basis for a debate about the Sabbath and the Son's authority on the Sabbath. Likewise, with the exception of the phrase 'Stand up, take your mat and walk', we would not see this miracle as having a parallel in the other gospels: we study the story of 'the healing of the paralytic' as a piece of the triple synoptic tradition, without reference to *Jn.*[10] Moreover, since the overall aim of Eusebius was to show that all four gospels proclaim one message, this is a good instance of his relating the four to each other.

Eusebius, because his method is fundamentally one of comparisons, *a definitione*, does not identify the unit of text as 5:1-18, nor the subsequent bundles of sayings on the Son's authority (5:19-30) but rather a body of text (5:1-23) which is then broken into two sections: 38 which is to be read using the first canon, and 39 which is identified as being found only in *Jn.* (*i.e.* canon 10). But it would appear that he saw 38 and 39 forming a narrative, before the saying moves on to another theme. That this sectioning led to rather strange delimitation of narrative units in the subsequent tradition cannot be blamed on Eusebius, but the mere fact of his sectioning where it occurs cannot but be seen as reflecting something that is happening *within the text* – and to that extent later readers cannot be said to be simply mistaken.[11] Eusebius believes that these sections are related

Mt. 70 = *Mk.* 20 = *Lk.* 37 = *Jn.* 38

and we would read them thus:

[10] See A. Huck and H. Greeven, *Synopse* (1981), 49-51; and although K. Aland, *Synopsis Quottuor* (1988), 124-5 does bring the same texts into comparison, this does not falsify the common judgement but merely shows that the rationale of this work is precisely to maximise the number of pericopes in which there are four texts in parallel.

[11] See Thomas O'Loughlin, 'Division systems for the gospels: the case of the Stowe St John (Dublin, R.I.A. D.ii.3)', *Scriptorium* 61 (2007), 150-64; and *id.*, 'The Biblical Text of the Book of Deer (C.U.L. Ii.6.32): Evidence for the Remains of a Division System from its Manuscript Ancestry', *Scriptorium* 63 (2009), 30-57.

Mt. 9:1-8	*Mk*. 2:1-12	*Lk*. 5:18-26	*Jn*. 5:1-10
And after getting into a boat he crossed the sea and came to his own town. And just then some people were carrying a paralyzed man lying on a bed. When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "Take heart, son; your sins are forgiven". Then some of the scribes said to themselves, "This man is blaspheming". But Jesus, perceiving their thoughts, said, "Why do you think evil in your hearts? For which is easier, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven', or to say, '*Stand up and walk*'? But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins" — he then said to the paralytic — "*Stand up, take your bed and go to your home*". And he stood up and went to his home. When the crowds saw it, they were	When he returned to Capernaum after some days, it was reported that he was at home. So many gathered around that there was no longer room for them, not even in front of the door; and he was speaking the word to them. Then some people came, bringing to him a paralyzed man, carried by four of them. And when they could not bring him to Jesus because of the crowd, they removed the roof above him; and after having dug through it, they let down the mat on which the paralytic lay. When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "Son, your sins are forgiven". Now some of the scribes were sitting there, questioning in their hearts, "Why does this fellow speak in this way? It is blasphemy! Who can	Just then some men came, carrying a paralyzed man on a bed. They were trying to bring him in and lay him before Jesus; but finding no way to bring him in because of the crowd, they went up on the roof and let him down with his bed through the tiles into the middle of the crowd in front of Jesus. When he saw their faith, he said, "Friend, your sins are forgiven you". Then the scribes and the Pharisees began to question, "Who is this who is speaking blasphemies? Who can forgive sins but God alone?" When Jesus perceived their questionings, he answered them, "Why do you raise such questions in your hearts? Which is easier, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven you', or to say, '*Stand up and*	After this there was a festival of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. Now in Jerusalem by the Sheep Gate there is a pool, called in Hebrew Bethzatha, which has five porticoes. In these lay many invalids – blind, lame, and paralyzed. [*Verse Omitted*].[12] One man was there who had been ill for thirty-eight years. When Jesus saw him lying there and knew that he had been there a long time, he said to him, "Do you want to be made well?" The sick man answered him, "Sir, I have no one to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up; and while I am making my way, someone else steps down ahead of me". Jesus said to him, "*Stand up, take your mat and walk*". At once the man was made

[12] I am omitting v. 4 – as do all modern editions of the New Testament – but this should not be seen as a comment on the text of *Jn*. used by Eusebius, simply that to include it would require a lengthy justification as would be a digression from the purpose of the this article.

filled with awe, and they glorified God, who had given such authority to human beings.	forgive sins but God alone?" At once Jesus perceived in his spirit that they were discussing these questions among themselves; and he said to them, "Why do you raise such questions in your hearts? Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven', or to say, '*Stand up and take your mat and walk*'? But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins" — he said to the paralytic — "I say to you, *stand up, take your mat and go to your home*". And he stood up, and immediately took the mat and went out before all of them; so that they were all amazed and glorified God, saying, "We have never seen anything like this!"	*walk*'? But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins" — he said to the one who was paralyzed — "I say to you, *stand up and take your bed and go to your home*". Immediately he stood up before them, took what he had been lying on, and went to his home, glorifying God. Amazement seized all of them, and they glorified God and were filled with awe, saying, "We have seen strange things today".	well, and he took up his mat and began to walk. Now that day was a sabbath. So the Jews said to the man who had been cured, "It is the sabbath; it is not lawful for you to carry your mat".

The Johannine narrative then continues for a further thirteen verses (5:11-23) which is identified by Eusebius as a section (39) without parallels.

What is significant is that here we have an even more pronounced case of 'ignoring the discordant details' than in previous example. The timing, location, *dramatis personae*, actual action of Jesus, and the theological reflection of what we find in *Jn.* is completely different to the others: yet on the basis of the

single more-or-less common element – the words of Jesus: 'Stand up, take your mat and walk' – Eusebius draws them together. While we might see this as no more than his desire to show that the four do proclaim one gospel, that is not a sufficient explanation since most of the sections (*i.e.* those listed in canon tables 2 to 10) do not have this quality. So why link the healing related in *Mt.*, *Mk.*, and *Lk.* (which would be an ideal candidate for Canon 2) with the historically distinct healing unique to *Jn.* (an ideal candidate for Canon 10)? The answer lies in Eusebius' Christology: these miracles are united in that the statement 'Stand up, take your mat and walk' is to be seen as a declaration of the Son's authority, and possibly also invoking a related theme in Eusebius of his highlighting the opposition between Jesus and the Jews. Thus what distinguishes Eusebius' agenda from that of today is not merely differing assumptions about the nature of the four texts and their inter-relationships, but that his work is fundamentally an act of theological exegesis. We do not end up with a mosaic of details – as we might expect from a textual diatessaron – but a theological mosaic such that the Jesus who heals in *Mt.*, *Mk.*, and *Lk.* is to be understood in the manner that he is portrayed in *Jn.* We do not end up with a single story of Jesus but with four differing stories, but with a single Christology.

Conclusion

This sample – inadequate though it be – allows us to see Eusebius the biblical exegete at work. While there are many cases of coincidence between his work and that of the modern synopses, it illustrates a fundamental difference. The rationale of modern works relating the gospels is a logic of sources – expressed in similar statements – intended to show textual interrelationships. For Eusebius, whether or not he believed in contact between the evangelists, source relationships are irrelevant: his concern is with the actual teaching of each as distinct narratives but with a common content, and it is this similarity at the level of teaching, literally their doctrinal similarity, that allows him to make connections where modern studies would find little commonality. The coincidence with modern research is illustrated in example 2, the difference between the approaches is seen in examples 1 and 3.

Eusebius' concern with doctrinal commonality brings before us another aspect of his work. While a glance at the history of exegesis shows that Christian memory builds up a single composite image of gospel scenes from the gospels, what is less obvious, but of more far reaching consequence for theology, is that his apparatus facilitates reading all four gospels against a common ecclesial theology: he preserved four narratives but they were to be read within a single theological, especially christological, framework – and that framework was, as a guide to reading the gospels, never explicit. The gospels as structured narratives could be used to interpret one another, passage by passage, and the apparatus

was acknowledged to aid this process by identifying related passages and allowing to be conveniently found. This has been acknowledged in recent scholarship by describing the apparatus as 'the world's first hot links'.[13] But the gospels were read together within a framework which was independent of them and whose underlying assumption was that each shared a common theology.[14] Since this common stance was more like a fifth gospel – beyond the four – than a diatessaron-like composite, it ensured that there would always be a gap between what was claimed as the teaching of the gospels and what could actually be found in any or all of them by textual analysis, and this gap is, arguable, as great a legacy of Eusebius to exegesis as the apparatus itself.

[13] The phrase comes from James O'Donnell and is cited by Anthony Grafton and Megan Williams, *Christianity and the Transformation of the Book: Origen, Eusebius, and the Library of Caesarea* (Cambridge MA, 2006), 199.

[14] This has been noted recently by Matthew R. Crawford who refers to 'the tables' – this should refer to the apparatus rather than the tables – as 'the Hermeneutical Key to a Canonical Reading of the Fourfold Gospel' in 'Ammonius of Alexandria, Eusebius of Caesarea and the Origins of Gospels Scholarship', *New Testament Studies* 61 (2015), 1-29, 26-8.

Exegesis and Hermeneutics in Eusebius of Caesarea's *Theophany* (Book IV): The Contemporary Fulfillment of Jesus' Prophecies

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This paper is dedicated to my four grandchildren (Hannah, Levi, Austin Michael, and Ava Grace) and two great-grandchildren (Alaya Maria and Emma Joy).

Abstract

The original Greek text of Eusebius' *Theophany* is lost, surviving only in 17 fragments. A Syriac translation of the work of the 5th century has preserved all five books. Samuel Lee published the first edition of the Syriac text in 1842. Hugo Gressmann's German translation (1904) published in Band III 2 of the *Die Griechischen Christlichen Schriftsteller* compared the Syriac translation of the *Theophany* with parallel Greek texts of Eusebian works and concluded that, on the whole, the Syriac translation is faithful to the original Greek. A number of scholars (Lightfoot [1880]; Gressmann [1904]; Quasten [1975]; Frede [1999]); and Kofsky [2002]) proposed that *Theoph*. IV was based on an earlier work devoted to the prophecies of Christ mentioned by Eusebius in the *PE* I 3. By offering a comparative philological study of the parallel Greek and Syriac passages of Book IV (12 of the 17 fragments come from this book, or 70.58%), this article analyzes Eusebius' exegetical and hermeneutical method in conjunction with the overarching soteriological argument developed around a number of sub-themes in which he attempts to prove the fulfillment of Christ's predictions in contemporary society. A thorough analysis of the exegetical method which Eusebius applies to the 166 scriptural citations found in Book IV may help the modern historian to better understand the venue and purpose of this last apology of the bishop of Caesarea.

Book Four of the *Theophany* of Eusebius of Caesarea contains 165 biblical citations[1] of which 16 or 9.7% derive from the Old Testament and 149 or

[1] See Index VII in Michael Bland Simmons, *Universal Salvation in Late Antiquity. Porphyry of Tyre and the Pagan-Christian Debate* (Oxford, 2015), 255-60; *id*., 'El Uso Soteriológico de ܟܠ̈ܗ̇ ,ܐ̈ܡ̈ܡ̈ܐ ,ܫ̈ܘ̈ܥ̈ܒ̈ܐ *SALVADOR UNIVERSAL* en la *Teofanía* de Eusebio de Caesarea', in A. Hernández, S. Villalonga and Patricia Ciner (eds), *Actas del Primer Congreso Internacional de Estudios Patrísticos* (San Juan, Argentina, 2014), 681-714; *id*., 'Time, History, and Eternity in the *Theophany* of Eusebius of Caesarea', in Pier F. Beatrice and Bernard Pouderon (eds), *Pascha nostrum Christus. Essays in Honour of Raniero Cantalamessa*, Théologie Historique (Paris, 2016), 137-73; *id*., 'Universalism in Eusebius of Caesarea: The Soteriological Use of ܟܠ̈ܗ̇ ,ܐ̈ܡ̈ܡ̈ܐ ,ܫ̈ܘ̈ܥ̈ܒ̈ܐ ,ܟ̈

90.3% from the New Testament.[2] In respect of the Old Testament, Eusebius gives 8 citations from *Psalms*, 4 from *Isaiah*, 2 from *Deuteronomy*, and one each from 1*Kings* and *Haggai*.[3] There are 99 citations from the *Gospel of Matthew* (60%), 21 from *Luke* (12.7%), 24 from *John* (15.1%), 2 from *Acts*, and one each from *Hebrews*, *Ephesians*, and 2*Thessalonians*. The total number of Gospel citations is 124 which represent 87.2% of all biblical citations in the book. From these data it becomes clear that Eusebius is leaning overwhelmingly upon New Testament passages for his apologetic argument in *Theophany* IV, rarely employing passages from the Old Testament. It would appear that by the time he wrote this part of the *Theophany*[4] the bishop of Caesarea *for some reason* had encountered a hermeneutical paradigm shift which caused him to abandon the conventional method that earlier apologists employed and he himself used in a number of his other works.[5] This conventional method can be

Book III of the Theophany', *SP* 66 (2013), 125-34; *id*., 'Universalism in the *Demonstratio evangelica* of Eusebius of Caesarea', *SP* 46 (2010), 319-24; *id*., '*Via universalis salutis animae liberandae*: The Pagan-Christian Debate on Universalism in the Later Roman Empire (A.D. 260-325)', *SP* 40 (2006), 245-51. The entire work is extant only in a Syriac translation (see following note). See also Aryeh Kofsky, *Eusebius of Caesarea Against Paganism* (Leiden and Boston, 2002), 279-80. Fragments cited herein from the *Contra Christianos* (*CC*) derive from A. von Harnack, '"Porphyrius, Gegen die Christen", 15 Bücher: Zeugnisse, Fragmente und Referate', *AKPAW* (1916).

[2] The original manuscript in *Estrangelo* is located in the British Library in the third of six works included in the ms. @ shelfmark Add.12150, according to the entry on pp. 631-33 of W. Wright's *Catalogue of Syriac Manuscripts in the British Museum*. The Greek fragments are found in Hugo Gressmann (ed.), *Eusebius Werke. Die Theophanie. Die Griechischen Bruchstücke und Übersetzung der Syrischen Überlieferung*, GCS 3.2 (Berlin, 1992), 3-35. The reverse of the 4th folio at the end of the Syriac ms. states it was written by a certain Jacob in Edessa and finished in February A.D. 411 (Lee [1843], xi-xii). The Syriac text was edited by Samuel Lee, *Eusebius Bishop of Caesarea, on The Theophania or Divine Manifestation of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. A Syriac Version, edited from an Ancient Manuscript recently discovered* (Cambridge, 1842). For the only English translation see *id*., *Eusebius Bishop of Caesarea on The Theophania or Divine Manifestation of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, Translated into English with notes, from an ancient Syriac Version of the Greek Original now Lost* (Cambridge, 1843). All English translations from the *Theophany* cited herein derive from the latter.

[3] M.B. Simmons, *Universal Salvation in Late Antiquity* (2015), 255-60: *Ps*. 2:8 (twice); 2:8b; 23:1 (twice); 72:7; 80:1; 118:22f.; *Is*.: 5:1f.; 5:7; 9:1-2; 28:16; *Dt*.: 18:15, 18f.; 32:8; 1*Kgs*.: 19:10; *Hag*.: 2:9.

[4] I date the work to c. A.D. 336-337 (see Simmons, 'El Uso Soteriológico' [2014]; *Universal Salvation* [2015]; and 'Time, History, and Eternity' [2016]) based on the composite chronological picture derived from the contents. The fact that exegetically there is a close relationship between the *Theophany* and the *De ecclesiastica theologia* and *Contra Marcellum* supports the late date. See Christopher A. Beeley, 'Eusebius' *Contra* Marcellum. Anti-Modalist Doctrine and Orthodox Christology', *ZAC* 12 (2009), 433-52, esp. 434 n. 6; 435; and 438 n. 26. Also, the statement in *SC* 17.12 undoubtedly precludes that the *Theoph*. was written before that work and the *LC* (see n. 24 below). The hypothesis of Eduard Schwartz, *Griechische Geschichtsschreiber* (Leipzig, 1957), 586-8, that Eusebius issued two editions of the *Theophany*, one about Christ's first historical θεοφανεία, and the second concerning the παρουσία, has been successfully refuted by Alice Whealey, 'The Greek Fragments attributed to Eusebius of Caesarea's *Theophania*', *VC* 69 (2015), 18-29.

[5] I do not mean to say that this conventional method is not used in other books of the *Theophany*.

described as a Christian apologist arguing that Old Testament prophecy x has either been fulfilled or is being fulfilled in event y, which of course proves the truth of Christian doctrine.[6] But in *Theophany* IV Eusebius switches his exegetical gears by proving to his audience indisputably that Christ was divine and bases his argument on a different hermeneutical method, namely, that Christ's prophecy x derived from the canonical gospels has been fulfilled or is being fulfilled *now in the present time* in contemporary event y which, in turn, confirms that the prophecy is true. In light of this intriguing hermeneutic, this article will attempt to accomplish three goals. First, I shall analyze hermeneutical methods found in a swath containing representative works from the Eusebian corpus. Second, I shall investigate the hermeneutical method found in Book IV of the *Theophany* and compare it with the swath.

And finally, in the conclusions to this article I shall offer some possible reasons that led Eusebius to use this method in the *Theophany*.

The swath from the Eusebian corpus

The swath contains representative hermeneutical methods from selected works of the Eusebian corpus (*HE*, *PE*, *DE*, *SC*, *LC*, and *VC*) which, when compared with *Theophany* IV, may shed light on how and why Eusebius interpreted prophetic texts in the gospels in light of contemporary events.[7] In the *Historia ecclesiastica* Eusebius rarely cites a fulfilment text from Christ's prophecies, and when he does, it is not applied to contemporary events.[8] A vast majority of the prophetic texts cited in the work derive from the Old Testament. For example, Valerian and his sons fulfilled *Is*. 66:3-4 and *Ex*. 20:5 where God said he would visit the sins of the fathers upon the children to the 3rd and

[6] The following works are invaluable for the background to Early Christian hermeneutics: Lewis Ayres, 'Irenaeus vs. the Valentinians: Toward a Rethinking of Patristic Exegetical Origins', *JECS* 23 (2015), 153-87; Peter W. Martens, 'Revisiting the Allegory/Typology Distinction: The Case of Origen', *JECS* 16 (2008), 283-317; David Dawson, *Christian Figural Reading and the Fashioning of Identity* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 2002); Michael J. Hollerich, *Eusebius of Caesarea's Commentary on Isaiah* (Oxford, 1999); Frances M. Young, *Biblical Exgesis and the Formation of Christian Culture* (Cambridge, 1997); Christoph Schäublin, 'Homerum ex Homero', *Museum Helveticum* 34 (1977), 222-7; George Kennedy, *The Art of Rhetoric in the Roman World* (Princeton, 1972); A.J. Bellinzoni, *The Sayings of Jesus in the Writings of Justin Martyr* (Leiden, 1967); Jean Sirinelli, *Les vues historiques d'Eusèbe de Césarée durant la période prénicéenne* (Dakar, 1961).

[7] On the *Commentary on Isaiah* which follows similar hermeneutical principles to those of the swath, see the very fine book by M.J. Hollerich, *Eusebius of Caesarea's Commentary on Isaiah* (1999).

[8] *HE* 3.7.1-3, citing *Luke* 19:42ff. and 21:23-4 to show that Christ's foreknowledge (τὴν πρόγνωσιν) of the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 was truly divine; see *HE* 5.1.15-6, applying *Jn*. 16:2 to the persecution under M. Aurelius.

4th generation (*HE* 7.10.7f). God's punishment of the Church's laxity by allowing the persecution fulfilled *Lam.* 2:1 and several *Ps.* (89:40; 39-45). At *HE* 9.9.5-9 the comparison of Constantine to Moses is based on *Ex.* 14:31; 15:1-2 and 15:10, but this falls short of fulfilment texts. Finally, the speech in Book 10 contains many fulfilment texts mainly from *Isaiah* and the *Psalms* which the bishop hermeneutically organizes around the themes of persecution, divine punishment, and the rebuilt church at Tyre.[9] The *PE* follows the same hermeneutical pattern. Most fulfilment scriptures derive from the Old Testament, and Eusebius employs the conventional apologetic method noted earlier. Hence Christ's advent, his preaching of the Gospel of the Kingdom, the apostasy of the Jews, and the call of the Gentiles were all foretold by the Hebrew prophets.[10] And though we find several contemporary fulfilment texts in the work,[11] it is again very rare that a prophecy of Christ is ever cited.[12]

In the Preface to the *DE* Eusebius claims that he will present the proof of the gospel from the prophecies which the Hebrews predicted about events which occurred long after their time and 'the things which in our own day are being fulfilled by the Holy Spirit before our very eyes'.[13] Later he divides prophecies about Christ into two classes, *viz.*, those fulfilled at his first Epiphany and those more glorious and divine which even now await his second coming to be fulfilled.[14] Though God gave the Hebrew prophets knowledge of the future to contribute to the progress of civilization,[15] it was Christ who broke the prophetic seal and explained the meaning of the Holy Scriptures.[16] Eusebius exegetes O.T. prophecies about Christ throughout the *DE* but rarely addresses prophecies in the N.T. spoken *by* Christ. Contemporary fulfilment texts are thus

[9] *E.g.*, 10.1.5-7 (*Ps.* 46:8f.; 37:35f.); 10.4.6 (*Ps.* 86:12; 48:8; 87:3; 122:1; 26:8); 10.4.8-9 (*Job* 38:15; *Ps.* 98:1; 136:4, 17-8, 23-4); 10.4.29f. (*Ps.* 37:14-5; 9:6; 18:41; 20:8; 78:20); 10.4.31-2 and 10.4.36 (*Is.* 35:1-4); 10.4.36 (*Hag.* 2.9 [see 10.4.45]); 10.4.47ff. (*Is.* 35:1; 61:10-1; 54:4, 6ff.); 10.4.50 *(Is.* 51:17-8, 18, 22-3; *Is.* 52:1-2; Is. 49:18-21); 10.4.61-2 (*Is.* 54:11-4).

[10] *E.g.*, *PE* 1.1 (*Ps.* 22:28-9; 96:10; *Zeph.* 2:11); 1.2; 1.3 (*Jer.* 16:19); 1.4; 4.21 (*Is.* 61:1; 42:7); 6.11 (1*Kgs.* 12:32; *Is.* 14:1; *Dn.* 2:39 and 8:5). It is worth noting that at 1.3 Eusebius refers to a work on the fulfilment of Christ's prophecies. This might have been a source for the *PE.*

[11] *E.g.*, *PE* 1.1 (*Ps.* 96:10; 22:28-9; *Is.* 57:19; *Zeph.* 2.11): the prophecies laid up long ago now have shone forth through Christ's teaching; *PE* 1.4 (*Ps.* 72:7; *Is.* 2:4): Christ's advent coincided with the *Pax Augusta*; *PE* 7.8 (*Gen.* 12:2; 17:5; 18:18): all nations are blessed in Abraham; *PE* 8.1 (a general reference to the Roman Empire).

[12] *PE* 1.3, citing *Matth.* 16:18: Christ's prediction that the gates of hell would not prevail against his Church.

[13] *DE* 1. *Praef.*

[14] *DE* 4.16; see 9:17: μυρίας δ'οὖν τοιαύτας καὶ ἄλλας περὶ τοῦ Χριστοῦ προφητείας συναγαγών, παραθείς τε καὶ συγκρούσας τὰ διαφόρως σημαινόμενα, ἐναργέστατα καταλήφῃ τίνας μὲν τῆς πρώτης αὐτοῦ παρουσίας δηλώματα περιεχούσας, πεπληρωμένας κατὰ τὴν πρώτην ἐπιφάνειαν αὐτοῦ, τινὰς δὲ εἰς τὴν δευτέραν αὐτοῦ καὶ ἔνδοξον ἄφιξιν ἀναφερομένας.

[15] *DE* 5. *Praef.*

[16] *DE* 8.2.

taken predominantly from the O.T., follow conventional apologetic themes,[17] and when N.T. texts are cited, they are often used to verify O.T. prophecies.[18] It is thus very rare in the *DE* that Christ's prophecies are applied to contemporary events.[19] He rarely cites or alludes to scripture in *De laudibus Constantini*, and there are no prophecies of Christ applied to contemporary events.[20] Following the same hermeneutical pattern, *De sepulchro Christi* contains O.T. texts which are interpreted in association with the life and ministry of Christ.[21] There

[17] *E.g.*, the call of the Gentiles: 1.2 *Gen.* 12:1); 1.6 (*Is.* 19:19-22); 2.1 (*Gen.* 18:27); 2.3 (*Is.* 11:1); 3.2 (*Gen.* 49:10); 4.16 (*e.g.*, *Ps.* 2:1-2, 7-8; 109:3; 1*Sm.* 2:31, 35); 5.2 (*Is.* 61:1); 5.3 (*Ps.* 109:1-5); 5.26 (*Zech.* 2:10-1); 5.30 (*Jer.* 16:19-21); 6.1 (*Ps.* 17:9ff.); 6.2 (*Ps.* 23:7; 46:1-9); 6.3 (*Ps.* 49:1-14); 6.5 (*Ps.* 95:1-13); 6.7 (*Ps.* 107); 6.18 (*Zech.* 14:1-10; *Is.* 5:1; *Jer.* 11:16; *Ez.* 11:22); 9.6 (*Is.* 35:3-6); 9.8 (*Is.* 9:3); 9.15 (*Is.* 42:1-7); 9.17 (*Zech.* 9:9-10); 10.8 (*Ps.* 22); Christ was foretold by the Pre-Mosaic prophets: 1.7 (*Is.* 28:16); Christ is the prophet predicted by Moses (*Dt.* 18:15): 1.3; Christ's suffering: 1.10 (*e.g.*, *Is.* 53:7; 53:4-9; *Jer.* 11:19; *Mal.* 1:11); Melchizedek priesthood: 5.3 (*Gen.* 14:18; *Heb.* 7:21); vanquishing of demons: 5.5 (*Ps.* 2, 30, and 148); the Ascension: 6.9 (*Ps.* 143:3, 5, 9); Christ the King from David's seed: 6.10 (1*Kgs.* 8:26-7; 2*Sam.* 7:12; *Ps.* 88:27); 7.1 (*Ps.* 89:25, 35); 7.3 (1*Chron.* 17:11ff.; *Ps.* 88:26); birthplace of the Messiah: 6.13 (*Mic.* 5:2); healings of Christ: 6.21 (*Is.* 35:1-7); Virgin Birth and Emmanuel predicted: 7.1 (*Is.* 7:9-15); punishment of the persecutors: 2.3 (*Mic.* 5:7); and of the Jews: 1.7 (*Dt.* 18:19); 2.3 (*Zeph.* 14:1-2; *Is.* 6:10); 4.16 (*Am.* 4:12-5:2); 5.23 (*Am.* 4:11); 6.13 (*Mic.* 1:2-5); 6.13 (*Mic.* 1:5-6, 12, 15; 3:12); 9.16 (*Is.* 6:1, 8-10).

[18] *E.g.*, *DE* 1.6: *Matth.* 28:19 (the Great Commission) fulfills *Zeph.* 2:11 and *Jer.* 31:31; 1.7: Christ fulfilled the Law and Prophets (*Matth.* 5:28; *Jn.* 4:21, 24) fulfills *Dt.* 18:15; 3.1: *Luke* 4:21 ('This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears') fulfills *Is.* 61:1; 4.18: the Gospel went forth from Jerusalem (*Jn.* 4:10, 7:37) fulfills *Zech.* 14:1-10; 6.8: Christ entering Jerusalem (*Jn.* 5:43) fulfills *Ps.* 117:1 and 118:25; 6.13: the devil takes Christ to a mountain (*Matth.* 4:8) fulfills *Mic.* 1:2-5; 6.13: *Luke* 12:49 fulfills *Mic.* 1:2-5; 6.25: *Luke* 12:49 fulfills *Is.* 66:15-6; 7.1: *Luke* 21:24 fulfills *Is.* 7:18-25; 8.2: *Matth.* 23:38 fulfills *Dtn.* 9:20-9; 9.13: Jesus heals the paralytic (*Mk.* 2:1-12) fulfills *Is.* 35:3 and shows his divine power is effective in the world today.

[19] *E.g.*, *DE* 1.6: Jesus' prediction that God would be worshipped in spirit and truth fulfills *Zeph.* 2:11. This has become the possession of all nations; 3.7: Jesus accurately predicted the future in *Matth.* 24:14 (gospel preached to all nations for a witness); 6.20: dissension within families due to the gospel (*Matth.* 10:21, 34; *Luke* 11:51) with a reference to *Is.* 19:1-4; 8.2: the Abomination of Desolation (*Matth.* 24:15; *Luke* 21:20) of the Temple in Jerusalem remains even today; 10.7: Jesus' prediction to the Samaritan woman about living waters (*Jn.* 4:10) with reference to *Zech.* 14:5-9 has been fulfilled in Christianity's encircling the earth.

[20] *LC* 1.1 alludes to *Is.* 66:1; 3.2 cites *Dtn.* 7:18 which Eus. interprets as being fulfilled in Constantine's appointment of the Caesars; 3.6 gives divine titles which according to Harold Drake, *In Praise of Constantine* (Berkleley and Los Angeles, 1975), 160 n. 17, allude to *Dtn.* 8:11; *Josh.* 5:14; 1*Macc.* 13:42; *Heb.* 1:30; and *Is.* 9:5; 6.20 alludes to *Mal.* 4:2 which Eus. connects with the Divine Logos as the Sun of Justice; and the mention of the 'armor of piety' (εὐσεβείας θώρακι) echoes *Eph.* 6:14 (τὸν θώρακα τῆς δικαιοσύνης); 6.21 appears to allude to 1*Cor.* 2:9 (see *Is.* 64:4).

[21] *SC* 11.5 cites a number of passages (*Ez.* 18:23; *Matth.* 9:12-3, 11:28) associated with Constantine's zeal for Christ, but these fall short of fulfilment texts. *SC* 15.12 cites *Jn.* 1:29 ('Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world') as fulfilling *Is.* 53:4-7. *SC* 16.7 ande 17.12 develop the theme of the Advent of Christ which coincided with the coming of the *Pax Augusta*, citing *Ps.* 71 (72):7, 8; and *Is.* 2:4. *SC* 17.7 generally refers to the prophets who foretold Christ's place of birth, the time of his Advent, and the nature of his life and ministry.

are only three contemporary fulfilment texts derived from Christ's prophecies: the Great Commission, the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem and the establishment of a universal Church, and making the disciples fishers of men.[22] All three relate to the overarching theme of universalism[23] and connect with 'examples of our Saviour's divine power that are evident from effects still visible…'[24] The final work in our swath, the *Vita Constantini*, presents an intriguing hermeneutical method by which Eusebius reads primarily Old Testament fulfilment texts in light of Constantine's Christianization of the Roman Empire and uses scripture to provide a typological framework to compare the events of his reign to Moses and the Exodus.[25]

Theophany IV: Contemporary fulfillment of Christ's prophecies

At the beginning of *Theophany*, Book IV, Eusebius states, 'we should hear from the Universal Saviour Himself' (ܦܘܩܕܢܐ ܟܠܝܐ ܡܫܝܚܐ)[26] who has given many proofs of the power of His Godhead (ܒܗ̈ܝܠ ܘܣܝܡ̈ܐ ܕܐܠܗ̈ܘܬܗ) when He made His divine Theophany among men (ܒܣܗ ܐܬܝܗ ܘܚܙܐ ܥܡ ܒܢܝ ܐܢܫ) from the foreknowledge

[22] *SC* 16-8 addresses the proofs of Christ's divinity, and 17.1 introduces the accomplishments of 'our Saviour in our day'. Great Commission (*Matth.* 28:19; see *Matth.* 24:14): *SC* 16.8; impious Jews and the Universal Church (*Matth.* 23:38; *Matth.* 24:2; *Matth.* 16:18: *SC*): *SC* 17.8; fishers of men (*Matth.* 4.19): *SC* 17.9. The allusion to *Mk.* 13:9 in *SC* 17.10 which includes Christ's prophecy about the disciples' undergoing punishments is not connected with the persecutions of Eusebius' day (as in the *Theoph.*) and thus should not be categorized as contemporary fulfilment.

[23] By this term is meant the offer of the gift of salvation through Christ to all people and not the doctrine that all souls ultimately will live in eternity with God. See now M.B. Simmons, *Universal Salvation in Late Antiquity* (2015).

[24] *SC* 17.12. The statement of Eus. in this text that he has not, up to the time of writing the *SC*, compiled all the examples of such 'visible effects' (= 'contemporary fulfilment texts') precludes its composition *after* the *Theophany* which is the conventional dating of these works.

[25] See Averil Cameron and Stuart G. Hall, *Eusebius. Life of Constantine* (Oxford, repr. 2010), 36, commenting on *VC* 1.39.1: 'The whole of Constantine's life as ruler of God's people is now to be read in terms of the figure of Moses'. See *VC* 1.3.4 (Constantine fulfills ancient oracles); 1.12; 1.19.1; 1.20.2; 1.27.1; 1.28-32 (compared to Moses [*Ex.* 3:1-6]); 1.29.1 (Constantine's cross-trophy compared with the Ark [*Ex.* 25-8]); 1.38.1-5 (more comparisons with Moses: *Ex.* 15:4-5, 10f.; *Ps.* 7:16-7); see also 1.39.1; 1.46.1; 1.47.2; 2.4.2; 2.11.2 (*Ex.* 9:12); 2.12.1-2 (*Ex.* 33:7-11); 3.3.2-3 (serpent represents Licinius [*Is.* 27:1]; 3.8 (Council of Nicaea fulfills *Acts* 2:1-13); 3.15 (a comparison of Constantine's *vicennalia* banquet and Christ's kingdom); 3.53.3-4 (Church at Mamre fulfills God's promise to Abraham in *Gen.* 18:1-20); 3.29.1 (Constantine possessed with prophetic gifts); 3.33.1 (Holy Sepulchre Church compared with the New Jerusalem of *Rev.* 3:12 and 21:2); 3.43.2 (Helena's visit to the East follows the prophetic word of *Ps.* 131(132):7; 3.63.2 (the suppression of sects is prophetically connected with *Matth.* 7:15-6).

[26] For a thorough analysis of how this term (*Universal Saviour*) functions soteriologically in the *Theophany* see now M.B. Simmons, 'El Uso Soteriológico de ܦܘܩܕܢܐ ܟܠܝܐ ܡܫܝܚܐ, *SALVADOR UNIVERSAL* en la *Teofanía* de Eusebio de Caesarea' (2014).

of things to come which he predicted (ܐܬܝ ܡܢ ܕܥܬܝܕ ܗܘ ܡܫܪ ܒܟܠܗ ܡܕܡ ܕܐܬܝ ܗܘ), the fulfilment of which 'is now before our eyes' (ܗܘ ܠܥܝܢ ܚܙܘܬ ܕܟܠ ܥܡܐ ܕܗܫܐ ܗܘ), no small proof of His deity (ܐܠܗܘܬܗ).[27] He then adds that Christ foretold by His divine foreknowledge (ܒܝܕܥܬܗ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ ܕܩܕܡ) of the future the things that had not yet existed which have now been fulfilled, 'and are in (these) our times seen by us, even to this very day'.[28] Throughout the Book he exegetes contemporary fulfilment texts of Christ's prophecies from the gospels according to six sub-themes to prove the deity of Christ. The first one contains prophecies about the Jews' rejection of the Gospel and its universal dissemination. The principle text cited is *Matth*. 8:7-13, the faith of the Centurion, accentuating Christ's statement that many would come from the East and the West and sit with Abraham, but the children of the kingdom would be cast into outer darkness.[29] Eusebius claims to be an eye-witness of the latter,[30] and the many churches now flourishing in the East (Persia and India)[31] and the West (Spain, Gaul, the Moors, Africa, Britain) provide evidence for the contemporary fulfilment of the former.[32] To reinforce his argument, a number of supplementary proof texts are then cited, including *Matth.* 4:19 ('You shall be fishers of men'),[33] *Matth*. 5:14-16 ('You are the light of the world),[34] and *Matth*. 28:18ff. (the Great Commission),[35] which are being fulfilled 'even to this time'[36] in the myriad of churches in the world.[37] The fact that Christ foretold future events before they happened as if he were present to them and each prediction has been fulfilled, prove his deity.[38]

[27] *Theoph*. 4.1. There are only 17 fragments from the original Greek text (Gressmann, *Eusebius Werke* [1992]: 3-35). When appropriate I sometimes compare Gk. and Syr. terms in the following analysis.

[28] *Ibid*. .ܕܥܒܕ ܟܠ ܗܢ ܕܚܙܐ ܒܥ ܡܫܟ

[29] *Ibid*. 4.2.

[30] *Ibid*. 4.3, *i.e*., the Jews remain now in subjection to those who destroyed their Temple.

[31] *Ibid*. 4.4: revealing increasing numbers of conversions to Christ from the professional and ruling classes of the empire taking place at the time of writing.

[32] *Ibid*. 4.5: citing *Luke* 13:28-9 as a supplementary proof text.

[33] *Ibid*. 4.6: the 'whole night' in which Peter fished unsuccessfully is metaphorically interpreted as Moses and the Prophets who preceded the divine manifestation of Christ. The net in the text is the gospel and the great draught is the universal dissemination of Christianity.

[34] *Ibid*. 4.7: hermeneutically associated with *Is*. 9:1-2; *Jn*. 1:9; 8:12; and *Matth*. 10:27-8. In 4.7 Eus. says Simon Peter is now known throughout the world because of his church and tomb in Rome; Paul's sepulcher is in the same city, and John's is found in Ephesus.

[35] *Ibid*. 4.8.

[36] *Ibid*.

[37] Other proof texts in this section: *Theoph*. 4.9: *Luke* 24:44-8 (Emmaeus Road prophecy) being fulfilled 'even up to this time' (εἰσέτι καὶ νῦν: ܥܕ ܗܫܐ ܗܢ); *Theoph*. 4.10: *Matth*. 26:13 (woman with the alabaster box); *Theoph*. 4.11: *Matth*. 16:15-6 ('Upon this rock I will build my Church'), 'we perceive with our own eyes'; and *Theoph*. 4.12: *Matth*. 10:34ff. ('Do not think I have come to bring preace'), taking place 'even up to this time' and is 'visible to the eyes' (ܡܬܚܙܐ ܠܥܝܢ).

[38] *Theoph*. 4.12, on the fulfilment of the prediction: ܠܐ ܠܐ ܡܫܝܚܐ ܕܐܬܐ ܗܘ ܕܟܕ ܐܡܪ. It should be noted that the Christology of the *Theophany* is perfectly compatible with Nicene Orthodoxy

The next set analyses Jesus' predictions concerning the divine punishment of the Jews, in which Eusebius initially exegetes the Parables of the Vineyard and the Wedding Banquet[39] and argues that in the former Christ had foreknowledge of future things not found in *Isaiah*'s parable,[40] interweaving other fulfilment texts including *Matth.* 21:42 ('The stone that the builders rejected')[41] to prove that God has given his vineyard to another people (the Church) which bears fruit. And as noted earlier, there follow more proof texts to prove his point.[42] Christ's prophecies about global evangelization represent the third set with two main texts: Christ the Good Shepherd and the statement which Eusebius interprets prophetically concerning the grain of wheat dying in order to give life, an obvious reference to the Resurrection.[43] The same hermeneutical pattern follows: Eusebius cites numerous proof texts to reinforce his argument on the contemporary fulfilment of Christ's prophecies.[44] The fourth sub-theme addresses Christ's predictions about the persecution of Christians. After a brief reference to *Jn.* 13:33 which is applied prophetically to the martyrdom of Simon Peter,[45] his principle texts are *Matth.* 10:17-8 (and 5:11-2) and *Matth.* 10:21-2, in which Jesus predicts the persecutions of his followers and that they will be hated by all nations for his sake.[46] Many such things, he concludes, 'took place, both during the persecutions, and in our own times' (ܗܘ̈ܢ ܕܒܙܒܢܢ).[47] He ends with a

articulated in other works of Eusebius which represent counter-arguments to 'excessive Arian subordinationism and Marcellan modalism' as noted by Davin Singh, 'Eusebius as Political Theologian: The Legend Continues', *HTR* 108 (2015), 129-54, 131. See also Christopher A. Beeley, *The Unity of Christ: Continuity and Conflict in Patristic Tradition* (New Haven, 2012), 48-104.

[39] *Ibid.* 4.13-4.

[40] *Is.* 5:1-2 and 7, *e*.g., the husbandmen (= the Jewish Elders and Chief Priests); the tower (= the Temple); the wine-press (= the Altar); the servants (= the prophets); the Son (= Christ).

[41] *Theoph.* 4.13-4: *Matth.* 21:11; *Is.* 28:16; *Matth.* 2:43; 1*Kgs.* 19:10-4.

[42] *Ibid.* 4.15: Jewish leaders fear the people (*Matth.* 21:45-6); 4.16: Parable of the Marriage Feast (*Matth.* 22:1-10), in which Christ points out *covertly* (ܒܣܬܪ̈ܐ) that the Bridegroom = the Word of God, the Bride = the Rational Soul, *etc*.; 4.17: condemnation of the Pharisees (*Matth.* 23:33-6); 4.18: Christ the Word of God (ܡܠܬܐ ܐܠܗܝܬܐ) *prophesied* (ܐܡܪ) the destruction of the Temple by the Romans (*Matth.* 23:37ff. [*Luke* 13:34-5]; see 4.19 (*Luke* 19:41-4a, fulfilling *Ps.* 72:7); 4.20ff.: Jerusalem trampled upon by Gentiles (*Luke* 21:20-4, and citing Josephus for extra-biblical evidence); 4.23: the true worshippers of God (*Jn.* 4:19-20, 21, 23-4).

[43] *Theoph.* 4.24 (*Jn.* 10:14ff.): fulfilling the prediction that the Gentiles would be his flock; 4.25 (*Jn.* 12:23-4): Christ was the seed which sprang up after his Resurrection and filled the world with his power.

[44] *Ibid.* 4.24: *Jn.* 10:14ff. (Good Shepherd) fulfills *Ps.* 23:1; 80:1; *Jn.* 10:16 ('I have other sheep') fulfills *Ps.* 2:8; 4.25: *Jn.* 12:23-4 (grain of wheat dying) supplemented by *Luke* 15:32; *Matth.* 3:12; 9:37; *Jn.* 4:35.

[45] *Ibid.* 4.25-6, also citing *Jn.* 13:36 and 21:18-9.

[46] *Ibid.* 4.27-8 Eus. argues that these prophecies have contemporary fulfillment and prove that they are the words of God. On the other hand, Porphyry, *Phil. orac.* 331F (Smith [Eus., *PE* VI.1.1] believed the gods spoke with knowledge of things determined by fate and their prophecies thus derive from the course of the stars.

[47] *Ibid.* 4.28: 'The brother shall deliver the brother to death' (*Matth.* 10:21-2).

[48] *Ibid.* 4.29 (*Matth.* 13:47-50).

metaphorical interpretation of the Parable of the Net: the net is Christ's doctrine; the sea is the fluctuating life of man; the fish are good and bad souls; and the separation after the catch represents the *Eschaton*.[48]

Jesus' predictions about false prophets make up the fifth contemporary fulfilment group. Eusebius first skillfully analyzes the *locus classicus* (*Matth*. 7:15ff.) in which Christ forewarns his disciples about wolves in sheep's clothing,[49] which is immediately followed by the prediction that they would be falsely accused of being demonized and practicing magic.[50] He refutes these accusations by referring to the many disciples who have kept themselves in perfect holiness and the state of virginity, thus fulfilling Christ's prophecy.[51] Such foreknowledge proves 'that his word was in truth the word of God.'[52] The section ends with supplemental contemporary fulfilment texts.[53] The final sub-theme relates to prophecies about false Christs in the Olivet Discourse[54] in which Christ predicts: 'See that no man deceive you: for many shall come in my name, and shall say, I am Christ; and shall deceive many'.[55] He adds to this prophecy *Jn*. 5:43 ('if another come in his own name, him you will receive') which forewarns about the lying Antichrist[56] who will come in the future, but the 'many' in the Olivet prophecy indicates that 'others also should be before this' which is confirmed by the appearance of deceivers since Christ's Resurrection.[57] The section ends with references to events that will happen before the *Eschaton* (war, famines, pestilences, persecutions)[58] customarily stressing the

[49] *Ibid*. 4.30, mentioning Marcion, Valentinus, Basilides, Bardesanes, and the 'madman … of our own times' who created the Manichaean heresy. Noteworthy here is the absence of Arius. Valentinus, Marcion, and Montanus of Phrygia are also mentioned in a law of Constantine (*VC* III 64-5); A. Cameron and S. Hall, *Eusebius. Life of Constantine* (2010), (1999), 306ff.; T.D. Barnes, *Constanine and Eusebius* (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1981), 224; Oyvind Orderval, 'Kaiser Konstantins Edikt gegen die Heretiker und Schismatiker', *Symbolae Osloenses* 70 (1995), 95-115.

[50] *Ibid*. 4.31 (*Matth*. 10:24-6). There is no mention in this text that the disciples would be accused of practicing magic. Since this was an accusation of Porphyry, its inclusion here is polemically logical. See (*e.g*.) *Phil. orac*. 344cF (Smith [Aug., *Civ. Dei* XXII 25.1-15]).

[51] *Ibid*. 4.32 (*Matth*. 19:10-2). This is the statement that some make themselves eunuchs for God. Interestingly Eus. claims to have known many who 'availed themselves to the iron'.

[52] *Ibid*.

[53] *Ibid*. 4.33: *Matth*. 13:3-9; 18-23 (Parable of the Sower); 4.34: *Matth*. 13:24-30 (Parable of the Tares), referring to heterodoxy (هجاس ,ةحد) in the Church. S. Lee, *Eusebius Bishop of Caesarea on The Theophania* (1843), 275 n. 4 is presumably right that the original Greek term was probably ἑτεροδοξία.

[54] *Ibid*. 4.35: *Matth*. 24:3-5 and 23-7.

[55] *Matth*. 24:5 (*Theoph*. 3.35).

[56] *Theoph*. 4.35: هذه سلك مخمسا حبجا.

[57] *Ibid*. The examples he gives in 4.35 are Doritheus who the Samaritans believed was the prophet predicted by Moses (*Dtn*. 18:15, 18-9); Simon Magus in the time of the Apostles; Montanus in Phrygia; and 'others' without naming them.

[58] *Matth*. 24:6-9, 10-4 (*Theoph*. 4.36).

[59] *Matth*. 24:14 (*Theoph*. 4.36).

preaching of the gospel to all nations, then the end will come.[59] Eusebius concludes by giving the meaning of all the prophecies of Christ addressed in the book which confirm the 'proofs of the divine manifestation of our Saviour' (ܗܕ̈ܐ ܕܐܝܟ ܐܬ̈ܝ ܘܐܝܟ ܐܬ̈ܝ ܕܐܠܗ̈ܝܘܬ̈ܐ ܕܡܘܢ ܦ̈ܪܘܩ̈ܐ) observing that 'in former times, the words were simply heard;' and adding:

but now, in our times, the fulfilment of these words is openly visible in deed, together with powers eclipsing those of all mortal nature.[60]

Conclusions

The *Theophany* was the *only* apology written by Eusebius after Constantine banned the *Contra Christianos* of Porphyry and after he issued a number of laws proscribing pagan practices which included the consultation of oracles.[61] Porphyry criticized biblical prophecies,[62] argued that Christianity was antisalvific,[63] the Bible lacked historical credibility,[64] and Christians were incapable of offering a logical demonstration of their faith.[65] He also argued that Christ, though a good man, was not divine;[66] and the apostles were ignorant rustics who taught something entirely different from their master.[67] His *De philosophia ex oraculis* used the oracles of the gods to uphold polytheistic culture and

[60] *Theoph.* 4.37: ܗܘ̈ܠܐ ܕܐܡ̈ܪ ܐ̈ܢ ܒ̈ܥܕܢ̈ܐ ܕ

contained some anti-Christian oracles as well.[68] The *Theophany* essentially contains a systematic refutation of these criticisms. Moreover, in Book IV Eusebius boldly claims that the oracle sites of the Greco-Roman world have now been silenced,[69] and the contemporary fulfilment of Christ's oracles at this time, I suggest, were strategically used by Eusebius to convince pagans of the deity of the Lord and the historical reliability of Christ's prophecies which, he hoped, would eventually lead to their conversion.[70] Mention should also be made that early in Book V he refers to the 'recent philosophers' (ܐܠܗ ܬ̈ܝ̈ܢ ܕ̈ܡ̈ܚ̈ܕ̈ܬ̈ܐ)[71] of the Greeks just before quoting from the *De philosophia ex oraculis*[72] and initiating an apologetic theme in which Christ is depicted as the divine philosopher[73] who came from heaven with his divine philosophy[74] which he taught to ignorant fishermen who, in turn, themselves became philosophers.[75] Books IV and V of the *Theophany* should therefore be read together as a counter-argument to Porphyry's narrative on pagan and Christian oracles.

However, the attempt to find the reason why Eusebius uses this hermeneutical method in Book IV of the *Theophany* should take us beyond his rebuttal of Porphyry's disparagement of Christ. In 1983 Averil Cameron wrote an excellent article about Eusebius' rethinking history, citing works written in the last years of his career but not including the *Theophany*.[76] I hope that this article might shed further light on her thesis. So I suggest that the greater motive for the hermeneutical method of *Theophany* IV is that the bishop is reading Christ's prophecies in conjunction with the new Christian interpretation of history brought about by the Constantinian Age, understood in the context of the Church's own recent existential struggles as Eusebius himself works through a scripture-based theology of Salvation History. Unprecedented contemporary events have revealed to him a profoundly prophetic meaning vis-à-vis the divine plan, purpose, and providence for humankind under the sovereignty of the Lord of time, history, and eternity.[77]

[68] See now M.B. Simmons, *Universal Salvation in Late Antiquity* (2015). It is noteworthy that *Phil. orac.* 322F (Smith [= Eus., *PE* V 15.6-16.1] expresses concern for the decline in Pythian oracles.

[69] *Theoph.* 2.76 and 87 (Delphi is silent); 3.13 (all oracle sites now silent).

[70] See note 30 above. *Theoph.* 4.4 (see *VC* 4.37-9) indicates consistent conversions of the professional classes to Christianity. For the background see Ramsay MacMullen, *Christianizing the Roman Empire A.D. 100-400* (New Haven and London, 1984); and Michelle R. Salzman, *The Making of a Christian Aristocracy* (Cambridge, MA, 2002).

[71] *Theoph.* 5.3. See also Arn., *Adv. nat.* 2.15 (*viri novi*) and Eus., *PE* 3.6.

[72] *Theoph.* 5.3.

[73] *Ibid.* 5.14.

[74] *Ibid.* 5.2, 8, 21, 48. He refers to this also at 4.4.

[75] *Ibid.* 5.18.

[76] Averil Cameron, 'Eusebius of Caesarea and the Re-Thinking of History', in E. Gabba (ed.), *Tria Corda: Scritti in onore dei Arnaldo Momigliano* (Como, 1983), 82-8.

[77] This theme (History, Time, and Eternity) in the *Theophany* is analyzed more thoroughly in M.B. Simmons, 'Time, History, and Eternity' (2016).

Should we Grieve and Be Afraid? Christ's Passions versus the Passions of the Soul in Athanasius of Alexandria

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Abstract

This article explores Christ's grief and fear in Athanasius' *Third Oration against the Arians*, comparing it with his wider treatment of grief and fear and situating the overall picture with reference to Origen. I proceed on the basis that Athanasius gives no account of Christ's soul and attributes suffering to Christ and, at least in some sense, to the Word. Athanasius does not invoke Christ's soul as the subject of Christ's suffering partly because Origen's account of Christ's soul implies too much mediation between God and the human body; also because, in Origen's Christology, Christ's soul is impassible, whereas Athanasius wants to attribute distressing emotions to Christ. This contrasts with *Contra Gentes*, where distressing emotions are depicted as sinful. Nonetheless, even in his Christology, Athanasius regards impassibility as an ethical ideal, because the Word takes on human passions in order to render human nature impassible. I conclude that Athanasius' anthropology is often more Origenian than his Christology, and that his Origenian picture of a sinless soul as impassible problematizes for him a doctrine of Christ's soul. Athanasius' attitude to grief and fear differs according to whether he is simply thinking about what is wrong with the world – as in the early anthropology of *Contra gentes* – or wondering how to heal it – as in his Christology. In the latter case, he emphasises the need for God to enter into our situation to rescue us, and therefore rejects both Origen's view of cosmological mediation and his picture of an impassible Christ.

Introduction

This article examines Christ's πάθη, and specifically his grief and fear in Athanasius in the context of Athanasius' engagement with Origen. Any question about Christ's πάθη in Athanasius rapidly encroaches on the thorny issue of Christ's soul; it is often asked why Athanasius does not invoke Christ's soul as the subject of Christ's πάθη.[1] This article is not intended to advance a novel

[1] For a still useful discussion of scholarship, see Christopher Stead, 'The Scriptures and the Soul of Christ in Athanasius', *Vigiliae Christianae* 36 (1982), 233-50. Other, and more recent, contributions to this conversation are discussed in what follows.

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thesis about the structure of Athanasius' Christology; I follow several earlier scholars in thinking that 1) in Athanasius, the Word undergoes human πάθη in the context of the incarnation;[2] 2) Athanasius does not give an account of Christ's human soul, at least before 362.[3]

Andrew Louth, among others, has rightly observed that Origen's ideas about Christ's human soul would not work for Athanasius partly because they suppose too much mediation between God and the human body.[4] Building on this, I will argue that Athanasius *also* rejects Origen's Christology because of Origen's picture of Christ's emotion, and attendant ideas about emotion generally. For Origen, Christ does not fully undergo distressing passion – he is not afraid or sad. This coheres with Origen's wider anthropology, in that, for Origen, fear and grief are sinful. Both with reference to cosmological mediation and with reference to the place of emotion in the moral life, aspects of Athanasius's *anthropology* are often more Origenian than his *Christology*. That is, when writing of human nature other than Christ's, Athanasius does imply mediation between the body and God, and does regard the elimination of πάθη or distressing emotions – ἀπάθεια – as a moral ideal.[5] I argue that this is partly because Athanasius has a different attitude when thinking about what is wrong with the world – that is, giving an account of the fall – than when thinking about what humanity needs from God – that is, giving an account of the incarnation. That is linked back to his rejection of mediation in Christology: Origen's cosmology might initially seem to work in explaining the gap between God and the world; it breaks down when Athanasius thinks about how this gap is best overcome. His own psychology therefore cannot support his Christology.

[2] See Andrew Louth, 'Athanasius' understanding of the humanity of Christ', *SP* 16 (1985), 309-18, 313; Khaled Anatolios, *Athanasius: The Coherence of his Thought* (London, 1998), 138-42.

[3] A. Louth, 'Athanasius' understanding' (1985). In the *Tomus ad Antiochenos* of 362, Athanasius claims that Christ did not have a σῶμα ἄψυχον (at chapter VII). This is rather ambiguous, as it could mean either soulless, or lifeless, though he does further stipulate that Christ's was not 'without sensation or reason'. For an argument that Athanasius does refer to Christ's soul, see Christopher Stead, 'The Scriptures and the Soul of Christ in Athanasius' (1982).

[4] A. Louth, 'Athanasius' understanding' (1985), 311.

[5] The term ἀπάθεια is ambiguous; most often, it refers to the removal of 'bad' emotions – distressing or immoderate ones, or some combination thereof – with the implication that some emotions are *not* bad. However it is sometimes interpreted as referring to the elimination of *all* emotion – with the implication that all emotion is bad (this interpretation is most common among those unsympathetic to its advocates). For instance, Augustine comments upon this ambiguity in *City of God*, ed. Bernhard Dombart and Alfons Kalb (Paris, 1960), xiv 9. I am here focusing on distressing emotions and use the term ἀπάθεια to refer to the absence of these. Consideration of how Athanasius and Origen respectively regard pleasant and potentially tranquil emotions, such as joy, is beyond this article's scope; suffice to note that neither author treats them as problematic in the same way as distressing emotions.

Πάθη in Athanasius' Christology

In the *Third Oration against the Arians*, Athanasius asserts the divinity and eternity of the Son, and the Son's intrinsic ontological connection with the Father, against a subordinationist perspective. Here, he specifically tackles pro-Arian exegesis of Christological passages. Passages that describe Christ suffering, particularly those to do with Christ's passion and death, are a key concern. About these, Athanasius writes:

> The properties of the body would not have been in the incorporeal, unless he had taken a corruptible and mortal body [σῶμα] … When he was in a body, suffering and lamenting [κλαίοντι] and toiling [κάμνοντι], these things which are proper to the flesh [σάρξ] are ascribed to [the Word] together with the body. If he lamented and was troubled, it was not the Word, considered as the Word, who did this; rather this was proper to the flesh. If he asked that the cup might pass away, it was not the Godhead that was afraid, but the human being [ἄνθρωπος].[6]

Athanasius is conscious that attributing suffering to the Word appears to subordinate the Word to the Father, and he does not want to do this. Consequently, he attributes Christ's grief and fear somewhat ambiguously to σῶμα, σάρξ, and ἄνθρωπος. However, he also says that the properties of the body are ascribed to *the Word in the body*, and writes of the Word toiling and suffering *in the body*. It seems to me clear that Athanasius does attribute suffering to the Word in the context of the incarnation (though this statement is not altogether uncontroversial).[7] How else are we to make sense of the claim that the Word takes on the body's properties in the incarnation?

This passage and others like it have been especially important to the discussion around Athanasius' silence about Christ's human soul.[8] A few scholars have argued that Athanasius means to include Christ's soul in his various references to Christ's body and Christ's flesh, and to 'the human being'.[9] Admittedly, the slippage between flesh, body and humanity, might indeed suggest this. Nonetheless, it must at the very least be acknowledged that Athanasius does not talk about Christ's human soul and there are good reasons to think

[6] *Athanasius Werke I.1.3. Contra Arianos* III, ed. Karin Metzler and Kyriakos Savvidis (Berlin, 2000), 56.2-4. I began to explore this passage in Sophie Cartwright, *The Theological Anthropology of Eustathius of Antioch* (Oxford, 2015), 113-4. This article develops some of the points made there.

[7] For an argument that Athanasius does not ascribe suffering to the Word, see Aloys Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition, volume 1: From the Apostolic Age to Chalcedon*, trans. John Bowden (London, 1965), 201. Relatedly, Richard Hanson describes Athanasius as having a 'Space-suit Christology' in which the Word acts through the body but is unaffected by the body's experiences: *The Search for the Christian Doctrine of God* (Edinburgh, 1988), 448.

[8] Brought to the fore by Marcel Richard, 'Saint Athanase et la psychologie du Christ selon les Ariens', *Mélanges de Science Religieuse* 4 (1947), 5-54. I draw on some of Richard's observations in this and the following paragraph.

[9] Thomas Weinandy, *Athanasius: A Theological Introduction* (Aldershot, 2007), 91.

that the omission is significant. Importantly, invoking Christ's soul would have offered a defence against divine passibility that still affirmed Christ's suffering: the anti-Arian Eustathius of Antioch, an acquaintance and ally of Athanasius, also tried to protect the Word from passions – and, partly for this reason, he attributed Christ's emotional distress to Christ's soul, rather than to the Word.[10] Furthermore, some of Athanasius' anti-Arian exegetical arguments are very close to Eustathius': pointedly, they both apply *Prov*. 8:22 'the Lord *created* me in the beginning of his ways' to Christ's *humanity* rather than his divinity.[11] Even here, Athanasius does not invoke Christ's soul.

Maurice Wiles objected to this framing of the discussion about Athanasius' Christology, arguing that Athanasius was from a generation that did not speak much about Christ's soul.[12] Perhaps it *is* Eustathius' focus on Christ's soul that is unusual. In any case, a wider lack of attention to Christ's soul in the early fourth century does not invalidate the question of why Athanasius does not explore it; rather, it suggests that the answer might shed light on Athanasius' wider intellectual context. The question of Christ's soul in Athanasius and, by extension, in his contemporaries, is partly a question about Origen's legacy. Origen gave a rich account of Christ's human soul;[13] Athanasius draws heavily on aspects of Origen's theology, including his anthropology, as we shall see – but this is not reflected in his Christology.

Let us return to Louth's argument that Athanasius rejects Origen's concept of Christ's soul partly because he does not want an intermediary between God and the human body. Origen certainly does want such an intermediary. In *On First Principles*, he writes: 'This substance of a soul … is intermediate between God and the flesh as it is impossible for God's nature to intermingle with a body'.[14] As has often been noted, the fourth century saw a wider collapse of Origen's cosmological mediation: Origen implies that, the Father, the Word, and the intelligible world were all eternal. In this framework, the Word acted unproblematically as a mediator between the Father and the soul.[15] In the fourth century, there is a renewed emphasis on the distinction between an eternal God and an order created in time. The soul then, cannot function as a rung in this hierarchy of

[10] See especially Eustathius of Antioch, *Contra Ariomanitas et de anima*, ed. José Declerck (Leuven, 2002), fragment 19a/b. Discussions of Eustathius' attitude to divine suffering in the incarnation can be found at R. Hanson, *The Search* (1988), 212-3; S. Cartwright, *Eustathius of Antioch* (2015), 59-62.

[11] *Athanasius Werke II.2. De Decretis*, ed. Hans-Georg Opitz (Berlin, 1935), 14; Eustathius, fragment 128.

[12] Maurice Wiles, 'The Nature of the Early Debate about Christ's human soul', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 16 (1965), 139-51, 146.

[13] Origen's writings contain numerous discussions of Christ's soul. Important amongst them is *De principiis*, ed. Paul Koetschau (Leipzig, 1913), II 6.

[14] Origen, *De principiis*, II 6.3.

[15] See for example Origen, *De principiis*, I 4.3-5; Rebecca Lyman, *Christology and Cosmology: Models of Divine Mediation in Origen, Eusebius, and Athanasius* (Oxford, 1993), 15-7.

mediation as it had before and, anyway, perhaps the relation between the corporeal and the incorporeal – which Origen partly addresses – is much less important because of the concern with the created-creator relationship.

There is another important respect in which Origen's account of Christ's soul does not fit with Athanasius' picture of Christ's suffering: for Origen, Christ achieved ἀπάθεια: he did not feel grief and fear. This belief is evident across different genres of Origen's work. For instance, in the speculative and imaginative account offered in *On First Principles*, Christ's soul achieved impassibility by clinging to the Word eternally, when all other souls fell.[16] Correspondingly, in his commentary on Matthew, exegeting passages that describe Christ's grief and fear, Origen argues that they do not describe full grief and fear, but only its beginnings.[17] This contrasts with Athanasius, who clearly attributes grief and fear to Christ in at least one *persona*.

Significantly, Origen argues that Christ did not undergo grief and fear of death *because* he does not want to impute sin to Christ:[18] he regards grief and fear of death as sinful. Presumably, Athanasius does not intend to impute sin to Christ either. This implies that Athanasius does not regard grief and fear as sinful.

Πάθη and the soul in Athanasius' anthropology

Though Athanasius finds room for distressing emotion in his Christology, he is much more circumspect about it in his anthropology. This is well illustrated by turning to his earlier work, *Contra gentes*. Here, Athanasius writes that, prior to the fall, the human soul 'clings to the divine and intelligible things in heaven by the power of the mind. For when the mind … has none of the body's desires mixed in with it … it rises above the perceptible things and all of human life, and seeing the Word, it sees the Word's Father in him'.[19] The soul then turned toward bodily senses, and accrued earthly desires which ultimately led to '*fears* and pleasures and thoughts of death'.[20] Pleasure led to fear, Athanasius claims, because, being attached to bodily pleasure, the soul began to fear being detached from the body. Pleasures also prompted murder and injustice in pursuit of them.[21]

This account sounds quite Origenian, cohering closely both with Origen's account of the fall and his wider treatment of distressing emotions.[22] Fears and thoughts of death look a lot like the last in a long line of sinful inclinations

[16] Origen, *De principiis*, II 6.3.

[17] Origen, *Origenes Werke 11: Commentary on Matthew*, 26.36-9, ed. Erich Klostermann (Berlin, 1976), 206-7.

[18] Margaret Graver, *Stoicism and Emotion* (Chicago, 2007), 106.

[19] Athanasius, *Contra gentes*, 2.20-6.

[20] *Ibid*. 3.28

[21] *Ibid*. 3.29-31.

[22] There are also parallels with pagan Neoplatonism; for example, see Plotinus, *Enneads*, ed. Paul Henry and Hans-Rudolph Schwyzer (Oxford, 1964-1982), iv 8.2-3.

here.[23] Also, if this is how the fall is interpreted, Origen's Christ, clinging eternally to the Logos, rather than falling away and ultimately undergoing sinful passions, seems well placed to reverse it.

Christ's πάθη as necessary for human ἀπάθεια

Athanasius does not abandon the ideal of ἀπάθεια in his Christology, because he *does* fairly consistently suggest that the Word incarnate *overcomes* human passibility, and can do so because he is immutable and impassible. However, Athanasius' Christ also *undergoes* passions in *order* to overcome them. For example, in the *First Oration against the Arians*, Athanasius writes that 'since "the first Adam" changed, "and through sin death entered the world", it fit the "second Adam" to be immutable'.[24] In *De incarnatione*, he says that the Word 'became human so that we might become divine'.[25] According to Athanasius, there is an exchange of divine and human properties in the incarnation (as Anatolios and Louth argue).[26]

When Athanasius' descriptions of Christ's suffering are seen in this light, it is evident that, even in his Christology Athanasius prizes ἀπάθεια. For him, as for Origen, human ἀπάθεια is one of the goals of the incarnation, achieved through the Word's impassibility. However, for Origen, this is achieved by the Word enabling Christ's human soul to be impassible; for Athanasius, Christ's humanity cannot be impassible until the Word has taken on human passions.

Even if one accepts that the purpose of Christ's passions is to eliminate human passions, the existence of Christ's grief and fear remains in tension with the notion that grief and fear are sinful. I want to suggest that this tension arises because Athanasius' somewhat Origenian anthropology does not support his Christology.

Athanasius' self-defeating Origenianism

So far, I have argued that Athanasius' psychology, especially in *Contra gentes*, bears a strong Origenian mark, and specifically in being dubious about emotional distress, but that his Christology and cosmology diverge from Origen: Origen believes that Christ's human soul did not undergo passions, and that it mediates between God and the body. Athanasius has no theology of Christ's

[23] The focus on fear but not grief initially seems significant as, from a Stoic point of view, grief is more problematic than any other distressing emotion, having no harmless equivalent (see Cicero, *Tusculan Disputations* IV 14). However, it is unsurprising that fear should be seen as a particularly problematic πάθος in a Christian text, given Christian preoccupation with martyrdom.

[24] Athanasius, *Contra Arianos* I, in *Athanasius Werke* I.i.2, ed. Karin Metzler and Kyriakos Savvidis (Berlin, 1998), 51.3.

[25] Athanasius, *De incarnatione*, ed. Robert Thompson (Oxford, 1971), 54.

[26] A. Louth, 'Athanasius' understanding' (1985), 313; K. Anatolios, *Coherence* (1998), 138-9.

human soul, thinks that Christ underwent passions, and avoids mediation between God and the human body in the incarnation. He does, however, think that the incarnation ultimately renders human nature impassible, thus maintaining in his Christology, as in his anthropology, that ἀπάθεια is ethically ideal. I now turn to the possible theological and ethical instincts underlying Athanasius' patchwork deployment of Origen.

I note that Athanasius not only wants to give an account of God's union with human creatures, but also, more specifically, to depict God as thereby entering into our fallen and broken situation to bring us back to him. This established, we can see that his affirmation of Christ's grief and fear is tied to a more pessimistic outlook than Origen has: Athanasius sees more cause for lament in humanity's present situation than Origen does, and relatedly, regards human beings as more helpless, and therefore in need of rescue. Human beings cannot achieve ἀπάθεια unless God enters into human suffering. For all of these reasons, Athanasius wants Christ to undergo human grief and fear. However, his own psychology is too Origenian to allow an account of Christ's passible human soul. If he is to explain how humanity can reach a thoroughly Origenian state of ἀπάθεια in the fallen world as he sees it, Athanasius must jettison Origen's doctrine of Christ's human soul.

Louth is right to highlight Athanasius' rejection of Origen's cosmology, and the soul's place within it. This illustrates Athanasius' concern with the union of God and creation in the incarnation. Unlike Origen, Athanasius distinguishes sharply between the eternal God – Father *and* Son – and temporal creation.[27] Nonetheless, in his description of the fall in *Contra gentes*, he strongly implies that the soul is inherently closer to God than the body, and belongs in the same realm as God: it turns, perversely, away from God and becomes embroiled with bodily things. It would be unfair to regard this as inconsistent with Athanasius' distinction between eternal God and temporal creation – one can make several different divisions simultaneously, and fourth-century thinkers do, of course, continue to imply that the soul is closer or more similar to God than the body is, alongside a focus on its creation in time.[28] However, I suspect that, for Athanasius, the two frameworks do not sit comfortably together when it comes to actually describing the interaction – and union – of God and creation.

I have noted already that Athanasius' rejection of Origen's cosmology is typical of his generation. This returns us to Eustathius of Antioch because, so far, Athanasius' concerns are very similar to his: both thinkers maintain a sharp distinction between God and creation, and find room for Christ's psychological

[27] See for example Athanasius, *Contra Arianos* I.iii.9.

[28] At the most basic level, both soul and God are incorporeal. For more specific references to the soul's similarity to God, see for example Eusebius, *Preparatio Evangelica* XIII 27, where Platonist arguments for the affinity of the soul and divinity are approvingly cited.

anguish.[29] Why does Athanasius not also adopt Eustathius' solution: a passible human soul, radically divided from God (admittedly, as I have argued elsewhere, Eustathius also retains his own, rather different, sense of Origenian mediation, but a consideration of this topic is beyond the scope of this article)?[30] I think partly because, when he thinks of a sinless soul, he thinks of an impassible one. I will return to this momentarily. First, let us also note that, plainly, Athanasius wants a much, much less divisive Christology than Eustathius.[31] In retaining a doctrine of Christ's human soul but depicting it as passible, Eustathius has widened the gap between God and creation, already writ large by the rejection of Origen's cosmology. Athanasius, by contrast, focuses on overcoming that gap. This involves him wanting *God* to take on *human* πάθη – though in order to overcome them.

The idea that the Word takes on our properties in order to overcome them points us towards another aspect of Athanasius' incarnational theology. When he looks at human beings, and what is wrong with us, he wants to remove, among other things, fear and grief. However, when he considers what humanity needs from God in order to be whole again, it is important to him that God enters into our anguish. He sees God as distant from us, and he wants God to come down and rescue us.

Origen's more consistent belief that psychological distress is sinful might be explained by some of his more speculative cosmology: at least on some readings of Origen, the physical world, and the many pains it brings us, was created to help us climb back to God.[32] If this is the case, it is natural enough to believe that the world offers no legitimate basis for psychological distress. Does Athanasius have a greater sense that earthly life is imbued with tragedy, and that psychological distress is an appropriate response? We might suppose that,

[29] The distance between God and creation in Eustathius is especially evident in his divisive Christology. See *Contra Ariomanitas* fragment D19a:10-3 and *Contra Arianos*, fragment D107 for insistence that the Son was not created.

[30] S. Cartwright, *Eustathius of Antioch* (2015), 133-8.

[31] T. Weinandy objects that 'Some critics [of Athanasius' lack of attention to Christ's soul] seem to want Athanasius to espouse a Nestorian position': *Athanasius* (2007), 92 n. 37. It might, correspondingly, be observed that Eustathius is often (justifiably) seen as an antecedent of Nestorius. See for example Robert Sellers, *Two Ancient Christologies* (London, 1940).

[32] This is central to Mark Scott's picture of Origen in his *Journey back to God: Origen on the Problem of Evil* (Oxford, 2012). Scott cites Origen's belief that suffering is remedial, see Origen, *Homilies on Ezekiel*, ed. W.A. Baehrens and Marcel Borret (Paris, 1989), I 2. In his circumspection about distressing emotions, Origen is heavily influenced by Stoicism and stands in a tradition of Jewish and Christian engagement with Stoic ethics. On Origen's engagement with Stoicism, see M. Graver, *Stoicism* (2007), 102-8 and Richard Sorabji, *Emotion and Peace of Mind: From Stoic Agitation to Christian Temptation* (Oxford, 2002), 346-52. Sorabji argues that Origen does find more room for grief than Stoicism, by developing the notion of a first movement to grief and implying a certain fluidity about its boundaries.

relatedly, the anthropology underlying the Christology of the *Third Oration against the Arians* is more pessimistic than the anthropology in *Contra gentes*.

In *De incarnatione*, written just after *Contra gentes*, the prelapsarian soul is intrinsically corruptible and needs God's supernatural support: human beings always had 'corruption and death' by nature, but God's grace staved it off.[33] This anthropological pessimism is absent from *Contra gentes*. The possibility that Athanasius continues to think of a sinless soul as an impassible soul is significant here. If Athanasius experiments with Origen's anthropology in *Contra gentes*, and begins to move away from it already in *De incarnatione*, nonetheless, he never gets quite far enough away to find a psychology capable of being integrated into his Christology. That is, if he concluded that Origen's anthropology was too optimistic, and his Christology correspondingly unable to offer a saviour who answered the depths of sin and suffering, perhaps he nonetheless never quite gave up on Origen's anthropology enough to conceive of a grieving, fearing soul as a perfect soul, responding appropriately to the fallen world.[34]

Conclusion

So, Athanasius' own anthropology is sometimes too Origenian for his Christology, and most emphatically very early in his career. Or, rather, it is in thinking Christologically about human nature that he departs from Origen's anthropology. This does little *logical* work in explaining the confusion over whether certain distressing emotions are sinful. This is a real confusion. It does, however, give a fuller picture of Athanasius' conflicting and developing ideas about grief and fear and demonstrates how, with the rejection of Origen's view of mediation, other aspects of Athanasius' Origenianism have parted ways. If humanity can no longer climb back to God as Origen wants them to, the ideal of ἀπάθεια must part company with the potential impassibility of the human being in the fallen world, and even the necessary impassibility of the Word.

I hope that I have shed a little further light on Athanasius' engagement with Origen, and also given reason to think that Origen's ideas about emotions were important to the negotiation of his cosmology and Christology in the fourth century.

[33] Athanasius, *De incarnatione* 3. See also 5: '[human beings] are corruptible according to nature but, if they had remained good they would have escaped what was according to nature, by the grace of the Word's participation'.

[34] That Athanasius' preoccupation with ἀπάθεια abided is strongly suggested by his later ascetic works, such as *Life of Antony*, written between 356 and 362. On the date of Life of Antony, see Brian Brennan, 'Dating Athanasius' *Vita Antonii*', *Vigiliae Christianae* 30 (1976), 52-4.

Athanasius of Alexandria and '*Sola Scriptura*'

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Abstract

The importance of Scripture and its correct interpretation in the early church have always been recognized and appreciated. The purpose of this communication is to explore how Athanasius viewed Scripture and its authority. The major focus is on Athanasius' comment in *Contra Gentes* 1: 'The holy and sacred Scriptures are sufficient (*autapkeis)* for the exposition of truth'. In standard treatments of Athanasius' views of Scripture this passage is not examined. The following questions are addressed: What is the meaning of this statement? How does Athanasius understand and use *autapkes* here and elsewhere?

The title of this presentation is not to suggest that Athanasius' understanding of Scripture should be viewed in the categories of later debates on this subject in the history of the church. The purpose of the title is to draw attention to one (*sola*) element in Athanasius' characterization of Scripture. To grasp better Athanasius' approach to Scripture, the larger setting of his fourth century activity should be mentioned.

A key factor in the early church's self-understanding of its message and mission was to see both inseparably tied to the interpretation of Scripture conducted within the church. This statement conveys in many ways a remarkable fact in view of three circumstances present for much of the Patristic era. First, the term 'Scripture' meant often the Hebrew Scriptures. Second, few members of the church possessed copies of the Scripture certainly not in their entirety. Third, the New Testament canon was influx.

This intimate association of the church's message and mission, *and* the role of Scripture has long been acknowledged in scholarship devoted to the early church. It has, however received a new appreciation, as a number of early Christian writers have been studied as exegetes or students of Scripture. These efforts have reduced to some degree the portrait of such persons as primarily polemical theologians or ecclesial politicians.[1]

[1] See, *e.g*. Charles Kannengiesser, *Handbook of Patristic Exegesis* (Leiden, 2004); Peter W. Martens, *Origen and Scripture: The Contours of the Exegetical Life* (Oxford, 2012); and Andrew Cain, *The Letters of Jerome: Asceticism, Biblical Exegesis, and the Construction of Christian Authority in Late Antiquity* (Oxford, 2009).

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Therefore, it has become more usual to see Athanasius of Alexandria (295/300 to 373 and bishop from 328 to 373), as a person seriously engaged with the message of Scripture, without denying that he had other traits. He has been portrayed in a recent publication as an author who writes at his best not in Greek, but in the 'Bible'.[2]

This insight into this Alexandrian bishop is not original, but its discussion has been a minor issue in most literature devoted to him. Athanasius has more familiarly been presented as one of those polemical theologians and/or a church-Machiavellian figure, although there are more recently attempts to acknowledge even his pastoral dimension. Still there are scholarly treatments of the use of Scripture in Athanasius, but it must be admitted that they are not many.[3]

This lack of attention is to some degree justifiable, for Athanasius is generally not seen as an exegete of Scripture or a commentator of Scripture. Here he clearly differs from many other early Christian writers, *e.g.* Origen, Jerome, and Augustine. In part this deficiency is encouraged because Athanasius' works dealing specifically with Scripture are few. Also the authenticity of some has been challenged.[4]

Athanasius has often been regarded, especially in his works against Arianism, as church leader putting forth his own hermeneutic of Scripture which he considered as synonymous with the hermeneutic of the church. His purpose was to refute his opponents, whom he considered as having an inaccurate interpretation of the same Scripture. Such an opinion of Athanasius' efforts has been appropriately challenged lately by a number of scholars.[5] Still this type of view has resulted in a portrayal of him as less than a serious student of the Bible. Obviously an evaluation of these simplistic portraits cannot be pursued here.[6]

Thus there is both a paucity of 'biblical' writings of Athanasius' pen and at the same time his profound appreciation and comprehension of the Bible. Both his debt to Scripture and grasp of it appear on virtually every page of the Athanasian corpus. It is particularly noteworthy then when a passage is encountered that gives some insight into his views of the nature and authority of Scripture. The purpose of this short article is to examine one such text.

[2] See Peter Gemeinhardt (ed.), *Athanasius Handbuch* (Tübingen, 2011) and esp. James D. Ernest, 'Themen, 1. Die Heilige Schrift', 282, and the sentence, 'Die Sprache, die er fliessend spricht und in der er am besten schreibt, ist nicht Griechisch, sondern "Biblisch"'.

[3] A good example of this literature is given in James D. Ernest, *The Bible in Athanasius of Alexandria* (Boston and Leiden, 2004), 6-27.

[4] See M. Geerard (ed.), *Clavis Patrum Graecorum* II (Turnhout, 1974), 36-41 and 42-60. These pages are sections which deal with 'Dubia' and 'Spuria'. For the debate about *Expositiones in Psalms*, see James D. Ernest, *The Bible in Athanasius of Alexandria* (2004), 9.

[5] See Frances M. Young, *Biblical Exegesis and the Formation of Christian Culture* (Cambridge, 1997), 29-45.

[6] A corrective to this view can be noted in Hilaru Tanaka, 'Athanasius as Interpreter of the Psalms: His Letter to Marcellinus', *Pro Ecclesia* 21 (2012), 422-47.

The passage of interest is at the outset of Athanasius' *Contra Gentes*. Here he makes the statement: 'For self-sufficient (Greek, αὐτάρκεις) are the holy and divinely inspired Scriptures for the exposition of truth'.[7] The general perception that Scripture is 'sufficient' had been expressed by other Patristic authors, and is not unique to Athanasius, although the manner in which he puts it has some claim to rarity.[8]

The quotation from *Contra Gentes* calls for a number of comments, as one strives for its full import. First, it seems to be overlooked in discussions of Athanasius' use and comprehension of the Bible. There is no reference to this passage in the work of James D. Ernest devoted to the Bible in Athanasius.[9] This is also true for the section on Scripture in the *Athanasius Handbuch*.[10] Hermann Josef Sieben in an article refers to the fact that Athanasius holds to the sufficiency of Scripture ('la suffisance de l'Ecriture'), but he does not elaborate on what this means.[11] Likewise Thomas Torrance mentions this passage without any further comment about it.[12]

Second, a key feature of this text is the claim that Athanasius makes for Scripture. It is sacred (Greek, ἅγιαι*)* and divinely inspired (Greek, θεόπνευστοι). Both attributes are so commonplace that they require no further comment.[13] Scripture itself so designated itself as do countless early Christian writers.

Third, Athanasius insists that the Scripture has a third characteristic. He highlights this feature by placing the word first in the Greek sentence. The Scriptures are 'sufficient' or better translated 'self-sufficient'. The Greek word is αὐτάρκης. It is clearly made up of two words and ideas in Greek, αὐτός (self) and ἀρκέω (verb meaning 'to be strong enough', 'to be sufficient', 'to suffice'). Unlike the other two adjectives for Scripture, this term, αὐτάρκης, is not a conventional adjective in Athanasius to explain Scripture. Yet G.W.H. Lampe apparently did not regard this word as of special note in relation to Scripture. The patristic Greek lexicon he edited contains no reference to the word.[14]

[7] See the Greek text and an English translation in Robert W. Thomson (ed., and trans.), *Athanasius – Contra Gentes and De Incarnatione* (Oxford, 1971), 2-3 (trans. here is mine).

[8] See, *e.g*. Paul M. Blowers (ed.), *The Bible in Greek Christian Antiquity* (Notre Dame, IN, 1997) and esp. Maurice Jourion, 'Irenaeus's Reading of the Bible', 105-11. Hilary of Poitiers, approximately Athanasius' contemporary in the West, expressed the view that one should not search beyond Scripture. See *De Trinitate,* II 5: IV 14; and XI 1.

[9] James D. Ernest, *The Bible in Athanasius of Alexandria* (2004).

[10] Peter Gemeinhardt (ed.), *Athanasius Handbuch* (2011), 282-91.

[11] Hermann Josef Sieben, 'Herméneutique de l'Exégèse dogmatique d'Athanasius', in Charles Kannengiesser (ed.), *Politique et Théologie chez Athanasius d'Alexandrie* (Paris, 1974), 195-214.

[12] Thomas F. Torrance, *Divine Meaning: Studies in Patristic Hermeneutics* (Edinburgh, 1995), 240.

[13] See G.W.H. Lampe (ed.), *A Patristic Greek Lexicon* (Oxford, 1961), 18 and 630.

[14] See *ibid*. αὐτάρκης is an entry in H.G. Liddell and R. Scott (eds), *Greek-English Lexicon* (Oxford, 1996), 278. Here it is observed that such authors as Herodotus, Plato, and Zeno, the Stoic, have used the word.

However, a general characteristic of Athanasius' writing is his judicious employment of words. As a contemporary commentator on Athanasius has expressed it: 'Nevertheless, Athanasius is very concerned about words and their use, and the linguistic context from which their meaning derives'.[15]

In view of this circumstance, can the intentions of Athanasius in the deliberate use of this word be discerned to any degree? He has selected a word that appears only once in Scripture. Interestingly it is in a Pauline passage where Paul describes himself as αὐτάρκης (*Phil*. 4:11). The New Revised Standard Version reads: 'For I have learned to be content (αὐτάρκης) with whatever I have'.

Also there is evidence that Athanasius does not consider αὐτάρκης as merely a synonym for 'enough' (Greek, ἱκανός). In *Epistola I ad Serapionem*, Athanasius states (the reference is the contents of Scripture) that self-sufficient (αὐτάρκη) and enough (ἱκάνα) are the things contained in the Scriptures for a model of this.[16] So on at least this occasion αὐτάρκης carries a differentiated, and I would say stronger, meaning than ἱκανός.

A more extensive examination of Athanasius' use of αὐτάρκης is quite revealing. Apart from the text in *Contra Gentes* and the letter to Serapion, there are twenty-five instances where Athanasius employs this word. Thus the total is twenty-seven times. He uses it five times in *Contra Gentes* (including the reference already mentioned); in *De Incarnatione* also five times; in *Contra Arianos*, Books I and II, five times; twice in *Vita Sancti Antonii*; twice in *Historia Arianorum*; once in *De Decretis*, *De Synodis*, *Apologia ad Constantium Imp*., *Apologia de fuga suo*, *Epistola ad Maximum philosophum*, *Epistola Episcoporum in Africa*, *Epistola I ad Serapionem* (already mentioned); and *Epistola Epictetum*.[17] Thus over half of the references come from three of Athanasius' writings.

Of all these references the exact formulation of *Contra Gentes* is never repeated. In other words, Athanasius does not claim anywhere else that Scripture is self-sufficient (αὐτάρκης). He does declare that the Word of God is self-sufficient (*Contra Gentes,* 56B) as are the things contained in Scripture (*Epistola I ad Serapionem* 573 B11); God is self-sufficient (*De Decretis* 429 B14); the things confessed at Nicaea are both self sufficient and enough (*Epistola Episcoporum in Africa,* 1029 B12); for foreknowledge the Son's Godhead is self sufficient (*Contra Arianos* II 216 B15). On a different level, the writings of bishops are self-sufficient as witnesses to the emperor (*Apologia ad Constantium Imp*. 596 A8).

[15] Thomas G. Weinandy, *Athanasius: A Theological Introduction* (Aldershot, 2007), 137.

[16] PG 26, 573, B11.

[17] Full references can be found in Guido Müller (ed.), *Lexicon Athanasianum* (Berlin, 1952), 168-9.

While it is recognized that the chronology of Athanasius' writings is difficult, if not impossible, to determine, it does appear that across the years, and in many, not all of his works, the Alexandrian bishop is willing to employ this word αὐτάρκης.

Is there a deliberate and conscious choice on Athanasius' part not to use this word as a descriptive of Scripture in texts other than *Contra Gentes*? Could it be the case in his polemic against Arianism when he takes on an energetic tone as in *Contra Arianos* he realizes that to speak of Scripture as 'self sufficient' can be open to a misunderstanding since both he and his Arian adversaries are appealing to the same Scripture?

In answering this question, it must always be kept in mind that the self sufficiency' of Scripture for Athanasius is neither intended to place Scripture over against Tradition nor to put forth a *sola scriptura* principle as viewed in the sixteenth century and later Reformation debates. For Athanasius and all patristic authors, the books of the canon were books that were part of that Tradition, 'traditioned', already for him for a period of some three hundred plus years.[18] There is no example in Athanasius of the expression γράφαι μόναι.[19]

Thus to probe this question of why Athanasius avoids this formulation as found in *Contra Gentes,* it would be helpful to know the exact date of the composition of this text. Unfortunately we do not have such information. Possible dates of writing range from an early 318 to as late as 362-363. Most proposals focus around 318 when Athanasius would probably have been a young deacon, or 336, when Athanasius was already a bishop for some eight years.[20]

If the work dates from about 318, then we have an Athanasius in his earlier years growing in his insight into this topic. If the work was written in around 336, then we have a bishop who has already encountered Arian views and so may be more attentive to his comments about the nature and authority of Scripture. In short, is the Athanasius who writes the opening section of *Contra Gentes* aware of the Arian controversy or does this dispute still only loom on the horizon of his experience?[21]

[18] For example, see James D. Ernest, *The Bible in Athanasius of Alexandria* (2004), 369-70, and Thomas F. Torrance, *Divine Meaning: Studies in Patristic Hermeneutics* (1995), 242-4.

[19] This statement can be confirmed by reference to G. Müller (ed.), *Lexicon Athanasianum* (1952), 256-8 and 923-30.

[20] P.Th. Camelot in his edition in *Sources Chrétiennes* reviews the data about the date of composition and settles on a date before 323. See P.Th. Camelot, *Athanase d'Alexandrie, Contre les Païens et Sur l'Incarnation du Verbe*, SC 18 (Paris, 1947), 16. Bertold Altaner, *Patrology* (Freiburg, 1960), 314 assigns a date around 318. Johannes Quasten, *Patrology* III (Westminster, Maryland and Utrecht, 1960), 25 places the date also around 318, but notes that E. Schwartz favors a date as late as 336. For a summary of the debate about the dating, see T.G. Weinandy, *Athanasius* (2007), 11 n. 2.

[21] Michael Slusser has argued that *Contra Gentes* does reflect Athanasius' knowledge of the Arian controversy. See Michael Slusser, 'Athanasius, *Contra Gentes* and *De Incanatione:* Place and Date of Composition', *JTS* 31 (1986), 114-7.

The argument could be put forth in a slightly different manner so that this unrepeated passage from *Contra Gentes* is a possible indication of an earlier rather than later date for the work. A bishop in 336 or later would have been more cautious about suggesting that Scripture is 'self sufficient' when both sides of the Arian controversy are appealing to the same collection of Scripture.[22]

This proposal is not adequate in itself to swing the debate about date in one direction or another. But it does add weight to the view of an earlier date. Thus it merits some attention. Athanasius' comment about Scripture as αὐτάρκης deserves more reflection than has been given to it to now. If this brief presentation renders that claim valid, then it has fulfilled its goal.

[22] See footnote 5 above.

Organon in Athanasius' *De incarnatione*: A Case of Textual Interpolation

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Abstract

Charles Kannengiesser, the editor of *De Incarnatione* in Sources Chrétiennes, considers omissions of and substitutions for the term *organon* in the Codex Vaticanus syriacus (Σ) to be intentional alternations. I would like to propose, based on textual and theological evidence and its theological reception, that absence of organon in the Syriac translation of *De incarnatione*, the earliest manuscript available, represents the authentic text.

Introduction

The sixth-century Syriac text of Athanasius' *De incarnatione* known as Codex Vaticanus syriacus 104, usually referred to as Σ, raises an important question: is the term *organon* in the Greek texts interpolated? The available tenth to the sixteenth century Greek manuscripts used for the critical edition of *De incarnatione* include the term *organon*.[1] Charles Kannengiesser, the editor of *De incarnatione* in Sources Chrétiennes, lists eight omissions of and seven substitutions for the term *organon* in the Syriac manuscript Σ.[2] Kannengiesser considers the fifteen variants to be intentional alterations. I would like to propose, based on textual and theological evidence and its theological reception, that the absence of *organon* in the Syriac translation of *De incarnatione*, the earliest manuscript available, represents the authentic text.

This essay begins by establishing the context within which the argument for the use or non-use of the term *organon* began. Athanasius' *Orationes contra Arianos* and *De decretis* represent a strong argument against the application of *organon* to the Logos and to the body of the Incarnate Logos. This sets the context within which we can assess if the term *organon* was interpolated into *De incarnatione*. For the sake of this short essay we will use only a couple

[1] For the studies of various recensions refer to Charles Kannengiesser (ed. and trans.), *Athanase d'Alexandrie. Sur l'incarnation du Verbe. Introduction, texte critique, traduction, notes et index,* Source Chrétiennes 199 (Paris, 1973), 163-80 and Robert W. Thomson, *Athanasius Contra Gentes and De Incarnatione* (Oxford, 1971), xxx-xxxv.

[2] Ch. Kannengiesser, *Athanase* (1973), 41.

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examples from *De incarnatione* to demonstrate that the use of *organon* is forced on the text and contradicts Athanasian theology. The reception of the term *organon* in Cyril of Alexandria's work will confirm the interpolation of *organon* in the Athanasian text of *De incarnatione*.

Organon in *Orations Contra Arianos*

We will start with Athanasius' use of the term *organon* in the *Orationes contra Arianos* and within the larger Arian context. *Contra Arianos* discusses the implications of the use of *organon* when applied to the Logos, as the Arians did, and when applied to the body of the Incarnate Logos. Athanasius writes that since the Father, God, is full of Reason and Wisdom and eternal, the Logos, the Father's Reason, is not from without. As the sun's radiance and light is not from outside the sun, the Son is also not from outside or external to the Father (*Or*. 1:25). In *Or*. 1:23-5 Athanasius emphasizes that God did not create the world of pre-existent matter, for in that case there would be no difference between God the creator and a craftsman (*Or*. 1:23).[3] Athanasius asserts that when the Arians claim that the Father created the Son out of nothing, 'as an instrument (ὄργανον)', to create the universe they have fashioned a weak (ἀσθένειαν) creator who has no power within himself but needs 'an instrument' from without (ἔξωθεν) to complete his work of creation. In this context, *organon* is a term suggested by the Arians that describes the Logos himself, not the 'body' of the Incarnate Logos. The Arians utilized this term to describe the Son as a created being external to the Father. Athanasius concludes that, if this is the case, then the Father is a maker with no power in Himself.[4]

The description of the Son as an instrument, implying a created being, suggests not only that the Father is a weak, powerless creator, dependent on an external instrument to complete the work of creation, but also that the Son is of a different nature and essence than the Father. Thus Athanasius writes in *De decretis*: 'If then it be thus with the Son, let Him be a creature as we are, and not One in essence (ὁμοούσιος); but if the Son is Word, Wisdom, Image of the Father, Radiance (εἰ δὲ Υἱός ἐστι Λόγος, σοφία, εἰκὼν τοῦ Πατρός, ἀπαύγασμα), He must in all reason be One in essence. For unless it be proved that He is not from God, but an instrument different in nature and different in essence (ὄργανον ἑτεροφυὲς καὶ ἑτεροούσιον) surely the Council was sound in its doctrine and correct in its decree'.[5]

[3] See also *De inc*. 2.

[4] *Or*. I 26. PG 26, 65. NPNF 4, 321.

[5] *De decretis* 23; PG 25, 457; NPNF 4, 166. The council referred to in this quote refers to that of Nicea for it is a treatise in defense of the Nicene Definition.

Another implication of the Arian claim that the Son is created as an instrument is that He was created and brought into being to serve humanity rather than humanity to serve God. Athanasius argues: 'And we were brought into being that we might be; but God's Word was made, as you must hold, not that He might be; but as an instrument (ὄργανον) for our need, so that not we from Him, but He is constituted (συνίστασθαι) from our need'.[6] In this case, the Logos was conceived of (ἐπενόησεν) after humanity since He was created to serve us. Athanasius argues against such Arian implications, for 'in him all things in heaven and on earth were created … all things have been created through him and for him' (*Col.* 1:16).[7] Athanasius further on writes that the Logos is neither a creature nor something that is made, for this would imply the Logos is of a different essence and nature from the Father. Nor is the Logos a work (ἔργον), for this would mean that the Son is an instrument (ὄργανον) made for the sake of humanity.[8]

In summation, Athanasius opposes the Arian application of the term *organon* to the Logos because this implies that the Son is a created being outside of and external to the Father. Externality of the Logos implies the Son is not of the essence and nature of the Father. The Son is not the Logos, Wisdom, Image and Radiance of the Father. Externality of the Son implies the weakness of the Father who has no Power in Himself. Instrumentality of the Son implies that the Son was an afterthought constituted after humanity to serve its needs. The statement in *De decretis* represents the definitive theology of the Nicene Council as well as that of Athanasius. It also affirms that the term *organon* is not part of the Nicene or the Athanasian language but rather that of the Arians.

In *Oratio III contra Arianos* the term *organon* is applied to the body of the Logos within the context of explaining the Incarnation. The text of *Or.* III 31 as we have it reads: 'Being God, He had His own body, and using this as an instrument, He became man for our sake' (see *Or.* III 35). Instrument here should also be seen as an interpolation. Athanasius begins his argument by commenting on *John* 1:14: the Son 'became flesh and dwelt among us' not to judge the world but to save it. 'He became man and did not come into man' nor manifest himself (φανερούμενος) to others as in the case of the saints or prophets.[9] To come into man is to use saints or prophets as instruments which are external to the Son, but to become man is to appropriate a human body as his own. Athanasius further clarifies that by flesh he means the race of humankind (τὸ τῶν ἀνθρώπων γένος) as Joel called humanity flesh (*Joel* 2:28).[10] He suffered for us in the flesh, for being God he had his own body (Θεὸς ὤν,

[6] *Or.* II 30; PG 26, 209; NPNF 4, 364.
[7] *Or.* II 31; PG 26, 211; NPNF 4, 364.
[8] *Or.* II 71; PG 26, 297; NPNF 4, 387.
[9] *Or.* III 29, 30; PG 26, 388; NPNF 4, 410.
[10] *Ibid.*

ἴδιον ἔσχε σώμα).[11] Through this very Athanasian theological idiom, to have 'the body as his own', the properties of the flesh are also said to be His own, the infirmities of the flesh are his own. To clarify even further that this appropriation is not external to but very much part of the Incarnate Logos himself Athanasius refers to *Isaiah*, who said the servant carried (ἐβάσταξε) our infirmities rather than healed (ἐθεράπευσεν) them, lest one think that these infirmities were external (ἐκτός) to the body.[12] Athanasius elaborates by saying that when the flesh suffered the Word was not external (ἐκτὸς) to it, and because of this humanity was set free (ἠλευθερώθη) from what belongs to the flesh (τὰ ἴδια τῆς σαρκός) and made God (οὐκ ἄν ἐθεοποιήθη ἄνθρωπος).[13] Athanasius continues his argument in *Or*. III 32: '[W]hen the flesh suffered, the Word was not external (ἐκτός) to it; and therefore is the passion said to be His: and when He did divinely His Father's works, the flesh was not external (ἔξωθεν) to Him, but in the body itself did the Lord do them'.[14]

According to this Athanasian understanding of salvation, if the body is external to the Incarnate Logos and not appropriated as 'his own' so that all the properties of humanity are 'his own', the act of salvation cannot be completed. Cyril of Alexandria expressed this Athanasian theology in his pithy statement: 'What is not assumed is not saved'.[15] This is different than Gregory Nazianzen's saying that 'what is not assumed is not be healed'.[16] Athanasius made it clear that 'healing' implies an external body but salvation is completed when the body is 'his own' and not external. Thus using the language of instrumentality of the body is alien to and even against Athanasian theology. Cyril of Alexandria expressed this theology in clear terms very distinct from those of Gregory Nazianzen, a clear indication of the coherent reception of Athanasian thought in Alexandrian theology.

Within Athanasian theology, the Father calls the Son 'his own' to assert that the Son is equal to the Father and of the same essence.[17] Athanasius also calls the body of the Incarnate Logos 'his [the Logos's] own', not to assert that the body is uncreated or of the same essence as the Son, but to assert their oneness and the Logos's appropriation of what belongs to humanity so that the Logos, through this appropriation, overcomes the corruption and death that overcame humanity. Using the language of instrumentality of the Son with respect to the Father or of the Son's body separates the Logos from the Father and the

[11] *Or*. III 31; PG 26, 389; NPNF 4, 410.

[12] *Or*. III 31; PG 26, 389; NPNF 4, 411 (*Isa*. 53:4).

[13] Athanasius is using the same term, θεοποιέω/θεοποίησις, as in his famous 'He became man that we might be made God' (αὐτὸς γὰρ ἐνηνθρώπησεν, ἵνα ἡμεῖς θεοποιηθῶμεν), *De inc*. 54.

[14] *Or*. III 32; PG 26, 389; NPNF 4, 411.

[15] *Commentary on the Gospel of John*, PG 74, 89: ὃ γὰρ μὴ Προείλεται οὐδὲ σέσωσται.

[16] Gregory Nazianzen, *First Letter to Cledonius*, PG 37, 181: τὸ γὰρ ἀπρόσληπτον ἀθεράπευτον.

[17] Christ called God his own Father (Πατέρα ἴδιον) in *John* 5:18.

Incarnate Logos from humanity. The Logos 'became man and did not come into man', meaning he became man and appropriated the body as his own and did not use a human being or a body external to him as an instrument as later Nestorians would claim. For if the body is an instrument and external to the totality of humanity, which is what Athanasius was fighting against, the Logos comes to serve humanity as a healer, a physician, which is appropriate for a creature, but not as a savior, which is appropriate for the Incarnate Logos. Thus having the term 'instrument' in *Or*. III 31 – 'Being God, He had His own body, and using this as an instrument, He became man for our sake' – is a clear interpolation making the Logos an instrument and his body an instrument, an external element, which clearly would not meet the requirements of our salvation.[18]

Organon in *De Incarnatione*

After presenting Athanasius' objection to the use of the instrumentality of the Son and of the body of the Incarnate Logos in *Contra Arianos,* a work that represents a developed anti-Arian theology, we now proceed to analyze the use of the term *organon* in *De incarnatione*. It is worthwhile noting that *organon* was not used in *Contra gentes*, the introductory text to *De incarnatione*, another indication that *organon* is not part of the Athanasian vocabulary. According to the available Greek manuscripts, *organon* was used fifteen times in *De incarnatione*; once each in chapters eight and nine and the rest in the section refuting the Greeks.

Chapter eight of *De incarnatione* explains that the Word created the universe out of nothing. The Word, as the creator, also had to recreate everything after the Fall. Because the Logos is the creator, He was not distant from or external to the universe but was in every part of creation. It was the Son who was to become Incarnate, recreate (ἀνακτίσαι) what became corruptible, suffer on behalf of all, and be their advocate before the Father.[19] He is able to accomplish this because He was not far (μακράν) from us.[20] Therefore, to overcome corruption and death He took a body that was not foreign (οὐκ ἀλλότριον) to ours. Athanasius used the term ἀλλότριος which is the exact opposite of ἴδιος, the signature theological term that came to define Athanasius', and later Alexandrian

[18] Similarly, *Or*. III 35 concludes that when He does divine things, through the instrument of his body, we know that He is divine. In this specific statement, divine actions imply that they were done by a divine subject; whether these actions were done through a body as his own or through the body as instrument does not affect the conclusion if the premise is preserved. The inserted clause, 'through the instrument of his body', impedes the flow of the idea and does not add further clarifications to the divinity of the Son.

[19] *De inc*. 7; R. Thomson, *Athanasius* (1971), 150.

[20] *De inc*. 8, R. Thomson, *Athanasius* (1971), 150. Using μακράν as in *Acts* 17:27.

theologians', understanding of the relationship between the Logos and the body he appropriated as 'his own', intimate, inseparable, not foreign or alien, and not external.[21] To assert that this body was truly 'his own', Athanasius insists that He did not want to be in or appear in 'a body' as in a theophany (θεοφάνειαν). Athanasius then explains that the creator, though powerful (δυνατός), made for himself (κατασκευάζει) a body as a temple and made it his own (ἰδιοποιεῖται) in which to be known (γνωριζόμενος) and dwell.[22] To dwell in a temple and be made known is to assert the ownership (making his own) of the body; it was not used as an instrument for an apparition or other external manifestation. Through this very appropriation the Logos is able to overcome death through his own body and recreate what had become corruptible because He is not alien to any part of creation. Though creation and the created body He appropriated as his own are of a different essence than the Logos, as creator He is in every part of creation. But in distinction from the rest of creation, he appropriated a body 'as his own'. This process of making it his own ensured that this body was not foreign or external to him, or an instrument. When we die in Him, through the 'power in the Lord's body' corruption and death have no power over humanity.[23] When the Son offered 'his temple and body for all', he satisfied all debt by his death.[24] Interposing in the Greek text the term *organon,* connoting an external element, contradicts the whole argument of not being foreign or external that Athanasius is trying to prove in sections eight and nine. The Syriac text, on the other hand, demonstrates the consistency of the Athanasian argument with the absence of *organon*. He can overcome corruption and death for all humanity through the body He appropriated.

Greek text: … Therefore as an offering and sacrifice free of all spot, he offered to death the body which he had taken to himself, and immediately abolished death from all who were like him by the offering of a like. For since the Word is above all, consequently by offering his temple and the instrument of his body as a substitute (ἀντίψυχον) for all men, he fulfilled the debt by his death.[25]

Syriac text: Therefore as an offering and sacrifice free of all spot, He offered *to death the body which He had taken to Himself,* at the same time abolishing death from all who were like Him by the offering of a like. For since the Word of God is above all,

[21] A. Louth, 'The use of the term ἴδιος in Alexandrian theology from Alexander to Cyril', *SP* 19 (1989), 198-202.

[22] 'Temple' is used in the biblical sense where 'he was speaking of the temple of his body' (*John* 2:19, 21; and 1*Cor*. 3:16).

[23] *De inc*. 8, R. Thomson, *Athanasius* (1971), 150-3.

[24] *De inc*. 9, R. Thomson, *Athanasius* (1971), 153-5.

[25] *De inc*. 9, R. Thomson, *Athanasius* (1971), 155. I intentionally chose Thomson's English translation of the Greek *De incarnatione* so that the comparison of texts might be easier since I will be using Thomson's translation of the Syriac text and the style of translation for both texts will be consistent; see next note.

consequently when He offered the temple, his body, for the life of all men, He fulfilled the debt by (his) death…[26]

The Greek text describes salvation through a body, an instrument, that substitutes (ἀντίψυχον) for all humankind. Kannengiesser observed that Athanasius never used ἀντίψυχον except in this sentence.[27] The unusual use of the term ἀντίψυχον in this sentence adds further suspicion of the odd phrase 'the instrument of his body as a substitute (ἀντίψυχον) for all men'. On the basis of theological content, the unusual use of vocabulary and its absence in the Syriac text argue for an interpolation.

Chapter 22 explains that it is not befitting (ἀπρεπές) the Word of God to show weakness and to flee death, for as he is Life and Savior he had to accept death when it came to his body to destroy it completely by showing victory over death by His resurrection.[28] Athanasius continues that it is not befitting (ἀπρεπές) that He who had victory over death by keeping His body incorruptible, insuring that we be granted incorruption by his resurrection, should become ill, that He who healed others should be consumed by illness. How could He who expelled weakness from others have a weak temple of his own?[29] Chapter 22 reasserts the theme that through the appropriation of the body as 'his own', He conquers death and corruption in his own body so that we can conquer death. Thinking of the body as instrument, external, weak and liable to illness, does not fulfill the notion of salvation as Athanasius describes it.

Greek text: If, therefore, it had happened that his body had been ill and the Word had been loosed from it in the sight of all, it would not have been fitting that he who had healed the illnesses of others should permit his own instrument to be consumed by illness.[30]

Syriac text: If therefore it had happened that his body had been ill and the Word had been loosed from it in the sight of everyone, it would not have been fitting that He who had healed the illnesses of others should permit his own body to be dissolved by illness.[31]

Athanasius insisted on the theology of appropriation not only to confront Arianism but also Docetism. In the raising of Lazarus, Athanasius explains:

He gave forth a human voice, as man; but divinely, as God, did He raise Lazarus from the dead. These things were so done, were so manifested, because He had a body, *not in appearance but in truth*; and it became the Lord, in putting on human flesh, to put it on whole with the affections proper to it; that, as we say that the body was His own,

[26] *De inc*. 9, Robert Thomson (ed.), *Athanasiana Syriaca, Part I, 1. De Incarnatione, 2. Epistula Ad Epictetum*, CSCO 257 (Louvain, 1965), 9.

[27] Ch. Kannengiesser, *Athanase* (1973), 296-7 n. 1.

[28] *De inc*. 22, R. Thomson, *Athanasius* (1971), 188-9. Πρέπει, fitting or befitting, became a theological term describing aspects of the relationship between the humanity and divinity within the person of the Incarnate Logos.

[29] *De inc*. 22, R. Thomson, *Athanasius* (1971), 188-91.

[30] *De inc*. 22, R. Thomson, *Athanasius* (1971), 189.

[31] *De inc*. 22, R. Thomson, *Athanasiana* (1965), 22.

so also we may say that the affections of the body were proper to Him alone, though they did not touch Him according to His Godhead.[32]

Athanasius is silencing any possible accusations of Docetism by insisting that the body is 'his own' and a participant in the raising of Lazarus.

Chapters 41-5 of *De incarnatione* are part of the long dialogue in which Athanasius explains the Incarnation to the Greeks. He begins with the assertion that the world is a great or large body with parts that affect the senses. If the Word of God (divine Logos) is (ἐστί) in the world, then he is present in its parts and present in humanity. He then elaborates on the mode of this presence (ἐστί) by explaining that he 'entered in' (ἐπιβεβηκέναι) or 'united with' all and every part of the world.[33] If this premise is acceptable to the Greeks, then it should be acceptable and should not be considered odd or strange (ἄτοπον) that He entered (ἐπιβεβηκέναι) or united with humanity. If the Greeks consider it strange or odd (ἄτοπον) of him to be (γενέσθαι) in a body then it is strange (ἄτοπον) that he should enter the whole and illuminate and move the universe by his providence. For the universe is a body. If it is befitting (πρέπει) (now using the theological language of what befits the incarnated divinity) to enter (ἐπιβαίνειν) the cosmos and be known (γνωρίζεσθαι) in it to all, then it is also befitting (πρέπει) that he should appear in a human body and illuminate (φωτίζεσθαι) and move (ἐνεργεῖν) this body. For the human race is part of the whole and if it is not befitting (ἀπρεπές) for the part to make known his divinity it would be most strange (ἀτοπώτατον) that he should be known (γνωρίζεσθαι) through the whole universe.[34] It is in this context that we find another instance of *organon* in the Greek text:

Greek text: For the human race is a part of the whole; and if the part is not suitable to be his instrument wherewith to make known his divinity, it would be most unfitting that he should be known through the whole universe.[35]

Syriac text: For the human race is also a part of the whole; and if a part is not suitable to be his body for the declaration of his divinity, it would be most unfitting that He should be known through the whole universe.[36]

Athanasius argues that whatever is said about the whole is said about the part. If the Logos is in the created universe, then He is also in the created human being. Therefore, it is fitting that the Word should be in man, that by him and through him the universe have light, movement (κινούμεθα), and life,

[32] *Or*. III 32 [Italics are my own].

[33] It might be of interest to read Wolfhart Pannenberg, 'The Significance of the Categories "Part" and "Whole" for the Epistemology of Theology', Philip Clayton trans., *The Journal of Religion* 66 (1986), 369-85.

[34] *De inc*. 41, R. Thomson, *Athanasius* (1971), 236-7.

[35] *De inc*. 41, R. Thomson, *Athanasius* (1971), 236-7.

[36] R. Thomson, *Athanasiana* (1965), 39.

and that through the human body He reveal and make known the Father.[37] Since humanity was unable to recognize the invisible God, He took part of the whole for himself, a human body, so that humanity might know him in the part. As He is in creation and it partakes of His power, the body he took was sanctified by Him.[38] Corruption and death were not outside (ἔξωθεν) the body but attached to it. To overcome corruption it was necessary that life should be attached to the body and not be outside it.[39] Thus, the necessity of Incarnation: the Logos took a body to give life to the body and to make Himself known to humanity.[40] Substituting 'instrument' for 'body' contradicts the whole argument.

Though we cannot discuss every instance in this very short essay, we will give one more example from chapters 41-5 in the same vein. In this Greek text, as in the one quoted above, the emphasis is on the body as an instrument in comparison to the Syriac text where the emphasis is on the appropriated body that is his own.

Greek text: Therefore he became a man and used the body as a human instrument. And if it was not right for it to happen in this manner, how should the Word have come when he wished to use an instrument? Or whence should he have taken it, except from those who already existed and had need of his divinity through one like them? For it was not the non-existent that needed salvation so that a command alone would suffice, but man, who had already been made, was corrupted and perishing. So it was right for the Word to use a human instrument and extend himself in all things.[41]

Syriac text: But man had been created and therefore He used a body. And if it was not right for it to happen in this manner, how should the Word have come when He wished to use a body? Or whence should He have taken it, except from those who already existed and had need of his divinity through one like them? For it was not the non-existent that need salvation, so that a command alone would suffice, but man, who had already been made, was corrupted and perishing. Therefore, it followed that it was good for the Word to use a human body and extend Himself in all things.[42]

In this lengthy explanation to the Greeks Athanasius is asserting the necessity of the Incarnation, for it is only through the body, part of the whole, not external to the whole, that overcoming death and corruption is accomplished. If corruption and death are not external to the body, then the body cannot be external to the Logos, the body cannot be an external instrument. If it is not part of the whole, how can corruption and death be conquered? 'For the death of all was fulfilled in the Lord's body, and also death and corruption were

[37] *De inc*. 42, R. Thomson, *Athanasius* (1971), 238-41.
[38] *De inc*. 43, R. Thomson, *Athanasius* (1971), 241-3.
[39] *De inc*. 44, R. Thomson, *Athanasius* (1971), 244-7.
[40] *De inc*. 45, R. Thomson, *Athanasius* (1971), 246-7.
[41] *De inc*. 44, R. Thomson, *Athanasius* (1971), 245.
[42] R. Thomson, *Athanasiana* (1965), 42.

destroyed because of the Word who was in it'.[43] If the body is not 'his own' but an instrument and external to the Incarnate Logos, He cannot conquer the death and corruption attached to it. Though this discussion took place within the context of the Arian controversy it became an integral part of the Alexandrian theological understanding of the nature of the Incarnate Logos. This can be demonstrated by its reception by Cyril of Alexandria, a theologian who appropriated much of Athanasius' theological thought.

The appropriation and reception of Athanasian theology in the writings of Cyril of Alexandria

In his *Commentary on the Gospel of John*, Cyril of Alexandria writes that if the Son is an instrument (ὀργάνου) then He is not of the essence of the Father and is not different from a flute or a lyre who gives utterance to whatever the player wants. The Son is an assistant to the Father and is alien from the Father, and not of the same essence, and is servant to humanity rather than master. If He is not a Son, then the Father is not a father, and the Trinity is falsely named.[44] Cyril's theology represents the essence of Athanasius' *Contra Arianus* argument.

Commenting on *John* 6:53, Cyril says that after the Incarnation, the body and the Word are indivisible (ἀδιαίρετος γὰρ μετὰ τὴν ἐνανθρώπησιν) and as the Word is life by nature, his body is also life-giving since it is united with the all-quickening Word (ἑνωθὲν τῷ τὰ πάντα ζωογονοῦτι Λόγῳ).[45] The body is not of the same nature as the Word but they came together to be one in union and in an incomprehensible agreement (ἓν δὲ τῇ συνόδῳ καὶ τῇ ἀπερινοήτῳ συνδρομῇ).[46] Cyril then proceeds to explain the force of this unity. The body is united in complete agreement with the Word; as the Word is life giving, so is the body of Christ life giving.[47] The life-giving attributes of

[43] *De inc*. 20, R. Thomson, *Athanasius* (1971), 184-5.

[44] *In Jo*. 2.438-9.

[45] *In Jo*. 1.528. *John* 6:53, *Very truly, I tell you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you.*

[46] *In Jo*. 1.530.

[47] For a full discussion of the differing scholarly opinions about the body of the Incarnate Logos used as an instrument refer to Lois Farag, *St. Cyril of Alexandria, A New Testament Exegete. His Commentary on the Gospel of John* (Piscataway, NJ, 2007), 122-5. It is worthwhile noting McKinion's opinion concerning the body of Christ as instrument. He writes: 'The third component of Nestorius' συνάφεια which Cyril rejects is that God the Word has taken up an ordinary human being like us to use as his instrument (ὄργανον) to provide redemption … Cyril is intent on maintaining singleness of agent. In other words, the referent of the Incarnation must be the Word, both before and after become a human being. To say, as he accuses Nestorius of doing, that the Incarnation is the Word's assumption of an ordinary human being like us to utilize as his instrument is to deny the necessary singleness of agent … If the body of Christ, which

the body are shown in the Eucharistic mystery, for if we do not eat his flesh we cannot have life. The power of this mystery is proved and demonstrated by the ability of the flesh of Christ, when it was united with the Word, to be life giving. The proof is in the raising of the dead, which was not done by word only (οὐ λόγῳ μόνον) or by command. Rather, there is a great stress on employing his flesh as a coworker (συνεργάτην) in the process of raising the dead.[48] The flesh has the power to be life giving (ζωοποιεῖν δυναμένην) because it is made one with the Word (ὡς ἓν ἤδη γενομένην πρὸς αὐτόν).[49] This also means that it is truly his own body and not another's; it is not external or an instrument but a coworker. Cyril demonstrates his point further by the examples of the daughter of the chief of the synagogue and the raising of the widow of Nain's son. Likewise, Cyril connects the healing of the blind man in *John* 9:6-7 to the life-giving ability of the body of Christ. Cyril then concludes his exegesis by referring back to the power of the Eucharistic mystery, saying that if the body that is one with Christ is life giving and raises the dead, surely we are also partaking of immortality when we partake of the mystery.[50] The Eucharistic mystery is based on the vivifying body of the Incarnate Logos. The body is 'his own', not merely an instrument that obeys orders but a coworker, a full participant in the act of vivifying. The body is a coworker in the raising of the dead and the healing of the blind. Cyril, in his letter to the monks in Egypt, writes that "we do not say that the temple born of the Virgin was used as an instrument". Further on he continues, "if, indeed, the Christ is neither truly the Son nor God by nature, but mere man as we are, and an instrument of divinity, we have not been saved by God, we have, but rather, since one like ourselves died for us and was raised up by the powers of someone else? How, then, was death still destroyed by Christ?"[51] If any of the available Athanasian texts included the instrumentality of the body, Cyril should have alluded to it somehow to assert his theological view.

belongs to a human being assumed by the Word as his instrument, is not his, then he is not truly Son of God, but the Son using an ordinary human being, like the boy using the lyre…' Steven McKinion, *Words, Imagery and the Mystery of Christ: A Reconstruction of Cyril of Alexandria's Christology* (Leiden, 2000), 100-1 and 146. McKinion was applying the notion of instrumentality from the post-Nestorian writings. This is the implication of accepting the instrumentality of the body even without Nestorius' influence. If the body is not his own but an instrument, then it could be another person's, it could be similar to the situation of the prophets, and if God could use a body as an instrument, then what is the significance of the Incarnation? The body must be 'his own' in order to achieve 'newness of life' and the 'new creation'.

[48] *In Jo.* 1.539.

[49] *Ibid.*

[50] Ezra Gebremedhin, *Life-Giving Blessing: An Inquiry into the Eucharistic Doctrine of Cyril of Alexandria* (Uppsala, 1977). Gebremedhin dedicated his research to the study of the vivifying power of the Eucharist in the larger spectrum of Cyril's work beyond the scope of the Commentary on the Gospel of John. Also L. Farag, *St. Cyril* (2007), 123.

[51] John I. McEnerney, *St. Cyril of Alexandria, Letters 1-50*, (Washington, D.C., 1987), 31, 32.

Conclusion

Looking at the literary and theological context within which *organon* is mentioned we noted the following. Arius first used *organon* to assert the instrumentality of the Logos in creation in his attempt to relegate the Son to the status of a created being since instrumentality also indicates being foreign, external, or from without. Athanasius, in *Contra Arianos*, vehemently opposed the application of such a term to the Logos. *Organon*, however, was also used to describe the body of the Incarnate Logos in three different discussions in the Athanasian corpus, once in *Contra Arianos* and twice in *De incarnatione*. In *Contra Arianos*, Athanasius established that, for the Incarnate Logos to overcome corruption and death, he has to take a body and make it 'his own' so that the properties and the suffering of the flesh are also said to be His own. If the Incarnate Logos is external to this suffering He cannot overcome death and corruption for the sake of humanity. In *De incarnatione*, Athanasius insists that the body must be 'his own' or else the body will only appear as in a theophany; therefore the Logos must assert the body is 'his own' and not used as an instrument for an apparition or other external manifestation as some Docetists might claim. In the second context of *De incarnatione* he explains to the Greeks the necessity of the Incarnation for it is only through the body, part of the whole, not external to the whole, that overcoming death and corruption is accomplished. If corruption and death are not external to the body, then the body cannot be external to the Logos. The body cannot be an external instrument, it has to be 'his own'. The consistency of the Syriac text in using the term 'body' delivers greater clarity of the Athanasian thought of the appropriation of the body as his own. On the other hand, the Greek text is constantly alternating between the use of 'body' and 'instrument' which is not consistent with the rhetorical style of the first part of the treatise, *Contra gentes*, and the inner consistency within *De incarnatione*.

Cyril of Alexandria's *Commentary on the Gospel of John* predates the Nestorian controversy, so he is still working within the aftermath of the Arian controversy. In this commentary, Cyril writes that the body of the Incarnate Logos is a coworker not an instrument, for this will affect not only our salvation but also the vivifying power of the Eucharist and the unity of action within the one person of Christ. In his letter to the monks, Cyril explicitly denies the instrumentality of Christ or of his body.

Based on the internal evidence in the Athanasian corpus and the reception of Athanasius' theology by the Alexandrian Cyril, it is evident that the notion of the instrumentality of the body of the Incarnate Logos is an interpolation. The sixth-century Syriac translation of *De incarnatione,* Codex Vaticanus syriacus 104, is surviving evidence of a non-interpolated text. On close study of the Syriac text, the inner theological consistency of Athanasius' theology of the Incarnation is evident: it presents the body of the Incarnate Logos 'as his own'

and not 'an instrument' external to the Logos, which is also consistent with the reception of Athanasian theology. The presence of the term *organon* in the Greek texts received by the West influenced Thomist and consequently western theology. As Du Manoir noted, Thomas Aquinas often uses the terms *instrumentum* and *organum* in his writings.[52] It is time for a re-evaluation that will consider the term *organon* as an interpolation in *De incarnatione* based on internal theological evidence. Kannengiesser's editing of *De incarnatione* as well as Thomson's work on the Syriac text have done the hard textual work and thus everything is ready for a new theological evaluation.[53]

[52] Hubert Du Manoir, *Dogme et Spiritualité chez S. Cyrille d'Alexandrie* (Paris, 1944), 139. Examples of academic interests are Grillmeier's discussion on the body as instrument in the context of the Logos-Sarx Christology and Anatolios' response to his opinion. Alois Grillmeier, *Christ in the Christian Tradition: From the Apostolic Age to the Council of Chalcedon (451)*. Translated by John Bowden, Vol. 1. (Atlanta, 1975), 311, 317-8, and Anatolios response in: Khaled Anatolios, ''The Body as an Instrument': A Revaluation of Athanasius' Logos-Sarx Christology', *Coptic Church Review* 18 (1997), 78-84.

[53] Ch. Kannengiesser, *Athanase* (1973), 41, 190-3; Robert Casey, 'Some Remarks on the Syriac Version of Athanasius *De Incarnatione*', *Le muséon* 77 (1964), 17-28; R. Thomson, *Athanasiana* (1965).

The Role of the Holy Spirit in Cyril of Jerusalem's Sacramental Theology

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Abstract

Cyril of Jerusalem, as catechist and mystagogue of his fourth-century see, focused on the orthodox formation of those in his care so that they would be able to live into their new identity as baptized and communing members of the catholic church. Of particular interest to Cyril is the transformative relationship between the Triune God and Christians; what he presents of his theology thus focuses on the relational dynamics within the Godhead as it pertains to sacramental *theōsis*. In this article, I focus on Cyril's explicit and implicit use of the concept of 'like nature resting upon like nature' as the means for humans to participate in the divine nature. I demonstrate that Cyril's consistent and highly nuanced use of *homoios* is foundational to his expression of a Trinitarian theology which informs his sacramental theology. In particular, his use of the noun *homoios* is the means by which he carefully attends to the mystery of the unity of the divine nature of the Godhead while preserving the distinctiveness of the three persons (*hypostases*) within the Godhead. While Cyril only uses the phrase 'like nature resting upon like nature' in his description of the Holy Spirit's descent upon Jesus at his baptism, I propose that this concept is central to his teachings on how, through baptism and eucharist, the Holy Spirit mysteriously sanctifies and deifies the catechumens so that they are transformed into faithful Christians.

In the third *Mystagogic Catecheses*,[1] Cyril of Jerusalem used the phrase 'like resting upon like' (τῷ ὁμοίῳ ἐπαναπαυομένου τοῦ ὁμοίου) to describe the descent of the Holy Spirit upon Jesus at his baptism (M 3.1). I propose that Cyril's use of ὅμοιος in this phrase, as well as within his teachings on the Trinity,[2] was most likely subordinate to his teachings on the divine mysteries.

[1] Word searches were conducted using *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae*. The most recent critical edition of the *Procatechesis* (P) and the *Catecheses* (C) is from the late nineteenth century by Reischl and Rupp (*S. patris nostri Cyrilli Hierosolymorum archiepiscopi Opera quae supersunt omnia*), which is found in the TLG. The text of the *Mystagogic Catecheses* (M) are from Piédagnel's critical edition, *Catéchèses Mystagogiques*, second ed., SC 126bis (Paris, 2004). All translations are mine unless otherwise noted.

[2] For a discussion of Cyril's Trinitarian theology, see Richard Patrick Crosland Hanson, *The Search for the Christian Doctrine of God: The Arian Controversy 318-381* (Edinburgh, 1988), 398-413 and Anthony A. Stephenson, 'Cyril of Jerusalem's Trinitarian Theology', *SP* 11 (1972), 234-41.

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While he only used the phrase 'like resting upon like' once, I propose that this concept is implicit and central to his teachings on *theōsis* mediated by the sacraments.[3]

The *terminus ad quem* for the *Procatechesis* and *Catecheses* is 351.[4] Debate over the dating of the *Mystagogic Catecheses* is over three issues: an apparent lack of consistency in sacramental theology between the *Catecheses* and *Mystagogic Catecheses*,[5] a difference in description of the baptismal ritual between the same texts,[6] and attribution of authorship in the manuscripts.[7] The issue of apparent lack of consistency in sacramental theology between the texts can be explained by taking into account the difference in genres between the two sets of lectures as well as the theological and spiritual advancement in the listeners as they progressed in their educational process.[8] The recent recognition of theōsis as a unifying soteriological motif in the texts provides the means of

[3] For a discussion of Cyril's teaching on *theōsis*, see Donna R. Hawk-Reinhard, 'Cyril of Jerusalem's Sacramental Theōsis', *SP* 66 (2013), 247-56.

[4] Hanson, working from *Catechesis* 14.14 and the mention of more than one emperor, locates the *terminus ad quem* of the *Catecheses* to before 350, R.P.C. Hanson, *The Search for the Christian Doctrine of God* (1988), 405. Working from the same lecture, Doval argues for 351 based upon internal dating concerns, Alexis Doval, 'The Date of Cyril of Jerusalem's Catecheses', *Journal of Theological Studies* 48, no. 1 (1997), 129-32. As might be expected in a series of catechetical lectures delivered in the 350s, Cyril's texts do not contain the word ὁμοούσιος (*homousios*, consubstantial). The use of ὁμοούσιος might not be required in the difficult cognitive work of recognizing and respecting the mystery of the Trinity and Incarnation that Cyril was seeking to teach. When discussing nature, essence, or substance, he typically used φύσις (*fusis*) and ὑπόστασις (*hypostasis*). Οὐσία (*ousia*, being, substance, G.W.H. Lampe [ed.], *A Patristic Greek Lexicon* [Oxford, 1961], 980) is used only once in the context of explaining ἐπιούσιος (*epiousios*, supernatural, Lampe, *A Patristic Greek Lexicon*, 529), the adjective describing the bread requested in the Lord's prayer to connect this bread to the eucharist (M5.15). The term οὐσιώδης (*ousiōdes*, substantial form, essential, real, Lampe, *A Patristic Greek Lexicon*, 986), is used once, in *Mystagogic Catechesis* 3, in the context of the phase 'like rests upon like' (M3.1).

[5] Enrico Mazza, using the work of Emmanuel Cutrone, has argued that the eucharistic theology within the Jerusalem mystagogical lectures is not consistent with the rest of the sacramental theology of the lectures, Enrico Mazza, *The Celebration of the Eucharist: The Origin of the Rite and the Development of Its Interpretation*, trans. Matthew J. O'Connell (Collegeville, MN, 1999), 146-51 and Emmanuel Joseph Cutrone, *Saving Presence in the 'Mystagogical Catechesis' of Cyril of Jerusalem* (PhD Dissertation, University of Notre Dame, 1975), 53.

[6] For the best arguments against Cyrillian authorship, see Juliette Day, *The Baptismal Liturgy of Jerusalem: Fourth- and Fifth-Century Evidence from Palestine, Syria and Egypt* (Burlington, VT, 2007) and most recently 'The Catechetical Lectures of Cyril in Jerusalem: A Source for the Baptismal Liturgy of the Mid-Fourth Century', in *Further Essays in Early Eastern Initiation: Early Syrian Baptismal Liturgy* (Norwich, 2014).

[7] For a list of the authorship in manuscripts and codices for the *Mystagogic Catecheses*, see my summary in Donna R. Hawk-Reinhard, 'Transmission Implications Regarding the Authorship of Cyril of Jerusalem's Mystagogic Catecheses', in Kenneth B. Steinhauser and Scott Dermer (eds), *The Use of Textual Criticism for the Interpretation of Patristic Texts: Seventeen Case Studies* (Lewiston, MA, 2013), 75-6.

[8] The intended audience for the *Catechetical Lectures* were those who were preparing to be baptized while the audience for the *Mystagogical Lectures* were those who had recently been

re-evaluating the sacramental theology in each text.[9] The difference in the original audience's preparation and ability to comprehend the content of the lectures is also one of the three considerations Maxwell Johnson provides as an explanation for the differences in description of the baptismal liturgy as found in the *Catecheses* and *Mystagogic Catecheses*.[10] Because the variations in attribution of authorship – either no attribution, both Cyril of Jerusalem and John of Jerusalem, or John of Jerusalem alone – in the manuscripts can be accounted for by recognizing a pattern of sequential redaction of a more Cyrillian text,[11] the *terminus ad quem* of the *Mystagogic Catecheses* is Cyril's death in 387.[12] The importance of dating these texts within the context of pneumatology is summarized by Richard Hanson's assessment: in these texts, Cyril 'comes closer to defining [the Holy Spirit's] status than anybody else in the mid-fourth century'.[13]

baptized and were communing. For Cyril's instructions on how to read the *Catecheses* and the *Mystagogic Catecheses*, if these are also his, see *Procatechesis* 11.

[9] While I agree that the eucharistic theology present within the mystagogical catecheses shifts from the baptismal and chrismational theology, when seen through the lens of sacramental *theōsis*, see D.R. Hawk-Reinhard, 'Cyril of Jerusalem's Sacramental Theōsis' (2013), 247-56, the eucharistic theology actually presents a unifying climax to the texts' sacramental theology, see D.R. Hawk-Reinhard, *From Χριστιανοί to Χριστοφόροι: The Role of the Eucharist in Christian Identity Formation According to Cyril of Jerusalem* (Ph.D. Dissertation, Saint Louis University, 2011), 175-206, 367-80.

[10] Maxwell Johnson has provided also mentions 'the evolution of the rites' and 'development in theological interpretations' as possibilities, Maxwell E. Johnson, 'Baptismal Liturgy in Fourth-Century Jerusalem in Light of Recent Scholarship', in Bert Groen, Steven Hawkes-Teeples and Stefanos Alexopoulos (eds), *Inquiries into Eastern Christian Worship*, Eastern Christian Studies 12 (Leuven, 2012), 92. See also Hawk-Reinhard, *From Χριστιανοί to Χριστοφόροι* (2011), 75-98.

[11] Johannes Quasten, *Patrology*, Christian Classics reprint, 1994 ed., vol. 3 (Westminster, MD, 1950), 366, proposed that these lectures were originally Cyril's and later revised by John of Jerusalem. Others who follow this argument include Frank Leslie Cross, *St Cyril of Jerusalem's Lectures on the Christian Sacraments: The Procatechesis and the Five Mystagogical Catecheses* (London, 1951), xxxix, A.A. Stephenson, 'Introduction', in *The Works of St. Cyril of Jerusalem*, *Fathers of the Church* (Washington, D.C., 1970), 2:147 and Edward J. Yarnold, 'The Authorship of the *Mystagogic Catecheses* Attributed to Cyril of Jerusalem', *Heythrop Journal* 19 (1978), 143-61, 145. For a description of the use of text-critical analysis and codicology to demonstrate that Bodleianus Roe 25 provides the text of the *Mystagogic Catecheses* that is most likely authored by Cyril of Jerusalem, see D.R. Hawk-Reinhard, 'Transmission Implications Regarding the Authorship of Cyril of Jerusalem's Mystagogic Catecheses' (2013), 37-76. The text in Bodleianus Roe 25 is close, but not identical, to that found in F.L. Cross, *St Cyril of Jerusalem's Lectures on the Christian Sacraments* (1951).

[12] R.P.C. Hanson, *The Search for the Christian Doctrine of God* (1988), 405. Following Johnson, if the latest date is assumed, sufficient time is allowed for development in the rite, M.E. Johnson, 'Baptismal Liturgy in Fourth-Century Jerusalem in Light of Recent Scholarship' (2008), 92.

[13] R.P.C. Hanson, *The Search for the Christian Doctrine of God* (1988), 407. In spite of Hanson's assessment, Cyril's pneumatology has not been as widely studied. Those who have explored it describe it as being one of the more robust and complex teachings during his time. In his study

Using the Jerusalem Creed[14] as the structure for his catechetical lectures, Cyril spent 12 of his 19 pre-baptismal lectures on theology proper: four concerning the Father, six on the person and work of Christ, and two on the Holy Spirit. Cyril taught that there are not three Gods but a Trinity that is neither separated nor coalesced (C16.4).[15] Cyril was careful to neither separate, confuse, nor collapse the persons of the Trinity; thus, the Son and the Holy Spirit share in the divinity of the Father (C6.6).[16] Cyril explained that the divinity of the Son is indistinguishable from that of the Father (C11.18)[17] and the Son is divine by nature (C11.19, C12.1). Since the Holy Spirit, who also shares in the Father's divinity, is the One who sanctifies and deifies (C4.6),[18] implicitly, the Holy Spirit is also divine by nature. The unity of the Trinity is seen through Cyril's further teaching that the Holy Spirit works according to the will of God and in the name of Christ (C16.12), lives and subsists with real substance, and is always present with the Father and the Son, speaking, working, dispensing, and sanctifying in harmony with the Father and the Son (C17.5).

of the *Catecheses*, Sébastien Grignon states that Cyril's pneumatology is one of the richest and most complex of this time period. Grignon has argued that Cyril's Trinitarian theology is dynamic, in contradistinction to Athanasius' more static understanding of the relationship between the persons of the Godhead, see his *La coherénce de la foi: Lire les 'Catéchèses Prébaptismales' de Cyrille de Jérusalem* (PhD Diss, Paris-Sorbonne University, 2003), 180, 235, 472-3. Juliette Day proposes that the influence of Cyril's pneumatology requires additional study, especially since his work in this area has been underestimated, 'Cyril of Jerusalem on the Holy Spirit', in D. Vincent Twomey and Janet E. Rutherford (eds), *The Holy Spirit in the Fathers of the Church: The Proceedings of the Seventh International Patristic Conference* (Dublin, 2010), 71-85. See also Pamela Jackson's works on this topic: *The Holy Spirit in the Catechesis and Mystagogy of Cyril of Jerusalem, Ambrose, and John Chrysostom* (Dissertation, Yale University, 1987) and 'Cyril of Jerusalem's Treatment of Scriptural Texts Concerning the Holy Spirit', *Traditio* 46 (1991), 1-31.

[14] Hanson argues that this anti-Arian, anti-Marcellan creed has closest affinities with the teachings of Alexander of Alexandria prior to the Council of Nicaea. R.P.C. Hanson, *The Search for the Christian Doctrine of God* (1988), 403-5.

[15] C16.4 lines 9-14: 'Our hope is in the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. We do not proclaim three Gods (let the Marcionites be silenced) but we proclaim one God through one Son together with the Holy Spirit. The faith undivided, the worship inseparable (ἀδιαίρετος ἡ πίστις, ἀχώριστος ἡ εὐσέβεια.) We do not separate the Holy Trinity as some do nor coalescing them as the Sabellians practice' (οὔτε χωρίζομεν τὴν ἁγίαν τριάδα ὥς τινες, οὔτε συναλοιφὴν ὡς Σαβέλλιος ἐργαζόμεθα).

[16] While Cyril states that one cannot speak with exactness about the Holy Spirit's substance (ὑπόστασις, C16.5 and C16.24), he does work on explaining what can be known about the Holy Spirit through Scripture (C16.1).

[17] Cyril's understanding of the common divine nature of the Father and the Son hardly gets any clearer than C11.18, where he describes both the one who begat and the one begotten are God – the divinity of the Son is indistinguishable (ἀπαράλλακτος; a word used once in the LXX, *Esther* 3:13 and only once in Cyril's text, line 4) from that of the Father's. This section ends with the perfection and full divinity of both the Father and the Son.

[18] The Holy Spirit sanctifies and changes (ἁγιάζω and μεταβάλλω) the bread and wine (M5.7) and sanctifies and deifies (ἁγιάζω and θεοποιεῖν) Christians (C4.16).

I. Phrase in context[19]

Cyril used the phrase 'like rests upon like' to describe the moment of contact between the real presence of the Holy Spirit and Jesus when Jesus was baptized in the Jordan River. In order to understand what Cyril meant by this phrase in *Mystagogic Catechesis* 3 and how he used this concept within his doctrine of *theōsis*, I have looked at how he used the term ὅμοιος in the rest of his catechetical corpus. Cyril used ὅμοιος a total of twenty-six times, two of which occur in this phrase. Of the other twenty-four uses, seventeen are of particular importance for evaluating what Cyril might mean with this phrase. The other instances are comparing concepts rather than persons.

[19] Other words in the semantic range that Cyril could have used in the phrase 'like rests upon like' in M3.1 but did not, can help clarify what he meant by the phrase. I examined three: ὁμοίωσις: 'likeness', 'form, appearance'; 'portrait'; 'simile, comparison'; ὁμοίωμα: 'likeness, image'; 'symbol'; 'figure, illustration'; 'example' and ὁμοιότης: 'image, copy'; 'likeness, resemblance'; 'similitude', G.W.H. Lampe, *A Patristic Greek Lexicon* (1961), 954, 956. Patterning his use after that in *Gen.* 1:26 Cyril used ὁμοίωσις (likeness) to describe the created resemblance of humanity to God (C2.4, C11.23, C12.5) which is that part of human nature that is damaged by sin (C14.10). When describing the human appearance that the Angel Gabriel assumed in order to talk to Daniel, this same term is used (C12.14) as well as ὁμοιοπροσώπον – like countenance (C12.14). The focus for ὁμοιοπροσώπον is on being made like rather than resemblance alone. Cyril used ὁμοίωμα (12 instances) in two different ways: to focus on the similarity of the representation of something to the original and to focus on analogous actions within sacramental rites. In the thirteen instances in Cyril's texts under consideration, eight are in the *Catecheses* and five are in the *Mystagogic Catecheses*. Of the eight uses in the *Catecheses*, six instances are in the context of seeing the likeness of God in contrast to God in God's self, which corporeal eyes cannot see (C6.7, five times in C9.1 in the context of *Ezek.* 1:28). A seventh is in the context of the angel Gabriel taking on the likeness of a human so that Daniel could bear the sight of him. The remaining six instances, five of which are in the *Mystagogic Catecheses*, are all in the context of the mystery of baptism in which the entry into the baptismal Laver is a likeness of Christ's death (C3.12, M2.7) which is necessary for the reality, not likeness, of salvation (M2.7). The anointing with holy *myron* in the post-baptismal anointing is, like baptism, the sacramental connection between the historical event in Jesus' life and the life of the Christian (M3.2). Like with Cyril's use of ὅμοιος, what is the same and what is different is kept in focus simultaneously. Cyril's sacramental use of ὁμοίωμα might be interpreted as symbolic representation. This allows for the focus on symbolic representation to connect the sacramental action of baptism and anointing with oil in the initiation into Christian identity to the analogous event in the life of Christ while not collapsing the two historical events into one. While the events of Christ's baptism, death, burial, and resurrection are central to Christian salvation and identity formation, each Christian's lived experience of baptism and post-baptismal anointing is not to be minimized. Cyril uses ὁμοιότης to focus more on the differences while keeping the sameness in view. In the seven instances, he uses this term to denote the likeness of God that all humans are created in (C14.10) and what has been damaged by sin (C14.10). The outward likeness of God is inexpressible and his substance (*hypostasis*) unimaginable (C6.7). Jonah (C14.17) and others who pre-figured Jesus are referred to as likenesses that Christ surpasses (C14.26). Christians become sons of Abraham through faith like Abraham (C5.6). The unity of God is described as being similar to the diversity of flowers that are all alike as flowers (C9.10).

Cyril used ὅμοιος when describing what it meant to be human. Peter, who through faith in Christ walked on water, shared in flesh and blood just *like* Cyril's listeners, and ate food *like* them (C5.7). Both men and women came to be catechized for *like* reasons (P5). The souls of men and women are *like* in nature (C4.20). All souls are *like* in nature in that none were created to be sinful while others were created to be righteous (C4.20). Even though those who come after Adam did not sin *like* Adam, all die as a result of Adam's sin (C15.31). All persons will receive resurrection bodies on the last day, but these resurrection bodies will not be exactly *like* each other (C4.31). In these examples from Cyril's theological anthropology, he used ὅμοιος to describe what it meant to be human without minimizing differences between persons, genders, or final judgments.

Within his teachings on the nature and work of God, Cyril used ὅμοιος as a way of describing the eternality of the Father: the Father is always *like* unto himself (C6.7). Ontologically, the Son is in all things *like* the Father who begat him. That is, the Son is God of God, Life of Life, Light of Light (C4.7, C11.18), eternal of eternal, Truth of Truth, Wisdom of Wisdom, King of King, and Power of Power (C11.4). The relationship between the Father and the Son is *not like* the relationship between the Father and creatures (C11.19). Arguing for the eternality of the Son against the Manicheans, Cyril argued that Father and Son speak of *like* judgment for sin (C6.27). Without confusing the persons or minimizing the mystery of the Trinity, Cyril used ὅμοιος in his Christology to demonstrate the Son's divinity.[20]

Cyril also used ὅμοιος in explaining the incarnation. He taught that God became truly human (C12.15)[21] by becoming *like* us through the incarnation.[22]

[20] When comparing Cyril's Christology with other theologians of this period, Hanson has persuasively argued that Cyril's Christology does not fit neatly into any of the conventional categories. R.P.C. Hanson, *The Search for the Christian Doctrine of God* (1988), 407.

[21] This is one of the rare instances in Cyril's text where 'God' does not refer to the Father. C12.15 lines 13-6: Καταλιπόντες ἄνθρωποι θεὸν ἐδημιούργησαν ἀνθρωπόμορφα ξόανα. ἀνθρωπομόρφου τοίνυν ὡς θεοῦ ψευδῶς προσκυνουμένου θεὸς ἀληθῶς ἄνθρωπος ἐγένετο, ἵνα λυθῇ τὸ ψεῦδος ('Humanity renounced God and fashioned statues in the form of humans. Because these in the form of humans as God were falsely worshiped, God truly became human in order to destroy the falsehood'). Lines 17-26: Ὀργάνῳ τῇ σαρκὶ καθ' ἡμῶν ἐκέχρητο ὁ διάβολος. καὶ τοῦτο γινώσκων ὁ Παῦλος λέγει· βλέπω δὲ ἕτερον νόμον ἐν τοῖς μέλεσί μου, ἀντιστρατευόμενον τῷ νόμῳ τοῦ νοός μου καὶ αἰχμαλωτίζωντά με, καὶ τὰ ἑξῆς. δι' ὧν οὖν ὅπλων ὁ διάβολος ἡμᾶς κατηγωνίζετο, διὰ τούτων αὐτῶν ἐσώθημεν. ἀνέλαβε τὸ ὅμοιον ἡμῶν ἐξ ἡμῶν ὁ κύριος, ἵνα δι' ἀνθρωπότητος σωθῶμεν. ἀνέλαβε τὸ ὅμοιον ἡμῶν, ἵνα τῷ λείποντι μείζονα δῷ τὴν χάριν, ἵνα ἡ ἀνθρωπότης ἡ ἁμαρτωλὸς θεοῦ γένηται κοινωνός. ὅπου γὰρ ἐπλεόνασεν ἡ ἁμαρτία, ὑπερεπερίσσευσεν ἡ χάρις… ('Our Lord received our likeness [substantive use] in order that through human nature he might save us. He took our likeness [substantive use] in order that he might give greater grace to that which lacked, in order that sinful human nature might be made a partaker of God').

[22] Cyril is clear that one of the distinctions between the Father and the Son is that the Father was not made man and he did not suffer for us, but the Son became human and suffered for us (C11.17).

While Christ was enfleshed *like* (adverbial form) the rest of humanity, he was *not like* the rest of humanity with respect to sin (C13.5). The reason for the incarnation was that by being *like* humanity, the Son could save humanity through human nature (C12.15). With respect to Jesus' ascension, this event was *like* Habakkuk's transportation, Enoch's translation, and Elijah's assumption, but surpassed all of these earlier events (C14.25).

Cyril's use of the other nine instances of ὅμοιος have the same function: to focus the listener's attention on what is the same while preserving distinctions. In summary, all humans are alike yet discrete persons and Jesus is both fully like the Father in what it means to be divine and fully like humans, except with respect to sin, in what it means to be human.[23]

With this understanding of Cyril's use of ὅμοιος from his *Procatechesis* and *Catecheses*, with which the hearers of his *Mystagogic Catecheses* would be familiar, I now turn to the specific phrase 'like resting upon like' in *Mystagogic Catechesis* 3.[24]

Since Cyril had already discussed the divinity and humanity of Jesus and the nature of the Holy Spirit as spirit (C16.13-19) and divine (C16.3), the sameness that is in view in 'like resting upon like' must be the divine essence, the divinity, of the Holy Spirit resting upon the divinity of Jesus. While this phrase might have been used to emphasize the divinity of the Holy Spirit, I suggest that this phrase is the explicit demonstration of an implicit structure of 'like resting upon like' that is woven into his mystagogical instruction.

II. Use of the concept 'like resting upon like' in Cyril's sacramental *theōsis*

Historically, at Christ's baptism, the water of the Jordan was able to receive Christ's divinity without recoiling in fear because Christ's divinity was veiled by his humanity (C12.15). Through this contact with Christ's divine humanity,

[23] Examples from among Cyril's twenty-seven uses of ὁμοίως (Instances are found in P14, C2.9, C2.10, C3.8, C4.35, C5.6 (twice), C6.2, C6.8, C74, C11.4, C11.9, C11.23, C12.26, C13.5, C13.24, C14.16, C14.18, C14.21, C14.29, C16.17, C16.9, C17.16, C18.16, C18.19, and C18.35) are: married and unmarried women should both behave in the same way while waiting (P14), people with extra tunics and meat should, in the same way, share with others (C3.8), the Holy Spirit provided both Peter and Elijah with supernatural insight and the ability to heal (C16.17, C16.29). Soteriologically, men and women receive salvation in the same way, through repentance (C2.9), and people of Cyril's day can repent and receive salvation in the same way as the biblical exemplars (C2.10). Theologically, the Son is in all things like the Father who begat him (C11.9) and does as he sees the Father doing (C11.23). Cyril used the adverb ὁμοίως to emphasis *like* action.

[24] M3.1, lines 9-12: Κἀκεῖνος μὲν ἐν Ἰορδάνῃ λουσάμενος ποταμῷ καὶ τῶν χρωτῶν τῆς θεότητος μεταδοὺς τοῖς ὕδασιν, ἀνέβαινεν ἐκ τούτων, καὶ Πνεύματος ἁγίου οὐσιώδης ἐπιφοίτησις αὐτῷ ἐγίνετο, τῷ ὁμοίῳ ἐπαναπαυομένου τοῦ ὁμοίου ('That one [Jesus] washed in the Jordan River and imparted a share of his divinity to the water by [its] contact with his body. As he came up out of the water, the essence [οὐσιώδης] of the Holy Spirit came upon him, like resting upon like').

his baptismal water became Christ-bearing water (P15).[25] The material, sensible water was transformed through contact with Christ's corporeal body: matter rests upon divine matter and becomes divinizing. This is the first 'like rests upon like' in the sacramental pattern.[26]

The second 'like rests upon like' in the sacramental sequence occurred historically at Jesus' baptism as the Holy Spirit rested upon him. Divinity rests upon divinity.

Between the two historical 'like resting upon like' events that Jesus participated in and the sacramental 'like resting upon like' sequence experienced by the Christian, the Holy Spirit was present and active among those who would be enrolled for baptism (P1). In particular, the Holy Spirit taught, admonished, strengthened (C16.16), illuminated (C16.3), enlightened (C16.22), and comforted (C16.20) throughout the Lenten catechetical period. The physical experience of sanctification prior to the rites of initiation was through exorcisms (P9, C1.5, C16.19, 22) which were efficacious because of the power of the Holy Spirit (P9, C16.19).

The third 'like rests upon like' action happens in the pre-baptismal anointing. After renouncing Satan and all his works, those preparing for baptism removed their clothing in a symbolic enactment of the reality of 'putting off the old man with his deeds' (*Col.* 3:9, *Eph.* 4:22, M2.2). This act also was in imitation of Christ's nakedness on the cross and a return to an Edenic, pre-lapsarian state of being naked and unashamed (M2.1). They were then anointed from head to toe with oil which was purified (exorcized) and made efficacious by the invocation of God's name and prayer (M2.3). Participation in the richness of Christ, symbolized by anointing with oil, removed all traces of sin and influence of the evil one who had once had access to the entirety of the person's bodily frame (M2.3). Those who had put off the old person were grafted in and planted with Christ, sharing in his richness (M2.3). Purified matter (oil) rests upon symbolically purified matter (the naked and unashamed person) so that the entire person participates in the gift of the riches of Christ and is, in reality, purified. Divine riches are shared through matter resting upon matter.

[25] This historical event in Christ's life becomes the means for the believer to enter into solidarity with Christ by imitating not only his baptism, but also his death, burial, and resurrection. The believer has now become an image of Christ through outward, bodily imitation and, by this conformity, partakers of Christ's glorious body (M3.1, see also C3.11 for the foreshadowing of the eucharistic transformation in the catechetical lectures). The baptismal transformation is cruciform while the eucharistic transformation is anastiform, see Stephen Finlan, 'Can We Speak of *Theosis* in Paul?', in Michael J. Christensen and Jeffery A. Wittung (eds), *Partakers of the Divine Nature: The History and Development of Deification in the Christian Traditions* (Grand Rapids, MI, 2007).

[26] Christ is the first fruit and beginning of salvation (M3.6). Through Christ's own baptism, the rite of baptism was sanctified (C3.11).

During baptism, the Christian experienced the fourth 'like resting upon like' action in the transformative sequence. Through the invocation of the Triune God, the baptismal waters again become Christ-bearing (C3.3). The one being baptized experiences Christ's divinity, mediated historically through his humanity, but now made present by the power of the Holy Spirit so that the Christian became a fellow and partaker of Christ (M3.2). Through the Christ-bearing waters, the baptized receive the seal of the Holy Spirit (C3.12) as Christ's gift (M2.6).[27] The pre-baptismal participation in the riches of Christ provides the 'like nature' upon which the baptismal seal of the Holy Spirit rests. Transformed water rested upon transformed person so that divine gift (the seal of the Holy Spirit) rested upon divine riches. Matter rests upon matter, divine gift rests upon divine riches.[28]

The fifth 'like resting upon like' action occurred during the post-baptismal anointing. In imitation of the historical event of the divine essence of the Holy Spirit resting upon Christ's divinity (M3.1), the Christian, the physical image of Christ,[29] was anointed with holy chrism (M3.1). The holy chrism became efficacious through the invocation of the Holy Spirit and becomes the means by which the soul is sanctified (M3.3). Sanctified oil rests upon sanctified body. What the body imitates, the Holy Spirit accomplishes in the soul (M3.6). Whereas the divinity of the Holy Spirit rested upon the divinity of Christ at Christ's post-baptismal anointing, for the Christian, the divinity of the indwelling Holy Spirit rests upon the divine seal received at baptism which was accessible to the Christian through the Christ-bearing waters. Through the baptismal seal, the Christian receives the Holy Spirit (M2.6, M3.3). Matter rests upon matter; divine presence rests upon divine seal.

As a result of the fifth 'like rests upon like', especially through the anointing of the forehead after baptism, the new Christians are able, with unveiled faces, to behold[30] the glory of the Lord (M3.4, 2*Cor*. 3:18).[31] Through their renewed spiritual senses, the new Christians are now able to look beyond the sight, taste,

[27] That is, assuming that the Holy Spirit has found the person worthy to receive this gift (C3.15, C18.32)

[28] Edward Yarnold's essay on the double sanctification effect of the sacraments provides additional insights into the double 'like resting upon like' of baptism, post-baptismal anointing, and eucharist. Edward J. Yarnold, 'The Body-Soul Relationship Mainly in Connection with Sacramental Causality', *SP* 35 (2001), 338-42.

[29] The Christian is one who is partaking of Christ's body through imitation in his death, burial, and resurrection.

[30] Κατοπτρίζω can be translated as 'look at something as in a mirror, contemplate' (BDAG 535) or, in the middle, as 'see, behold; reflect', G.W.H. Lampe, *A Patristic Greek Lexicon* (1961), 734. In M3.4, it seems best to translate κατοπτρίζω as 'behold' since the context is on the opening of the senses. See S. Finlan, 'Can We Speak of *Theosis* in Paul?' (2007), 75-6.

[31] Finlan states that 2*Cor*. 3:18 is '[t]he most frankly theotic passage in Paul…' *ibid*. 75. Cyril used this passage twice, once here, in M3.4, and in M4.9. I am grateful to Clay Berry for a conversation about Cyril's use of this passage. Cyril's use of 2*Cor*. 3:18 could serve as an *inclusio*,

feel, and smell of bread and wine to behold Christ's humanity, his body and blood, in the Eucharistic elements.[32]

The sixth 'like rests upon like' action happens during the Christian's first eucharist. Through the action of consecration, the Holy Spirit makes the divine Logos, Christ (C4.8), harmonious with the soul (M4.5, M5.15) such that these holy things[33] can be offered to the holy people who have been taught and divinely enabled to recognize the knowable beyond the sensible. The Christian receives Christ's humanity in the elements; divine humanity rests upon like humanity. However, Christ's divinity cannot be separated from his humanity. Through Christ's humanity resting within the Christian's humanity, Christ's divinity rests upon the divinity of the Holy Spirit that the Christian participates in through the post-baptismal anointing. Divine nature rests upon divine nature. Christians become Christ-bearers, partaker of Christ's divinity (M4.3) through his divine humanity made present by and resting upon the divinity of the Holy Spirit. Through the eucharist, Christians are being transformed from glory to glory.[34] Those whose faces have been made to shine and whose hearts have been unveiled are now able to reflect[35] the glory of the Lord.[36] Matter rests upon matter, divine presence rests upon divine presence.

The seventh and final 'like rests upon like' action continues for the rest of the Christian's mortal life. The baptized and communing Christians are being more fully transformed into the image of Christ who is the Heavenly One (M5.11). Heaven is 'the dwelling place of God' (C6.8). Christ-bearers who are partaking of the divine nature of Christ and the Holy Spirit are themselves 'heavens' (M5.11). In the most-awe-inspiring hour of the celebration of the Eucharist, God dwells among his people. The Heavenly One rests upon his heavenly dwelling place, his people.

but this would require that the listeners remember that the *inclusio* began in the third Mystagogic lecture and was not completed until the end of the next lecture on the following day.

[32] To see the glory of the Lord in the Eucharist, the senses must be opened through baptism and the post-baptismal anointings.

[33] The holy things are, sacramentally, Christ's holy humanity – his humanity and divinity cannot be separated. The holy people are holy through participation in Christ's divine humanity, asceticism, and prayer (M5.19).

[34] Cyril wove together *Ps*. 104:15 and 2*Cor*. 3:18 to explain this transformation.

[35] In M4.9, in contrast to the use of κατοπτρίζω in M3.4, 'reflect' is the better translation due to the connection with the shining face from *Psalm* 104.

[36] This progression from glory to glory is, according to Finlan, the progression that Paul laid out in *Philippians* of a sequence moving from a cruciform experience to an anastiform experience. S. Finlan, 'Can We Speak of *Theosis* in Paul?' (2007), 74-5. 'Such renewal, with the ability to read the Bible unveiled, and with capacity to reflect the character of God, is truly anastiform: living as though already in the kingdom of God and receiving eternal light and truth' (*ibid*. 76-7).

III. In conclusion

For Cyril, the word ὅμοιος was more than the simple rhetorical structure of 'this is the same as that but they do not lose their uniqueness'. He used this term to provide a means for the young Christians to grasp onto the mystery of how they were being conformed to Christ through sequential transformation from glory to glory.

Through an implicit motif of 'like resting upon like', Cyril's Trinitarian theology, Christology, pneumatology, soteriology, and sacramental theology coalesce into a vision of progressive deification of the Christian that has present implications. Cyril's innovative pneumatology was necessary in order to express how, through the divine mysteries, Christians are transformed from glory to glory.

Choice and Will in the Catecheses of Cyril of Jerusalem*

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Abstract

What is demanded from someone who wants to become a Christian in the middle of the fourth century? According to Cyril of Jerusalem it is, first of all, the deliberate choice of each candidate to sincerely devote oneself to the Christian faith. Thus, in the present article I will analyze the *Procatechesis* and the *Lenten Catecheses* of Cyril of Jerusalem in relation to the fundamental anthropological contents transmitted to the *Photizomenoi* during the fasting period. In particular, I will focus on the following questions: On which ideas of choice and free will does Cyril base his *Catecheses*? Which significance do these concepts have for the process of becoming a Christian?

By answering these questions, I will demonstrate that the concept of free will is not only crucial for the catechetical aim but also functions as a kind of learning theory for those who are going to attend the dogmatic lectures in order to be baptized.

Until now, patristic researchers considered Cyril of Jerusalem's († 387) catechetical instructions, the *Procatechesis* and the *Lenten Catecheses*,[1] mainly as a means to reconstruct liturgical processes in the church of Jerusalem in the fourth century. An approach with respect to the specific theological purposes of this catechetical work is, however, still rare. In this article, I will demonstrate that Cyril was not only aware of the anthropological debates of his time, but also provided a distinct concept of free will in his catechetical lectures. Thus, I will start this article with a few remarks on the terminology used by Cyril and then move on to the anthropological concepts presented in the *Procatechesis* and the first four *Catecheses*.

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[1] The following English translations are based on Leo P. McCauley and Anthony A. Stephenson (eds. and trans.), *The Works of Saint Cyril of Jerusalem*, FC 61 and 64 (Washington, 1969/1970). Modifications are provided by Edward Yarnold, *Cyril of Jerusalem* (London, 2000). The Greek quotations are based on Wilhelm C. Reischl and Joseph Rupp, *Cyrilli Hierosolymarum archiepiscopi opera quae supersunt omnia*, 2 vols. (Hildesheim, 1967, reprint of München 1848/1860). Hereafter, abbreviations will be used as follows: *PCat.* for the *Procatechesis* and *Cat.* for *Catecheses*.

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From the variety[2] of terms that early Christian authors used to describe the human will, Cyril's terminology in his first lectures is confined to the terms τὸ αὐτεξούσιον and προαίρεσις.

As it appears, Cyril distinguishes human's constitutive endowment with free will from its exercise in deliberate choices. Thus, the term αὐτεξούσιον serves to describe the human being's capacity to exercise self-determination and autonomy which is granted by God, while the term προαίρεσις refers to particular choices as well as to persisting aims. This last interpretation is based on the works of the stoic philosopher Epictetus. In philosophic studies it is long recognized that he assigned a new meaning and importance to this term by arguing that it was one's προαίρεσις that defined one's personality.[3] For the essence of the human being is, according to Epictetus, one's προαίρεσις: 'Because *you* are neither flesh nor hair, but moral purpose'.[4] Further, Epictetus insists that the human being's προαίρεσις is free to make decisions and cannot be compelled by anyone – not even by Zeus himself.[5] Thus, the προαίρεσις freely executes all kinds of choices and decisions and is responsible for a good or evil state of being.[6] Therefore, it is the προαίρεσις which is the dominant moral faculty of the human being.

[2] See Christoph Markschies, 'Wille III. Kirchengeschichtlich', *RGG*[4] 8 (2005), 1561-3, George Karamanolis, *The Philosophy of Early Christianity* (Durham, 2013), 144-80; Theo Kobusch, 'Selbstbestimmte Freiheit. Das frühe Christentum im Kontext der antiken Phiosophie', *ZNT* 17 (2014), 47-55; Wolfgang Achtner, *Willensfreiheit in Theologie und Neurowissenschaften. Ein historisch-systematischer Wegweiser* (Darmstadt, 2010). These studies provide, amongst others, a compilation of Greek terms that were used by Christian authors.

[3] A detailed study is provided by Michael Frede, *A Free Will. Origins of the Notion in Ancient Thought* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London, 2011) with further references to anterior studies. See also Roberto H. Pich, 'Προαίρεσις und Freiheit bei Epiktet: Ein Beitrag zur philosophischen Geschichte des Willensbegriffs', in Jörn Müller and Roberto H. Pich (eds), *Wille und Handlung in der Philosophie der Kaiserzeit und der Spätantike* (Berlin, 2010), 95-127, 101. In an actual study about the different uses of the term προαίρεσις Jean-Baptiste Gourinat ascribes three main fields to the human being's προαίρεσις: 'a) *La* προαίρεσις *comme une choix d'un role* (prosopon) *et d'un mode de vie* (epitedeuma), b) *La* προαίρεσις *comme decision ponctuelle*, c) *La* προαίρεσις *comme faculté de choisir*', see Jean-Baptiste Gourinat, 'La « prohairesis » chez Épictète: décision ou « personne morale » ?', *Philosophie Antique* 5 (2005), 93-143, 114-23.

[4] Epict., *Diss*. III 1,40: ὅτι οὐκ εἶ κρέας οὐδὲ τρίχες, ἀλλὰ προαίρεσις. See also Epict., *Diss*. II 23,5-19 where Epictetus characterizes the προαίρεσις as the only faculty that is responsible for all thoughts, senses and actions of the human being. The Greek quotations are based on Heinrich Schenkl, *Epicteti dissertationes ab Arriano digestae* (Leipzig, 1916). The English text is quoted from William A. Oldfather, *Epictetus: The Discourses as Reported by Arrian, the Manual, and Fragments*, Vol. I-II (Cambridge/Mass., London, 1959/1961).

[5] Epict., *Diss*. I 1,23-4. In *Diss*. IV 1,68-75 Epictetus again makes clear that one's assent which is performed by the προαίρεσις cannot be forced by anyone.

[6] See, for example, Epict., *Diss*. I 29,1-2; *Diss*. II 23,19. Gourinat, therefore, concludes: 'Enfin, la *prohairesis* est une connaissance susceptible de distinguer le bien du mal, et de choisir entre le bien et le mal, comme entre le vraix et le faux. […] la qualité morale de la *prohairesis* définit l'essence du bien et du mal'. J.-B. Gourinat, 'La prohairesis' (2005), 114.

That is why this term was considered to describe 'the true self, the inner man, the "I" of personal identity'[7] and consequently was translated with 'will',[8] 'moral personality'[9] or referring to Cyril's *Catecheses* with 'purpose' or 'intention'. Thus, Karamanolis points out that it was mainly Epictetus' specific use of the term προαίρεσις 'that was crucial to early Christians'.[10] The openness to interpretation on the one hand and the emphasis on the personal character of the process of decisions on the other hand made this term so attractive to the Christians that they, in general, preferred it. Both Karamanolis and Kobusch agree to the influence of this term on later Christian authors in their attempt to oppose to contemporary philosophical and/or gnostic ideas of God and man. But the catechetical context and especially Cyril's *Catecheses* are completely neglected in recent patristic studies concerning the concepts of free will in Late Antique Christianity.

In fact, the preference for the term προαίρεσις can be found in Cyril's lectures as well: While the term αὐτεξούσιον is used only five times, there are more than 40 passages where Cyril applies the term προαίρεσις in order to address his candidates' deliberate choice or purpose. It is noticeable that Cyril does not include the stoic term ἐφ' ἡμίν in his *Catecheses* although it was likewise known and applied by his contemporaries. I assume he did this for didactic reasons in order to not confuse his audience with different philosophical terms. The total absence of this term demonstrates that Cyril accurately prepared his lectures in advance considering the term προαίρεσις to be adequate to address his candidates' motivation, while he used the term αὐτεξούσιον to explain anthropological concepts. In this respect, Cyril's account concerning the human soul shall be analyzed in the following.

In the middle of the fourth *Catechesis* Cyril introduces the doctrine concerning the human being's soul with the famous appeal γνῶθι σεαυτόν:

> Next, know yourself for what you are, that you are a man, twofold in nature, composed of soul and body, and that […] the same God is the Creator of the soul and the body. Know also that this soul of yours is self-determining, the fairest work of God, made according to the image of its Creator, immortal because of God who makes it immortal, a living being, rational, imperishable, because of Him who has conferred these gifts.[11]

[7] Charles H. Kahn, 'Discovering the will. From Aristotle to Augustin', in John M. Dillon and Anthony A. Long (eds), *The Question of 'Eclecticism'. Studies in Later Greek Philosophy* (Berkeley, 1988), 234-59, 253.

[8] M. Frede, *Will* (2011), 46.

[9] See R.H. Pich, 'Προαίρεσις' (2010), 100 with further references to translations.

[10] G. Karamanolis, *Philosophy* (2013), 153.

[11] *Cat*. IV 18: […] καὶ σεαυτὸν γνῶθι λοιπὸν ὅστις εἶ. Ὅτι διπλοῦς ἄνθρωπος καθέστηκας, ἐκ ψυχῆς τε καὶ σώματος συγκείμενος· καὶ ὅτι, […] ὁ αὐτὸς Θεὸς καὶ τῆς ψυχῆς καὶ τοῦ σώματός ἐστι δημιουργός. Καὶ γίνωσκε ψυχὴν ἔχειν αὐτεξούσιον, ἔργον Θεοῦ κάλλιστον, κατ' εἰκόνα τοῦ πεποιηκότος· ἀθάνατον, διὰ τὸν ἀπαθανατίζοντα Θεόν· ζῶον λογικὸν ἄφθαρτον, διὰ τὸν ταῦτα χαρισάμενον·.

This short passage contains the constitutive anthropological explanations: Cyril opts for a dichotomous idea of man and he defends the human body as also created by the one God. However, God's worthiest act of creation was the human soul. Only the soul is made in the image of God and this distinction is manifested in the endowment of the soul with the αὐτεξούσιον. It is worth noting that Cyril does not expound any problems of *Gen.* 1:26 with regard to anthropological contents.[12] Most quotations from this biblical passage serve for Christological and not anthropological purposes.

Returning to the fourth catechesis, there are further explanations referring to the constitution of man's soul:

> And all souls are alike, both of men and women; only their bodily members are differentiated. There is not a class of souls sinning by nature and a class of souls acting justly by nature. Both are a matter of choice, since the substance of the soul is of one kind and alike in all.[13]

Like Irenaeus,[14] Clement of Alexandria[15] or Origin,[16] Cyril renounces gnostic ideas that opt for distinct human natures and claim that some are destined to salvation and while others are not. In contrast, Cyril insists that it is the personal deliberate choice, the exercise of man's autonomy,[17] which is the base for God's reward or punishment, as he claims in the following:

[12] Only once, in *Cat*. XIV 10 Cyril mentions that the human being maintains the image, which is characterized as the endowment of the soul with the αὐτεξούσιον, while the likeness becomes obscured because of man's disobedience against God; *Cat.* XIV 10: τότε εἶπεν ὁ θεός· ποιήσωμεν ἄνθρωπον κατ' εἰκόνα ἡμετέραν καὶ καθ' ὁμοίωσιν. καὶ τὸ μὲν κατ' εἰκόνα ἔλαβε, τὸ δὲ καθ' ὁμοιότητα διὰ τὴν παρακοὴν ἡμαύρωσεν. A possible affinity to God because of this likeness is not discussed by Cyril.

[13] *Cat*. IV 20: καὶ ὁμοῖαι πᾶσαι αἱ ψυχαί εἰσιν ἀνδρῶν τε καὶ γυναικῶν· τὰ γὰρ μέλη τοῦ σώματος διακέκριται μόνον. Οὐκ ἔστι τάγμα ψυχῶν κατὰ φύσιν ἁμαρτανουσῶν, καὶ τάγμα ψυχῶν κατὰ φύσιν δικαιοπραγουσῶν· ἀλλ' ἐκ προαιρέσεως ἀμφότερα, μονοειδοῦς καὶ ὁμοίας οὔσης ἐν ἅπασι τῆς τῶν ψυχῶν ὑποστάσεως.

[14] See, for example, Iren., *Adv. haer*. IV 37,1.4-6.

[15] See, for example, Clem., *Strom*. VII 12,96,1-3, Clemens also disagrees with Valentinus and Basilides that faith is a product of nature but insists that faith is an effort of the προαίρεσις – otherwise repentance and baptism would be useless, *Strom.* II 3,10.1-11.1-2.

[16] Origen's whole cosmological and anthropological concept is based on the idea that, in the beginning, God created the rational beings without any distinctions and it is because of their exercise of free will that they turned away from God to a sinful state of being. See, for example, *PA* II 9,2.

[17] In *Cat*. IV 19 Cyril also explains, 'that before the soul comes into the world, it has committed no sin; but though we came into the world sinless, we now of our own choice commit sin' (ὅτι πρὶν παραγένηται εἰς τόνδε τὸν κόσμον ἡ ψυχή, οὐδὲν ἥμαρτεν· ἀλλ' ἐλθόντες ἀναμάρτητοι, νῦν ἐκ προαιρέσεως ἁμαρτάνομεν). It has been suggested that in this passage Cyril opposes to the idea that a preexistent fall caused the imprisoning of the soul into a body, see, for example, Edwin H. Gifford, *The Catechetical Lectures of St. Cyril*, NPNF, second series 7 (1893), 23 note 3. Yet, I think that Cyril inserts this passage again for didactic reasons: The idea of the preexistence of the soul, as it has been defended not only by gnostic groups but also systematized for an educated Christian audience by Origen, is not only highly speculative but also very difficult to understand for an audience that probably consists of uneducated people. I suppose that to avoid

The soul possesses the capacity to exercise self-determination; and though the devil can make suggestions, he has not the power to compel against your will […] For, if you committed fornication by necessity, then why did God prepare Gehenna? If you acted justly by nature and not by choice, why did God prepare ineffable crowns?[18]

It is worth noting that in *Cat*. IV 21 Cyril almost quotes an Epictetean dictum according to which one's προαίρεσις cannot be forced by anything.[19] Thus, the responsibility for choosing either the good or the bad is entirely attributed to human being's προαίρεσις.

Apparently, the endowment with autonomy, *i.e*. free will expressed by the term τὸ αὐτεξούσιον is, at first, of no moral value, since it is man's προαίρεσις which can be good or evil.[20] Furthermore, Cyril clarifies that God has created the human being towards the good[21] while it is the exercise of man's endowment with the αὐτεξούσιον, the particular choices and outlasting aims freely performed by the προαίρεσις, that the human being is responsible for.

This theoretical, anthropological understanding of the constitution of the human being leads to the question which actually practical kinds of choices or decisions Cyril expects his candidates to make. For this purpose, it is necessary to consider the catechetical context of Cyril's lectures. Peter Gemeinhardt characterizes the fourth century as a period in which it came into vogue to become a Christian.[22] The political change during Constantine's reign brought forward a social

any misunderstandings or attempts to transport one's peccability to a preexisted state of being, Cyril focuses in this paragraph on the importance of one's προαίρεσις referring to the problem of sin in the here and now.

[18] *Cat*. IV 21: Αὐτεξούσιός ἐστιν ἡ ψυχή· καὶ ὁ διάβολος τὸ μὲν ὑποβάλλειν δύναται, τὸ δὲ καὶ ἀναγκάσαι παρὰ προαίρεσιν, οὐκ ἔχει τὴν ἐξουσίαν […] Εἰ γὰρ κατ' ἀνάγκην ἐπόρνευες, καὶ τίνος ἕνεκα τὴν γέενναν ἡτοίμασεν ὁ Θεός; Εἰ κατὰ φύσιν, ἀλλ' οὐ κατὰ προαίρεσιν ἐδικαιοπράγεις, τίνος ἕνεκεν στεφάνους ἀνεκδιηγήτους ἡτοίμασεν ὁ Θεός;. McCauley/Stephenson, *Cyril* (1969/1970) suggest to translate the first part with: 'The soul possesses freedom', but I think that here Cyril repeats the characterization already given in *Cat*. IV 18. See note 11.

[19] See note 5 as well *Cat*. IV 37.

[20] See note 6 for the Epictetean background of this interpretation.

[21] *Cat*. II 1: 'For that we sin of our own free choice, the Prophet clearly declares: "I had planted you, a choice vine of fully tested stock; how could you turn into bitterness, a spurious vine?" (*Jer*. 2:21)'. The planting was good, but the fruit brings forth evil by his deliberate purpose; and, therefore, the planter is blameless, but the vine should be burnt with fire, since it was planted to bear good fruit, and it has chosen freely to bear evil fruit […] Though the Creator, being good, created unto good works, the creature of his own purpose turned aside to wickedness' (καὶ ὅτι γε αὐτοπροαιρέτως ἁμαρτάνομεν, λέγει που σαφῶς ὁ προφήτης· Ἐγὼ δ' ἐφύτευσά σε ἄμπελον καρποφόρον πᾶσαν ἀληθίνην, πῶς ἐστράφης εἰς πικρίαν ἡ ἄμπελος ἡ ἀλλοτρία; Ἡ φυτεία καλή, ὁ δὲ καρπὸς ἐκ προαιρέσεως κακός· καὶ διὰ τοῦτο ὁ φυτουργὸς ἀναίτιος, ἡ δὲ ἄμπελος κατακαυθήσεται πυρί, ἐπειδὴ εἰς ἀγαθὸν ἐφυτεύθη, καὶ εἰς κακὸν ἐκαρποφόρησεν ἐκ προαιρέσεως […] Ὁ μὲν οὖν κτίστης, ἀγαθὸς ὤν, ἐπ' ἔργοις ἀγαθοῖς ἔκτισεν· τὸ δὲ κτισθέν, ἐξ οἰκείας προαιρέσεως εἰς πονηρίαν ἐτράπη).

[22] Peter Gemeinhardt, 'Staatsreligion, Volkskirche oder Gemeinschaft der Heiligen? Das Christentum in der Spätantike: eine Standortbestimmung', in *id*., *Die Kirche und ihre Heiligen. Studien zu Ekklesiologie und Hagiographie in der Spätantike*, STAC 90 (Tübingen, 2014), 21-46, 30.

appreciation of Christianity in general and a religious admiration of Jerusalem in particular. Jan William Drijvers has recently outlined how Palestine in only a few years changed from a former forgotten Roman colony to the Christian Holy Land with its center in Jerusalem.[23] Especially the new Church of the Holy Sepulchre was highly attractive to pilgrims, monks as well as to the common people.[24] Accordingly, the Christian clergy and theologians were confronted with a new situation:[25] more and more people wanted to join the Christian community – but not always because of devotional reasons. Right at the beginning of his lectures, Cyril conveys his awareness of the different motives of some candidates who were about to be baptized came for:

> Let no one enter saying: 'I say, let us see what the believers are doing; I'm going in to have a look and learn what's going on'.[26]
> Perhaps you have come with a different motive: perhaps you are courting, and a girl is your reason – or, conversely, a boy. Many a time, too, a slave has wished to please his master, or a friend his friend. You may have come with an evil purpose, but I have good hope that you will be saved.[27]

[23] Jan W. Drijvers, *Cyril of Jerusalem: Bishop and City* (Leiden, 2004), see also Katharina Heyden, *Orientierung. Die westliche Christenheit und das Heilige Land in der Antike* (Münster, 2014).

[24] Gregory of Nazianzus bears witness, even though critically, to the fact that they were people who at all costs wanted to be baptized by the bishop of Jerusalem himself: 'Do not say, "a Bishop shall baptize me, – and he a Metropolitan, – and he of Jerusalem (for the Grace does not come of a place, but of the Spirit), – and he of noble birth, for it would be a sad thing for my nobility to be insulted by being baptized by a man of no family"'. The translation is quoted from Charles G. Browne and James E. Swallow, *Select Orations of Saint Gregory Nazianzen*, NPNF, second series 7, repr. (1989), Gr. Naz., *Or*. XL 26: Μὴ εἴπῃς· «ἐπίσκοπος βαπτισάτω με, καὶ οὗτος μητροπολίτης, ἢ Ἱεροσολυμίτης – οὐ γὰρ τόπων ἡ χάρις, ἀλλὰ τοῦ Πνεύματος –, καὶ οὗτος τῶν εὖ γεγονότων· δεινὸν γὰρ εἰ τῷ βαπτιστῇ τὸ εὐγενές μου καθυβρισθήσεται» (SC 358, 256,10-4 Moreschini/Gallay).

[25] By gradually entering into the society the Church opened its doors as Cyril witnesses: 'For our part, as Christ's ministers, we have given a welcome to every man and, in the role of porter, have left the door ajar' (*PCat*. 4: Ἡμεῖς μὲν γάρ, οἱ διάκονοι Χριστοῦ, δεδέγμεθα ἕκαστον, καὶ θυρωρῶν ὥσπερ τάξιν ἐπέχοντες, ἀνέτην ἀφήκαμεν τὴν θύραν). The reorganization of the catechumenate in the fourth century shows how the Church, in this case the bishop of Jerusalem, tries to handle a situation which Gemeinhardt characterizes as '"volkskirchlich" […] was für eine Kirche damals wie heute konkret bedeutet: im öffentlichen Raum zu existieren und dabei offen für verschiedene Formen der Partizipation zu sein. Es gab gute theologische Gründe, sich dem wachsenden Zustrom an Taufwilligen nicht zu entziehen […]'. P. Gemeinhardt, 'Staatsreligion' (2014), 32-3. Nowadays it is questioned whether the reorganization of the catechumenate is only a result of mass conversions taking place during and after Constantine's reign. Johnson provides an overview of the current arguments against the '"mass conversion" theory', Maxwell E. Johnson, *The Rites of Christian Initiation. Their Evolution and Interpretation* (Collegeville, Minnesota, [2]2007), 116-7. However, it was not mainly the number of the candidates, but the quality of their motivation that caused the exhortatory tone of the catechists, see M.E. Johnson, *Rites* ([2]2007), 117-9.

[26] *PCat*. 2: μήτις ὑμῶν εἰσέλθῃ λέγων· Ἀφὲς ἴδωμεν τί ποιοῦσιν οἱ πιστοί· εἰσελθὼν ἴδω, ἵνα μάθω τὰ γινόμενα.

[27] *PCat*. 5: Ἐγχωρεῖ σε καὶ προφάσει ἄλλῃ ἐλθεῖν· ἐγχωρεῖ γὰρ καὶ ἄνδρα βούλεσθαι γυναικὶ καθικετεῦσαι, καὶ διὰ τοῦτο προσελθεῖν· ἀντιστρέφει καὶ ἐπὶ γυναικῶν τὸ ὅμοιον ὁ

Especially, in the *Procatechesis* which will be the focus of the following analysis Cyril goes on and on to exhort his listeners to be sincere participating in the catechetical instruction. To express this, he applies the term προαίρεσις. Nearly a quarter of all passages where Cyril uses this term are to be found in this inaugural lecture. Here he constantly repeats that primarily all that counts for God is the human being's deliberate choice to devote oneself to Him. Thus, Cyril explains: 'For God is a generous benefactor, but he waits for each one's decision […]. It is a true resolution which makes you one of the called; for if you are here in body and not in mind, you gain nothing'.[28]

Obviously, although God does not elect only some people to salvation it is still up to the individual to take the first step by sincerely learning and believing in the Christian doctrines.[29] For God is gladly willing to forgive and accept every single person even when some candidates at first have come because of wrong motivation, as Cyril claims:

> You, maybe, have come in with your soul befouled with the mire of sin and with your purpose sullied. You came in; you were accepted; your name was entered in the register […]. If you persist in an evil purpose, the preacher is guiltless, but you must not expect to receive the grace.[30]

Then, in *Procatechesis* 6, Cyril continues:

> It was because he foresaw this – because man were to bear a name which belongs to God – that the Psalmist, speaking in the person of God, said: 'I have said: you are gods, and all of you are sons of the Most High' (*Ps*. 80:6). But take care that you do not, while rejoicing in the name of 'faithful', have the purpose of the faithless.[31]

These passages clearly illustrate that Cyril applies the term προαίρεσις to address the human being's disposition to reconsider not only particular choices,[32] but also outlasting conviction – in that case to be convinced by and bent on the

λόγος· καὶ δοῦλος πολλάκις δεσπότῃ, καὶ φίλος φίλῳ ἀρέσαι ἠθέλησε. Δέχομαι τὸ δέλεαρ τοῦ ἀγκίστρου, καὶ καταδέχομαί σε, κακῇ προαιρέσει μὲν ἐλθόντα, ἐλπίδι δὲ ἀγαθῇ σωθησόμενον.

[28] *PCat*. 1: Ὁ μὲν γὰρ Θεὸς δαψιλής ἐστιν εἰς εὐεργεσίαν· περιμένει δὲ ἑκάστου τὴν γνησίαν προαίρεσιν […]. ἡ πρόθεσις γνησία οὖσα, κλητόν σε ποιεῖ· κἂν γὰρ τὸ σῶμα ὧδε ἔχῃς, τὴν δὲ διάνοιαν μὴ ἔχῃς, οὐδὲν ὠφελῇ.

[29] *PCat*. 8: 'For God requires nothing more of us than a good intention' (Οὐδὲν γὰρ ἄλλο παρ' ἡμῶν ζητεῖ ὁ Θεός, εἰ μὴ προαίρεσιν ἀγαθήν), E. Yarnold, *Cyril* (2000).

[30] *PCat*. 4: Ἐγχωρεῖ δέ σε βεβορβορωμένην ἔχοντα τὴν ψυχὴν ἁμαρτίαις, καὶ τὴν προαίρεσιν ἐσπιλωμένην, εἰσελθεῖν. Εἰσῆλθες· κατηξιώθης· ὄνομά σου ἐνεγράφη […]. Εἰ δὲ ἐπιμένεις κακῇ προαιρέσει, ὁ μὲν λέγων ἀναίτιος, σὺ δὲ μὴ προσδόκα λήψεσθαι τὴν χάριν.

[31] *PCat*. 6: Τοῦτο προβλέπων ὁ Ψαλμῳδὸς ἔλεγεν ἐκ προσώπου τοῦ Θεοῦ, ἐπειδὴ μέλλουσιν ἄνθρωποι Θεοῦ προσηγορίαν λαμβάνειν· Ἐγὼ εἶπα, θεοί ἐστε, καὶ υἱοὶ Ὑψίστου πάντες· ἀλλὰ βλέπε, μὴ πιστοῦ μὲν ἡ προσηγορία, ἀπίστου δὲ ἡ προαίρεσις. To be consistent, I have substituted 'resolve' with 'purpose'.

[32] Examples for particular choices would be the registration for baptism as well as all kinds of actions referring to the Christian lifestyle.

Christian faith. Only by means of his distinctive concept of free will, Cyril can consider human beings to be capable of deliberately accepting[33] Christian doctrines in the first place. Thus, learning the Christian doctrines, as one part of the Christian faith, is a willingly accomplished process and, consequently, can be stimulated and guided by the catechist in order to prepare the candidates for a worthy baptism.

Conclusion

The present article aims to show that Cyril of Jerusalem offers a bipartite notion of free will in his *Catecheses* using the terms τὸ αὐτεξούσιον and προαίρεσις. As a result, Cyril deems human beings to be particularly characterized by the endowment with free will on the one hand and able to exercise this endowment deliberately in particular choices and outlasting purposes on the other hand. While applying the term αὐτεξούσιον to explain anthropological ideas it is the term προαίρεσις that predominates in Cyril's lectures. It should then become clear that it is mainly the Epictetean understanding of this term with its strong individual and moral connotation which is the background for Cyril's own writings. Accordingly, it is highly important that Cyril chiefly makes use of term προαίρεσις in order to underline the individual responsibility for a moral decision concerning the process of becoming a Christian. Thus, it is primarily in the *Procetechesis* that Cyril exhorts his candidates to be sincere in undergoing the forthcoming instructions. Since, for Cyril, baptism requires a decent aim as well as an honest willingness to learn the Christian doctrines, I suggest that Cyril's emphasis on the concept of free will is, first of all, pedagogical. Therefore, the possibility for the educational process of the catechetical instructions is fundamentally based on anthropological considerations presented by Cyril in his first lectures. Those considerations are the base on which further topics like for example sin and repentance, faith and grace could be elaborated properly.

[33] In *Cat*. V 10 Cyril presents a twofold notion of faith. Concerning the first understanding he explains: 'Dogmatic faith involves an assent to something; and this truly benefits the soul […]' (Ἔστι μὲν γὰρ ἓν εἶδος τῆς πίστεως, τὸ δογματικόν, συγκατάθεσιν [τῆς] ψυχῆς ἔχον περὶ τοῦδέ τινος· καὶ ὠφελεῖ τὴν ψυχήν). By using the stoic term συγκατάθεσις in this definition, Cyril assigns the process of learning and believing to the responsibility of one's προαίρεσις. Hence, giving an assent to impressions is a form of acting of the προαίρεσις, see Adolf Bonhöffer, *Epictet und die Stoa, Untersuchungen zur stoischen Philosophie* (Stuttgart, ^{2}1968), 168-75; R.H. Pich, Προαίρεσις (2010), 101; see also Winfried, Schröder, *Athen und Jerusalem, Die philosophische Kritik am Christentum in Antike und Neuzeit* (Stuttgart, 2011), 96-103 who discusses the notion of faith in Clemens of Alexandria's and Cyril's writings arguing for its stoic background. Though I do not agree with him that Cyril provides a notion of faith 'in einem eindeutig voluntaristischen Sinne' (Schröder, *Athen* [2011], 99-100 footnote 66), the connection between the term προαίρεσις and συγκατάθεσις is obviously made in the *Catecheses*.

Marius Victorinus, *Opus ad Candidum*. An Analysis of its Rhetorical Structure

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Abstract

The writings of Victorinus have been regarded as obscure since the times of Jerome. Hadot tried to solve this problem by the methods of *Quellenforschung*. He identified purely philosophical, alien elements in the works of Victorinus and considered them to be translations of lost works of Porphyry. This article shows that the *Opus ad Candidum* has to be analysed by rhetorical categories. There are no incoherencies, rather everything is a necessary and useful step in Victorinus' argumentation. Therefore the works of Victorinus should not be used as a source to reconstruct lost works of Porphyry. Furthermore, the structure of the work shows that Candidus is a persona employed as a rhetorical device by Victorinus. The broad argumentation of Victorinus indicates that his work is not simply antiheretical, but an attempt to give Nicene theology a stable philosophical and theological foundation.[1]

1. The problem of *obscuritas*

'Marius Victorinus, an African by birth, taught rhetoric at Rome in the reign of the emperor Constantius, and in extreme old age converted to the Christian faith and wrote books against Arius, extremely obscure and written in a dialectical style, which only experts understand […]'.[2]

The passionate repetition of this harsh verdict by Jerome seems to have become a common place in the study of Marius Victorinus.

Indeed, everyone who reads the trinitarian works of Victorinus for the first time, might be inclined to agree with this view on his literary abilities. As his speculative concepts are difficult to grasp, we are relieved by the fact that generations of readers have had the same experience.

However, it seems highly unlikely for an ancient author to deliberately write incomprehensible books, even more so when he is a philosopher of Victorinus'

[1] These are first thoughts on the right methodological approach to Marius Victorinus in the context of my doctoral dissertation.

[2] Hier., *vir. ill.* 101: *Victorinus, natione Afer, Romae sub Constantio principe rhetoricam docuit et in extrema senectute Christi se tradens fidei scripsit Adversus Arium libros more dialectico valde obscuros, qui nisi ab eruditis non intelliguntur* […], English translation: *Saint Jerome. On illustrious men*, trans. by Thomas P. Halton, Fathers of the Church 100 (Washington, D.C., 1999), 135.

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stature and the public professor of rhetoric in Rome. One cannot stress this fact enough, as clarity of style and thought is one of the most important rules according to ancient rhetorical handbooks.[3]

2. Hadot's *Quellenforschung*, its criticism, and a rhetorical approach

Pierre Hadot tries to solve the problem of this obscurity by the methods of *Quellenforschung*, the search for and study of Victorinus' literary sources. Following this path, he identifies certain alien elements as borrowings from lost works of Porphyry.[4] Despite of his *Quellenforschung*, Hadot is confident that the works of Victorinus will not become a 'disparate mosaic'.[5] This is a promise he cannot keep. Since a key-point of his analysis is to identify passages that have no real function in the development of thought and literary composition, these passages would indicate little to no thoughtful literary arrangement. In his avid search for incoherencies, Hadot ultimately draws the conclusion that even Victorinus' contemporary readers could not fully understand his works.[6] In contrast, I propose that even if a Roman author uses literary sources for his writings, he chooses them well and integrates them properly in his whole composition. It seems quite absurd to assume that an honoured professor of rhetoric would have written books nobody could understand.[7] Instead his works have to be analysed by rhetorical categories: In his rhetorical works he promotes Cicero's ideal of a synthesis of *eloquentia* and *sapientia*.[8] Why should he not follow the same goal as a Christian author?

3. The *Opus ad Candidum*: fictitious speeches, not real letters

The first work of the *opera theologica* is presented as an exchange of four writings between the Arian Candidus and Marius Victorinus.[9] It has already

[3] For the virtue of *perspicuitas*/σαφήνεια see *e.g.* Quint., *inst.* VIII 2,22: *nobis prima sit virtus perspicuitas* […].

[4] See Pierre Hadot, *Porphyre et Victorinus*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1968), I 30-77, the parts considered to be borrowings from Porphyry are collected separately in vol. II.

[5] *Ibid.* 35.

[6] *Ibid.* 65.

[7] See Hier., *chron. a. Abr 2370* (354 AD): *Victorinus rhetor et Donatus grammaticus praeceptor meus Romae insignis habentur. E quibus Victorinus etiam statuam in foro Traiani meruit.* See also Aug., *conf.* VIII 2,3.

[8] See *e.g.* Mar. Victorin., *rhet. praef.*: […] *studendum esse eloquentiae, sed tamen quae sit mixta sapientiae.* [*C. Marius Victorinus. Commenta in Ciceronis Rhetorica,* rec. Thomas Riesenweber (Berlin and Boston, 2013), 2,1f. = p. 155,19f. Halm]

[9] The now so called book *Adversus Arium* I consists of two different writings and has to be divided after *Adv. Ar.* I 47. The first half is the last book of the *Opus ad Candidum*, see Pierre Hadot, *Marius Victorinus. Recherches sur sa vie et ses œuvres* (Paris, 1971), 256-7.

been argued mainly on ground of stylistic observations that Candidus is nothing more than a fictitious *persona* employed by Victorinus to demonstrate the Arian cause more compactly and to prepare his refutation.[10] I hope to show that an analysis of the basic structure of the work of Victorinus can support this view. Nevertheless, I will continue to use the name Candidus for practical reasons.

Even though this exchange is always called a correspondence, it has to be noted that these writings, strictly speaking, are not letters: there is no salutation at the beginning or the end and none of the manuscripts contains the title *epistula* or *litterae*. The fact that the addressees call each other by name at the beginning of each writing rather reminds of a dedication than a letter. Victorinus himself addresses the writings as *sermo,* admittedly a vague category.[11] According to the definition of a letter as one half of a dialogue, *sermo* can, of course, be used to describe a letter.[12] However, the lack of any real epistolary elements in addition to the sheer length of the writings makes me inclined to translate *sermo* here as philosophical or theological discussion.[13] Furthermore, an analysis of the structure of these *sermones* shows that they can be read as speeches and that they follow the traditional *partes orationis*. Even single arguments are often structured according to the rules of the handbooks.[14] The lack of any real epistolary elements makes it even more compelling to assume that we are dealing with a fictitious discussion *in utramque partem.*

4. Structure and discussion of *De generatione divina*

The *Opus ad Candidum* starts with a philosophical tract by Candidus.[15] Its title *De generatione divina* indicates the main object: Candidus writes to Victorinus to prove that God is unbegotten and does not beget. His main premise is that every act of generation means change, while God himself is immutable. This part of his writing is identical to the *confirmatio* of a speech.[16] The following part is

[10] See Pierre Nautin, 'Candidus l'Arien', in *L'homme devant dieu. Mélanges offerts au père Henri de Lubac. Exégèse et Patristique* (Paris, 1963), 309-20, Manlio Simonetti, 'Nota sull'Ariano Candido', *Orph* 10 (1963), 151-7.

[11] Mar. Victorin., *Adv. Ar*. I 1: *In primo sermone huius operis […]* [32,14 Locher].

[12] See Ps.-Demetr., *eloc*. 223 citing Artemon the editor of Aristotle's letters: εἶναι γὰρ τὴν ἐπιστολὴν οἷον τὸ ἕτερον μέρος τοῦ διαλόγου.

[13] See OLD s.v. *sermo* 3, 1743f. In my opinion the translation of Blaise as *écrit* or *livre* goes too far, *sermo* keeps the connotation of a debate or dialogue even in his examples, see Albert Blaise and Henri Chirat, *Dictionnaire Latin-Français des auteurs chrétiens* (Turnhout, 1954), s.v. *sermo* 4, 755.

[14] I cannot deal with a detailed analysis of single arguments in this article.

[15] All citations and references follow: *Marii Victorini Afri opera theologica*, ed. Albrecht Locher (Leipzig, 1976).

[16] *Cand*. I 1-3.

the *refutatio*, where Candidus refutes twelve different modes of generation as proposed by philosophy or the bible. He argues that they all imply change or a diminution of God.[17] The conclusion of Candidus is that Jesus Christ cannot be the begotten Son of God, but rather is the first and only perfect creature.[18]

De generatione divina has the structure of a speech, missing only a proper *exordium*. This, however, is not necessary, as an exchange between friends already suggests familiarity and interest on behalf of the addressee.[19] The arguments are stringent and perfectly modelled after the recommendations of rhetorical handbooks. While Candidus' strict logical style seems to be very similar to the Anhomoean τεχνολογία, it is important to note that the doctrine is not purely Anhomoean.[20] The most striking example is Candidus' refusal to attribute substance to God, whereas the Anhomoean theology is decidedly a speculation on God's substance.[21]

However, even Hadot identifies only two small parts as borrowings from Porphyry.[22] Nevertheless, at the same time he also accepts the hypothesis that Candidus is nothing but a *persona* of Victorinus.[23] This leads to the odd conclusion that Victorinus wrote a perfectly structured Arian exposé, practically without using literary sources, while he makes wild use of Greek sources for his own theological dissertations. This is a strange disproportion and can only be solved in two ways: Either Candidus was a real person who employed a very different and much more stringent literary technique than Victorinus, or the other works of Victorinus are not that much of a disparate mosaic. I advocate the second solution.[24]

5. Structure of the whole *Opus ad Candidum*

5.1. *Ad Candidum*

In *Ad Candidum* Marius Victorinus gives a copious answer to the problems raised by Candidus. The structure of Victorinus' answer to Candidus is not very

[17] *Cand*. I 4-9.

[18] *Cand*. I 10-1.

[19] See the functions of an *exordium* in Rh. Her. 1,4,6: *[…] ut attentos, ut dociles, ut benivolos auditores habere possimus*. Cic., *partit. orat*. 13 shows that an exordium is unecessary, when the audience is already known to be favourably disposed towards the speaker. This is certainly the case in an exchange between friends.

[20] For τεχνολογία as a contemptuous term for the strict logic of the Anhomoeans see *e.g*. Gr. Nyss. Eun. I 155.

[21] Philostorgius, *hist. eccl*. X 2 reprimands even Arius for rejecting to speak about God's οὐσία or ὑπόστασις.

[22] See P. Hadot, *Porphyre* (1968), II 21, 27-8.

[23] See *ibid*. 40 no. 3, 52 and P. Hadot, *Recherches* (1971), 272-5.

[24] Hadot probably would not have accepted the first solution either, as he sees the usage of sources as a common trait of late antique writers. This is the explanation for their 'bad writing', see P. Hadot, *Porphyre* (1968), 33.

clear, as Hadot rightly points out.[25] Still, I hope to show that rhetorical categories are here of use, too. The fluent transitions might be considered as evidence for the authenticity of this letter, whereas the letter of Candidus seems to be more artificial in his strict logical arrangement.

In his *exordium*, Victorinus insists on the bible as the reference point of theology. The matter at stake is man's salvation. The accentuation of this fact shows the importance of the issues to be treated. A classical way to make the listeners or readers attentive.[26] He outlines in his *propositio* the basis of his theology and his goal to refute the Arian position of the Son's creation out of nothing.[27] The following *argumentatio* is a bit more complex. It has to be divided in two parts, each consisting of a *confirmatio* and a *conclusio*.

The natural starting point of his argumentation is the philosophical debate about the states of the existent and non-existent. Victorinus shows that there is no place in the ontological hierarchy for the truly non-existent, because everything is full of God's existence.[28] Thus, the Son cannot be created out of the non-existent in the Arian sense. In his large dissertation, Victorinus argues that the Father has existence potentially inside of himself. The birth of the Son is then described as the actualisation and manifestation of this potential existence. He is the first and perfect existent through which all creation comes into being, while the Father is the total pre-existent.[29]

Victorinus does not discuss every last detail of ontology, because he is blindly copying a source or showing off his philosophical knowledge, but because he needs it to refute the Arian positions and to formulate his own theology. Besides clarifying the Father's and the Son's place in respectively above the ontological hierarchy, this section has also an epistemological impetus. The soul as *solum* ὄν can only perceive other *sola* ὄντα. To reach a higher level, its intellectual potency has to be awakened by the νοῦς. This is an indirect critique of the extremely optimistic epistemology of Candidus.[30] Thus the debate on the non-existents and existents is not at all a mere philosophical, alien element in this work, but an integral part of it.[31]

[25] P. Hadot, *Porphyre* (1968), I 62.

[26] See *Ad Cand*. 1-2,12. The exordium might be classified as *ab scriptura (*Rh. Her. 1,4,6), as the starting point is a biblical quotation. For the strategies to make the listeners attentive see Cic., *partit. orat*. 30: *ut attente audiamur, trium rerum aliqua consequemur; nam aut magna quaedam proponemus aut necessaria aut coniuncta cum ipsis apud quos res agetur*. These are all equally true in this case.

[27] See *Ad Cand*. 2,13-23.

[28] See *Ad Cand*. 4-11, this is the first *confirmatio*.

[29] See *Ad Cand*. 12-6, this is the *conclusio* of the the first *confirmatio*.

[30] See *Ad Cand*. 7-8. The writing also starts with criticizing the optimistic approach of Candidus, see *Ad Cand*. 1.

[31] Against *e.g*. Pierre Hadot, *Marius Victorinus. Traités théologiques sur la trinité II. Commentaire*, Sources Chrétiennes 69 (Paris, 1960), 713: « *L'exposé précédent sur les modes des existants*

Victorinus concludes that the Arian dogma of the Son's creation out of nothing is now totally refuted.[32] In his second *confirmatio*, he demonstrates his understanding of the father as potency and the Son as act in greater detail. Father and Son belong both to the *genus* λόγος, the specific difference being that the Father is more *esse*, the Son more *moveri* or *agere*.[33] Therefore, the second *conclusio* is that the Son is not only not created out of the non-existent, but that he is consubstantial with the Father.[34]

This broad *confirmatio* of his own theology is followed by a small, but effective *refutatio*[35]: Victorinus now uses different rhetorical strategies and accommodates his style to the Arian's syllogistic technique. That does not mean that this is now the real Victorinus' writing, whereas before he is just copying his source. It shows that his goal is not a simple logical retribution, but to establish a profound system of his own. After this, he shows that the errors of the Arian could be refuted much easier. However, he wants to refute them totally and to demonstrate the necessity of his alternative.[36] A nice example of his rhetorical methods is the usage of a *retorsio criminis*, which uses the premises of the opponent to beat him with his own weapons[37]: If every movement of God equalled change, as Candidus supposes, there could be no creation at all, because God must necessarily move to create the world. The *peroratio* ends with some additional remarks on the term 'son' and the Holy Ghost as well as with a small prayer.[38]

5.2. *Candidus II*

The exchange does not stop there. One would assume that Candidus would have insisted on clarifying the stance on the different modes of generation he refuted. These play little to no role in *Ad Candidum* and Victorinus uses some of the imagery attacked by Candidus *en passant* without really reestablishing it. Instead, Candidus translates two letters from Arius and Eusebius from the beginning of the Arian Controversy. It is impossible to think that a real Arian with Candidus' level of philosophical argumentation would retreat to such a useless move. An astute philosopher as Candidus could have thought of a much

a été trop long, soit que Victorinus n'ait pas su se libérer de sa source, soit qu'il ait voulu faire étalage d'érudition ».

[32] *Ad Cand.* 16: *exterminandum igitur dogma est ex his, quae non sunt, esse Iesum* [20,21f. Locher].

[33] See *Ad Cand.* 17-22.

[34] See *Ad Cand.* 23.

[35] See *Ad Cand.* 24-30,13.

[36] He doesn't want to commit the error of which he accuses the Homoiusians in *Adv. Ar.* I 29: *debebas enim non solum ὁμοούσιον destruere, sed et ὁμοιούσιον astruere* [62,16-7 Locher].

[37] The term *retorsio criminis* isn't drawn from ancient handbooks, there only the verbal form *retorquere* is attested, see OLD s.v. *retorqueo* 3, 1643.

[38] See *Ad Cand.* 30,14-32.

more powerful answer than that.[39] Therefore, it is clear that this is not a real answer.

Nautin supposes that these documents are used by Victorinus to dispel possible doubts on his orthodoxy. Victorinus could have feared to be accused of Arianism, because he defines the father in a certain sense as non-existent. Therefore, the Son comes out of the non-existent.[40] This is highly unlikely. If anything at all, Victorinus would have to fear the accusation of modalism.[41] I suggest that these letters rather have more of a dramaturgical function in the overall concept of the *opus*: The Arian practically admits his defeat and Victorinus can again briefly refute the basic ideas of Arianism to move on to his next subject.

5.3. *Adversus Arium Ia (= Ad Candidum II)*

Victorinus uses this brief recapitulation of the main theses of Arianism and their refutation in *Adversus Arium I* as an outset for developing a broader spectrum of trinitarian theology.[42] He collects a vast amount of evidence from Scripture. Only now, he begins to explain the right understanding of biblical metaphors criticized by Candidus. This is further evidence that the *opus* is planned as a whole: Nothing in these argumentations is new or surprising, everything could have been brought up in the same way in *Ad Candidum*, if Victorinus would have intended a complete refutation of a real Arian letter. However, the defence of scriptural imagery is arranged under this item, which is dedicated to an examination of Scripture itself. This first part of *Adversus Arium* naturally follows more the rules of a commentary than those of a speech.[43]

During the scriptural analysis a shift in argumentation takes place: The main antagonists now become the Homoiusians under the leadership of Basil of Ancyra. The Nicene Creed is shown to be sufficient against all heresies, there is no need to replace it with a new Creed.

This sudden change in topic would be very surprising in a real exchange with an Arian. The addressee is totally out of focus in the biggest part of *Adversus Arium I*. Such an arrangement only makes sense in a bigger composition: After

[39] While defending the authenticity of *De generatione divina,* Drecoll agrees in his article that *Cand*. II can be nothing but a polemical collection. However, he doesn't give an explanation why Victorinus would have to fake this second writing under the name of Candidus. See Volker H. Drecoll, 'Marius Victorinus', *RAC* 24 (2012), 130-2.

[40] P. Nautin, 'Candidus l'arien' (1963), 319.

[41] The Homoeusians identify ὁμοούσιον and ταυτούσιον, see *anath*. XIX in the letter of the Synod of Ancyra from 358, *Athanasius Werke. Dritter Band, erster Teil. Dokumente zur Geschichte des Arianischen Streites. 4. Lieferung: Bis zur Synode von Alexandrien,* ed. Hanns-Christof Brennecke *et al*. (Berlin and Boston, 2014), document 55, 408. That's why he so often marks the differences with Marcellus of Ancyra or the *patripassiani*.

[42] See *Adv. Ar*. I 1.

[43] See *Adv. Ar*. I 2-27.

the Arians and Homoeans have been refuted, it is time to refute Homoiusianism as the latest heresy against the Nicene Creed. A brief *refutatio* where the Homoiusians are denounced as a new and unnecessary sect is followed by another *confirmatio* of his own theology.[44] This *confirmatio* mostly tries to show that on the basis of their own Creeds, the Homoiusians have to admit that the Son and the Father are consubstantial. This again can be summed up under the rhetorical strategy of a *retorsio criminis*.

6. Conclusions on the *Opus ad Candidum*

The *Opus ad Candidum* can be read as a treatise against all heresies to strengthen Nicene theology in the run-up to the Council of Rimini in 359.[45] Beginning with the refutation of the oldest, most dangerous and obvious heresy, Arianism, Victorinus works his way up step by step to the more difficult to refute and more current heresy of Homoiusianism. The progression of the work shows the inherent connection of Homoiusianism to Arianism: Basil of Ancyra and his partisans are Crypto-Arians.[46]

The pseudo-Arian treatise at the beginning has different functions: It comprehensively shows the starting point of the trinitarian debate and marks the main reservations an Arian could have against the Nicene Creed. Candidus fears that this kind of theology is not appropriate to God.[47] It is important to note that his argumentation is mostly philosophical and only at the very end supported by scriptural passages. Thus, Candidus displays one of the biggest flaws of Arian theology criticized by Victorinus: The bible has to set the standard for philosophical argumentation not *vice versa*.[48]

This is why Victorinus puts much effort into demonstrating that his Nicene theology is in fact the only appropriate Christian way to speak of God. Thus, his work is not a collection of disparate philosophical material, but the attempt to give the Nicene ὁμοούσιος a stable philosophical and theological foundation and to clarify its meaning within a broad panorama of contemporary theology and philosophy. It is not only antiheretical, but much more than this. It is an attempt to convincingly demonstrate the necessity of the ὁμοούσιος to

[44] Because of the polemical nature of both the *refutatio* and *confirmatio*, it is difficult to exactly draw a line between both. I suggest that in *Adv*. I 32 [66,24 Locher] the *refutatio* ends with a small *conclusio*: *et hoc est ὁμοούσιον*. This is the last time that Basil is addressed directly [66,14 Locher]. The following analogy of the soul and the Trinity is the fluent transition to the *confirmatio*.

[45] The exact dating poses some problems which cannot be fully elaborated in this article.

[46] *Adv. Ar*. I 45: *occulti Ariani* [81,16 Locher].

[47] See *e.g. Cand*. I 5: […] *quod incongruum deo* [5,2 Locher]. This is the Latin equivalent of Greek θεοπρεπής.

[48] See *Ad Cand*. 1: *Sed nomine Christianus necesse habes accipere atque venerari scripturas inclamantes dominum Iesum Christum* [10,12-4 Locher].

a broad audience interested in theology and philosophy at the same time. The intended audience is not only heretics who are to be convinced of Nicene theology, but also supporters of the ὁμοούσιος. The work explains to them, how to understand Nicene theology correctly in a non-Marcellan way, which was the occidental standard interpretation before the Council of Rimini.[49]

7. Limits of *Quellenforschung*

Victorinus is to be seen as a whole, not half philosopher, half theologian. The feeling of obscurity has to be explained differently: For instance, one big problem for Victorinus is the lack of philosophical terminology in Latin, the best example being the missing participle of *esse*.[50] Another one is the high level of philosophical argumentation and Victorinus' preference for the paradox. The great thing about the ὁμοούσιος is, he says, that it is ultimately beyond our understanding just like God himself is above all knowledge.[51] Nevertheless, he tries to explain his trinitarian concepts and wants his readers to understand and accept them. That is why he extensively uses rhetorical strategies and devices, as the goal of any speech is to convince.[52]

Quellenforschung is not *per se* erroneous, but it has little value for the interpretation of a complete literary work. To understand Victorinus and his theology we first have to analyse the arrangement and composition of his works, which often enough are utterly rhetorical and therefore a combination of *sapientia* and *eloquentia*. The traditional rhetorical strategies help him to convincingly convey his complex theology to an audience that appreciates philosophical speculation.

Subsequently we have to compare his writings to contemporary philosophical and theological concepts to understand his specific teachings and maybe find conceptual sources of his theology. Nevertheless, when Victorinus uses literary sources he integrates them well in his work and tries to do so in a syncretistic, not a dichotomous manner. As Jerome added to his verdict, perhaps this really is an attempt only experts understand.

[49] See Jörg Ulrich, 'Nicaea and the West', *VigChr* 51 (1997), 10-24, esp. 19-24.

[50] Seneca complains about the difficulty to render τὸ ὄν and οὐσία in Latin, see Sen., *epist*. 58,6-7.

[51] See *Adv. Ar*. I 18: *quid ex his queas dicere ab his, quae non sunt, esse Christum, aut similis substantia est Christus? Comprehensibilia sunt et definita. At vero ὁμοούσιον non solum incomprehensibile, sed et habet contradictiones multas* [48,15-8 Locher].

[52] See *e.g*. Quint., *inst*. II 15,5: *Cicero pluribus locis scripsit officium oratoris esse dicere adposite ad persuadendum.*

Cappadocian Writers

Is it Possible to Speak of 'Cappadocian Theology' as a System?

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Abstract

There are various good reasons to consider the Cappadocians as a group. The Cappadocians were united by a network of family and regional ties; they shared significant involvement in the defence of some crucial theological principles. Despite this, we should not allow these similarities to conceal their differences. While a series of connections can be traced between Gregory of Nyssa's theology and Basil's, it is clear that the peculiarities of Gregory of Nazianzus' theology are not near to Basil's.

Up until the 20th century it had been traditional to consider the theology of the Cappadocians in a unitary manner.[1] However, in a study that still carries weight,[2] Holl had stated that 'the theology of the Cappadocians did not come about overnight. They did not adopt a unitary stance with regard to the crucial issues of their time. Nevertheless, their "Gedankenbildung" does not lack its own internal cohesion'.

Subsequent studies (von Balthasar, von Ivanka, Daniélou[3]) concentrated their attention almost exclusively on Gregory of Nyssa, in whom they identified a precursor of their own personal philosophical tendencies, namely those dating from the 1930s – 1950s. Brooks Otis' reaction derives from this,[4] as he wished

[1] As Christoph Markschies asserted, 'Unterschiede innerhalb der kappadozischern Trinitätstheologie haben weder deren Spätantike Protagonisten noch deren Zeitgenossen wirklich wahrgenommen. Es handelt sich um eine weitgehend neuzeitliche Fragestellung', see 'Gibt es eine einheitliche „kappadozische Trinitätstheologie"? Vorläufige Erwägungen zu Einheit und Differenz neunizänischer Theologie', in *id.*, *Alta Trinità Beata* (Tübingen, 2000), 196-237, 227; see also S.P. Bergjan, *Theodoret von Cyrus und der Neunicänismus* (Berlin, New York, 1994), 58-9.

[2] Karl Holl, *Amphilochius von Ikonium in seinem Verhältnis zu den grossen Kappadoziern* (Tübingen und Leipzig, 1904), 116. In any case Holl also speaks of 'the great Cappadocians' (who are the three that everyone knows, and to whom he adds Amphilochius), and interprets their theology jointly. His interpretation of the Cappadocian Fathers which starts with the theology of Basil who was the other three's master to a large extent still holds.

[3] Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Présence et Pensée* (Paris, 1942); Jean Daniélou, *Platonisme et Theologie Mystique* (Paris, 1944); Endre von Ivánka, *Hellenisches und Christliches im frühbyzantinischen Geistesleben* (Wien, 1948).

[4] Brooks Otis, 'Cappadocian Thought as a Coherent System', *Dumbarton Oak Papers* 12 (1958), 95-124.

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to re-establish the 'coherent system' of the three, even if he then concentrated only on certain points (the resurrection of the body and angelology) and excluded theology, since, in his opinion, the system of the Cappadocians should not be considered only as a theological system: he reacted against an interpretation that was due to the fact that the great scholars of the 19th century had mostly been theologians (Harnack, Loofs, Seeberg and Holl) – and more recently we have also attempted to provide this type of interpretation.

The most recent criticism, dating at least from an important study by Reinhard Hübner appears to be almost unanimous in maintaining that the 'theology of the Cappadocians' was never either organic or uniform: the writings of Basil, Gregory of Nazianzus and Gregory of Nyssa do not constitute a monolithic block.[5] The most recent criticism appears to be almost unanimous in maintaining that the 'theology of the Cappadocians' was never either organic or uniform. Radde-Gallwitz and Del Cogliano have observed that 'all the Cappadocians developed different types of theology with some shared tenets'.[6] Then attention was once again focused on Gregory of Nyssa and to a lesser extent on Basil, who is held to be the acknowledged master by his brother, as well as by his friend, Gregory of Nazianzus – even if in this regard there is not complete agreement. Nyssa was considered 'the most subtle and intriguing' by Sarah Coakley.[7]

Nyssa and Nazianzen acknowledged Basil's impact, each in their own way. Gregory of Nyssa took on Basil's role after his death in the area of ecclesiology and theology, defending him from criticism and expanding his doctrinal intuitions. But within this general interpretation arose another distinction, which concerns

[5] See Reinhard Hübner, 'Gregor von Nyssa als Verfasser der sog. Ep. 38 des Basilius. Zum unterschiedlichen Verständnis der οὐσία bei den Kappadozischen Brüdern', in J. Fontaine and Ch. Kannengiesser (eds), *Epektasis. Mélanges patristiques offerts au Cardinal Jean Daniélou* (Paris, 1972), 463-90, 464. Hübner also subsequently stated that the Cappadocians lacked a 'konsistente[] Begrifflichkeit und kohärente[s] Denken', and this was due to the fact that the post-Nicene Trinitarian doctrine is 'im Werden', with the result that neither the history of the preceding theology nor philosophy were in a position to provide adequate categories.

[6] Andrew Radde-Gallwitz and Mark Del Cogliano, *St. Basil of Caesarea, Against Eunomius, translated by Mark Del Cogliano and Andrew Radde-Gallwitz*, The Fathers of the Church 122 (Washington, D.C., 2011), 18-9. The events that separated Basil from Gregory of Nazianzus and, partly, from Gregory of Nyssa, are well known. The *communis opinio* with regard to the agreement among the Cappadocians derives above all from the fact that only a little while after the Council of Constantinople, Gregory of Nazianzus, despite the sorrow he still felt for some of their past clashes, praised his one-time friend Basil in a celebratory way, Philip Rousseau, *Basil of Caesarea*, The Transformation of the Classical Heritage (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London, 1994), 19-20; John Mc Guckin, *Saint Gregory of Nazianzus. An Intellectual Biography* (Crestwood, New York, 2001), 372-4. On that occasion Gregory described Basil as an exemplary pastor, master and theologian, and gave him the epithet with which he is still known: 'Basil the Great' (*Or.* 43,1-43,16). Gregory of Nyssa never broke off relations with Basil, recalling him with affection in the introduction to the *Apologia in Hexaemeron* (380 AD), but his doctrines differed from those of Basil above all with regard to pneumatology.

[7] Sarah Coakley, 'Introduction: Nyssa Studies in Transition', in *ead.* (ed.), *Re-thinking Gregory of Nyssa* (Oxford, 2003), 1.

the position of Nazianzus. From 1970 onwards Nazianzus was studied apart, as he was considered to be of a theologically inferior level. Unlike Gregory of Nyssa, Gregory of Nazianzus did not so obviously depend on Basil and managed to mark out his own path.[8] This path was not considered of a high level by many scholars.

1. Gregorius Nazianzenus rhetor?

The fact that Gregory of Nazianzus' writings are not studied as carefully as those of Basil or Gregory of Nyssa stems from a lack of regard (sometimes manifest, sometimes concealed): Gregory of Nazianzus' speculations appear to have been limited by a lack of critical and speculative intelligence, which becomes apparent in his peculiar way of tackling problems, that is, in a rhetorical-homiletic manner, which differs from Basil's and Gregory of Nyssa's 'treatise-like' approach. Already in 1952 Prestige had synthesised this interpretation when he defined Gregory as 'an inspired popularizer',[9] and only a few voices were raised against this (such as that of C. Moreschini). This interpretation is unsatisfactory: if Gregory of Nazianzus' form of communication is indeed 'rhetorical', this does not mean that it is 'illogical': Nazianzen presents his doctrines in rhapsodic form, but they are no less acute than those of Basil or Gregory of Nyssa. This evaluation of Gregory's writings was contested by Mc Guckin,[10] who observes that only rarely was any attempt made to penetrate below the surface of the text and little consideration was accorded to the dialectical nature of its context. Mc Guckin's stance was taken up and developed, but with the addition of a reconsideration of Nazianzen' theology by Beeley in the volume dating from 2008. To this may be added the intepretation, which is perhaps too a-theological, by Susanna Elm:[11] Gregory of Nazianzus is as much a 'son of Hellenism' as Julian. Gregory sets his defense of Christianity against the hard defense of Hellenism, which was Julian's ideal; but common to both was the defense of the *logoi*, of the idea of God, of the world, of the Roman Empire and of Greek *paideia*'.

2. Other Cappadocians?

Another question that arises is the need to clarify who exactly the 'Cappadocian Fathers' were.[12] Naturally, concerning Amphilochius' relations with Basil

[8] A. Radde-Gallwitz and M. Del Cogliano, *St. Basil of Caesarea* (2011), 18.

[9] George Leonard Prestige, *God in Patristic Thought* (London, 1925), 234.

[10] J. Mc Guckin, *St. Gregory of Nazianzus* (2001).

[11] Susanna Elm, *Sons of Hellenism, Fathers of the Church. Emperor Julian, Gregory of Nazianzus, and the Vision of Rome* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London, 2012).

[12] There are those who suggest considering Eunomius too as one of the Cappadocian Fathers, on account of his birthplace (Oltiseris, where he was born, was on the border between Galatia and Cappadocia).

and Gregory of Nazianzus, Holl opened up the road,[13] even if Amphilochius has not been studied with any great interest.

Despite not being put forward by scholars, in my opinion the presence of Evagrius Ponticus among the Cappadocians is justified, at least as far as one part of his doctrine is concerned. The *Realien* of his biography (Evagrius was nominated lector by Basil, deacon by Gregory of Nazianzus, who then entrusted him to Nectarius when he had to leave the Council of Constantinople; Evagrius is recalled by Gregory Nazianzus in his testament) are all in favour of this addition.[14] Socrates (*HE* IV 23), gives us many details; Sozomen's account is clear (*HE* VI 30): 'Evagrius was educated in philosophy and Holy Scripture by Gregory, Bishop of Nazianzus'. When he recalls the teaching he had been given by 'our wise master' (*Praktikòs* 89), Evagrius is definitely referring to Gregory of Nazianzus, and in the conclusion of the same treatise he advocates 'the prayers and intercession of Gregory the Just, who planted me, and the holy Fathers, who now water me' (that is, the desert Fathers, with whom he was then staying). Gregory and the desert Fathers (following the tradition of Origen) are therefore the basis of his cultural formation.

For this reason, the position taken by those who trace a parallel between Evagrius' and Gregory of Nyssa's doctrine[15] does not seem tenable to us; Casiday also underlines Evagrius' formation with Basil and Gregory of Nazianzus,[16] but apparently does not maintain that Evagrius' theology had links with that of his masters.[17]

3. Some observations on the theology of the Cappadocians

Given the extent and difficulty of the problem, it is possible to examine only a few points, from which it may be possible to clarify what exactly constituted both the unity of their doctrines and their consistency.[18]

[13] Following Ch. Markschies, 'Gibt es eine einheitliche „kappadozische Trinitätstheologie"?' (2000), 196 n. 2 and 228.

[14] All this, along with his own personal experiences, which led to his voluntary exile in the Egyptian desert, are recounted by Palladius (*Hist. Laus.* 38).

[15] Kevin Corrigan, *Evagrius and Gregory. Mind, Soul and Body in the 4th Century* (Farnham, 2009); Ilaria L.E. Ramelli, 'Evagrius and Gregory: Nazianzen or Nyssen? Cappadocian (and Origenian) Influence on Evagrius', *Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies* 53 (2013), 117-37.

[16] Augustine Casiday, *Reconstructing the Theology of Evagrius Ponticus. Beyond Heresy* (Cambridge, 2013).

[17] Claudio Moreschini, *I Padri Cappadoci* (Roma, 2008), 72-6; 200-2 *etc*.

[18] Both these points have been made with great clarity by Markschies, who distinguishes the problem of the unity of the Cappadocians' doctrines from that of their 'Konsistenz', Ch. Markschies, 'Gibt es eine einheitliche „kappadozische Trinitätstheologie"?' (2000), 196-7. The unity of the Cappadocians also includes Gregory of Nazianzus, who had ties of friendship with Basil, and their theology is examined in its globality by Markschies.

3.1. *Ousia, hypokeimenon and hypostasis*

In order to interpret the meaning of the term that lies at the base of the Cappadocians' alleged formula for the Trinity – that is, *ousia* with its manifold meanings – critics have for some time maintained that recourse to philosophy is inevitable, in particular Stoic and neo-Platonic philosophy.[19] *Ousia* and *hypostasis*, and the terms linked to them (*homousios*, *prosopon etc*.) are used by the Cappadocians in a non-univocal manner and, above all, in a manner that does not correspond to a precise formulation. The very formula 'one substance – three hypostases', which was considered typical of the Cappadocians, has been shown to be present in the West before them: Marius Victorinus assigns it a Greek origin: 'This is expressed by Greeks in this way: there are three hypostases from one substance'[20] (*idque a Graecis ita dicitur*: ἐκ μιᾶς οὐσίας τρεῖς εἶναι τὰς ὑποστάσεις) (*Adv. Arium*[21] III 4) and gives the Latin translation (*Adv. Arium* II 4): 'And that is why it was said: "From one substance there are three subsistences"' (*et ideo dictum est: de una substantia tres subsistentias esse*); see also *Adv. Arium* I 39: 'But the Father is by his own subsistence, the Son is by his own subsistence, from the one substance which is from the Father' (*sed subsistentia propria et pater et filius est, ab una ex patre substantia*).[22] Ritter rightly maintains that this formula (which probably derives from the Homoiousians) does not precisely correspond to the neo-Nicene formula, since it speaks of three hypostases *deriving from* one substance, and not of three hypostases *in* one substance;[23] but Abramowski objects that in any case Victorinus may come under the Homoiousian formula, because in *Adv. Arium* III 9 he states that the Father, Son and Holy Spirit 'are one sole substance, while being three subsistences' (*unum esse et unam esse substantiam, subsistentias tres*). For this reason he cannot interpret 'from one substance' as meaning a derivation *from another* hypostasis or *ousia*, which had been condemned by the Council of Nicaea.[24] Drecoll[25] maintains that Victorinus' formula, *unum esse et unam esse substantiam, subsistentias tres*, cannot simply be the translation

[19] Only Gregory of Nyssa is properly considered a philosopher (this had been claimed since the time of Daniélou: the title *Platonisme et théologie mystique* is emblematic); Gregory of Nazianzus is certainly interested in Platonic philosophy, but he suggests doctrinal re-elaborations that achieve a Christianisation of Platonism; Basil is basically considered as not interested in philosophy (which is not completely true).

[20] Trans. by Mary T. Clark, The Fathers of the Church 69 (Washington, D.C., 2001).

[21] The *Adversus Arium* was written in 360-361, therefore it precedes Basil's works.

[22] *Subsistentia* usually means the divine Person for Victorinus.

[23] Adolf-Martin Ritter, *Das Konzil von Konstantinopel und sein Symbol* (Göttingen, 1965) 285 n. 2 and 288 n. 4.

[24] Louise Abramowski, 'Trinitärische und Christologische Hypostasenformeln', *Theologie und Philosophie* 54 (1979), 38-49, 44-5.

[25] Volker Henning Drecoll, *Die Entwicklung der Trinitätslehre des Basilius von Cäsarea: Sein Weg vom Homöeusianer zum Neonizäner*, Forschungen zum Kirchen- und Dogmengeschichte 66 (Göttingen, 1996), 19-20.

of a neo-Nicene formula coming from a Greek ambience, 'because it introduces an equiparation between hypostasis and substance'.[26] But this equiparation does not appear in the formula cited by Victorinus: the formula may be similar to an interpretation criticised by Apollinarius and Basil (Basil, *Ep*. 361, dating from the same time as Marius Victorinus' *Adversus Arium*), in which the divine hypostases *proceed from* a species that is superior to them (γένος κοινὸν ὑπερκείμενον).

Another point brought to light by recent studies is that the problem of the meaning of οὐσία and ὑπόστασις does not constitute the central point of their Trinitarian theology.[27] This seems excessive. Basil set to tackling the problem right from the beginning (*Adversus Eunomium*, 364 AD), he established the difference between *ousia* and *hypostasis* in 373 AD (*ep*. 125, to Eustathius of Sebaste), but he achieved this result over the course of many years.[28] Hübner and Hildebrand examined at length *Adversus Eunomium* and arrived at the conclusion that Basil uses *ousia* and *hypostasis* interchangeably, even if in some cases *hypostasis* foreshadows the specific use that the term was subsequently to take on.[29] As far as *hypostasis* is concerned, Hildebrand underlined the generic meaning of the term according to the early Basil ('concrete existence'), a meaning that then became the specific means by which to outline the Trinitarian theology in his final years. Likewise, *physis* and *ousia* are equivalent in the *De Spiritu sancto*.[30] In Basil's homiletic writings, unlike Gregory of Nazianzus, there is very little on theological themes: evidently he did not like discussing theology with the wider public. An exception is *Homily* 24, *Contra Sabellianos et Arium et Anomaeos*, which is important because the term *hypostasis* is no longer used and has been replaced with 'person', and on the origin of the Holy Spirit, the technical term 'proceed' is used (PG 31, 612C and 616C). It therefore seems that this homily may date from Basil's final years.[31]

Michel René Barnes carried out his investigation into the significance of hypostasis in Gregory of Nyssa while attempting to achieve a theoretical definition;

[26] Drecoll's opinion has been questioned by Simonetti, 'Dal nicenismo al neonicenismo. Rassegna di alcune pubblicazioni recenti', in *id*., *Studi di cristologia postnicena*, Studia Ephemeridis Augustinianum 98 (Roma, 2006), 269-89, 274-5.

[27] Ch. Markschies, 'Gibt es eine einheitliche „kappadozische Trinitätstheologie"?' (2000), 225 and 231; Reinhard Hübner, 'Basilius von Caesarea und das homousios', in Lionel R. Wickam and Caroline P. Bammel (eds), *Christian Faith and Greek Philosophy in Late Antiquity: Essays in Tribute to George Christopher Stead…*, Supplements to Vigiliae Christianae 19 (Leiden, New York, 1993), 70-91, 91.

[28] Ch. Markschies, 'Gibt es eine einheitliche „kappadozische Trinitätstheologie"?' (2000), 205-6.

[29] St.M. Hildebrand, *The Trinitarian Theology of Basil of Caesarea. A Synthesis of Greek Thought and Biblical Truth* (Washington, D.C., 2009), 58-65.

[30] Ch. Markschies, 'Gibt es eine einheitliche „kappadozische Trinitätstheologie"?' (2000), 204.

[31] It appears to have been greatly influenced by Apollinarius, because ch. 4 (PG 31, 605D-608C) shows a strong similarity with Pseudo Athanasius' *Contra Sabellianos* 6ff. (PG 28, 108B-109A), so R. Hübner, 'Basilius von Caesarea' (1993), 88-9.

but he effectively confirmed, with regard to Gregory of Nyssa, what had been observed in Basil. Gregory uses *hypostasis* to indicate an existing being that possesses a real and separate existence, and this when it is placed in relation to the language of *ousia* or *physis*. The formula 'one *ousia* or *physis* / three *hypostases*' points to the joining together of the terms which are to be used, as if one were saying: 'When *ousia* and *hypostasis* are used together to describe the Trinity, we must say: one *ousia*, three hypostases'. Gregory of Nyssa derives from *hypostasis* a significant consequence: while Athanasius and his contemporaries use divine 'generation' in order to show that the Father and Son have the same nature, Gregory uses 'generation', and not *hypostasis* as the basis for distinguishing the three Persons. As he says in *Ad Ablabium* (p. 56,3-10): 'The difference between cause and caused is the only means that allows us to understand that one Person is distinct from the Other'. While previously in Nicene theology the reality of the titles 'Father' and 'Son' guaranteed the natural relation (that is, the continuity of nature or essence) between these two, now this reality guarantees that there is a difference of the type of existence between the two. This difference is expressed in terms of causality; the reality of this difference is manifested in terms of *hypostasis*: what is definite is that *hypostasis* loses somewhat of its specificity. In conclusion: concerning questions on the Trinity, Gregory of Nyssa manifests a 'happy disregard for what we may call "orthodox precision"'.[32] L. Ayres also states that we ought not to try to understand Gregory of Nyssa by referring, in the first place, to the development of certain terminological formulations such as 'one *ousia*, three *hypostases*'. He underlines the variety of terminology in Gregory of Nyssa for describing the relations between divine unity and the Persons: *ousia*, *physis*, *hypostasis*, *prosopon* are all used interchangeably when the need arises.[33]

What is typical of Basil and Gregory of Nyssa is discussion, in a strictly philosophical sense, of the significance of *ousia*: whether it should be taken as *substratum* (ὑποκείμενον), in the Stoic sense, or as οὐσία, in the Aristotelian sense. This distinction was put forward in an important article by Hübner, who saw that Basil's *Epistle* 38 interpreted the concept of *ousia* in accordance with Aristotle's doctrine; this epistle therefore appears not to be authentically Basil's, who followed Stoicism, but rather Gregory of Nyssa's.[34] I shall reconsider only

[32] Michel René Barnes, 'Divine unity and the divided self: Gregory of Nyssa's Trinitarian Theology in its psychological Context', in S. Coakley (ed.), *Re-thinking* (2003), 45-66, 52-3.

[33] Lewis Ayres, 'On not three people: The fundamental themes of Gregory of Nyssa's trinitarian theology as seen in *To Ablabius: on not three gods*', in S. Coakley (ed.), *Re-thinking* (2003), 15-44, 36.

[34] Drecoll has opposed this, maintaining that the epistle is effectively by Basil, *Die Entwicklung der Trinitätslehre* (1996), 297-331, as does Manlio Simonetti, review Drecoll, *ZAC* 1 (1998), 304-15, 309, in whose opinion 'l'ep. 38, oltre tutto di tono così scolasticamente trattatistico, non sia stata dettata da Basilio, ma neppure dal fratello, bensì da un ignoto personaggio del loro *entourage*, e sia poi passata, con procedimento quanto mai naturale, sotto l'autorità del leader, proprio come i libri IV e V di Eun., con annesso spir'. I do not agree with this interpretation.

one point that is interesting for the thrust of this article. I refer to a passage in Basil's *Contra Eunomium* (II 4,577C), discussed by Eunomius and subsequently by Gregory of Nyssa *Contra Eunomium* III 5,22:

> So when we hear 'Peter', our thought does not go from the name to the essential being (οὐσία) – by 'essential being' (οὐσία) *I am not here referring* to the physical substance, but we receive the impression in our mind of the peculiar properties attributed to him.

The citation of Nyssa, in fact, does not correspond to Basil's text, who had actually said the opposite: 'I *do call* "substance" the material substratum'. According to Balàs the change had not been made by Eunomius, despite the fact that Gregory of Nyssa is quoting from Eunomius, but by Nyssa himself: Eunomius, in fact, appears to have attacked Basil's text by emphasising its materialism, which was not in accordance with the doctrine of divine substance, with the result that Gregory of Nyssa, in order to deal with Eunomius' polemic, may have added the negation.[35] Zachhuber's[36] and Maspero's[37] explanation is more subtle: Gregory explains the consubstantiality of Father and Son by means of an analogy with human society in order to defend himself from Eunomius' accusations of passing wrongfully from material reality to intelligible reality. But this defence would have been possible only if Basil had conceived of the substance as a material substratum. Instead Gregory distinguishes human nature from divine nature, and attributes consubstantiality to both, with the difference that he attributes corruptability only to the former: its corruptability is due to the fact that it is material. Basil conceives of the substance of creatures as a shared material substratum, in the manner of Athanasius and the Stoics: Gregory, instead, conceives of nature as being immaterial and identified it with the essence. Subsequently the problem was tackled by Robertson, who, while bearing in mind Hübner's considerations, nevertheless goes in the opposite direction. This leads him to state that Basil did not advance 'a consistent conceptuality derived from Stoic logic', but rather 'follows Porphyry's line of thought, who unites Stoic and Peripatetic logic: God's *ousia* has its roots in the *hypostases*, which are almost like a collection of the divine peculiarities (ἰδιοτήτων ἄθροισμα).[38]

It is our opinion that these subtleties need not be pursued. Markschies maintains that the example (of Basil) does not imply that *ousia* means *constantly*

[35] David Balàs, 'The Unity of Human Nature in Basil's and Gregory of Nyssa's Polemics against Eunomius', *SP* 14 (1976), 275-81.

[36] Johannes Zachhuber, *Human Nature in Gregory of Nyssa. Philosophical Background and Theological Significance*, Supplements to Vigiliae Christianae 46 (Leiden, Boston, Köln, 2000), 101-4.

[37] Giulio Maspero, *Trinity and Man. Gregory of Nyssa's Ad Ablabium,* Supplements to Vigiliae Christianae 86 (Leiden, 2007), 14-6.

[38] D.G. Robertson, 'Stoic and Aristotelian Notions of Substance in Basil of Caesarea', *VC* 52 (1998), 393-417, 416-7.

(our italics) ὑλικὸν ὑποκείμενον.[39] Basil had rejected the hypothesis that divine substance is a ὑλικὸν ὑποκείμενον (and a γένος κοινὸν ὑπερκείμενον) already in *Ep*. 361 to Apollinarius. In *Ep*. 52,1 (c. 370 AD) he explains more clearly what the problems are connected with *homousion*, and sees that they are to do with Paul of Samosata. In order to reply to this heretic's errors, Basil does not admit that divine substance is a οὐσία ὑπερκειμένη divided in its particulars.[40]

However, even before this Hübner had advanced the right solution. Basil employs the Stoic term *substratum* and the material sense it contains both in connection with men's relationships and their nature (Peter and Paul are men, but different to each other), and in connection with the relationship among the divine Persons and their nature (Father and Son are different to each other, but they are both God).[41] By means of an examination of Stoic logic Hübner saw that, according to the Stoics, material realities are not a pure and simple *substratum*, but are rather differentiated from each other through the addition of qualities: 'Der Begriff (Mensch) erscheint als Resultat der Addition von Merkmalen, die durch fortgesetzte Teilung gewonnen wurden'.[42] In any case, one cannot expect a rigorous philosophical formulation from Basil.

3.2. *Homousios*

The second point in this research regards *homousios*. Barnes does not intend to deny that the Cappadocians acknowledged and expressed their theological support for the Nicene Creed, including therein the term *homousios*, but asserts that their polemical writings in favour of this type of theology do not bring into play either the Nicene Creed in general or *homousios* in particular. Furthermore, the rhetoric of their polemic makes no significant or detailed use of Arian theology. When in the decade following 370 AD an Eastern reinterpretation of Nicaea was added to a Western reinterpretation of Nicaea that had taken place after 360 AD, as well as heated pro-Nicene debate in Alexandria and the churches in Rome and Gaul, this led to a dominant consensus in favour of a reinterpretation of the Nicene Creed. *Hypostasis* also ceased to be a term that

[39] Ch. Markschies, 'Gibt es eine einheitliche „kappadozische Trinitätstheologie"?' (2000), 201-3. Hildebrand also observes that 'this definition of human *ousia logically may not be applied* (our italics) to divine *ousia*, with the result that Basil naturally denies that God is in any way material. But just as Stoic philosophy influenced his definition of human *ousia*, so too did it influence his description of divine *ousia*'.

[40] In *De Spiritu Sancto* 17,41 as well, Basil denies that 'the God of the universe, as if he were a κοινότης that may be observed only in thought, but does not possess being in any *hypostasis* (ἐν οὐδεμιᾷ ὑποστάσει), may be broken down into the underlying realities (εἰς τὰ ὑποκείμενα)'.

[41] R. Hübner, 'Gregor von Nyssa als Verfasser' (1972), 474-80.

[42] R. Hübner, 'Gregor von Nyssa als Verfasser' (1972), 477. Hübner's interpretation is followed also by A. Radde-Gallwitz and M. Del Cogliano, *St. Basil of Caesarea* (2011), 70.

had been anathematised by Nicaea, becoming instead a necessary term for an orthodox interpretation of the Nicene Creed – and all this occurred without it ever appearing in the Nicene or Constantinople Creed. Barnes therefore once again questions the normative status of *homousios*. The use of *homousios* on the part of the pro-Nicenes may be viewed as a reaction to the clear and consistent way in which the anti-Nicenes so vigorously rejected it. While the debate for the defence of *homousios* was limited to the sphere of Athanasius and the Latin pro-Nicenes, anti-Nicene criticism of the term frequently occurs throughout the empire during the controversy surrounding the Trinity. In *Contra Eunomium* Gregory of Nyssa himself uses *homousios* only once, while recounting the clash between Basil and Valens, but, as is typical of the debate fostered by the Cappadocians, it appears uttered by those who reject it. Unlike the 'Greek Westerner' Athanasius and the Latins, the Cappadocians did not respond to the anti-Nicene attacks on *homousios*, turning the term into the central focus of their argument; on the contrary, *homousios* hardly appears in Cappadocian writings on the anti-Eunomian controversy. It appears twenty-five times in Gregory of Nyssa, and at least three times as much in Athanasius' *De synodis* alone; of the twenty-five cases in Gregory of Nyssa, twelve occur in the writings against Apollinarius and nine in *Contra Eunomium*. Of these nine, three occur among the words of an anti-Nicene (Eunomius or Valens), and four are used lacking any significance in the sense of the Trinity. Similarly, Nicaea is never mentioned in these texts as a norm, while both Nicaea and *homousios* appear in the writings against Apollinarius.[43]

This fluctuation on the part of Basil in the use of *homousios* has embarrassed scholars.[44] Hübner[45] underlined the poor level of consistency in the meaning attributed to *homousios* in the *Contra Eunomium*, and the strong influence not only from Apollinarius (as was already known), but also from Athanasius, who used *homousios* in *De decretis Nicaenae synodi*.[46] Basil's *Contra Eunomium* does not employ consistent terminology: this should not surprise us as Basil's 'conversion' from homoiousianism had occurred only a few years previously, and from that point on he had concentrated above all on practical rules for the monastic life.

[43] M.R. Barnes, 'The fourth century as trinitarian canon', in Lewis Ayres and Gareth Jones (eds), *Christian Origins. Theology, Rhetoric and Community* (London and New York, 1998), 47-67, 58-61.

[44] See for instance Lewis Ayres, *Nicaea and its Legacy* (Oxford, 2004), 188-91.

[45] R. Hübner, 'Basilius von Caesarea und das *homousion*' (1993), 90-1.

[46] M. Simonetti rightly denies that Basil was influenced by Athanasius (see the latest 'Dal nicenismo al neonicenismo' [2006], 271-7); but this idea has been advanced again by M. Del Cogliano, 'The Influence of Athanasius and the Homoiousians on Basil of Caesarea's Decentralization of "unbegotten"', *JECS* 19 (2011), 197-223.

Hildebrand distinguishes four phases in Basil's development: 1. The years of Basil's homoiusianism (360-365);[47] 2. The transition from *homoiousios* to *homousios* (365-372); 3. The use of *prosopa* for the divine Persons (c. 372); 4. The emergence of *hypostasis* (375-379), in order to express the three Prosopa.[48] In any case, Hildebrand maintains that the use of *homoios* appears to Basil more and more unsatisfactory, so that the transition to a definite acceptance of the word *homousios*, as well as *prosopon* and *hypostasis*, occurs gradually, and occasionally even with the complementary presence of the two terms.[49] Also in Ayres' opinion[50] it is natural to speak of Basil in the sense of his adhesion to the homoiousian doctrine (it forms a part of the title of Drecoll's volume). He asserts that there is no proof of Basil's adherence to the homoiousian faction, and his attitude to 'similar according to the substance' is very complex. If, among the Homoiousians, there were those who thought of themselves as supporters of the essential meaning of Nicaea, despite the problems with terminology, then Basil was of their company. However, during the years from 360 AD to 370 AD, it may be seen that Basil gradually distanced himself from those who refused to set out on his road towards a pro-Nicene type of theology.

In conclusion, Simonetti[51] states that 'l'atteggiamento di Basilio nei confronti di *homousios* debba essere soprattutto spiegato tenendo presente … la consapevolezza, cioè, che il termine fosse equivoco e perciò avesse bisogno di un adeguato chiarimento. Se egli, dopo la rottura con Eustazio, lo ha non solo accettato, ma anche propagandato è stato soprattutto per motivi politici … ma il termine non lo ha mai interamente convinto a livello teoretico. Un atteggiamento che presenta parecchio in comune con quello tenuto anni prima da Ilario. È infatti soprattutto nelle lettere, scritti d'occasione e di propaganda, che egli fa uso del termine, mentre nei trattati … egli ha preferito far uso del termine poco (Eun.) o niente affatto (spir.)'.

Gregory of Nazianzus also used *homousios* in a different way with the passing of time, but he never explored its significance to any great extent.[52] His first three orations precede Basil's *Contra Eunomium* (364 AD), but are contemporary with Basil's letters to Apollinarius. There does not appear to be a significant

[47] During which, nevertheless, and specifically in the correspondence with Apollinarius, *Epistle* 361 dating from 360-362, includes the use of *homousios*, which, on the contrary, is not present in *Contra Eunomium*. It may be that Basil initially used *homousios*, only to abandon it subsequently during the clash with Eunomius.

[48] St.M. Hildebrand, *The Trinitarian Theology* (2009), 31.

[49] St.M. Hildebrand, *The Trinitarian Theology* (2009), 76-82.

[50] L. Ayres, *Nicaea and its Legacy* (2004), 188-9.

[51] In his review of H. Drecoll, *Die Entwicklung der Trinitätslehre* (1996), *ZAC* 1 (1998), 304-15, 314.

[52] The presence (or absence) of the term *hypostasis* has been studied in Basil's works, Ch. Markschies, 'Gibt es eine einheitliche „kappadozische Trinitätstheologie"?' (2000), 204, but far less in those of Gregory of Nazianzus.

influence from Basil and they lack the term *homousios*. The other homilies, delivered at Nazianzus, are very generic from a theological standpoint: only later would the ambience in Constantinople enrich Gregory's speculations. The formulations of faith contained in these homilies are simple: *Orat*. 1,7: 'The Father, Son and Holy Spirit, the only divinity and power (τὴν μίαν θεότητά τε καὶ δύναμιν)'; 2,36: 'The language must not be joined to only one *hypostasis* for fear of [giving rise to a] multiplicity of gods. In such a case pure and simple names are maintained, so that it may be understood that Father, Son and Holy Spirit are one and the same thing' (ὑπόστασις, here is used with its proper meaning: 'only one divine *hypostasis*', that is the Father); *Or*. 6,13 (c. 365 AD): God is one on account of the concordance of the Three no less than the τῆς οὐσίας ταυτότης; ch. 22 contains a Trinitarian formula which makes use of distinction and union ('dividing them before combining them and not regarding the Three as a single individual': πρὶν συνάψαι διαιροῦντες καὶ πρὶν διελεῖν συνάπτοντες, οὔτε τὰ Τρία ὡς ἕνα). 'In fact the names do not lack subsistence (that is, they are not empty names), nor are they uttered with regard to one single *hypostasis*, so that the enrichment appears to affect only the names and not the things, but rather believing the Three to be a single entity (καὶ[53] τὰ Τρία ἕν)'. 'For they are a single entity not in individual reality but in divinity (Ἓν γὰρ οὐχ ὑποστάσει ἀλλὰ θεότητι)'.

More particularly, Gregory of Nazianzus juxtaposes (*Or*. 20,5-6) ἰδιότης with θεότης; and τὰ τρία with ἕν; in ch. 7. he conceives 'one God in accordance with the unity and identity of the divine nature (θεότης) and of the movement (κίνημα) and of the will (βούλημα) and of the identity (ταυτότης) of the substance (οὐσία), and on the other hand the three ὑποστάσεις'. Time must not be inserted amongst entities which are both eternal and concerted (συναΐδια καὶ συνημμένα). Ch. 10 employs 'divinity' (θεότης) several times and speaks of 'the unique God' (τὸν ἕνα θεόν) with the three hypostases or persons (τρεῖς ὑποστάσεις εἴτ'οὖν τρία πρόσωπα), each with its own peculiarity (ἰδιότης). The Three must not be reduced to a μία ὑπόστασις for fear of introducing a multiplicity of gods and τὰ πάντα ought not to be reduced to ἕν. Gregory makes no distinction between Christ's generation or *hypostasis* (τοῦ Ὑιοῦ εἴτε γέννησιν χρὴ λέγειν εἴτε ὑπόστασιν) and confesses his inability to be more precise; nor does he make a distinction between power and divinity (*Or*. 22,12: Τὴν μίαν ἐν τοῖς τρισί θεότητά τε καὶ δύναμιν[54]), nor between divine nature and movement (τὸ ταυτὸν τῆς κινήσεως καὶ τῆς φύσεως) (*Or*. 23,11).

Nevertheless, when it is necessary Gregory of Nazianzus manages to grasp the terminological differences that separated Easterners from Westerners. Later

[53] I would correct καὶ into ἀλλά, as the translator does, Martha Vinson, in St. Gregory of Nazianzus, *Select Orations*, The Fathers of the Church 107 (Washington, D.C., 2003).

[54] Ὑποδιαίρεσις refers to the Pneumatomachians, against what is noted by Justin Mossay, SC 270 (Paris, 1980).

on (379 AD) he clarifies that Easterners were able to distinguish accurately between *ousia* and hypostasis (*Or*. 21,35, in praise of Athanasius): 'We use in an orhodox sense the terms one Essence and three *Hypostases*, the one to denote the nature of the Godhead, the other the properties of the Three; the Italics mean the same, but, owing to the scantiness of their vocabulary, and its poverty of terms, they are unable to distinguish between Essence and *Hypostases*, and therefore introduce the term Persons, to avoid being understood to assert three Essences' (trans. Browne – Swallow, modified).

4. Theology and philosophy

Recourse to philosophy appears even more evident in connection with the Trinitarian formula. It has been frequently asserted that the conception of a divine Trinity and the inter-relation between *ousia* and *hypostasis* have a precedent in neo-Platonic philosophy, which however was ammended by Christian theologians in the 4th century by the exclusion of the hierarchical structure, which is so typical of neo-Platonism. Both Simonetti[55] and I[56] thought that the Trinitarian doctrine of the Cappadocians represented a recuperation, suitably adapted for the Christian religion, of Porphyry's hierarchy of the *hypostases*. Simonetti has again put forward his hypothesis on the derivation of the Trinitarian formula from neo-Platonism, on the basis of the presence in Marius Victorinus of the formula that has been considered above: *idque a Graecis ita dicitur*: ἐκ μιᾶς οὐσίας τρεῖς εἶναι τὰς ὑποστάσεις. In his opinion, the sentence *idque a Graecis ita dicitur* does not necessarily refer to Greek Christians, but may be a reference to Greek pagans, that is, to neo-Platonists.[57]

The idea of a neo-Platonic derivation for the Trinitarian formula has found other and more recent supporters. Corrigan, for instance, is well aware of the danger of arbitrariness in identifying neo-Platonism as the source of the Cappadocians' doctrine of the Trinity: yet, he asserts that 'from a historical point of view this type of theology is not feasible without the complex intellectual climate that can help to frame it: an indispensible part of this climate is the tension deriving from different strands of neo-Platonism, among which the non-generation of the ultimate principle (for instance, in Iamblichus) … Gregory completes his brother's work partly by creatively adopting some of the more important themes of Porphyry and Plotinus'.[58]

[55] Manlio Simonetti, *La crisi ariana nel quarto secolo* (Roma, 1975), 513. This interpretation was contested by Christoph Markschies, 'Was ist lateinischer »Neunizänismus«? Ein Vorschlag für eine Antwort', in *id*., *Alta Trinità Beata* (Tübingen, 2000), 238-64, 251-3.

[56] Claudio Moreschini, *Storia della filosofia patristica* (Brescia, 2004), 516-7.

[57] M. Simonetti, 'Dal nicenismo al neonicenismo' (2006), 281-2.

[58] Kevin Corrigan, 'Οὐσία and ὑπόστασις in the Trinitarian Theology of the Cappadocian Fathers: Basil and Gregory of Nyssa', *ZAC* 12 (2008), 114-34, 116

According to Markschies, instead, the Trinitarian formula represents a recuperation of Origen's doctrine of 'non-fused unity' (ἀσύγχυτος ἕνωσις): like Holl,[59] Markschies maintains that what is lacking in the concepts utilised by the Cappadocians is effective philosophical penetration, a precise evaluation of the relations, and therefore accuracy: 'Basil does not possess any terminological means required in order to distinguish the specificities of the hypostases from the qualities of the substance...' Plus: 'Since "paternity" and "filiality" are not individuations of the same substance, how could the Father, insofar as he is a father, produce the Son's divine nature through generation?'[60] Such a conception would be a *monstrum* in Platonism (as Holl had asserted[61]). The Cappadocians' conception could aspire to consistency only if it could draw on the image of the 'non-fused unity', which in any case is more frequent in the writings of the Cappadocians than the formula 'one substance – three *hypostases*'.[62] But the formula of 'non-fused unity' does not appear to have reached the Cappadocians directly from Origen, but, according also to Dodds and Beierwaltes, is rather of neo-Platonic origin. Even though the idea of the reciprocal co-presence of the three Persons of the Trinity has a certain basis in the Gospel, what we are dealing with here is also the neo-Platonic idea of the reciprocal union of incorporeal reality, which nevertheless excludes confusion, keeping them well distinct one from the other. Origen's doctrine of the three *hypostases*, which was originally that of subordinance, and the Plotinian designation of the metaphysical principles as *hypostases* may date back, despite all the differences in details, to a common source.[63] The Cappadocian doctrine of 'non-fused unity', may also be found in Nemesius' *De natura hominis* (p. 38,19 Morani), as a means of illustrating the relations of the soul with the body: these relations do not in fact represent a 'blending'. Nemesius indeed depends on Ammonius Saccas, Plotinus' and Origen's master (p. 39,19). Plotinus and Origen might have gained this doctrine from him. The starting point of Basil's speculations on the Trinity was therefore the *Tomus ad Antiochenos* of 362 AD, elaborated by Athanasius in the sense of a neo-Nicene interpretation of the formulation of faith from Nicaea dating from 325 AD. Basil appears to have set to interpreting it at the start of his ascetic life in Pontus. The decrees of the Council of Alexandria were then sanctioned by the council of Antioch, at which Meletius had great authority, an authority that he continued to wield over the Cappadocians until his death in 381 AD.

[59] K. Holl, *Amphilochius von Ikonium* (1904), 133.
[60] *Ibid.* 148.
[61] *Ibid.* 131.
[62] Ch. Markschies, 'Gibt es eine einheitliche „kappadozische Trinitätstheologie"?' (2000), 234.
[63] See H. Ziebritzki, *Heiliger Geist und Weltseele. Das Problem der dritten Hypostase bei Origenes, Plotin und ihre Vorläufern* (Tübingen, 1994), 176-81.

A new interpretation of the derivation of the Trinitarian formula from neo-Platonism (or rather, in opposition to this) has recently been put forward: the relationship between neo-Platonic philosophy and the Trinitarian formula has been reiterated – but in an inverse sense to the traditional one, in the sense that with that formula the Cappadocians do not appear to have drawn on neo-Platonism, but rather opposed its doctrine of universals. The relationship between substance and *hypostasis* in the divine Trinity has been considered as a form of the relationship between the universal and the particular – there will be an example also regarding the problem of divine monarchy in Gregory of Nazianzus, as well as the problem of tritheism. Zachhuber and Cross examine the problem of the Trinity from this point of view, and Cross maintains that the solution advanced by Gregory of Nyssa consists in considering divine *ousia* as an immanent universal in the Persons; this represents a deliberate polemic towards Porphyry's take on the theory of universals, for whom the universal had a 'collective' sense.[64] Cross describes the philosophical background to the distinction between universals and particulars in Porphyry and other neo-Platonists.[65] 'It was necessary to explain the unity of the Persons by basing oneself on the *derivation* of one Person from the other without this derivation implying subordination. The problem of divisibility is dealt with by claiming that not every relationship of derivation diminishes the substance of the source. The Father remains an indivisible monad and the Son derives from him through generation, without dividing the substance of the Father'.[66]

Such strongly philosophical interpretations raise objections. Against the first, which had been advanced both by Simonetti and myself, according to which the Christian Trinity can be traced back to Porphyry, we counter the observation that the *hypothesis* whereby the Porphryian formula is a form of *praeparatio evangelica* had already been advanced prior to the Cappadocians' speculations, by Eusebius of Caesarea, and was taken up by Didymus the Blind in the *De Trinitate* and by Cyril of Alexandria. As he was convinced that Greek philosophy derived from Jewish revelation, Eusebius states that Plato's philosophy was preceded by the 'oracles' of Holy Scripture (*PE* XI 21,20,1-3). In order to demonstrate this, Eusebius outlined a comparison between the

[64] R. Cross, 'Gregory of Nyssa on Universals', *VC* 56 (2002), 372-410, 373. This interpretation of the universals in relation to the particulars was also advanced by Boetius, who infact was following Porphyry.

[65] According to Cross, Basil replaces it with the theory of indivisible immanent universals (referred to indifferently as *ousiai* and *physeis*). He uses this theory to defend the *homousion* against theological objections, 'Gregory of Nyssa' (2002), 380.

[66] Other philosophical problems have been identified in above all in Basil or in Basil and Gregory of Nyssa, always excluding Gregory of Nazianzus. See Mark Del Cogliano, 'Basil of Caesarea versus Eunomius of Cyzicus on the Nature of Time: A Patristic Reception of the Critique of Plato', *VC* 68 (2014), 498-532, 532: 'Therefore Basil is a fine exemple of how the Greek philosophical tradition was appropriated and re-expressed when employed in issues of specifically Christian interest'.

second Platonic epistle, where 'three gods' are spoken of, as well as three worlds, or realms of reality, which are 'around' each of these, and the Christian doctrine of the divine Trinity: both the comparison and the use of that specific passage in Plato had already occurred in Athenagoras and in Clement of Alexandria.

Markschies' explanation, then, entails too many stages. His hypothesis, that Origen's conception of 'non-fused union' may have led to the Cappadocians' doctrine of the Trinity is likely; but the path by which it appears to have reached the Cappadocians is extremely tortuous, passing as it does through neo-Platonism, both Porphyry's and Plotinus'. It is our opinion that the path that should be followed is the one leading from Origen straight to the controversies of the 4th century, in which it was crucial for the pro-Nicenes to find the substance common to the three *hypostases*, a problem which was hardly debated. This is a problem that I should like to return to. To Cross', Corrigan's and others' interpretation, I wish to counter with the objection that conceiving of a theology in which the universal entails the particular and is present wholly in each of them, without spreading and fragmenting into the individual parts, is extraneous to the Christian tradition.[67] Origen himself had already stated that the Son is both distinct from and united with the Father (even if he does not use the term *hypostasis*).[68] This close connection between Basil and Gregory of Nyssa (as usual Gregory of Nazianzus is excluded) and contemporary philosophy is too strong: it overlooks the conviction that the Father represents the divine nature and is therefore the fount of the other two *hypostases*. The problem with tritheism, which criticism has only recently begun to tackle, came about as a consequence precisely of the problem concerning one *ousia* and three *hypostases*, as the Cappadocians explained it, and may be linked after all to what is discussed above: that is, whether or not divine substance is a universal.

[67] An instance of this excessive philosophication of the theology of the Cappadocians is provided by Cross, 'Gregory of Nyssa' (2002), 399, who maintains that the use of the term μονάς in Nyssa's *Ad Ablabium* corresponds to Iamblichus' neo-Platonism and that μονάς was used both by Iamblichus and subsequently by Proclus in order to underline the numerical indivisibility of the individual forms, even if this does not imply that Gregory of Nyssa derives from Iamblichus; the term 'monad' characterises the numerical indivisibility of the idea, and for Gregory of Nyssa, 'the unity of the divine substance is not less than numerical' (Gregory of Nyssa' [2002], 399, note). But μονάς is already present in Origen to indicate the Christian God and is frequent in Gregory of Nazianzus too, *e.g*. *Or*. 6,22, a few years before Gregory of Nyssa (see also a little further on).

[68] *Ita etiam sapientia de se vult intellegi, cum speculum immaculatum paternae virtutis inoperationisque nominatur … idcirco speculum eum immaculatum nominavit, ut per hoc nulla omnino dissimilitudo Filii intellegatur ad Patrem* (*Princ*. I 2,12).

Some theological issues in Gregory of Nazianzus

Tritheism

We have addressed this issue in a previous study, and now take into consideration only Gregory of Nazianzus.[69] Tritheism was, Gregory says (*Or*. 31,13), 'a question which had been solved a long time ago and had given way the right faith; yet it was revived during those very days … If there is God and God and God, how cannot there be three gods? In other words, how can a πολυαρχία be the object of our faith?'[70] 'For us', he continues, 'there is one God, because there is one divinity, and the things that derive from the one (τὰ ἐξ αὐτοῦ, namely τὸ ἕν), which are believed to be three, have reference to it…'[71] Τὰ ἐξ αὐτοῦ are the divine Persons, who come from the ἕν, which is the divine nature: the neutral should not surprise us: it also appears in *Or*. 20,6: 'Do not reduce everything to a μία ὑπόστασις for fear of introducing a multiplicity of gods; do not reduce τὰ πάντα to ἕν', and in *Or*. 29,2, where it is said that divine monarchy consists of other characteristics as well as of the convergence (σύννευσις) πρὸς τὸ ἓν τῶν ἐξ αὐτοῦ:

> And since they derive from it,[72] it is not possible that one is more God, and another less; nor is one first, the other second; nor are they separated by will or power, but if it is necessary, to put it briefly, the divinity is undivided in things that are divided: just as in three suns that mutually interconnect there is one mixture of light, and it is not possible to see in the divine nature what is peculiar in things divided.

If we consider the divine nature, the first cause (πρώτη αἰτία) and divine monarchy, we can apprehend the ἕν (*Or*. 31,14). If, on the other hand, we look at τὰ ἐν οἷς ἡ θεότης and what comes from the first cause out of time and within a community of glory (Gregory does not speak of three *hypostases*), there are three that we adore. One might object, Gregory goes on to explain (*Or*. 31,15), that Christian theology teaches precisely what the best among Greek philosophers do, namely, that there is one divine nature (θεότης), as there is one human nature (ἀνθρωπότης), which is the γένος in its totality.[73] But the explanation does not hold. The gods of the heathens, like humans, are many, and they possess unity only as an abstraction (ἐπινοίᾳ θεωρητόν).

[69] Claudio Moreschini, 'Tritheism in Basil and Gregory of Nazianzus', *SP* 47 (2010), 111-5.

[70] The term refers to the multiplicity of gods, to which tritheism is connected.

[71] Translation by R. Cross, 'Divine Monarchy in Gregory of Nazianzus', *JECS* 14 (2006), 105-16.

[72] 'It' is the ἕν: therefore, the Son and the Holy Spirit do not come from the Father, but from the θεότης: we shall object to this interpretation by Cross shortly.

[73] This was already asserted by Basil (*Contra Eunomium* II 4), with whom Gregory here disagrees. Following Apollinarius, Basil proposes the genus of human beings as an example which explains the distinction between divine persons and their unity. As human beings, Peter and Paul participate in the same substance, while their individual characteristics distinguish them as Peter and Paul.

Individual humans are effectively divided by time, passions and power (*Or*. 31,15-6). On the contrary, we can apply the example of the three suns, connected to each other and forming a single light.[74] What is contemplated in the three Persons is the light of the divine nature, whose abundance consists in the communion of their nature and the joint splendour of their brightness (ἡ συμφύϊα καὶ τὸ ἓν ἔξαλμα τῆς λαμπρότητος) (*Or*. 40,5).

The example of the three suns also returns in *Carmina arcana*, where however more generically three lights are mentioned: 'One God in his three gleaming facets keeping the universe on its whirling course' (εἷς Θεὸς ἐν τρισσοῖς ἀμαρύγμασι κόσμον ἑλίσσον) (*Arc*. 3,43);

> The single nature is firmly established in three lights (ἐν τρισσοῖς φαέεσσιν ἴη φύσις ἐστήρικται). It is not a unity unrelated to number, since it consists of three excellent forms, nor is it a Trinity to be worshipped as plural, since its nature is indivisible. The oneness inheres within the Godhead, those to whom Godhead belongs are three in number. Each of them is the one God, when you mention only one.[75] Again, the one God is unoriginate, whence comes the rich quality of Godhead, when there is any reference to three, so as to bring about in mortal men a reverent proclamation of the three lights and also we may glorify the clear-shining unity of rule (ὡς τὸ μὲν εἶη / τῶν τρισσῶν φαέων σεπτὸν κήρυγμα βροτοῖσι) (*Arc*. 3,71-7) (trans. D. Sykes).

Divine monarchy

The concept of 'monarchy', in the sense of the monarchy of one Person within the divine substance, is what primarily interests Gregory of Nazianzus. Nazianzen tries to highlight, as few succeeded in doing before him, what exactly the unity of nature within the Trinity consists of, and above all the simultaneous returning to the origin – that is, the Father – on the part of the other two Persons, who originated from him. Gregory discusses this problem in connection with that of tritheism, which we saw in *Or*. 31,14. Is the origin of the *hypostases* the Father or the divine nature? Is the Father both divine nature and *hypostasis*? In *Or*. 39,12 Gregory states that, insofar as he is the cause, the Pauline formulae in *Rom*. 11:36 ('For from him and through him and for him are all things') and 1*Cor* 8:6 ('yet for us there is but one God, the Father, from whom are all things and we exist for Him; and one Lord, Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we exist through Him') state that the Father is the origin of everything. In the field of theology, anarchy and polytheism are Greek defects, while monarchy is the prerogative of the Christian religion, provided it is properly understood:

[74] The same image of the three suns is employed by Gregory of Nyssa (*Contra Eunomium* I 533-4; *Refut*. 194-5).

[75] This may represent a first instance of the doctrine of Perichoresis concerning the divine Persons.

Monarchy is not that which is delimited by one person, because it is possible that even a single reality may become a multiplicity, if it is discordant within; the monarchy of which we speak is constituted by the equal dignity of the nature (of its constituents), agreement of will and identity of movement, by the simultaneous tending to unity on the part of those that come from it, so that, despite differing in number, the monarchy is not truncated in its substance (*Or*. 29,2).

How may this passage be interpreted? Some scholars have stated that Gregory ascribes the prerogative of being the first cause to the divine substance, which is considered to be common to the three Persons (see also *Or*. 31,14, discussed above), and connected this tenet to the interpretation of divine substance as a universal, in which the Persons are the particulars.[76] But as we are not persuaded that divine substance is a logical concept, for the same reason we think that divine monarchy is the prerogative of the Father, who is the source of the existence of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.[77]

From Monad to Triad

Two passages of Nazianzen are particularly interesting:

When I speak of God, I refer to the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, because the divine nature *does not spill over* (χεομένης) beyond these realities, so that we should not introduce a people of gods; nor does it limit itself down here, so that we may not be condemned to a paucity of the divine nature – we would be Jews on account of the monarchy[78] or Greeks on account of the superfluity (of gods) (*Or*. 38,8).

… light that spills over (χεόμενον) but a little onto the realities that lie outside of it (*Or*. 40,5).

The verb 'spill over' is reserved for the effusion of the divine nature of the Trinity, but it contains an element of ambiguity, because it is also used in other instances, where instead it expresses the irradiation *ad extra* of the divine nature, in accordance with the principle *bonum est diffusivum sui*:

But since contemplation of itself did not suffice the divine Goodness, it needed to *spill over* (χεθῆναι) and issue forth, so that there would be a greater number of beings that might partake of its benefits (this, in fact, is proper to the highest Good), and so it conceived of the angelic and celestial powers... (*Or*. 38,9).

[76] R. Cross, 'Divine Monarchy' (2006), 107-10.

[77] See also John Meyendorff, *Byzantine Theology* (New York, 1974), 183; J. Mc Guckin, *Saint Gregory of Nazianzus* (2001), 294 n. 352; see also 296 and 296 n. 355; 305-6 and 306 n. 396 on *Or*. 31,14.

[78] In this passage the term 'monarchy' has a more generalised meaning, similar to that of 'monotheism', and does not regard the relationship pertaining among the divine Persons.

Once the structure within the divine monarchy and the union that holds the Persons that originated from the Father had been established, in *Or*. 29,2 Gregory presents a formula that he wishes to pit against Plotinus': 'For this reason, from the beginning the monad *moved towards* (κινηθεῖσα) the dyad and stopped at the triad. And this means the Father, Son and Holy Spirit...' Here the process of expansion of the divine substance, expressed in *Or*. 38,9 by means of the verb 'spill over', is indicated by the verb 'move'. The reason for this change is due perhaps to the fact that Gregory saw that 'spill over' is not fitting; in actual fact it is quite ambiguous, because it was used in pagan philosophy. In fact Plotinus had spoken of the 'overflowing (ὑπέρχυσις) of goodness' in a passage dedicated to the doctrine of the first principles (V 1,6). Gregory refused to accept this pagan doctrine and therefore also rejected the verb that was associated with it.

The problem of the Monad and the Triad is examined in another passage:

> The perfect Trinity, made up of three perfect realities, in the sense that the monad proceeded forth on account of the abundance[79] (of its divine nature), then it moved beyond the dyad (in fact, it is above and beyond matter and form, from which derive bodies), and consequently is defined as a triad on account of its perfection. Given that it is primary, it indeed goes beyond the composition of the dyad, so that the divine nature may not be restricted, nor yet that it might spill over for all eternity' (*Or*. 23,8).

In the context of *Oration* 25 (chap. 17), in replying to the Arians, for whom the generation of the Son was impossible since it would entail the occurrence of *pathos* in the Father, Gregory observes that divine generation is devoid of *pathos*: it is clear that the term indicates the mutation of the divine substance as a consequent effect of generation, or, in any case, its affection. Gregory's objection is profound, despite its apparent simplicity: 'Do not fear passion, when you admit generation, because the divine being is not subject to passion, even though it has generated. I can guarantee to you that this occurs in a divine way, not in a human way. In fact, for him being has nothing human. What you should fear is time and creation...' It follows that divine generation may not be understood in a human way, in the sense that it occurs on account of an act of will, but in an ineffable way. It remains to be seen what exactly this way is.

Does the Father want to generate the Son?

The generation of the Son is discussed by Gregory of Nazianzus in *Oration* 29. In Chap. 6 he maintains that it does not depend on the will of the Father. If, in fact, this had been so, there would have been a moment or an intermediate

[79] Mossay's translation is wrong: 'une monade étant à exclure à cause de la richesse de la réalité, une dyade étant depassée…'. In fact, here we interpret κινηθείσης as in *Or*. 29,2.

reality between the reality of the Father and the generation of the Son – that is, in other words, an act of will.

In his explanation Gregory distinguishes between the will and whoever wants and, in the end, even if cautiously, he puts forward another solution: 'The reality of God, however, is above and beyond all this, because in Him, *perhaps*, generation entails the will to generate; however, there is nothing in the middle (between the will and the generation), if we accept this explanation in its entirety, but it must be searched if generation is[80] superior to will'.

It may be that Gregory has come up against an *impasse*: if the Son was generated by the Father's will (even if outside of time), this means that the Son is inferior to the Father; but if the generation is above and beyond will, that is, if will can be excluded, this generation appears to be a 'mechanical phenomenon', as Plotinus suggested, which was also unacceptable. For this reason the generation is as natural as the will to generate, that is, the will is intrinsic to the Father's nature, and therefore, in a certain sense, 'the generation is superior to the will'.[81]

The Father's very intention is sufficient in order to bring the Son into existence, as Origen has it: *sicut voluntas procedit e mente neque partem aliquam mentis secat neque ab ea separatur aut dividitur, tali quadam specie putandum est pater filium genuisse, imaginem scilicet suam* (*Princ*. I 2,6). That the Father does not generate the Son as a consequence of his will has also been said in *Arc*.: 'For what is prior to God, be it time or will, is to me a division of Godhead' (ὃ γὰρ πάρος ἐστὶ Θεοῖο / ἢ χρόνος ἠὲ θέλησις, ἐμοὶ τμῆξις θεότητος) (2,26-7).

Origenism

Gregory of Nyssa's Origenism is well known, while that of Nazianzen's much less so. There may be, therefore, some interesting points to examine here.

Gregory of Nazianzus' *Oration* 37 represents his only homily of an exegetical nature. It is dedicated to an interpretation of the passage in *Matth*. 19:1-12, which concerns 'those who choose to live like eunuchs for the sake of the Kingdom of Heaven', and frequently re-elaborates Origenian motifs: it was natural that, in commenting on *Matthew*, Gregory should draw on the exegesis of the greatest and most renowned commentator of that Gospel.[82]

[80] This is the translation that we suggest of the Greek text: ἀλλὰ μὴ καὶ θελήσεως κρείττων ἡ γέννησις. Gallay translates thus: 'si nous admettons totalement cette idée et si la génération n'est pas supérieure à la volonté', which to me seems contradictory. It should be borne in mind that one of the best manuscripts (A: Ambrosianus E 49-50 inf, gr. 1014, 9th century) did indeed grasp the difficulty and corrected ἀλλὰ μὴ to ἀλλὰ μήν.

[81] The deadlock in which Gregory has come was already noticed by E.P. Meijering (*God Being History. Studies in Patristic Philosophy* [Amsterdam, 1975], 112 n. 43) as well, yet he did not propose any solution.

[82] Greg. Naz., *Or*. 37,20; Orig., *Matth. Comm*. XIV 14 – XV 5.

Gregory's objection to Origen is suggested by the comment on *Matth*. 19:11 ('Not everyone can receive this saying, but only those to whom it is given'). Gregory excludes from these words any interpretation along Valentinian lines, which might introduce a division into 'psychic', 'material' and 'spiritual' nature. The expression 'those to whom it was given' only implies a propension (νεῦσις), which must always be linked to help from God, in order to achieve the objective one has set oneself. It is necessary, therefore, for free will (τὸ ἐφ' ἡμῖν) to exist as well as God's help (τὸ ἐκ θεοῦ). Gregory continues and introduces, at the beginning of chap. 15, a polemical note with Origen, whom he nevertheless never mentions:

> I fear at this point that some people might get an absurd idea into their heads, for instance that the soul may have lived elsewhere (ἀλλαχοῦ πολιτευσαμένη) and subsequently was connected to this body of ours, and that, depending on its conduct in the other world, some were given the gift of prophecy, while others – those who lived dishonestly – were condemned.

The reference to Origen's doctrine (which is condemned as 'absurd') of the pre-existence of souls appears evident.[83] The aptest passage in this sense is, I think, that in *Princ*. I 7,4: note that the term πολιτεύειν, which Gregory uses, also reappears in the account that Gregory of Nyssa gives us of this doctrine (*De opificio hominis* 28 = GCS 22, p. 102,14 Koetschau: 'That the souls existed previously in their own life' (ἐν ἰδιαζούσῃ πολιτείᾳ τὰς ψυχὰς προϋφεστηκέναι); p. 103,17-8: 'If the soul has been expelled from its superior life due to a kind of wickedness' (εἰ γὰρ διά τινος κακίας ἀποσπασθεῖσα τῆς ὑψηλοτέρας ἡ ψυχὴ πολιτείας...), and that the concept, which can be traced back as far as Plato and states that the soul, once it has stained itself with guilt in a previous life, may be chained to the body as a chastisement so that they can both be taught together, is attested to by Epiphanius (*Haer*. 64,4,6), as well as Justinian's *Epistle to Menna* (p. 212,20 Schwartz = Fr. 13, p. 91 Koetschau; p. 201,31-3: 'In the flesh, as in a jail' (ὡς ἐν δεσμωτηρίῳ τῇ σαρκί). But it is possible to observe something about Gregory's example as well. He who receives the gift of prophecy may be, as Nazianzen says, a Jeremiah, sanctified even before he is born, while he who receives the chastisement in the pre-earthly life might be Esau. Both these examples are from Origen, and may be read in the passage cited in *Princ*. I 7,4.

Holl[84] also examined Origen's well-known interpretation of the 'garments of skin'. So for Gregory do the 'garments of skin' with which God covered the protoplasts after they had become aware of their nakedness, and banished them

[83] The Maurist editors thought that here Gregory was clashing with Pythagoreanism and its doctrine of Metempsychosis; but Origen was also accused of having adhered to this doctrine (Hieron., *epist*. 124,4).

[84] K. Holl, *Amphilochius von Ikonium* (1904), 162-3.

from Paradise (*Gen*. 3:21), signify the human body. Nevertheless, Gregory underlines his uncertainty in regard of this interpretation: 'God covered them in garments of skin, *perhaps* this flesh thicker and more resistant' (*Or*. 38,12). Additionally, one can read *Arc*. 7,115 (the Son 'clothed his now heavy flesh in coats of skin' [δερματίνους δὲ χιτῶνας ἐφέσσατο σάρκα βαρεῖαν / νεκροφόρος]), where however the expression of uncertainty (*perhaps*) in *Or*. 38 is not present.

In *Or*. 38,12 there is another allusion to Origen's doctrine, and specifically to the pedagogical function of chastisement and evil. After the first sin man gained something, 'that is, death and the fact that his sin has ceased to hold sway, so that evil might not be immortal, and in this way chastisement becomes an act of divine philanthropy. I am in fact convinced that this is the way in which God chastises'. What Gregory claims in a more general sense also fits into this context: that evil shall not last forever; rather it will cease along with the conclusion of the chastisement: see *Or*. 40,36 and *Arc*. 7,82-95.

Arc. 6 is dedicated to angelology, a not irrelevant problem in Origenism. Gregory tackles above all the problem of the fall of the angels and their transformation into demons, which implies free will and, above all, the possibility of turning to evil: consequently the angels are not immobile and fixed on goodness, as is the divine nature. Indeed their goodness is not of substance, as is God's; rather do they receive it from their Creator (*Arc*. 6,46-66). Gregory is unsure about the reasons for their fall: 'I might have wished them also quite unjielding. But restrain the horse, for all its impetuosity, checking it with the curb of the mind' (ἤθελον εἰ καὶ πάμπαν ἀτειρέες· ἀλλ'ἄνεχ' ἵππον / Καὶ μάλα θερμόν ἐόντα, νόου ψαλίοισιν ἐέργων) (*Arc*. 6,20-1). And he is unsure whether or not Lucifer's chastisement is eternal: 'Perhaps also might Lucifer, for all his stubborn resistence, hereafter pay his penalty, his substance consumed, when there is requital by fire' (ἢ τάχα κεν μετέπειτα δίκας τίσειεν ἀτειρής, / ὕλης δαπτομένης, ὅτε ἔμπυρός ἐστιν ἄμειψις) (*Arc*. 6,91-2).

The resurrection of the body

When the final resurrection shall take place,

> the soul shall once again take from the earth this miserable flesh that is intrinsic to, which had given it and to which it was then reconsigned ... This shall take place in the way that only God knows, who conjoined and then dissolved these substances; the soul's destiny, together with the flesh, is the glory of the hereafter and, as in this life it participated in the evil orderings of the flesh on account of conjoint nature with it (διὰ τὴν συμφύϊαν), so too in the afterlife will it partake in the joys that are its lot, because it will consume all of the flesh, until it renders it like unto itself (ὅλον τὸ σαρκίον εἰς ἑαυτὴν ἀναλώσασα); and together with the flesh it shall form one thing, one spirit, one mind, one God (ἓν καὶ πνεῦμα και νοῦς καὶ θεός), because the mortal and transient aspect will have been absorbed by life (καταποθέντος ὑπὸ τῆς ζωῆς τοῦ θνητοῦ τε καὶ ῥέοντος) (*Or*. 7,21).

This statement looks to the spiritualisation of the human body in the afterlife, which Origen had put forward. And it is interesting that, similarly to what frequently happens with Gregory of Nyssa's *De anima et resurrectione*, in a scholium it is hastily explained that Gregory 'does not say that the body is destroyed or fused in the soul: God forbid! But rather (it is said that the body dissolves in the soul) insofar as it takes on immutability and a lack of passions (διὰ τὴν ἀτρεψίαν καὶ ἀπαθὲς τοῦ σώματος)'.[85]

Spiritual chastisements and the spiritual body

Holl also attributes to Origen's influence this passage:

What does the last judgement consist of? In one's weight or one's lightness within one's conscience, and in the examination of God's law, as observed in our life ... For wrongdoers, the shadows represent being cast far from God; the worm that gnaws and the fire signify the consumption of every material passion (*Carm.* I, 2, 34, 254-60).

If on the one hand it is clear that 'external shadow', which will envelop evil-doers, means being cast far from God (ἐκ θεοῦ πεσεῖν), how should the worm and the fire spoken of in the Scriptures be understood? They represent the consumption (τῆξις) of the corporeal passions: so this might point to a transient chastisement, which will cease when the bodily element ceases, once this latter has been consumed by fire.

Another passage, which seems to challenge an eternity of chastisement is that which may be read in *Or.* 40,36:

I know of ... the fire that has been prepared also for the devil and his angels and which proceeds from the face of the Lord and will burn all around His enemies: and I also know of a fire that is far worse than this, which is the fire that Scripture speaks of together with the worm that never sleeps: it is the fire that never goes out, but lasts for all eternity and is reserved for the damned.

Up to this point everything is clear; but Gregory adds: 'All this is part of the destructive power of God, *unless one prefers to interpret this in a more favourable way for men, and worthier of He who is their chastiser*': that is, in the sense that the chastisement does not have to be eternal. Gregory's eschatology may substantially be what can be read in abbreviated form in *Or.* 16,9:

Some shall be welcomed by the ineffable light to the contemplation of the Holy and Regal Trinity, which shall illuminate them with greater clarity and purity, and in its totality it shall penetrate the human mind in its totality. This, and this only is what I

[85] It is a pity that this scholium was not cited in the critical commentary of the edition Sources Chrétiennes (n. 405): it is present in Migne's edition.

believe to be the Kingdom of Heaven; for the others instead, together with the other tortures, or rather, even more than the other tortures, there shall be the torture of being cast away by God and the interminable shame of one's own conscience (καὶ ἡ ἐν τῷ συνειδότι αἰσχύνη πέρας οὐκ ἔχουσα).

Eternal beatitude, therefore, is the contemplation of God, and damnation is being cast far from God, the interminable torment of one's conscience. 'And if we move to meet God, shall all men eventually meet Him? Let us keep this problem for a later time' (εἰ δὲ θεοῦ, καὶ ἅπαντας ἐσύστερον; ἄλλοθι κείσθω) (*Carm*. II 1,1, 522).

‘Teach us to pray’: Self-Understanding in Macrina’s Final Prayer

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Abstract

In this article, Gregory of Nyssa’s *Life of Macrina* is read from a mystagogical perspective. Mystagogy, in this case, is understood in a double sense as referring to the sacramental rituals of the church as well as to a more general process of spiritual formation. Such a layered mystagogical viewpoint applies particularly well to the *Vita Macrinae* because this inspirational text is saturated with liturgical references in terms of both terminology and ritual practice. By incorporating such language into the *vita*, Gregory appeals to the liturgical experience of his audience. Thus, hagiography and liturgy are closely connected here: not only in terms of writing and authorship, as worked out by Derek Krueger, but also as a communicative tool employed to connect with the recipients of the text, appealing to their personal experience. Macrina’s deathbed prayer represents a special instance of ritual setting and wording as it is highly reminiscent of the eucharistic prayer recited in the divine liturgy. The saint’s Final Prayer signals the high point in the text because it is an extensive section presented in direct speech. It is also the passage *par excellence* which enables the reader to identify with the ‘I’ of the saint. Via use of the first person singular the reader/hearer is encouraged to identify closely with Macrina and to appropriate her words. Because the prayer encapsulates his theology, Gregory takes on a mystagogical role here: he teaches to pray *and* he presents a particular, ascetic form of self-understanding, inviting the recipients of his texts to view themselves from that theological perspective, thus inscribing their stories into God’s. As a result, Gregory’s hagiographical prayer functions as mystagogical communication and spiritual formation at its most intense.

Introduction[1]

The Cappadocian fathers are well known for their ability to connect spirituality and theology, experience and doctrine.[2] In fact, *theologia* is the place

[1] A more elaborate and adapted version of this contribution will appear in the proceedings of the second international conference organized by the Dutch Centre for Patristic Research (CPO) at Utrecht in August of 2014, entitled *The Early Christian Mystagogy of Prayer*, to be published in the LAHR-series (Late Antique History and Religion), by Peeters, Leuven (ed. Paul van Geest *et al*.).

[2] See Andrew Louth, ‘Later theologians of the Greek East’, in Philip Esler (ed.), *The Early Christian World I* (London, 2000), 580-601, 590.

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where prayer and theological reflection meet.[3] This integral approach to faith is also present in the *Life of Macrina*, a work of hagiography written around 381 A.D. by Gregory of Nyssa about his sister Macrina.[4] It is quite an unusual *vita* because the saint already dies at two-thirds of the narrative. What follows are flashbacks which encourage the reader to piece together the meaning of Macrina's saintly life posthumously.[5] Another striking element in the text is the prayer that Macrina prays on her deathbed, the so-called Final Prayer. In this contribution, I will reflect on this prayer from the perspective of mystagogy. Considering both liturgical and biblical allusions and citations, I will show how Gregory performs a mystagogical role in the *vita* as he teaches his readers to pray and, by extension, to live.

Mystagogy, liturgy, and hagiography

First, let us consider the term 'mystagogy', which can be defined in a number of ways. [6] It has been described as 'a guided process of transformation, in which believers acquire an inner balance by a certain order of life, in that they become more receptive to God's being and operation, without losing touch with everyday life and the community of faith'.[7] In this article, I will use the term 'mystagogy' to refer to the process of initiation in which one participates when joining the Christian church, and which continues throughout the rest of one's life as a Christian.[8] Originally, the term was closely connected to the rite of baptism,[9] but I will also apply it, as in the definition just mentioned, in a broader sense – of initiation as such. We might ask: what are new Christians being initiated into? Apart from the categories of dogmatics and ethics – in the sense of 'what do I believe' and 'how should I conduct myself' – I see other fields of initiation related to the liturgy, the reading of Scripture, and prayer.

[3] See Frances M. Young, *Biblical Exegesis and the Formation of Christian Culture* (Cambridge 1997), 217-20.

[4] I will refer to Gregory of Nyssa's *Vita Macrinae* [*VM*] in the following edition: *Vie de Sainte Macrine*, ed. Pierre Maraval, SC 178 (Paris, 1971).

[5] See Georgia Frank, 'Macrina's Scar: Homeric Allusion and Heroic Identity in Gregory of Nyssa's *Life of Macrina*', *JECS* 8 (2000), 511-30.

[6] For the past few years, 'mystagogy' has been the focus of the research done at the Dutch Centre for Patristic Research (abbreviated in Dutch as CPO). Two international conferences have been organized: in 2011 and in 2014. For a more elaborate discussion of mystagogy, see the proceedings of the first international conference: Paul van Geest (ed.), *Seeing through the Eyes of Faith. New Approaches to the Mystagogy of the Church Fathers*, LAHR 11 (Leuven, 2016).

[7] This is a translation of the Dutch definition that can be found on the website of the Dutch Centre for Patristic Research: <www.patristiek.eu/onderzoek/index.htm>.

[8] See, for instance, Philip Rousseau, *Basil of Caesarea* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, CA, 1998), 130.

[9] See, for instance, Maxwell E. Johnson, *The Rites of Christian Initiation. Their Evolution and Interpretation* (Collegeville, MN, 1999), 93-4.

So apart from dogmatics and ethics, I would distinguish 'the spiritual life' of which the liturgy is a core element. Needless to say, these fields easily shade into each other as the reading of Scripture and the performance of prayer are integral to the service of the liturgy.[10] Similarly, one could argue that both dogmatics and ethics are aspects of one's spiritual life. Thus, these distinctions are made solely for the purpose of clarification. Indeed, at times – as we shall see below – both meditation and prayer may occur in contexts somewhat removed from an actual liturgical setting, while still harbouring liturgical notions.

As we approach the *vita* of Macrina by Gregory of Nyssa, and especially the Final Prayer, from the angle of mystagogy, with its roots in the process of liturgical initiation, the liturgical dimension of the work lights up. When we view Macrina's final days from the perspective of mystagogy, for instance, it becomes apparent how these are embedded within the liturgical rite of thanksgiving for the light – connected to the evening ritual of lighting the lamps. The Final Prayer, while presented (as other prayers in the *vita*)[11] as an *ex tempore* prayer, is clearly set within a liturgical setting. And not only the context, but the wording is also 'liturgical' as both Pierre Maraval and Derek Krueger have noted.[12] I will return to these liturgical dimensions more elaborately below, but first let us consider briefly two examples of liturgical allusions by way of illustration.

With the notion of mystagogy and its baptismal origin in mind, two elements in the text stand out: the image of the light and the description of a procession. The image of the light is referred to in two ways: first, Macrina's Final Prayer is set within the context of 'lighting the lamps' at which ritual the hymn *Phōs hilaron* (Φῶς ἱλαρόν) would probably have been sung.[13] *Phōs hilaron*, meaning 'friendly light', refers to Christ. This liturgical and prayerful celebration of light is then followed, after the death of Macrina, by the statement that the saint is mourned by women close to her as 'light', for we read: 'The lamp of our eyes has been extinguished; the light to guide our souls has been carried off'.[14]

[10] See F.M. Young, *Biblical Exegesis* (1997), 220.

[11] For instance, in *VM* 13, where Macrina's mother Emmelia prays on her deathbed.

[12] *Vie de Sainte Macrine*, ed. P. Maraval, SC 178 (1971), 72-7 and 220-5; see also Derek Krueger, *Writing and Holiness. The Practice of Authorship in the Early Christian East* (Philadelphia, 2004), 127-31.

[13] *Vie de Sainte Macrine*, ed. Maraval, SC 178 (1971), 73. Maraval explains that Basil of Caesarea, Gregory's brother, mentions the same night office (of thanksgiving for the light) in his treatise on the Holy Spirit (*De Spir. Sancto* 73) and the fact that it included a specific ancient formula which was part of 'Friendly Light', the famous hymn celebrating Christ as the Light.

[14] *VM* 26,23-4. The translation cited is by Kevin Corrigan, *The Life of Saint Macrina by Gregory, Bishop of Nyssa* (Eugene, OR, 2001), 44. Maraval qualifies the metaphors as 'banal' ('métaphores banales') because they occur elsewhere. I do not agree, however. It seems to me that in this context the words 'light' and 'lamp' are carefully chosen by the author. I do agree with another remark made by Maraval: he notes that these words by the maidens of Macrina's community put into relief the saint's educational role. He sees this as a case of 'photagogie' which

The second mystagogical element I want to highlight is that of the procession. It is mentioned as Macrina is brought to her final resting place: the procession is called '*pompē*' (πομπή), which term is also used in the context of the Easter vigil when the catechumens are baptized.[15] Thus we find two illustrations, *phōs*/light and *pompē*/procession, that capture the liturgical and baptismal glow inherent in the work, reinforcing its mystagogical quality.

With this in mind, let us now shift our focus to that other sacrament, the eucharist, and concentrate on the eucharistic quality of the language in the Macrina's Final Prayer. The prayer, which is included in chapter 24 of the *vita*, is – as said – presented as an *ex tempore* prayer prayed by Macrina on her deathbed. It has been noted, however, that it is highly stylized. It both captures Gregory's ascetic theology and includes – apart from many biblical quotations and allusions – quite a number of liturgical phrases.[16] As our liturgical sources containing full eucharistic prayers are relatively late, it is difficult to speak of literary dependence, but it is clear that we find structural parallels between the eucharistic prayer and Macrina's Final Prayer.[17]

In his study entitled *Writing and Holiness*, Derek Krueger analyses the *Vita Macrinae* in terms of liturgical authorship. He observes important parallels between the autobiographical narration of one's life (in this case that of Macrina) *in speech* and the biographical narration of that life *in writing*. He also points out that in both cases, two major structural elements from the eucharistic liturgy are present: *anamnēsis* and *eucharistia*. The events of the life are recalled and this is done with a view to thanksgiving. While in the eucharistic liturgy the focus is on the mighty acts of God in the history of salvation, the more personal prayer offered by Macrina includes autobiographical reminiscences which are closely related to her spiritual life, more specifically her devotion to God in asceticism. In the prayer, Gregory presents salvation history and personal history as mirror images. Quite strikingly, the core components of the divine liturgy, remembering and thanksgiving, determine the dynamic of both the Final Prayer in chapter 24 and the authorship of Gregory of the *vita* as a whole.[18]

theme is developed by Gregory elsewhere in his homily on *Song of Songs* (*In Cant. Hom.* XV). See *Vie de Sainte Macrine*, ed. P. Maraval, SC 178 (1971), 231 n. 3. Approaching matters from the perspective of mystagogy, I find the term 'photagogie' particularly apt. It also resonates with an important notion from Macrina's final prayer: 'cheiragogia' – suggested by the reference to an angel leading Macrina 'by the hand'. See *VM* 24,26-7; and K. Corrigan, *The Life of Saint Macrina* (2001), 42.

[15] *VM* 34,12; see *Vie de Sainte Macrine*, ed. P. Maraval, SC 178 (1971), 252-3.

[16] For the biblical material see Eugenio Marotta, 'La base biblica della *Vita s. Macrinae* di Gregorio di Nissa', *Vetera Christianorum* 5 (1968), 73-88.

[17] See *Vie de Sainte Macrine*, ed. P. Maraval, SC 178 (1971), 74-7 and 220-5; see also D. Krueger, *Writing and Holiness* (2004), 127-31.

[18] D. Krueger, *Writing and Holiness* (2004), 110-32.

Two Final Prayers: the *Vita Macrinae* and the *Martyrium Polycarpi*

From the perspective of Macrina as a character in the story, the point is that she – as Krueger calls it – 'inscribes her story into God's' by means of the prayer.[19] How is this done? It is clear that the prayer is basically made up of two parts: a descriptive part and a request. The first part relates the important elements of salvation history, while in the second, Macrina appropriates these. While the prayer displays many examples of literary and compositional ingenuity (as I have shown elsewhere),[20] I want to focus here on one specific aspect related to the notion of 'paradise'. While the first descriptive part of the prayer speaks of the creation of human beings (they are 'fashioned' from the earth: from the Greek διαμορφόω),[21] and their 'recreation' (they are 'transformed': from the Greek μεταμορφόω),[22] the second part zooms in on the related notion of paradise referring to both the fiery sword from *Genesis* 3 and the famous scene from the Gospel where Jesus and the sinner on the cross are in conversation.[23] The sinner asks the Lord to 'remember him in his Kingdom',[24] that is, to remember him when he will enter paradise. Jesus' subsequent promise is that the sinner will enter paradise 'today'.[25] Next, Macrina connects herself to both the state of being crucified – having crucified her flesh in asceticism – and the entrance into paradise. The prayer reads: 'Remember me also in your kingdom, for I too have been crucified with you, for I have nailed my flesh out of reverence for you'.[26]

It has been noted that Christian prayer has inherited much of its structure from the Greek prayers of the classical period.[27] The basic model is that of invocation, followed by a narrative part (*pars epica*) and a request.[28] While Macrina's prayer does not open with a clear invocation, the twofold structure

[19] *Ibid*. 130.

[20] One important structural element, for instance, is word repetition. The article in which I discuss the prayer more extensively is entitled 'Gregory of Nyssa as Mystagogue: Macrina's Final Prayer in Context'. It will be published in the proceedings of the CPO-conference *The Early Christian Mystagogy of Prayer* (held in 2014) by Peeters, Leuven (ed. P. van Geest). See note 1.

[21] *VM* 24,8; K. Corrigan, *The Life of Saint Macrina* (2001), 41.

[22] *VM* 24,9; K. Corrigan, *The Life of Saint Macrina* (2001), 41.

[23] *VM* 24,29-31; see *Gen* 3:24 and *Luke* 23:42-3.

[24] See *Luke* 23:42: 'Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom'.

[25] See *Luke* 23:43: 'Amen, I say to you: today you will be with me in paradise'.

[26] *VM* 24,32-4; K. Corrigan, *The Life of Saint Macrina* (2001), 42. See also note 16.

[27] See, for example, Gerard Rouwhorst, 'Hymns and Prayers in the Apocryphal Acts of Thomas', in Clemens Leonhard and Hermut Löhr (eds), *Literature or Liturgy? Early Christian Hymns and Prayers in their Literary and Liturgical Context in Antiquity* (Tübingen, 2014), 195-212, esp. 197-200; and Gerd Buschmann, *Das Martyrium des Polykarp* (Göttingen, 1998), 226-57 ('Exkurs: Traditionsgeschichtliche Analyse des Gebets in MartPol 14 – Ein jüdisches Dankopfergebet des Einzelnen als eucharistisches Märtyrergedächtnisgebet der frühchristlichen kleinasiatischen Gemeinden'), esp. 237.

[28] G. Rouwhorst, 'Hymns and Prayers' (2014), 197-8.

of a narrative or epic part followed by a request is obvious.[29] One could argue that in the case of Macrina's prayer, the invocation is now situated between the two parts, whereby the basic format has been adapted.[30] In fact, the request opens with an invocation which takes on an autobiographical colouring as Macrina's prayer refers to her devotion to God. In a sense, this is part of her personal *anamnesis*, inserted here in the invocation and introducing the request that is to follow. Recalling the importance of *anamnesis*, we must note that the narrative part in the prayer, about the saving acts of God, constitutes the *anamnesis* proper.

Now let us consider another hagiographical text which includes a 'Final Prayer' with eucharistic overtones: The Final Prayer by Polycarp, the bishop of Smyrna, from the *Martyrium Polycarpi*. Gerd Buschmann, rather than emphasising the influence of Greek hymns and prayers, focuses more on biblical material, for instance, the Psalms, and on the structure of Jewish blessings (*berachot*) at the dinner table.[31] He notes that in the case of Polycarp's prayer, the section of the request is remarkably short – pointing out that the request would expand over time, also, or especially, in the eucharistic liturgy.[32] Such an elaborate request is included in the *Life of Macrina*.

Another vital aspect concerning Polycarp's prayer is the following. Buschmann presents a source critical analysis of the martyr's prayer in which the text is constituted by three layers: that of a Jewish blessing, a Christianized layer reflecting eucharistic practice, and a third and final redactional layer relating specifically to martyrdom.[33] He then suggests that this prayer, which he believes incorporates actual liturgical language, could later function in the martyrological rituals of remembrance developed after Polycarp's death. That is: Polycarp's prayer, partly derived *from* the liturgy, could flow back *into* the liturgy, and thus be prayed by members of the Christian community.[34]

This observation enables us to move from Krueger's focus on liturgy as a metaphor for authorial activity to an interpretation of liturgical notions in hagiography as mystagogical, that is, as primarily fostering religious communication and formation. Thus, while Krueger concentrates on *anamnesis* and *eucharistia* in the context of authorship, which enables him to envisage Gregory as a priest who offers Macrina's remains to God in thanksgiving as a writer,[35] a consideration

[29] The narrative part comprises lines 1 to 20 of chapter 24, while the request runs from line 21 to the end (line 46).

[30] The request starts with an invocation in line 21: 'God Eternal', after which three relative clauses follow (lines 22-5), before the actual request is articulated (starting line 26). See also K. Corrigan, *The Life of Saint Macrina* (2001), 42.

[31] G. Buschmann, *Das Martyrium* (1998), 228-47.

[32] *Ibid.* 243 and 247.

[33] See note 27.

[34] G. Buschmann, *Das Martyrium* (1998), 247, 254-6, 267-8, 288.

[35] D. Krueger, *Writing and Holiness* (2004), 132.

of Polycarp's Final Prayer may shift attention to the field of spirituality and the dynamics of prayer. Indeed, such a shift in focus derives from the connections between the story of the saint, eucharistic experience, and personal prayer.

When we read Macrina's and Polycarp's prayer in conjunction in this way, a mystagogical interpretation becomes plausible which argues that Gregory was using Macrina's prayer to teach his audience. The scene has been set in such a way that one might imagine the readers as having asked Gregory what the disciples once asked Jesus: 'Teach us to pray'.[36] Significantly, the biblical book of hymns and prayers, the Psalms, often uses the first person, allowing for instant appropriation of the words. Similarly, the Lord's Prayer, taught by Jesus to his disciples, is easily repeated. The same is true of Gregory's prayer voiced by Macrina: it is set in the first person and can be easily repeated by the reader. As one reads the story of *vita*, one reads the prayer when arriving at chapter 24. Readers take Macrina's words upon their lips and consequently, these become their words.

From a linguistic and narratological point of view, it is important to note that the prayer is formulated in direct speech, which means that narrative and narrated time coincide.[37] In stories, narrative time generally slows down until the moment when direct speech happens. From a discourse linguistic point of view it signals that we have reached *a*, if not *the*, peak in the story, as climactic passages are often preceded by a slowing down of narrative tempo and communicated by way of direct speech.[38] From a linguistic perspective this is definitely the case in *Vita Macrinae* 24: the Final Prayer presented in direct speech represents a high point in the narrative. It is significant that the simultaneity of narrative and narrated time in direct speech helps readers to become maximally involved in the story – even to the extent of being immersed in it.[39] Buschmann's suggestion that Christians celebrating the festival of Polycarp could repeat his Final Prayer in the context of the eucharistic liturgy fits very well with this interpretation of appropriation.[40] While both the *Martyrium Polycarpi* and the *Vita Macrinae* may be understood as texts closely connected to the ritual remembrance of the saints, they can also quite easily be imagined as functioning

[36] *Luke* 11:1.

[37] See, for instance, Monika Fludernik, *An Introduction to Narratology* (Abingdon, 2009), 33.

[38] See for the notion of the peak, for instance, Robert E. Longacre, *The Grammar of Discourse: Second Edition* (New York, 1996), 42-3. See also Rutger J. Allan, 'Towards a Typology of the Narrative Modes in Ancient Greek: Text Types and Narrative Structure in Euripidean Messenger Speeches', in Stéphanie J. Bakker and Gerry C. Wakker (eds), *Discourse Cohesion in Greek* (Leiden, 2009), 171-204, 187-8.

[39] For the concept of immersion see, for instance, the chapter entitled 'Fictional vs. Factual Narration' by Jean-Marie Schaeffer, in Peter Hühn, John Pier, Wolf Schmid and Jörg Schönert (eds), *Handbook of Narratology*, Narratologia 19 (Göttingen, 2014), 179-96, 191-4. See also the Dutch article 'Homerus' narratieve stijl: enargeia en immersion' by Rutger J. Allen, Irene J.F. de Jong and Casper C. de Jonge in *Lampas* 47 (2014), 202-23.

[40] See note 34.

in non-liturgical contexts with readers and/or listeners taking in the words of the story including the Final Prayer. In a sense, the actual place where the recipient of the text is sitting or standing or even lying down then becomes a liturgical setting. In this way, via eucharistically informed language, one's actual surroundings may be transformed into a sacred space.

Mystagogy and spirituality

Krueger focuses on Gregory's self-understanding with a view to his authorship and explains how Gregory's writing can be seen as a liturgical activity mirroring both *anamnesis* and *eucharistia*. From the perspective of mystagogy, I would add that the reader is drawn into the liturgical dynamic of the work itself. As Macrina inscribes her life into God's,[41] that is, as she inserts her biography into the story of the Scriptures by way of liturgically contextualized prayer, the reader may do the same. Macrina's 'I' may become the 'I' of the reader.

Mystagogically, Gregory has a twofold mission here: he teaches his readers to pray but in doing so, he also teaches them to understand themselves since his theology is encapsulated in the prayer. The prayer is his theology, or rather, his anthropology, and therefore his spirituality in a nutshell. In the prayer, life as Gregory understands it is condensed. Consequently, the Life culminates in the Prayer. This is an important observation also made by Krueger: life itself is a prayer and with the life, the prayer ends, or rather, the proper end of the prayer marks the end of Macrina's life.[42] There is a perfect parallellism between the two, making the profound point that life is prayer and prayer is life. In this context, the notion of thanksgiving, of *eucharistia*, must again be mentioned as both the life and the prayer are offered to God in gratitude. Indeed, all of these notions are deeply connected to the theme of sacrifice. Typically, the term marks the final sentence of the Final Prayer as Macrina calls herself 'an offering of incense'.[43]

Concluding remarks

A few years ago, the Convent of Saint Catherine (Catharijneconvent), an important museum of religious art in the Dutch city of Utrecht, put on an exhibition that focused on the role of the Bible in the seventeenth century, the so-called 'Golden Age'. It was entitled 'At Home in the Bible' and the final section of

[41] See note 19.
[42] See D. Krueger, *Writing and Holiness* (2004), 131.
[43] *VM* 24, lines 45-6.

the exhibition showed how the depiction of biblical stories had found its way into the homes of the Dutch in the seventeenth century: on tobacco containers, cupboards, buttons, linen, *etc*.[44] They also displayed exemplars of large family Bibles that were often placed on a special lectern in the home. On the first page of these Bibles the faithful often included their own family history recording births, marriages, and deaths. These Christians, like Macrina, were still 'inscribing their stories into God's'.

Apparently, we may read the Scriptures, but we also interpret our own stories and try to understand them, thereby understanding ourselves. We may use pre-existing stories to illuminate our own – as Macrina did – or Gregory for her. In such cases, one aims at acts of *anamnesis* and possibly also *eucharistia*: remembering the larger (biblical) story and one's own while giving thanks. It is a special kind of intertextual activity. Still, in the case of the *Life of Macrina*, yet another performer of memorization plays a major role, who is included in the story about the sinner on the cross.[45] For Macrina and Gregory, the ultimate act of *anamnesis* was performed by Christ who had promised to remember his own.

[44] The catalogue accompanying the exhibition was entitled *Thuis in de Bijbel: Oude meesters, grote verhalen* ('At Home in the Bible: Old Masters, Great Stories') (Zwolle, 2014).

[45] See notes 24 and 25.

Defending Moses. Understanding Basil's Apparent Rejection of Allegory in the *Hexaemeron*

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Abstract

A problem in understanding Basil of Caesarea's method of exegesis is the apparent contradiction between his earlier Origenian exegesis and his criticisms of allegoresis in the *Hexaemeron*. Two main solutions had been offered by scholars, namely, to attack the problem at the beginning and say that he never really accepted Origen's method in the first place, or to attack it at the end and say that Basil changed his point of view late in life. Richard Lim rejects both these solutions and instead argues for a continuity between Origen and Basil. Although Lim is right to reject previous explanations and maintain the connection between Basil and Origen, some of his arguments are not sustainable. A better explanation lies in Basil's understanding of *Genesis* 1 as a privileged source of cosmology, which he defends against dualistic cosmologies and theologies. Because the heretics used allegorical explanations of *Genesis* 1 to support their dualism, Basil insists on the reasonableness and sufficiency of the text at the literal level.

A problem in understanding Basil of Caesarea's method of exegesis is the apparent contradiction between his earlier Origenian exegesis and his criticisms of allegoresis in the *Hexaemeron*.[1] Two main solutions had been offered by scholars, namely, to attack the problem at the beginning and say that he never really accepted Origen's method in the first place, or to attack it at the end and say that Basil changed his point of view late in life. In a 1990 article, Richard Lim rejects both these solutions and instead argues for a continuity between Origen and Basil.[2] Although Lim is right to reject previous explanations and maintain the connection between Basil and Origen, some of his arguments are not sustainable. I will argue that a better explanation lies in Basil's understanding of *Genesis* 1 as a privileged source of cosmology, which he had to defend against dualistic cosmologies and theologies. Because the heretics used allegorical explanations of *Genesis* 1 to support their dualism, Basil insists on the reasonableness and sufficiency of the text at the literal level.

[1] *Basilius von Caesarea: Homilien zum Hexaemeron*, ed. Emmanuel Amand de Mendieta and Stig Y. Rudberg, GCS, n.s. 2 (Berlin, 1997).

[2] Richard Lim, 'The Politics of Interpretation in Basil of Caesaera's "Hexaemeron"', *VC* 44 (1990), 351-70.

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Identifying the problem

Basil's exegetical praxis in his homilies on the Psalms shows that he was a disciple of Origen. Like Origen, Basil believed that what they both call the 'bodily sense'[3] of scripture is usually spiritually edifying.[4] Nevertheless, figurative interpretations abound, as, for instance, when Basil says that the lyre and 'the harp of ten strings' (*Ps*. 32:2) represent the body and the Ten Commandments respectively,[5] or that the infants the Lord protects (*Ps*. 114:6) include 'psychic' infants, *i.e*., those who humble themselves through conversion.[6] By way of exception, Basil, like Origen before him,[7] occasionally rejects the literal interpretation of a passage. For instance, *Psalm* 33 speaks of God's 'eyes', 'ears', and 'face', but these words should not be read literally, as that would make scripture 'seem to be unreasonable'.[8]

Seemingly in spite of this Origenian approach to scripture, Basil's explicit hermeneutic in the *Hexaemeron* is to interpret words literally. He declares: 'As for me, when I hear "grass", I think of grass'.[9] He compares allegorical interpretations to 'dream interpretations and old wives' tales'.[10] At best, they are 'neatly made'[11] by the interpreter, though 'not at all true'.[12] A good interpreter of scripture, Basil says, must always remain faithful to a passage's obvious meaning.[13]

The heretics do the opposite by twisting passages to make them follow their own doctrine: 'The counterfeiters of the truth, who do not at all thoroughly teach their minds to follow scripture, pervert the meaning of the scriptures according to their own understanding'.[14] For example, *Gen*. 1:2 says: 'And darkness was over the abyss'. This verse, Basil tells us, has been used by people who 'pervert the words according to their own meanings'[15] to construct

[3] Basil, *Homilia in Psalmos* 32,6: τὸν σωματικὸν νοῦν. *S. P. N. Basilii, Opera Omnia Quae Exstant*, ed. Julien Garnier and Prudentius Mauran, PG 29 (Paris, 1886). Origen, *De principiis* 4,2,5: τὸ σωματικὸν. *Origène: Traité des principes, tome III (Livres III et IV)*, ed. Henri Crouzel and Manlio Simonetti, SC 268 (Paris, 1980).

[4] Basil, *Homiliae in Psalmos* 32,6. Origen, *De principiis* 4,2,8.

[5] Basil, *Homiliae in Psalmos* 32,2.

[6] *Ibid*. 114,4.

[7] Origen, *De principiis* 4,2,2.

[8] Basil, *Homiliae in Psalmos* 33,11: ἄλογον εἶναι δόξει.

[9] *Ibid*. *Homiliae in hexaemeron* 9,1: ἐγὼ δὲ χόρτον ἀκούσας χόρτον νοῶ. See *ibid*. 3,9: τὸ ὕδωρ ὕδωρ νοήσωμεν ('Let us consider water as water').

[10] *Ibid*. ὀνειράτων συνκρίσεις καὶ γραώδεις μύθους.

[11] *Ibid*. κεκομψευμένον.

[12] *Ibid*. ἀληθῆ δὲ εἶναι οὐ πάνυ.

[13] *Ibid*. 2,5.

[14] *Ibid*. 2,2 οἱ παραχαράκται τῆς ἀληθείας, οἱ οὐχὶ τῇ γραφῇ τὸν ἑαυτῶν νοῦν ἀκολουθεῖν ἐκδιδάσκοντες, ἀλλὰ πρὸς τὸ οἰκεῖον βούλημα τὴν διάνοιαν τῶν γραφῶν διαστέφοντες.

[15] *Ibid*. 2,4 πρὸς τὰς ἰδίας ὑπονοίας παρατρεπόντων τὰ ῥήματα.

'myths'[16] and 'rather impious fabrications'.[17] Instead of taking the word σκότος 'as is natural'[18] to mean 'some unlighted air',[19] 'a place overshadowed',[20] or 'a place deprived of light',[21] Gnostics take it to mean 'evil itself, having its beginning from itself'.[22] Similarly, they allegorize the word ἄβυσσος as though it meant 'a mass of opposing powers'.[23] Allegorical interpretations of *Genesis* 1 support their dualistic cosmology and theology.

Status quaestionis

If Basil's condemnation of allegoresis is absolute, as it may appear to be,[24] there is an obvious contradiction with his earlier attitude. In older scholarship a prevalent opinion was that Basil became a literalist sometime before preaching the *Hexaemeron*. The 19th-century scholar Eugène Fialon believed that Basil gradually moved away from allegorical exegesis as he matured.[25] The priest-scholar Emmanuel Amand de Mendieta considered Basil's exegesis in the *Hexaemeron* 'anti-origénienne', suggesting a prior conversion.[26] The Rev. William Tieck called Basil 'a forerunner of [the Antiochene] school', in part because he corresponded with Diodore.[27] Joseph Trigg also considers Basil to be an 'Antiochene'.[28] Philipp Rousseau regards this Antiochene connection as 'not unlikely'.[29]

A difficulty for this solution is the testimony of Basil's friend, Gregory of Nazianzius. In his eulogy, Gregory states that Basil used a threefold interpretation

[16] *Ibid*. μύθων.

[17] *Ibid*. πλασμάτων δυσσεβεστέρων. See *ibid*. 9,1 ἐπὶ τὰς οἰκείας ὑπονοίας παρατρέψαντες ('changing [the meaning] according to their own meanings').

[18] *Ibid*. 2.4 ὡς πέφυκεν.

[19] *Ibid*. ἀέρα τινὰ ἀφώτιστον.

[20] *Ibid*. τόπον σκιαζόμενον.

[21] *Ibid*. τόπον φωτὸς ἐστερημένον.

[22] *Ibid*. αὐτὸ τὸ κακόν, παρ' ἑαυτοῦ τὴν ἀρχὴν ἔχον.

[23] *Ibid*. δυνάμεων πλῆθος ἀντικειμένων.

[24] As Emmanuel Amand de Mendieta takes it to be in his review of Giet Stanislas (ed.), *Basile de Césarée: Homélies sur l'Hexaéméron*, *Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique* 47 (1952), 222-8, 223.

[25] Eugène Fialon, *Étude historique et littéraire sur saint Basile, suivi de l'Hexaméron* (Paris, 1869), 294-5.

[26] Emmanuel Amand de Mendieta, 'La Préparation et la composition des neuf "Homélies sur l'Hexaéméron" de Basile de Césarée: Le problème des sources littéraires immédiates', *SP* 18 (1986), 349-67, 352.

[27] William Tieck, *Basil of Caesarea and the Bible*, PhD diss. (NY, Columbia University, 1953), 157.

[28] Joseph W. Trigg, *Biblical Interpretation*, Message of the Fathers of the Church 9 (Wilmington, 1988), 35.

[29] Philip Rousseau, *Basil of Caesarea*, The Transformation of the Classical Heritage 20 (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1994), 323 (note 21).

of scripture.[30] Obviously he means the threefold hermeneutic of Origen, the same hermeneutic Basil used in his homilies on the *Psalms*. So if Basil did undergo a hermeneutical conversion, Gregory either was unaware of or wanted to hide the fact. Since neither possibility is probable, an explanation that can overcome this difficulty is preferable.

The turning-point in the interpretation of Basil's hermeneutics came with the publication of an article by Lim, who argues that Basil's condemnation of allegoresis was not absolute. Instead, Lim believes that Basil rejected only what he terms 'translational' allegory, *i.e.*, allegory in the strict sense, in which the words are only a cypher for a hidden meaning.[31] Lim identifies this kind of allegory with the Gnostics, not Origen. Although pointing scholars in the right direction, I believe Lim's thesis is doubly flawed. First: while the allegorical interpretations of the words *darkness* and *deep* that Basil rejected are indeed 'translational' allegories, Basil's problem with them was not merely that the literal meaning of the words was lost, but that the allegorical meaning was false. *Darkness* does not indicate self-subsistent evil, nor *deep* evil powers. The problem was not that words were being 'translated' so much as that they were being interpreted heretically. Second: Lim claims that 'translational' allegory was not part of Origen's method and thus could not have been the object of Basil's criticism. However, this is incorrect: 'translational' allegory was an important part of Origen's method, and indeed Basil's, too, as it allowed the interpreter to avoid absurdities. In fact, the water above the firmament (*Gen.* 1:6-7) was one of the very passages Origen refused to take literally,[32] and Basil rebuked him for that.[33]

Lim has another theory: the apparent contradiction within Basil's corpus is a result of differing audiences for his sermons. Lim argues that Basil's criticism of allegorical interpretation in the Hexaemeron was based on Origen's threefold classification of Christians into the 'simple', somewhat advanced, and 'perfect'.[34] 'Basil was leading his humble congregation by the hand in a gradual anagogy, using the literal hermeneutics which he considered to be most

[30] Gregory of Nazianzus, *Orationes* 63,67: ὅταν ταῖς ἄλλαις ἐξηγήσεσιν … τρισσῶς ἐν ταῖς στερραῖς ἑαυτοῦ πλαξὶ τῆς καρδίας ἀπογραψάμενος, πείθομαι μὴ μέχρι τοῦ γράμματος ἵστασθαι μηδὲ βλέπειν τὰ ἄνω μόνον, ἀλλὰ καὶ περαιτέρω διαβαίνειν καὶ εἰς βάθος ἔτι χωρεῖν ἐκ βάθους ('When I peruse his other commentaries … after inscribing them in three forms on the solid tablets of his heart, I am persuaded not to be content with the literal interpretation, or to fix my attention on things merely on the surface, but to advance further and to proceed from depth to depth'); *Grégoire Nazianze: Discours 42-43*, ed. Jean Bernardi, SC 384 (Paris, 1992). English translation by Leo P. McCauley, SJ, *Funeral Orations*, FOTC 22 (New York, 1953).

[31] R. Lim, 'Politics of Interpretation' (1990), 357.

[32] See Origen, *In Genesim homiliae* 1,2. *Origène: Homélies sur la Genèse*, ed. Louis Doutreleau, SC 7bis (Paris, 1976).

[33] Basil, *Homiliae in hexaemeron* 3,9.

[34] Origen, *De principiis* 3,4,11.

appropriate to his audience'.[35] Basil stuck to the literal sense because his audience was made up of ordinary, 'simple' people, such as tradesmen.[36] 'Basil is not categorically rejecting the allegorical method *per se*, but ... warning his specific, and largely unsophisticated, audience not to abandon the literal meaning of scriptures in favor of more arcane spiritual meanings'.[37]

However, this idea has been disproved by Stephen Hildebrand, who points out that, in the homilies on the *Psalms*, there is no indication that Basil's audience consisted of 'perfect, or even somewhat advanced, Christians'.[38] Jean Bernardi already demonstrated that most, if not all, of the *Psalms* homilies were addressed 'au grand public'.[39] Furthermore, the homilies on the six days contain too many scientific allusions, which would be lost on the 'simple' Christians, to assume that the congregation was so predominately 'unsophisticated' as to rule out allegoresis completely. When Basil responded to criticisms from his audience that his exegesis thus far had been too literal,[40] it may have been the more educated ones complaining. Moreover, Basil did not say that the fault lay with them, that they were not advanced and still needed only 'milk, not solid food' (1*Cor*. 3:2), but criticized 'the laws of allegory' themselves.[41]

Nevertheless, Hildebrand agrees with Lim that the allegorization Basil has in mind is not that of Origen but of the Gnostics.[42] He rightly rejects Lim's thesis that the key difference between the sets of homilies lay in Basil's audience.[43] Instead he emphasizes Basil's continuity with both himself and Origen: 'Basil had become more mindful of the dangers of allegory without substantially changing his method'.[44] However, Hildebrand's evidence for saying that Basil's method in the *Hexaemeron* was substantially the same as in his earlier sermons is not convincing, in my opinion, because Hildebrand conflates analogy with allegory. In the *Hexaemeron*, we do not see the same method only, as Hildebrand puts it, grown more 'sober, mature, and critical'.[45] Rather we see two different methods. Analogy, as abundantly practiced in the *Hexaemeron*, offers moral interpretations by looking at things from nature, like the behavior of animals; Origenian allegory,

[35] R. Lim, 'Politics of Intepretation' (1990), 352.

[36] Basil, *Homiliae in hexaemeron* 3,1. For futher examples, see R. Lim, 'Politics of Interpretation' (1990), 361.

[37] *Ibid*. 361-2.

[38] Stephen M. Hildebrand, *The Trinitarian Theology of Basil of Caesarea: A Synthesis of Greek Thought and Biblical Truth* (Washington, D.C., 2007), 137-8.

[39] Jean Bernardi, *La prédication des Pères cappadociens: le prédicateur et son auditoire* (Paris, 1968), 33-4. Basil, *Homiliae in Psalmos* 29,3; 32,2.

[40] Basil, *Homiliae in hexaemeron* 9,1.

[41] *Ibid*. νόμους ἀλληγορίας.

[42] Stephen Hildebrand, *Basil of Caesarea*, Foundations of Theological Exegesis and Christian Spirituality (Grand Rapids, 2014), 54.

[43] S. Hildebrand, *Basil* (2014), 56.

[44] *Ibid*.

[45] *Ibid*. 55.

in contrast, interprets scripture nonliterally with reference to either the soul or Jesus Christ. The latter is absent from the *Hexaemeron*.[46]

Two other scholars offer arguments similar to Hildebrand's and Lim's, rejecting the old viewpoint and emphasizing continuity. John McGuckin argues that Basil's criticism of allegory is 'highly rhetorical' and not to be taken 'too literally'.[47] What Basil opposes, according to McGuckin, is only the 'excessive allegorization of [secondary] details' at the expense of a text's σκόπος.[48] Timothy McConnell reaches a conclusion similar to Lim's: 'Basil practiced a tempered Origenist hermeneutic of Scripture, preferring the literal but allowing the spiritual'.[49] When Basil attacked allegory, McConnell says, he meant Gnostic interpretation specifically, not Origen.[50] While these theories are worthy of serious consideration, I do not see much evidence to recommend them, as they require downplaying what Basil actually says about allegory. Basil did not condemn 'excessive' allegorizing, but seemingly all allegorizing. He did not 'prefer' the literal, but insisted upon it.

Thesis

If the newer theories are flawed, must we return to the older theory that Basil at some point in his life rejected Origenian exegesis? No. Rather, a better explanation lies in Basil's understanding of the nature of *Genesis* 1 itself. Hildebrand suggests this idea when he says that Genesis 'was unusually subject to perverse allegorical interpretations, especially in the hands of the Gnostics', whereas the *Psalms* were 'especially open to christological readings'.[51] My thesis is that Basil saw *Genesis* 1 as a privileged source of information about the cosmos, which he had to defend against dualistic cosmologies. Because the Gnostics used allegorical explanations of *Genesis* 1 to make the text support their dualism, Basil counters by insisting on both the reasonableness and sufficiency of the text, understood literally.

As Lim, Hildebrand, and McDonnell all agree, a crucial context for Basil's anti-allegorical statements is the Gnostic, allegorical interpretation of *Genesis* 1. Their dualism, by positing an evil Demiurge and good God in eternal opposition, contradicted not merely the literal details of *Genesis* 1, like the place of water in the cosmos, but the theological affirmation central to the orthodox

[46] See Ph. Rousseau, *Basil* (1994), 323 (note 2).

[47] John A. McGuckin, 'Patterns of Biblical Exegesis in the Cappadocian Fathers: Basil the Great, Gregory the Theologian, and Gregory of Nyssa', in S.T. Kimbrough, Jr. (ed.), *Orthodox and Wesleyan Scriptural Understanding and Practice* (Crestwood, NY, 2005), 37-54, 46.

[48] *Ibid*. 45.

[49] Timothy P. McConnell, *Illumination in Basil of Caesarea's Doctrine of the Holy Spirit* (Minneapolis, 2014), 201.

[50] *Ibid*. 182-4.

[51] S. Hildebrand, *Basil* (2014), 55.

interpretation of the whole narrative: 'God saw that it was very good' (*Gen.* 1:31). Gnostic dualism is what initially prompted Basil's attack on allegoresis.[52] If Basil seems suddenly to despise allegoresis, it's not because of a change in himself or his audience, but because of the nature of *Genesis* 1 as Basil understood it. *Genesis* 1 is an inspired source for cosmology because it was given by the 'servant of God' Moses.[53] It is not a cryptic text of mythology, but a straightforward description of the universe.

Basil's attitude toward the nature and purpose of *Genesis* 1 also explains his attacks on non-Gnostic allegorical interpretations. Scientific allegoresis, which attempts to find in *Genesis* 1 cosmographical details about the shape and size of the universe, does not respect the text for what it is.[54] Such details, Basil says, would be spiritually 'useless'[55] and thus inappropriate. Nevertheless, what it does say, such as that there is water above the sky, must be accepted literally, 'as written'.[56] Although Origen's allegorical interpretation of the water was not Gnostic, it too compromised the integrity of the text and opened the door to heretical allegoresis. Basil conservatively eschewed all nonliteral interpretation of *Genesis* 1 in part to put up a wall against Gnosticism. He did this even though, as he says, he had the skill to find allegorical meanings.[57] Allegoresis as a way of interpreting others parts of scripture remained valid, so Basil does not contradict himself, even though his rhetoric gives that impression. One of the purposes of nonliteral interpretation, according to Origen, was to edify the soul. However, Basil did not need allegory to do that; analogy was sufficient, as the scripture directs our attention to the animals that God made, whose instincts and behaviors have human analogues. Both because of its intrinsic value at the literal level and because of the urgent need to combat dualism, *Genesis* 1 is simply not suited to allegorization.

Conclusion

To sum up: when Basil denounced allegory, he did not limit his criticisms only to 'translational' allegory or 'excessive' allegory, nor was he merely adapting himself to his audience. Nevertheless, Basil never renounced Origen or the allegorical interpretation of scripture as such. It was not the audience that determined his method, but the nature of *Genesis* 1 itself, read in the context of the 4th-century struggle between orthodoxy and heresy. For Basil, *Genesis* 1 is an inspired source of knowledge about the universe, which can and should be read as such without the artifice of allegory.

[52] Basil, *Homiliae in hexaemeron* 2,2-5.
[53] *Ibid.* 9,1 ὁ θεράπων τοῦ θεοῦ.
[54] *Ibid.*
[55] *Ibid.* ἄχρηστα.
[56] *Ibid.* ὡς γέγραπται.
[57] *Ibid.*

A Philological Note to Basil of Caesarea's Second Homily on the *Hexaemeron*

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Abstract

In the second of his hexaemeral homilies, Basil of Caesarea, while explaining *Gen*. 1:6, describes the life-giving activity of the Creator and clarifies, in order to prevent anthropomorphic representations of God, that, when referred to the Lord, such terms as 'voice', 'word' or 'command' take on a peculiar meaning, since God does not need human means to communicate His will. The three words mentioned by the preacher (φωνή, ῥῆμα, πρόσταγμα) are listed as if they had already been pronounced: the passage seems to come up as a necessary clarification of what Basil has hitherto told. Nonetheless, in the previous lines, the first and the last terms (φωνή, πρόσταγμα) can be found in the critical editions, while the second one is missing. However Giet and Naldini, in their editions, while accepting the lectio ἐμφθεγξάμενος, include in the apparatus the variant ἓν φθεγξάμενος ῥῆμα, given by Par. Graec. 959 (16th c.), manuscript that Amand de Mendieta - Rudberg exclude from the number of eleven codices (dated 9th/10th c.) used for their edition. It is true that Par. Graec. 959 is a recentior, but a wider analysis of the tradition of the homily shows that it is not the only manuscript with this variant, which restores a better and more coherent text, giving the whole triad φωνή - ῥῆμα - πρόσταγμα in this order and within a few lines, just before the explanation of the passage.

In his hexaemeral homilies, through the exegesis of the first verses of *Genesis*, Basil of Caesarea offers a theological compendium and an encyclopedia of the knowledge of his era. Man of faith and man of science meet within rhetorically elaborated speeches, whose aim is both to captivate and educate the believer by the description of the world: by discovering the nature around them, unveiled by the preacher, Christians become actors of the beauty of Creation.

The many subjects covered also include the interpretation of the representation of God in the act of creating. In the second homily, the reflection takes its cue from the words of *Gen*. 1:3: Καὶ εἶπεν ὁ Θεός, γενηθήτω φῶς. Basil focuses on the πρώτη φωνὴ Θεοῦ, new element in Creation, because in the first two verses God, who has created heaven and earth, has not yet spoken. The first feature of the φωνὴ Θεοῦ stressed is its life-giving nature, which occurs primarily in the creation of light.

First, the preacher states the ability of the divine voice to bring everything to the best condition: Πάντα ἡ θεία φωνὴ πρὸς τὸ ἥδιστον καὶ τιμιώτατον

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μετεσκεύασεν.[1] Basil then recalls the immediate realization of the action of God, who gives light to the world only expressing His words: Ὥσπερ γὰρ οἱ ἐν τῷ βυθῷ ἐνιέντες τὸ ἔλαιον, καταφάνειαν ἐμποιοῦσι τῷ τόπῳ, οὕτως ὁ ποιητὴς τῶν ὅλων ἐμφθεγξάμενος, τῷ κόσμῳ τὴν φωτὸς χάριν ἀθρόως ἐνέθηκε.[2] As the light generated by the oil introduced into the water during a dive,[3] so the world will light suddenly and simultaneously with the word of the ποιητής. The concurrency of events, indicated by the adverb ἀθρόως, is in some sense represented by the structure of the speech itself, as Basil goes suddenly to 'act out' the situation he is describing: he pronounces the words of God (γενηθήτω φῶς) and adds: Καὶ τὸ πρόσταγμα ἔργον ἦν.[4] The divine voice expresses a command, rather it is a command, but does not need intermediaries who put it into practice, since it is the command itself that immediately turns into action, an absolutely pleasant action. So, the Cappadocian, wanting to avoid an anthropomorphic representation,[5] focuses on the concept of the voice of God, to clarify an important point: Ὅταν δὲ φωνὴν ἐπὶ Θεοῦ καὶ ῥῆμα καὶ πρόσταγμα λέγωμεν, οὐ διὰ φωνητικῶν ὀργάνων ἐκπεμπόμενον ψόφον, οὐδὲ ἀέρα διὰ γλώσσης τυπούμενον, τὸν θεῖον λόγον νοοῦμεν, ἀλλὰ τὴν ἐν τῷ θελήματι ῥοπὴν διὰ τὸ τοῖς διδασκομένοις εὐσύνοπτον ἡγούμεθα ἐν εἴδει προστάγματος σχηματίζεσθαι.[6] Basil says when we are talking about God and we use words such as 'voice', 'word' or 'command' we should be aware that these terms take on a particular meaning. When God speaks, His voice cannot be 'a sound given off by phonatory organs' (Epicurean definition[7]), nor His word can be considered 'air shaped by tongue' (Archelaus' definition, then adopted by Stoics[8]): the θεῖος λόγος must be interpreted as an 'internal impulse of will',[9] expressed 'in the form of command' to facilitate understanding for those who have to be taught. The Scripture itself, then, wants

[1] Basilio di Cesarea, *Sulla Genesi (Omelie sull'Esamerone)*, a cura di Mario Naldini (Milano, 1990), 60, ll. 21-2.

[2] Basilio di Cesarea, *Sulla Genesi* (1990), 60, ll. 22-4.

[3] To this difficult passage M. Naldini (1990), 328 compares Ambrose, *Hexaemeron* II,9,33. Basil's words can be explained by the practice of carrying oil while diving in order to increase the view: see Fabio Maniscalco, 'Pratica e insidie del nuoto nel Mondo Antico', *Mélanges de l'Ecole française de Rome. Antiquité* 11 (1999), 148-69, 145-56.

[4] Basilio di Cesarea, *Sulla Genesi* (1990), 60, ll. 25-6.

[5] M. Naldini (1990), 329

[6] Basilio di Cesarea, *Sulla Genesi* (1990), 60, ll. 28-32.

[7] See Karl Gronau, *Poseidonios und die jüdisch-christliche Genesisexegese* (Leipzig, 1914), 69; see Hermann Diels, *Doxographi Graeci* (Berlin, 1879), 408, ll. 9-10; see Basile de Cesarée, *Homélies sur l'Hexaéméron*, introduction, text critique, traduction par Stanislas Giet, SC 26bis (Paris, 1968), 172, 2.

[8] See H. Diels, *Doxographi Graeci* (1879), 409, ll. 8-10; 471, l. 8; see K. Gronau, *Poseidonios und die jüdisch-christliche Genesisexegese* (1914), 69.

[9] See first homily in Basilio di Cesarea, *Sulla Genesi* (1990), 12, ll. 33-6: ὁ τοῦ παντὸς τούτου δημιουργὸς […] τῇ ῥοπῇ τοῦ θελήματος μόνῃ εἰς τὸ εἶναι παρήγαγε τὰ μεγέθη τῶν ὁρωμένων.

to make understandable to man, with the use of human σχήματα, what would be otherwise difficult to understand.

The three words mentioned by the preacher (φωνή, ῥῆμα, πρόσταγμα) are listed as if they had already been pronounced: the passage seems to come up as a necessary clarification of what Basil has hitherto told. Nonetheless, in the previous lines (Basilio, *Sulla Genesi*, 60, ll. 21-8), the first and the last terms (φωνή, πρόσταγμα) can be found in the critical editions, while the second one (ῥῆμα) is missing.

Now, it seems strange that Basil feels the need to offer an explanation of the meaning of the three terms φωνή, ῥῆμα, πρόσταγμα (φωνή: sound output; ῥῆμα: articulated voice; πρόσταγμα: expression of a will) while, in the previous lines, he has mentioned only the first and the last of them. This does not match the precision and consequential argumentation, wich are peculiar of Cappadocian's style, in accordance with his pastoral.

The analysis of the words of the Scripture always takes place stepwise, gradually, with moments that summarize what has been said or clarify it. Parallels are privileged, completeness comes as the supreme principle.

Just as an example, we can indicate a passage of the *First Homily on the Hexaemeron*:

Λέγεται μὲν οὖν ἀρχὴ καὶ ἡ πρώτη κίνησις· […]. Λέγεται δὲ ἀρχὴ ὅθεν γίνεταί τι, τοῦ ἐνυπάρχοντος αὐτῷ ὡς επὶ οἰκίας θεμέλιος, […]. Ἀρχὴ δὲ καὶ τῶν τεχνικῶν ἔργων ἡ τέχνη· […]. Ἀρχὴ δὲ πράξεων πολλάκις καὶ τὸ εὔχρηστον τέλος τῶν γινομένων·[...][10]

Εὑρήσεις γὰρ οὕτως, πόθεν τῷ χρόνῳ ἡ πρώτη κίνησις, ἔπειτα, ὅτι καὶ οἱονεὶ θεμέλιοί τινες [...] προκατεβλήθησαν ὁ οὐρανὸς καὶ ἡ γῆ· εἶτα, ὅτι ἐστί τις τεχνικὸς λόγος […]· καὶ τὸ μὴ εἰκῇ μηδὲ μάτην, ἀλλὰ πρὸς τι τέλος ὠφέλιμον καὶ μεγάλην χρείαν […] ἐπινενοῆσθαι τὸν κόσμον.[11]

With reverse order, but in fact proceeding in the same way, the preacher lists a number of meanings of the term ἀρχή (is commenting on the verse *Gen.* 1:1: Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἐποίησεν ὁ Θεὸς τὸν οὐρανὸν καὶ τὴν γῆν). After a few lines, then, he applies, in the same order in which they were presented, one by one, each meaning to the biblical text, with precise lexical recalls.

In our case, if Basil draws attention to the lexicon, revealing a particular meaning of three words, two of which (φωνή, πρόσταγμα) are located a few lines above, within a short distance from one another, and in the same order (first and last) presented in our passage, it is natural to wonder about the second of the three words (ῥῆμα), missing in the previous lines in the current editions. If the term ῥῆμα is missing in the lines before Basil's explanation, why does the preacher put it in the list φωνή, ῥῆμα, πρόσταγμα? Why explain a word

[10] Basilio di Cesarea, *Sulla Genesi* (1990), 20, ll. 37-46.
[11] Basilio di Cesarea, *Sulla Genesi* (1990), 20, ll. 6-12.

that has not been said along with two others in need of clarification? Of course, we should not necessarily look for a parallel structure in the text and the Cappadocian may have felt the need to add the term ῥῆμα to the other two, whose meaning he wanted to clarify. But why would he introduce the three terms in an order that does not respect that of the sentences which have just been said? Why would he put the word ῥῆμα among the other two, rather than after them? Why would he give up some of the fundamental characteristics of his style, such as clarity and balance, careful construction of the period and consequential concatenation of thought, explaining a term that his audience had not heard? Moreover, we must not forget that Basil's attention to style, as well as being a result of his education, is also an essential element of the author's pastoral duty: instruction of the believers gathered in the assembly is the most urgent need in these homilies. To be educated, then, the believers must be fascinated, captiveted with wonderful representations and intriguing informations, but they must also be guided to a rational understandig of visible and invisible, through logical and rhetorical processes that can address a varied audience at different levels.

In our passage, then, something lacks, something that could have been lost in transmission. And it seems possible that some scribes or readers could have been aware of that.

In a 16th century manuscript, Par. Graec. 959, in fact, we find the variant ἓν φθεγξάμενος ῥῆμα, that Giet and Naldini, in their editions, include in the *apparatus*, while accepting the reading ἐμφθεγξάμενος in the text (Basilio, *Sulla Genesi*, 60, l. 24).

This variant seems to perfectly introduce into the text what we felt was missing. But it is the reading of a 16th century manuscript.

Indeed, all the manuscripts that I could examine report the form ἐμφθεγξάμενος, with some discrepancies regarding the punctuation.[12] The reading of the Par. Graec. 959, instead, as far as I could see, is found only in the manuscript London, British Library, Arundel 532 (dated to the last quarter of the 9th century) in an interlinear addition by a 15th century hand, which also integrated to the ff. 9r and 16v two sheets of text which had been lost. In fact, on f. 27r the verb ἐμφθεγξάμενος is circled with a darker ink and, just above it, we can read the variant ἓν φθεγξάμενος ῥῆμα.

The small number and nature of the witnesses who hand down this lesson (a late manuscript, an interlinear addition) suggest perhaps not to consider ἓν φθεγξάμενος ῥῆμα a variant handed down by ancient tradition, but to read it as a humanistic conjecture that reveals in the scribe/reader who proposed it acumen and familiarity with basilian *usus*.

[12] Several manuscripts insert a pause after the participle, while others link it to τῷ κόσμῳ, that seems to be connected to the praefix of the verb ἐνφθέγγομαι.

We must say, in fact, that, if the reading we find in these manuscripts restores a parallel construction, it also replaces the verb ἐμφθέγγομαι, which is very rare, with the simple φθέγγομαι, which can be often read in Basil's works. That means, of course, that φθέγγομαι could be thought as a *lectio facilior*. But it is not at all *facilior* to substitute ἐμφθεγξάμενος with ἓν φθεγξάμενος ῥῆμα.

Moreover, we can say that the reading shared by both Par. Grec. 959 and the 15th century additions to Arundel 532 is the only variant that these two witnesses have in common. That is to say that the scribe or reader who corrected and integrated Arundel 532 and the scribe who wrote Par. Grec. 959 were copying from manuscripts belonging to different branches of the tradition.

Of course, this does not prove that the variant ἓν φθεγξάμενος ῥῆμα is undoubtedly ancient, but it helps us think the reading as an important one: if it does not restore the text, at least it appropriately points out a textual corruption and offers a proposal which can be considered.

ἀγών/θέα-θέαμα and στάδιον/θέατρον: A Reviewed ἔκφρασις of the Spectacle in Basil's *In Gordium martyrem*

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Abstract

The semantic field of vision, as the Latin word *spectaculum* in a broad sense indicates, plays a central role in the panegyric dedicated to Gordius. Τὸ θαῦμα τοῦ μάρτυρος, the wonder of the martyr, or preferably, τὸ θαυμαστὸν θέαμα, the amazing sight, which we contemplate (θαυμάζομεν), is constructed on a brilliant ἔκφρασις. As the Sophist's tradition had transmitted, it was 'a descriptive account which brings what is illustrated vividly before one's sight, such that one can almost see what is narrated (Theon, *Progymnasmata*, 118)'. Basil applies this rhetorical rule to provide hundreds of the faithful, during the homily, a vivid image of the competition the athlete (*i.e.* the martyr) must have faced previously, that means, a *recontextualization* of the past, as J. Leemans as remarked: 'The homily in praise of the martyr [...] was the medium par excellence through which this recontextualization took place'.[1] The στάδιον turns itself into a θέατρον, and the competition (ἀγών) into a spectacle (θέα). This manifold rhetoric instrument allows, therefore, the preacher to display the image of the scene as if it was really happening live.

'And so, since the wonder of the martyr has brought us to this revered and very beautiful stadium of the martyrs (τὸ σεμνὸν τοῦτο καὶ πάγκαλον τῶν μαρτύρων στάδιον) […] on that day on which the entire city […] occupied the theatre to view the horse-race (κατειλήφει θέατρον, ἀγῶνα ἱππικὸν θεωμένῃ) […] everybody ran to the spectacle (πρὸς τὴν θέαν ἔτρεχον) […]. The stadium was full (πλῆρες δὲ ἦν τὸ στάδιον), and everyone was already intent on watching the horse race (πάντες ἤδη πρὸς τὴν θέαν τῆς τῶν ἵππων ἀμίλλης). Then that man, noble and great in spirit, great in purpose, coming down from the mountains to the theatre (ἐπικαταβὰς τῷ θεάτρῳ) […] ran past those sitting around the stadium (τοὺς τὸ στάδιον περικαθημένους παραδραμών) […], he was in a conspicuous place in the theatre (ἐν περιφανεῖ τοῦ θέατρου γενόμενος)

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[1] Johan Leemans, 'Martyr, Monk and Victor of Paganism. An analysis of Basil of Caesarea's Panegyrical Sermon of Gordius', in Johan Leemans (ed.), *More than a Memory. The Discourse of Martyrdom and the Construction of Christian Identity in the History of Christianity* (Leuven, 2005), 45-81.

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[…]. So he immediately turned the theatre upside down by the unexpected sight (εὐθὺς μὲν οὖν ἐπέστρεφε τὸ θέατρον τῷ παραδόξῳ τῆς θέας), being a savage-looking man with squalid hair […], long beard, filthy clothes, his entire body hardened, carrying a stick and fitted with a pouch […] Nobody's eye had time to look (ὀφθαλμός) at anything except Gordius, nor could anybody's ear bear to hear (ἀκοή - ἀκούειν) anything except his words […] Gordius was listened to (ἠκούετο), Gordius was looked at (ἐθεωρεῖτο)'.[2]

Basil's description of Gordius, thanks to his well-known background as professor of rhetoric at Caesarea, shows in its own entirety the pregnant role played by the *visuality* in the construction of the ἔκφρασις of the martyr's character. Through this quote, the preacher brings to the fore the aim of putting the rhetorical description at the service of the homily's argumentation: more than a simple ornament in the speech, it becomes an illustration subordinated to the will of the panegyrist and focused to his pastoral needs, aimed to make the listener 'see' the subject in their mind's eye.[3] These factors allow the listener to keep alive the memory of the martyr, as the Cappadocian father remarks in the *proemium*: remembrance makes the saint's imitation possible through his example; nonetheless, it is obscure (ἀμυδρά).[4] On this ground it is necessary, on Basil's words, to portray, as painters do imitating in a painting, the heroic deeds of the martyrs, trying to respect, in the most possible way, the truth, as the loss of sight could diminish it.[5] The preacher remarks then the importance of the θέα, the firsthand vision of the facts (ὄψις) along the *narratio* of the acts of the martyr, which is accompanied, mostly in the central part of the speech, by what it can be defined a semantic field of the vision, where the lexical root of the verb θεάω with its verbal (θεάομαι) and lexical variants (θέα, θέαμα, θεατής, θέατρον) in the text are, verbally and semantically, interconnected to their sister forms, as θαῦμα, θαυμαστός, and θαυμάζω.

[2] PG 31, 489C-499A. The translation is of Pauline Allen in: Johan Leemans, Wendy Mayer, Pauline Allen and Boudewijn Dehandschutter, *'Let us die that we may live': Greek Homilies on Christian Martyrs from Asia Minor, Palestine and Syria c. 350 – c. 450 AD* (New York, 2003), 58-62.

[3] Simon Goldhill, 'The naïve and knowing eye: ecphrasis and the culture of viewing in the Hellenistic world', in *id.* and Robin Osborne (eds), *Art and Text in Ancient Greek Culture* (Cambridge, 1994), 197-223; *id.*, 'What is ekphrasis for?', *Classical Philology* 102 (2007), 16-9, cited in Ruth Webb, *Ekphrasis. Imagination and Persuasion in Ancient Rhetorical Theory and Practice* (Farnham, 2009), 2.

[4] PG 31, 492D-493A: 'Remembering them is enough to profit us continually. For indeed they do not need a supplement to their good repute, but remembrance of them by imitating them is essential to us in this life in order to imitate them (ἀλλ' ἡμῖν τοῖς ἐν τῷ βίῳ ἀναγκαία ἡ μνήμη διὰ τὴν μίμησιν)'.

[5] PG 31, 493A-B: 'and in some way it is reasonable that we compare ourselves to painters (δοκεῖ τὸ καθ' ἡμᾶς τῷ τῶν ζωγράφων προσεοικέναι). For when they translate images out of images, mostly, as is likely, they fall short of the model (τῶν ἀρχετύπων ἀπολιμπάνονται). And there is no small danger that we, who have lost sight of the events [*the vision*] (αὐτῆς τῆς θέας τῶν πραγμάτων ἀπολειφθέντας), will diminish the truth (τὴν ἀλήθειαν ἐλαττῶσαι)'.

The main goal of this article is, therefore, to demonstrate how a simple description of a character and its correlative images turn into a described vision itself, and, at the same time, how a classical rhetorical instrument as the ἔκφρασις is used in a Christian way to spread the hortatory message of living a Christian life as if it were an *imitatio Christi*. It is evident, at this point, whom Basil resorted to while composing the panegyric: give to his hearers a clear representation (πλάσμα) of the subject in order to convert it into a live and real image before the eyes of the presents. The preacher was aware of how powerful the tool was that he had in his hands to make the audience feel involved in the subject matter, creating a fictitious atmosphere where they might feel as they had been witnesses of the scene they were going to re-live through a rhetorical instrument capable to stimulate mental images and appeal to their emotions.[6] The most innovative aspect in this homily, within a profound analysis of the text, is how the ocular ἔκφρασις stretches itself out all along the panegyric at a point that it might be considered that Basil would be the first author in recurring such frequent times to this rhetorical manifold instrument, showing off how firmly closed is the relationship between the vision (θέα) and the spectacle (θέαμα), in the strictest lexical affinity to its Latin correspondent, the *spectaculum*. Basil plays finely with both concepts, at such a level to convert a physical place, the στάδιον, where the races in honour of Mars were being celebrated, into a θέατρον, a fictitious place just outside the urban walls where the competition (ἀγών) of the martyr is held, converted, at the same time, into a θέαμα, where the athlete has to fight for the prize, the crown for his sacrifice.[7]

This semantic, and, at the same time, conceptual association between the vision and the spectacle is already a topic which can be easily traced in contemporary Patristic writings. Augustine, for instance, remarks a tight relationship between reading a text containing the acts of the martyrs to spectating them, where the image of the sacrifice is reproduced in the hearer's mind and he is converted into a spectator of the vision too.[8] Augustine analyses in his

[6] This effect is what B. Cassin defined as l'*Effet sophistique* (Paris, 2005), which, using R. Webb's own words, allowed *ekphrasis* to become a powerful type of fiction which creates an universe of likeness through the explorations of the language's ability, R. Webb, *Ekphrasis* (2009), 10.

[7] About the conception of the competition aimed to obtain a prize there is the influence of Paul, 1*Cor*. 9:25: 'Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but only one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may win'. On the other hand, the idea of martyrdom as ἀγών hails either from Paul, 1*Cor*. 4:9: 'we are like men condemned to die in the arena, a spectacle to the whole universe, angels as well as to men', cited by Lucy Grig, *Making Martyrs in the Late Antiquity* (London, 2004), 16.

[8] Augustinus, *Serm.* 301, 1, VII [PL 46, 879]: *Modo spectavimus magnum certamen septem Fratrum et Matris illorum. Quale certamen, fratres mei, si noverunt mentes nostrae spectare? Comparate huic sancto spectaculo voluptates et delicias theatrorum. Ibi oculi inquinantur; hic corda mundantur. Hic laudabilis est spectator, si fuerit imitator; ibi autem et spectator turpis est, et imitator infamis. Denique amo Martyres, specto Martyres. Quando leguntur Passiones Martyrum,*

sermons this correlation, the polyptoton *spectacula spectant*,[9] analogically associated with the worldly spectacles in the arena, intending that a simple vision of a sensible image (*spectare*) becomes the instrument by which the sacrifice of the martyr (the sacred *spectaculum*) acquires visibility. Every time the martyrs' acts were read aloud on their annual feast, the spectacle of martyrdom was re-enacted, a re-enactment that permitted the believers to recollect and experience a martyrdom that they had not witnessed personally. This remark shows how clutched was this connection between a sensible vision (the memory of the martyrdom witnessed live) and a supernatural one (a recreated vision through a written text) and how this re-enactment, this exhortation to imitate the martyr's bravery was only made possible before the eyes of hundreds of the faithful through his visualization, displaying the great deeds of the martyr during the sermon in a way that these can be felt as they were happening live.[10] At the same time, the topic of the martyrial performance as a *spectaculum*, a representation requiring an audience, an heroic deed aimed to raise awareness about the importance of the sacrifice in early Christianity, was common in Patristic work.[11] Nevertheless, this combination of the performance of the martyrial act, together with the description of it, hails originally from Paul and his direct interrelation between the competition and the spectacle, as this quote affirms: 'Stephen has become a spectacle to the world, angels and to men'[12].

specto [...]. Opportune de spectaculo sanctorum Machabaeorum, quorum victoriae memoriam hodie celebramus, de spectaculis theatricis admonenda visa est mihi Charitas vestra.

[9] Augustinus, *Serm.* 51, 2 [PL 38, 333-4]: *quid potuit magnificentius, quam ut non solum spectatores nugacium munerum aggregaret ovili suo, sed etiam nonnullos qui illic spectari solent? Non enim tantum amatores venatorum, sed etiam ipsos venatores venatus est ad salutem: quia et ipse spectatus est […]. Ecce quomodo spectatus est, ut ossa eius dinumerarentur. Et dicit apertius ipsum spectaculum: Ipsi vero consideraverunt et inspexerunt me. Spectabatur illudendus, spectabatur ab eis qui non ei saltem faverent in illo spectaculo, sed saevirent: quomodo spectari fecit martyres suos primitus, dicente Apostolo: Spectaculum facti sumus mundo, et Angelis et hominibus. Sed duo genera hominum talia spectacula spectant; unum carnalium, alterum spiritalium. Carnales spectant, miseros putantes eos martyres, qui bestiis subiecti sunt, qui capite caesi, qui ignibus concremati, detestantes eos et exhorrentes. Alii vero sicut et sancti Angeli spectant, non attendentes corporum laniatus, sed mirantes fidei integritatem. Magnum spectaculum praebet oculis cordis integer animus, corpore dissipato. Haec vos cum in ecclesia leguntur, libenter spectatis oculis cordis. Si enim nihil spectaretis, nihil audiretis. Videtis ergo quod hodie spectacula non contempsistis, sed elegistis. Adsit itaque Deus, dans ut amicis vestris quos doletis hodie ad amphitheatrum cucurrisse, et ad ecclesiam venire noluisse, referatis dulciter vestra spectacula […]. Qui autem in illa dubitatione elegerunt potius ad amphitheatrum currere, ab illo utique victi sunt, quem isti vicerunt.*

[10] Gitte Lønstrup Dal Santo, 'Rite of Passage: on Ceremonial Movements and Vicarious Memories (Fourth Century CE)', in Ida Ostenberg, Simon Malmberg, Jonas Jørnebye (eds), *The Moving City: Processions, Passages and Promenades in Ancient Rome* (London, 2015), 152.

[11] Augustinus, *Serm.* 301, 1: *Magnum spectaculum positum est ante oculos fidei nostrae*; Augustinus, *Serm.*, 274, 1: *Magnum spectaculum spectavimus oculi fidei, martyrem sanctum Vincentium* [...].

[12] 1*Cor*. 4:9; Gregorius Nyssenus, *In sanct. Steph*. I 76, 3, ed. Otto Lendle, *Gregorii Nysseni Opera* (Leiden, 1990) (GNO 10/1); Tertullianus, *Adv. Marc*. V 7; Augustinus, *Serm.* 51, 2; *Enarrat.*

Against this background Basil on top, following this Patristic κοινὸς τόπος,[13] describes in detail the bravery of Gordius, presenting it as a previous performance to the upcoming condemnation to death. The reconstruction of this performance is only made possible by means of the ἔκφρασις, through which the author describes the triumphal entry of the soldier into the arena to confess his faith in public and to go under martyrdom to get his victory against his persecutors. The homily of Gordius, thanks to its rhetorical roots, results through the vividness and clarity of the ἔκφρασις into a brilliant painting, divided into several frames. Basil himself gives an *icastic definition* of it in his *proemium* to the *Homily on the Forty Martyrs of Sebastes*: 'When often both historians and painters express manly deeds of war, the one embellishing them with words, the other engraving them onto tablets, they both arouse many too to bravery. The facts, which the historical account presents by being listened to, the painting silently portrays by imitation. In this very way, let us too remind those present of the men's virtue, and as it were by bringing their deeds to gaze, let us motivate them to imitate those who are nobler and closer to them with respect to their course of life. I mean that this is the encomium of the martyrs: the exhortation of the congregation to virtue'.[14] Basil therefore gives the roots to a Christian *ekfrastical diegesis* which one, making use of the Classical heritage, creates a new idea of portraying the martyr's virtue, addressed to stimulate the audience to follow his example.

About the elaboration of an ἔκφρασις, Greek and Latin authors, beginning from the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* to Nicholas the Sophist formulate an almost similar definition to it.[15] Every author agrees with defining it as putting, literally, what is shown (τὸ δηλούμενον) under the vision (ὑπ' ὄψιν) in a vivid manner (ἐναργῶς). The relevant aspect of the visuality, or using Aphtonius' and Nicolaus' description, ὑπ' ὄψιν ἄγων ἐναργῶς τὸ δηλούμενον, 'conducting what is shown vividly under the eyes of the hearer', is the main aspect of the ἔκφρασις. The principle of the vividness (ἐνάργεια) together with the clarity (σαφήνεια) and the mental image (φαντασία)[16] were the basic skills which

in Ps. 39, 9: *spectare vis, esto spectaculum* […] *spectaculum facti sumus mundo, et angelibus et hominibus*.

[13] The κοινὸς τόπος, following Theon's definition, was the rhetorical exercise previous to the ἔκφρασις (*Progymn.* 60). Nicholaos, on the other hand, includes within it the ἔκφρασις, as a part of the exercise (*Progymn.* 45). Neverthless, this rhetorical device was mainly used for a vivid description, as the written representation of a crime or a murder (Theon, *Progymn.* 109). This is why ancient rhetorician taught the ἔκφρασις as a part of the exercise κοινὸς τόπος, R. Webb, *Ekphrasis* (2009), 77.

[14] PG 31, 508; J. Leemans, 'Martyr' (2005), 68-9.

[15] Theon, *Progymn.* 118-20; Ps. Hermogenes, *Progymn.* 22-3; Aphtonius, *Progymn.* 36-41; Nicholaos, *Progymn.* 67-71; Libanius, *Progymn.* 438-546; Quintilianus, *Inst. Orat.* 8, 3, 61-71; 8, 3, 88; Anonymus, *Rhet. Herenn.* 4, 55, 68.

[16] About the use of phantasy in the construction of the visuality as a factor of truth and reality in the narration, see Pseud. Longin, *Sublim.* 15.1 (ἤδη δ'ἐπὶ τούτων κεκράτηκε τοὔνομα ὅταν

permitted a clear distinction between a description and a narration.[17] The Sophist's description, however, contemplated the narration into the literary category defined as ὑποτύπωσις, synonym of the ἔκφρασις as the διατύπωσις and included as well in the κοινὸς τόπος.[18] This common place (κοινὸς τόπος), in the definition of Nicholas the Sophist, is a paragraph (κεφάλαιον), which brings the facts under the vision (ὑπ' ὄψιν), making us, through a description (δι'ἐκφράσεως), spectators of incredible events (θεατὰς τῶν ἀτόπων). The rhetorician clarifies then that the description is part of the tight connection between ἔκφρασις and ὑποτύπωσις, but he does not explain how they are bounded and how separated. Theo clarifies the distinction between both: whereas in the ὑποτύπωσις a personal opinion on the description is added (προστίθεμεν καὶ τὴν ἡμετέραν γνώμην), in the description of the facts it is pure (ψιλὴ τῶν πραγμάτων ἐστὶν ἡ ἀπαγγελία).[19]

The construction of the ἔκφρασις was then in ancient rhetoric a quite complex process. There were simple (ἁπλαί) and mixed (μικταί) ones, depending on the elements contained in the description. As Theon,[20] Hermogenes,[21] Aphtonius[22] and Nicholas[23] had stated, these descriptions were combined with flexible elements as the characters (πρόσωπα), the places (τόποι) and the facts (πράγματα), to whom Theon added the means (τρόποι) and Hermogenes and Aphtonius the circumstances (καιροί). Within a profound exegesis of the homily *In Gordium martyrem* it is apparently not difficult to find the rhetorical schema reproduced in the homily itself. Following the just mentioned patterns, what had been defined as πρόσωπον is represented beyond question by the character of Gordium, who descended from the mountain to the city, or, precisely, the stadium (τόποι), to confess his faith and receive the condemnation to death (πράγματα). About the means (τρόποι), it should be included within the attitude of Gordius towards the sacrifice when being interrogated during the

ἃ λέγεις ὑπ'ἐνθουσιασμοῦ καὶ πάθους βλέπειν δοκῇς καὶ ὑπ' ὄψιν τιθῇς τοῖς ἀκούουσιν; 'this denomination is used when, by enthusiasm and passion, you think you see what are you speaking about and present it to the listeners how it were under the eyes') and 15.9 (τῆς δὲ ῥητορικῆς φαντασίας κάλλιστον ἀεὶ τὸ ἔμπρακτον καὶ ἐνάληθες; 'the most impressive factor of the rhetorical phantasy is the real and truthful aspect').

[17] Theon, *Progymn.* 119-20.

[18] R. Webb, *Ekphrasis* (2009), 126 remarks: 'One way which ekphrasis and koinos topos were connected was, through the use of vivid evocations – variously referred to as ekphraseis – *hupotuposeis* or *diatuposeis* – within the *koinos topos*'.

[19] Nicholaos, *Progymn.* 45. About the definition of ὑποτύπωσις, Theon, *Progymn.* 108-9 and Ps. Hermogenes, *Progymn.* 12.

[20] Theon, *Progymn.* 118-20.

[21] Ps. Hermogenes, *Progymn.* 22, 23: ἔκφρασις ἐστι λόγος περιηγηματικός, ὥς φασιν, ἐναργὴς καὶ ὑπ' ὄψιν ἄγων τὸ δηλούμενον.

[22] Aphtonius, *Progymn.* 36, 41: ἔκφρασις ἐστι λόγος περιηγηματικός, ὑπ' ὄψιν ἄγων ἐναργῶς τὸ δηλούμενον.

[23] Nicholaos, *Progymn.* 67-71: ἔκφρασις ἐστι λόγος ἀφηγηματικός, ὑπ' ὄψιν ἄγων ἐναργῶς τὸ δηλούμενον.

process because of that time circumstances (καιροί), that is, the edicts prohibiting Christian worship. This very fixed and canonized structure, therefore, allows Basil to build the grounds of his ocular ἔκφρασις, permitting the audience, congregated in the Gordium's shrine in Caesarea for his annual πανήγυρις, to listen and to visualize in the most possible vivid way the glorious deeds of the saint. Rhetorical *Progymnasmata*, therefore, underlined the importance of the effect achieved with the ἔκφρασις on the listeners, at a point to make listeners into spectators: this is what Basil had in mind when pointing out the difference between history and painting, because the fundamental objective of the ancient ἔκφρασις was exclusively this one: the re-creation of 'virtual images in the listener's mind'.[24]

Since the beginning of the speech, the Cappadocian father works on the parallelism between the stadium of the martyr (τὸ τῶν μαρτύρων στάδιον), and the wonder of the martyr (τὸ θαῦμα τοῦ μάρτυρος) following the semantics of the Latin word *spectaculum*, related at the same time with the lexical root of the vision too (θέα).[25] Basil reads his encomium at the martyr's shrine, during the annual festival (πανήγυρις), establishing a direct connection between the place where the commemoration of the martyr is held and the same place (or perhaps around) where the eulogized was killed, or better, the stadium where Gordius made his ὁμολογία, confessing publically his Christian faith. This rhetorical device of anticipating through a key concept (the stadium) in order to make the audience convened in the shrine to display mentally and pathetically Gordius heroic deeds is emphasized by the term θαῦμα, also connected with the root of θέα (*nomen actionis*) which amplifies the field of the vision. Basil, presenting the similitude with the painters, remarks that θέα is the only possible way to get the real truth, in the same way as the painters reproduce the image from the archetypes.[26] Through his introduction, the preacher introduces the first ἔκφρασις, reviewed in a Christian way, presenting the description of the physical appearance (τὸ τοῦ σώματος εἶδος) of Gordius not in a strict sense of beauty, as the classical rhetoric was used to make, but in a Christian way, intended to stress, in particular, virtues more than the physical appearance. Basil puts a strong emphasis on the ascetic aspect[27] while

[24] R. Webb, *Ekphrasis* (2009), 9, 77.

[25] *In Gordium martyr*. I (PG 31, 489C): ὁ λαός [...] τὸ σεμνὸν τοῦτο καὶ πάγκαλον τῶν μαρτύρων στάδιον, πανδημεὶ κατειλήφασιν [...] ἤγαγε τὸ θαῦμα τοῦ μάρτυρος.

[26] *Ibid*. 493A: καὶ πως δοκεῖ τὸ καθ'ἡμᾶς τῷ τῶν ζωγράφων προσεοικέναι. Καὶ γὰρ ἐκεῖνοι, ἐπειδὰν ἐξ εἰκόνων μεταγράφωσι τὰς εἰκόνας, πλεῖστον, ὡς εἰκός, τῶν ἀρχετύπων ἀπολιμπάνονται.

[27] 496B-C: τότε ὁ γενναῖος οὗτος προλαβὼν τὴν ἐκ τῶν δικαστηρίων ἀνάγκην, ῥίψας τὴν ζώνην, ὑπερόριος ἦν, ὑπεριδὼν […] ἀπολαύσεως βίου […], πρὸς τὰς βαθυτάτας καὶ ἀνθρώποις ἀβάτους ἐρημίας ἀπέδραμε, τὸν μετὰ τῶν θηρίων βίον τῆς πρὸς τοὺς εἰδωλολατροῦντας κοινωνίας ἡμερώτερον ἡγησάμενος, κατὰ τὸν ζηλωτὴν Ἠλίαν; 'then that noble man, averting the necessity of the law courts, threw off his commission, was banished, despising […] the enjoyment of life […] and ran off to the deepest desolate places that are inaccessible to the human

describing the entrance of the soldier in the stadium, anticipated by the Paulinian metaphor of the athlete.[28]

Basil, in order to emphasize the anachoretic character of his protagonist, separates, along the panegyric, the physical characteristics of Gordius from his moral ones. About the physical ones, Basil does not spend many words in drafting his physical beauty, but just states it with a short sentence (493A: καὶ σώματος ῥώμῃ καὶ ψυχῆς ἀνδρίᾳ τοῖς στρατιωτικοῖς καταλόγοις ἐμπρέπων). Christian panegyric refuted the classical stereotypes as the exaltation of beauty[29] in spite of celebrating the moral virtues:[30] this is the reasons why this short passage is the preamble of the ἠθοποιΐα of the soldier,[31] where Basil highlights Gordius' disdain of the *vanitas vanitatum* and the city's hustle. Through the description of the virtues the valor is the most remarked in the list of *ethoi* among which Gordius stands out. Basil stresses frequently his grandeur (γενναῖος), his nobility in spirit (μέγας τὴν ψυχήν) and temperament (μέγας τὸ φρόνημα) in opposition to the worse defects of the city as the θορύβος, the αἰσχρολογία and the εὐτραπελία. This opposition is ever more extolled with the figurative portrait of Gordius in the middle of the arena as a proud lion (*Prov*. 28:1), daring to face his opponents.

Gordius picks the day on which the city is assembled in the stadium to view the horse races. Basil stresses the Pagan component of the stadium as a place where the horse race annual festivity in honor of a not mentioned deity was held defining it as a στάδιον, but changing the terminology when it becomes the place where the performance of the martyr will take place ('then that man, noble and great in spirit, great in purpose, coming down from the mountains to the *theatre*'). The sudden show of the soldier (παράδοξος θέα) in the hippodrome is described in a strictly oxymoronic way, so then the antithesis between

beings. He considered life with wild beasts to be more civilized than mixing with idol-worshippers, in the manner of zealot Elias'.

[28] 496D-497A: καὶ οἷον ἀθλητής, αἰσθόμενος ἑαυτοῦ ἱκανῶς γυμνασθέντος καὶ ἀλειψαμένου πρὸς τὸν ἀγῶνα […] πᾶσα ἡ πόλις […] κατειλήφει θέατρον, ἀγῶνα ἱππικὸν θεωμένη; 'and he was like an athlete, realizing that he is sufficiently trained and oiled for the contest […] the entire city […] occupied the theathre to view the horse race'.

[29] Theon, *Progymn*. 119.

[30] Basil, in his proemium to the *Homily of the XL Martyrs of Sebaste* (*In quadrag. martyr*. 509A), reminds that the sermons about the saints do not permit accomodation to the rules of the encomia, and the real encomium is not that which tends to celebrate birth or place of origin, but it is that which stimulates the exhortation of the congregation of virtue.

[31] 496C: Τοιοῦτος οὖν ἦν καὶ ὁ Γόρδιος ἀποφυγὼν θορύβους πολιτικούς, ὄχλον ἀγοραῖον, ἀρχοντικοὺς τύφους, τὰ δικαστήρια, τοὺς συκοφάντας, τοὺς πωλοῦντας, τοὺς ὠνούμενους, τοὺς ὀμνύοντας, τοὺς ψευδομένους, τὴν αἰσχρολογίαν, τὴν εὐτραπελίαν, τἆλλα ὅσα, ὥσπερ ἐφόλκια, αἱ πολυάνθρωποι τῶν πόλεων ἐπισύρονται; 'so Gordius was like that too, turning his back on political turmoils, the crowd in the marketplace, the vanity of the magistrates, the law courts, the back-biters, the vendors, the buyers, the swearers, the liars, the foul language, the frivolous talk, all the rest [which] like burdensome appendages, populous cities drag after them (trans. P. Allen [2003], 61)'.

a description of a beast, with squalid hair, long beard, filthy clothes contrasts with a vision that, using a play on words, is considered divine (θέαν). This lack of beauty stands out against his moral virtues, so more than an ἔκφρασις should be defined as a *notatio* and not as an *effictio*, as the unknown author of the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* discerns:[32] the characterization prevails over the plain rhetorical description, the savageness of Gordius is replaced by 'the grace, who came from the Ineffable, shone all around him'.[33] The description of the physical appearance of the martyr, aspect that causes the reaction of the population before his presence, alters the course of the festivity due to the martyr's unexpected show and at the same time, the development of the narration itself. This artifice falls within Hermogenes' *praecepta* about the use of the surprise effect,[34] that is, to catch the attention of the audience with a rhetorical expedient in the same manner as the public did not expected Gordius' performance during the Mars races.

Suddenly the stadium, the location where the assistants were intent on watching the horse race, turns permanently into a θέατρον. There is at a lexical stage a connection between the θέατρον and the spectation (θεωμένη) of the competition, the horse one, where the whole population was congregated, the same group of people, which will assist to the Gordius' competition later, his *martyrium*. The lexical sequence follows this development: θέατρον - θεωμένη - θεαταί - θέαν - στάδιον - θέαν - θεάτρῳ - στάδιον - θέατρου - τὸ θέατρον τῷ παραδόξῳ τῆς θέας changes radically to an ἔκφρασις the vision, transporting the listener's attention to the visual analyzed of the character eulogized, so we assist a simple assistance to a spectacle to the συμπάθεια to the feelings of the protagonist and, at the same time, the preacher, who tries to make the audience adopt his viewpoint. This visual transportation of the listener's eye and mind is carried through a minute description of the assistants' global move (501B: μετέβαινε δὲ πᾶν τὸ θέατρον) to the place of the execution, just outside the

[32] Anonimus, *Rhet. Herenn*. IV, 63-5: *Effictio* is when one portrays and represents someone's physical appearance with words clear enough to make understood who he was (*effictio est cum exprimitur atque effingitur verbis corporis cuiuspiam forma, quoad satis sit ad intellegendum, hoc modo: 'Hunc, iudices, dico, rubrum, brevem, incurvom, canum, subcrispum, caesium, cui sane magna est in mento cicatrix, si quo modo potest vobis in memoriam redire'. Habet haec exornatio cum utilitatem, si quem velis demonstrare, tum venustatem, si breviter et dilucide facta est*). *Notatio* is when the character of somebody's is described with certain signs, which are attributed to him as the particular mark of his nature (*notatio est, cum alicuius natura certis describitur signis, quae sicuti notae quae naturae sunt adtributa* […] *Huiusmodi notationes, quae describunt, quod consentaneum sit unius cuiusque naturae, vehementer habent magnam delectationem: totam enim naturam cuiuspiam ponunt ante oculos, aut gloriosi, ut nos exempli causa coeperamus, aut invidi aut tumidi aut avari, ambitiosi, amatoris, luxuriosi, furis, quadruplatoris; denique cuiusvis studium protrahi potest in medium tali notatione*).

[33] 493A.

[34] Ps. Hermogenes, *Progymn*. 23.

urban walls (ἐπὶ τὸν τόπον τοῦτον […] πρὸ τοῦ τείκους), like, in the image offered in the text, a river (ὥσπερ τινὸς ῥεύματος).

Nevertheless, it is the second illustration, pertaining to the population gathered in the hippodrome for the *Equirria*, that is the best digression to present the ἔκφρασις of the spectacle produced by the sudden show of Gordius in the hippodrome interrupting the charioteer's race. Here, introduced by the Pauline metaphor of the athlete and his competition (ἀγών) to achieve the crown, the semantic field of the vision, reinforced by the ἔκφρασις, has one of its most magnificent examples. At a lexical stage, as mentioned before, the frequency of the nouns related to the semantic field of the vision becomes very dense, as they occur more than ten times in a really short passage of the text.[35] In the figurative description of the elements presented in the panegyric, Basil resorts to the classical ἔκφρασις in Homer (the commonly known shield of Achilles), Thucydides or Demosthenes. The city is described, as even Theon had maintained, in every single component: school, stadium, theater, walls, houses and the agorá, together with the different ethnic groups and creeds, Jewish, Greeks, Christians and their social condition: masters, slaves and prostitutes. So the ἔκφρασις of the spectacle is properly inserted in this preamble, where the occasion (καιρός) of the charioteer's race is extensively replaced with the spectacle of Gordius' execution in the last part of the speech. Basil himself describes, using a hyperbole, the event as μέγα καὶ ἐναγώνιον θέαμα, τὸ θαυμαστόν for the angels and every single creature, and, on the other side, ὀδυνηρὸν τῷ διαβόλῳ καὶ φοβερὸν δαίμοσιν.[36]

As in the previous ἔκφρασις, Basil describes incidentally the geographical location of the theater, often confused with the stadium. It is singular that the word στάδιον, used in the description's outline to indicate the place where the *Equirria* took place, changes gradually into the noun θέατρον, as the author wanted to point out the change of the dynamic of the spectacle from a more human competition into a supernatural ἀγών. Basil, furthermore, in order to convert the description into a pure realism, mentions the public assisting to the spectacle: women (something quite unusual), slaves, elder people and even merchants, usually keen to do business instead of attending competitions. In this ἔκφρασις, so, the city's participation to the martyrial competition turns into an ecumenical dimension, as a mean of stressing the real importance of the occasion of Gordium's sacrifice in comparison to the triviality of the races in honor of Mars. On a stylistical analysis, Basil takes care of any singular detail to make the

[35] 497A-D, closed with a circular expression recollecting both senses, the vision and the sound: θέατρον, πρὸς τὴν θέαν, πρὸς τὴν θέαν, τῷ θεάτρῳ, τοῦ θέατρου, τὸ θέατρον τῷ παραδόξῳ τῆς θέας - οὐδενὸς γὰρ ἐσχόλαζεν ὀφθαλμὸς ἄλλο τι βλέπειν ἢ Γόρδιον, οὔτε τις ἀκοὴ ἄλλο τι ἠνείχετο ἀκούειν ἢ τὰ ἐκείνου ῥήματα […] ἠκούετο Γόρδιος, ἐθεωρεῖτο Γόρδιος.

[36] 501B. On the use of the *hyperbole* in Basil, and mostly in this encomium, Mario Girardi, *Basilio e il culto dei martiri nel IV secolo. Scrittura e tradizione* (Bari, 1990), 114.

description the most vivid possible. On one side, ground noise and uproar contrast with the silence caused by the new θέα. This one, not yet characterized by Christian elements, is composed by the elements typical to the description of a hippodrome in a horse race: the audience, horses, charioteer racers, heralds and the musicians. The silence, symptom of the upcoming surprise the audience will experience, results in an unconditional attention paid from the spectator to the new protagonist of the scene, Gordius. Nicholas the Sophist recommended in his *praecepta* to make always a mention of the emotions provoked by this surprise effect in order to give a deep reality to the description.[37]

Conclusions

In conclusion, in this graphical analysis of this homily, it is possible to delineate an extended ἔκφρασις developed along different frames in order to achieve a real and detailed icon, which would have reproduced, in the mind of the hearers, a neat image of Gordius' martyrdom and his further *exemplum*. The ἔκφρασις, in most of the cases, is enriched with the use of the ἠθοποιΐα, which, at the same time, concedes vividness to the description. On one hand, the physical representation characterizes the described subject in a concise way; on the other the ἠθοποιΐα scrutinizes profoundly those virtues that the Christian encomium used to praise.

The homily for the martyr Gordius allows the reader, therefore, to appreciate the two slightly different aspects of the ἔκφρασις related to the semantic field of the vision. On one side, the eulogistic goal turns a simple vision (a θέα) into a spectacle itself, changing radically the audience's geographical point of view from a στάδιον into a θέατρον. This achievement reaches the first aim of the orator to produce a change in the audience's mental state: the stadium, where mainly Pagan spectacles were held, is blamed in favor of the Christian performances, the heavenly ones. On the other side, the argumentative goal allows the hearer to get to empathize in depth with the acts of the martyrs and to get, as an immediate effect, impressed by them, converting, in the mind of the hearer, a θέα into a θαῦμα. The imagery of the martyr's suffer becomes a whole, a proper 'visual theology',[38] where the faithful receives the stimulation to confirm his faith. It can be easily deduced then, as we have seen from this panegyric, that the Second Sophistic rhetorical artifices, still at the service of the Christian rhetoric, have only a mere propagandistic function seeking to catch the complete attention of the hearer, and at the same time, convey his message to the audience through – as Basil maintains – an admirable spectacle (τὸ θαυμαστὸν θέαμα).

[37] Nicholaos, *Progymn*. 69.
[38] L. Grig, *Making Martyrs in the Late Antiquity* (2004), 113.

Une source littéraire de l'*Ep.* 46 de Basile de Césarée : le traité *De la véritable intégrité dans la virginité*

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Abstract

The present article shows for the first time the connections between Basil of Caesarea's famous *Ep*. 46, which is also found in Basil's work translated in Latin and Syriac as early as the fourth century, and another ascetic 'best-seller', the treatise *On true integrity in virginity*, reattributed to Basil of Ancyra at the beginning of the twentieth century. My inquiry puts in light that *Ep*. 46 borrows some material from that treatise to construct specific diatribic passages, following the order of the treatise, but only along a short portion of it (39-41). Moreover, a careful literary analysis allows us to say that *Ep*. 46 rewrites the source with creativeness, according to the author's purpose. The article finally discusses the consequences of the use of such a literary material in the debate about Basilian authorship of this very rhetoric piece of literature. Such an argument is able to bring at least new perspectives rather than a definitive solution to the debate.

Le présent article souhaite montrer les liens littéraires qui unissent deux textes et qui n'ont pas été repérés, ou en tout cas, pas été signalés jusqu'ici. Les deux textes en question sont, d'une part, l'*Ep*. 46 de la correspondance de Basile, qui a connu une riche postérité dans trois des grandes langues de diffusion des textes patristiques (grec, latin, syriaque)[1], et, d'autre part, le traité *De la véritable intégrité dans la virginité* dédié à un évêque Létoios, autre 'best-seller'

[1] En grec, le succès de cette lettre est palpable par les nombreux remplois dont elle fait l'objet dans d'autres textes spirituels. Mais ce qui manifeste le caractère ancien de ce succès, ce sont aussi les traductions antiques, en latin et en syriaque. Ce fait mérite d'être souligné, non pas que ce texte soit le seul de, ou attribué à Basile de Césarée, à avoir été diffusé dès l'Antiquité dans ces deux grandes langues de transmission des textes patristiques, mais nous n'avons pas d'autre lettre de Basile à avoir été traduite en latin dès l'Antiquité et nous n'avons, sur la masse totale de la correspondance de Basile de Césarée conservée en grec – soit plus de trois cents lettres – que relativement peu de lettres à avoir fait l'objet d'une traduction en syriaque. Ce fait a été signalé à bon droit par Sebastian Brock, 'Traduzioni siriache degli scritti di Basilio', dans Comunità di Bose (éd.), *Basilio tra Oriente e Occidente. Atti del Convegno internazionale 'Basilio il Grande e il monachesimo orientale', Cappadocia, 5-7 ottobre 1999*, Spiritualità orientale (Bose, 2001), 165-80. La traduction syriaque nous est conservée par trois témoins manuscrits qui nous font connaître une version assez libre, ce qui tendrait à indiquer une date haute, à peu près à la même période que la traduction latine par Rufin, au tournant des IV^{e} et V^{e} siècles.

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ascétique[2], qui nous est transmis avec l'œuvre de Basile de Césarée, mais qui a été réattribué, au début du XX^e siècle, à un autre évêque du même nom, mais de la génération précédente, Basile d'Ancyre[3]. Cette identification a pu être contestée ces dernières années[4], mais ce n'est pas mon propos. Je me concentre sur les liens littéraires entre les deux textes que je viens de mentionner.

Selon certains commentateurs, l'*Ep*. 46 n'est 'qu'un tissu de citations scripturaires et servait sans doute d'aide-mémoire aux écrivains ecclésiastiques'[5]. Cette lettre appartiendrait donc à une forme de *Gebrauchsliteratur*, rassemblant à destination des ecclésiastiques une collection de citations scripturaires pour les aider à répondre à des situations pastorales. Je ne saurais m'associer à un tel jugement, comme j'ai déjà eu l'occasion de le signaler[6]. L'analyse montre des phénomènes d'écriture littéraire complexes comme la construction de la parénèse en différents volets avec des jeux d'inversions et d'échos internes, ainsi que de nombreuses figures de mots et de sonorités. Fénelon disait d'ailleurs qu'on 'ne peut rien voir de plus éloquent que [l'] Épître à une vierge qui étoit tombée : à mon sens, c'est un chef d'œuvre'[7]. L'auteur se donne la peine de récrire, de rabouter et d'adapter subtilement un grand nombre de mentions de l'Écriture. Du reste, le matériau scripturaire est d'une densité fluctuante et l'on ne peut donc parler de 'tissu de citations'. Enfin, l'étude du matériau non scripturaire révèle, elle aussi, un effort littéraire concordant d'appropriation d'une source identifiable : le traité *De la véritable intégrité dans la virginité* (désormais traité *De la véritable intégrité*).

Dès le premier contact entre les deux 'best-sellers' ascétiques, l'enjeu d'appropriation est net. La lettre évoque 'les traits enflammés du Mauvais (*Eph* 6:16), qui ont brûlé de façon barbare (βαρβαρικῶς καταφλέξαντα) âmes et corps en même temps'[8]. Cette expression imagée n'est attestée que dans le traité *De la*

[2] Une étude de Julien Leroy le montre : 'La tradition manuscrite du *De virginitate* de Basile d'Ancyre', *OCP* 38 (1972), 195-208. Le texte semble même avoir été plus populaire que les traités de Grégoire de Nysse et de Jean Chrysostome sur le même sujet.

[3] C'est une étude de Ferdinand Cavallera qui emporta alors la conviction : 'Le *De Virginitate* de Basile d'Ancyre', *RHE* 6 (1905), 5-14.

[4] Voir Anne Burgsmüller, *Die Askeseschrift des Pseudo-Basilius. Untersuchungen zum Brief »Über die wahre Reinheit in der Jungfräulichkeit«*, Studien und Texte zu Antike und Christentum 28 (Tübingen, 2005).

[5] Jean Dumortier, *Jean Chrysostome. À Théodore*, Sources Chrétiennes 117 (Paris, 1966), 81.

[6] J'ai présenté à la journée d'étude 'Textes sans frontières – I', qui s'est déroulée le 27 mars 2015 à l'École normale supérieure de Paris, un texte sur cette question qui fera l'objet d'une publication prochaine.

[7] François de Salignac de la Mothe Fénelon, *Dialogues sur l'éloquence en général et sur celle de la chaire en particulier* (Paris, 1718), 228.

[8] 1, 14-15. Le texte grec que j'utilise est celui de l'édition d'Yves Courtonne, *Saint Basile. Correspondance. Lettres I–C*, Collection des Universités de France (Paris, 1957). Les lignes que je donne renvoient à cette édition. Toutes les traductions du présent article, en revanche, sont les miennes. Pour l'expression finale de cet extrait, voir *Matt* 10:28 mais ici le pouvoir du Jugement de Dieu est passé, par le biais de la récriture, au pouvoir de nuisance du diable.

véritable intégrité qui défend au profanateur barbare de 'brûler de façon barbare (βαρβαρικῶς καταφλέξαι) <les offrandes, *i.e*. une vierge consacrée> par les feux de la débauche (τοῖς ἀκολασίας πυρσοῖς)'[9]. Dans la lettre, l'expression est passée de la métaphore de la profanation du Temple par les barbares à un développement sollicité par l'image paulinienne des « traits enflammés », destiné à figurer le pouvoir de destruction total du diable.

L'essentiel des emprunts au traité se trouve concentré dans le quatrième paragraphe de la lettre. L'*Ep*. 46 résume d'abord de longs développements qui filent les métaphores sur plusieurs lignes dans la source et les condense sous forme de questions rhétoriques plus nerveuses, caractéristiques du style diatribique. Ainsi : Τίς δοῦλος αὐθάδης εἰς τοσοῦτον ἐμάνη ὡς δεσποτικῇ κοίτῃ ἑαυτὸν ἐπιρρῖψαι ; 'Quel esclave impudent en est venu à un tel degré de folie qu'il se rue sur la couche du maître ?'[10] se laisse aisément rapprocher du passage suivant du traité :

Πῶς δὲ ἐκεῖνος ὁ ἄνθρωπος τῇ τοῦ Κυρίου κοίτῃ ἐτόλμησε μανιωδῶς ἐπιβῆναι ; Ἐκ γὰρ τῶν ἀνθρωπίνων δεῖ τὴν δίκην οὕτως ἐξαμαρτανόντων στοχάζεσθαι. Τίνος μὲν ἀξία ἡ ἀντὶ εὐγενοῦς ἀνδρὸς πρὸς δοῦλον ἑαυτῆς φθειρομένη, καὶ τῇ δεσποτικῇ κοίτῃ τὸν οἰκέτην εἰς ἐπιβουλὴν ἐπεισάγουσα ; τίνος δὲ ἄξιος ὁ δοῦλος δεσποίνῃ ἑαυτοῦ καὶ κοίτῃ κυρίου ἑαυτὸν ἀσελγῶς ἐπιρρίψας ;

Comment cet homme a-t-il eu la folle audace de monter sur la couche du Seigneur ? Car c'est à partir de ce qui se fait dans les affaires humaines qu'il faut conjecturer la punition de ceux qui pèchent de cette façon. De quelle punition est digne celle qui se corrompt pour un esclave à elle, en lieu et place de son noble époux, et qui conduit le serviteur à outrager la couche du maître ? De quelle punition est digne l'esclave qui s'est rué avec impudence sur sa maîtresse et sur la couche de son seigneur ?[11]

De même pour le passage suivant de l'*Ep*. 46 :

Ποῖος λῃστὴς ἐπὶ τοσοῦτον ἀπονοίας προήχθη ὡς αὐτῶν ἐφάψασθαι τῶν τοῦ Θεοῦ ἀναθημάτων, οὐ σκευῶν ἀψύχων, ἀλλὰ σωμάτων ζώντων καὶ ψυχὴν ἔνοικον ἐχόντων κατ' εἰκόνα Θεοῦ πεποιημένην ;

Quel voleur s'est laissé entraîner à ce degré de démence qu'il aille porter la main sur les offrandes de Dieu, non pas des objets inanimés, mais des corps vivants, habités par une âme faite à l'image de Dieu ?[12]

Cette interrogation semble être l'écho, sous une forme plus concentrée, d'un autre passage du traité *De la véritable intégrité* :

Μηδεὶς οὕτω μανιώδης ἱερόσυλος, ὡς τῆς ἀχράντου ἱερείας χερσὶν ἀκολάστοις ἐφάπτεσθαι. Μηδεὶς εἰς τοσοῦτον ἀπονοίας ἡκέτω, ὡς τηλικαύτην δίκην τοῖς

[9] *De la véritable intégrité dans la virginité*, 41, PG 30, 749 D9. L'expression est bien attestée, en une autre occurrence, mais elle est le fait d'un Pseudo-Théodore qui pille la lettre que nous étudions (*Réponse à l'*Ad Theodorum *de Jean Chrysostome*, 2).

[10] 4, 3-4.

[11] *De la véritable intégrité*, 39, PG 30, 748 D6-A5.

[12] 4, 5-8.

ἱεροσύλοις ἐπηρτημένην ὁρῶν, μὴ τῶν ἀψύχων ἐκ χρυσοῦ καὶ ἀργύρου ὕλης πεποιημένων σκευῶν, ἀλλ' αὐτῶν ἐμψύχων καὶ ζώντων ἀναθημάτων λῃστρικῇ χειρὶ βεβήλως ἐπιλαμβάνεσθαι.

Que nul ne soit un sacrilège si fou qu'il aille toucher de ses mains débauchées à la prêtresse pure. Que personne n'en vienne à ce degré de démence, qu'en dépit du fait qu'il voit qu'on frappe les sacrilèges d'une telle punition, il aille de façon sacrilège porter sa main de voleur non sur des objets inanimés faits d'or et d'argent, mais jusque sur des offrandes animées et vivantes ![13]

La récriture est enrichie du point de vue de la 'théologie de l'image'. On passe du simple ἐμψύχων dans la source à ψυχὴν ἔνοικον ἐχόντων κατ' εἰκόνα Θεοῦ πεποιημένην dans la lettre. Cet enrichissement par le thème de 'l'homme image de Dieu', abordé ailleurs dans le traité *De la véritable intégrité*, sert de relai à un apport particulier de la lettre au réseau métaphorique, l'insertion de la comparaison avec le crime de lèse-majesté par dégradation d'une image impériale : 'De qui a-t-on jamais entendu dire qu'en pleine ville et en plein midi il ait eu l'audace de dessiner sur une effigie royale des formes de porcs impurs ?'[14] Ce thème est totalement absent du traité, mais connu de la tradition chrétienne pour désigner le péché[15]. Par ailleurs, le motif de la défiguration de l'image royale par la surimpression, ou la substitution, d'une figure animale symbolique est traditionnel dans la littérature chrétienne[16]. Dans la lettre, on a une sorte de synthèse des deux.

Le morceau de bravoure du quatrième paragraphe que nous lisons ci-après réélabore une première ébauche de dialogue diatribique que l'on trouvait dans le traité *De la véritable intégrité* :

Ἀλλ' ἐβούλετο, φησίν, ἐκείνη, καὶ οὐκ ἄκουσαν ἐβιασάμην. Καὶ γὰρ ἡ δέσποινα ἡ ἄσωτος αὐτὴ τῷ καλῷ Ἰωσὴφ ἐπεμάνη, ἀλλ' οὐκ ἐνίκησε τὴν ἀρετὴν τοῦ σώφρονος ἡ μανία τῆς ἀκολάστου, οὐδέ, χερσὶν αὐτῆς βιαζομένης, πρὸς τὴν παρανομίαν ἐκεῖνος ἐβιάσθη. Ἀλλ' ἐκέκριτο ἐκείνῃ τοῦτο, φησίν, καὶ οὐκέτι ἦν παρθένος· καί, εἰ ἐγὼ μὴ ἐβουλόμην, πρὸς ἄλλον ἂν ἐφθάρη. Καὶ γὰρ καὶ τὸν Υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου, φησίν, ἔδει παραδοθῆναι, ἀλλ' οὐκ δι' οὗ παρεδόθη· καὶ τὰ σκάνδαλα ἐλθεῖν ἀνάγκη, ἀλλ' οὐκ δι' οὗ ἔρχεται.

– Mais c'est elle qui voulait, répond-il, et je ne l'ai pas possédée contre son gré ! – Certes, mais la maîtresse libertine a bien pu de son côté devenir folle du beau Joseph, la folie de la débauchée n'est pas parvenue à ébranler la vertu de l'homme tempérant, et même alors qu'elle cherchait à lui faire violence, en portant la main sur lui, elle ne parvint pas à le contraindre de transgresser la loi. – Mais c'est elle qui avait pris cette décision, rétorque-t-il, et elle n'était plus une vierge. Et si moi je n'avais pas voulu,

[13] *De la véritable intégrité*, 41, PG 30, 749 C9-D3.

[14] 4, 8-10.

[15] Basile (?), *Commentaire à Isaïe*, XIII, 268 considère que pécher contre le prochain qui est l'image de Dieu c'est porter atteinte au Créateur en personne.

[16] On verra, par exemple : Irénée, *Adversus Haereses* I, 8, 1 ; Clément d'Alexandrie, *Extraits de Théodote*, IV, 80, 3 ; Origène, *Dialogue avec Héraclide*, 13.

c'est pour un autre qu'elle se serait corrompue. – Certes, même le Fils de l'Homme devait être livré, est-il dit, mais malheur à celui par qui il a été livré ! Et il était nécessaire que les scandales arrivent, mais malheur à celui par qui ils arrivent.

Tout ce passage est à mettre en regard de 'l'original' :

Ἀλλ' εἰ ἑκοῦσαν ἐπέδωκεν ἑαυτὴν ἡ παρθένος, παραβᾶσα μὲν τὴν πρὸς τὸν νυμφίον συνθήκην, πάντα δὲ καὶ ναόν, καὶ ἀνάθημα, καὶ φιλίαν τὴν πρὸς αὐτόν, καὶ βασιλείας κοινωνίαν δι' ἡδονὴν πάθους συγχέασά τε ὁμοῦ καὶ πατήσασα, μὴ χρήσῃς τῇ τοιαύτῃ σαυτὸν εἰς κοινωνίαν τῆς ἁμαρτίας. Ἐπεὶ οὐδὲ ὁ καλὸς Ἰωσὴφ τῇ δεσποίνῃ ἐπιμανείσῃ αὐτῷ ἑαυτὸν πρὸς τὴν τῆς ἀκολασίας ἀπόλαυσιν χρῆσαι ἠθέλησεν […] Δεῖ με γαμηθῆναι, ὡς τὸν Υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου δεῖ παραδοθῆναι· ἀλλὰ οὐαί, δι' οὗ ἐκείνη τὰς πρὸς τὸν νυμφίον παραβᾶσα συνθήκας, τὴν ἑαυτῆς ἐπιθυμίαν πληροῖ.

Mais si c'est la vierge qui s'est livrée de son propre chef, transgressant la promesse faite à l'Époux, ruinant et foulant aux pieds tout en même temps et le temple, et l'offrande, et l'amitié envers lui, et la participation à la royauté à cause du plaisir passionné, ne te livre pas à elle en vue de la participation au péché. Car le beau Joseph n'a pas consenti non plus à se livrer à la maîtresse qui était devenue folle de lui, en vue de jouir de la débauche. […] – Il faut que je sois mariée, comme il faut que le Fils de l'Homme soit livré ! – Mais malheur à celui grâce auquel celle-ci transgresse les promesses faites à l'Époux pour accomplir son désir ![17]

Le dialogue diatribique présent dans la source est étendu dans la lettre à l'ensemble de la section imitée. Dans l'*Ep*. 46, le passage est récrit du point de vue de l'accusation portée contre le corrupteur impardonnable et de la défense qu'il peut éventuellement présenter, et non plus de la mise en garde de l'homme contre les menées d'une vierge désormais changée en femme impudique, et de la défense qu'elle peut éventuellement présenter. La comparaison des deux versions de l'épisode de Joseph et de la femme de Putiphar (voir *Gen* 39:7) révèle que l'*Ep*. 46 présente un phénomène de 'moralisation' de l'Écriture par la réduction des personnages à des types moraux (le tempérant – τὴν ἀρετὴν τοῦ σώφρονος – et la débauchée – ἡ μανία τῆς ἀκολάστου), tributaires de la lecture philonienne dans le *De Josepho*[18], alors que cette 'typisation' n'est pas visible dans la source, qui est davantage préoccupée de la rupture du contrat et de la déchéance qui s'ensuit. Le lien entre les deux textes est donc, à notre sens,

[17] *De la véritable intégrité*, 41, PG 30, 752 A1-15 ; B 4-7.

[18] La perspective consistant à envisager un personnage biblique comme un *tropos*, comme l'illustration d'un mode d'être est d'origine philonienne : voir le début du *De Josepho*, où Joseph est identifié par Philon au *politiokos anêr*. Dans le commentaire à la seconde péricope (*Jos*. 40 et 57), la σωφροσύνη est caractéristique du *tropos politikos*, qui s'oppose à la passion du pouvoir, comparée à une ἀκόλαστος γυνή (*Jos*. 64). La 'typisation' philonienne de Joseph et de la femme de Putiphar, pensée à l'intérieur du mode de vie du *politikos*, est réduite, dans notre lettre, au domaine de l'éthique, sans plus aucune référence au cadre politique sur lequel méditait l'Alexandrin. Pour une réduction semblable de la vie de Joseph à un moyen d'apprendre la σωφροσύνη, on verra Basile, *Ep*. 2, 3.

celui de la reformulation et de la récriture littéraire, selon les besoins et les intérêts de l'auteur.

On rappellera, enfin, que le contact ne porte ici que sur une section délimitée du traité – uniquement les chapitres 39 à 41 –, ce qui est peu au regard de la longueur totale de l'ouvrage, mais il faut avoir à l'esprit qu'une partie des *testimonia* de la lettre peuvent bien également provenir du traité. En tout cas, l'emprunt dans le quatrième paragraphe est ciblé ; d'ailleurs, les contacts littéraires mis en évidence *suivent l'ordre* du traité *De la véritable intégrité*, avec de clairs échos lexicaux, ce qui suppose, à un moment ou à un autre, la présence du texte sous les yeux de l'auteur.

Conséquences de ce lien de dépendance littéraire pour la querelle de l'authenticité

L'identification de la proximité littéraire entre le traité *De la véritable intégrité* et l'*Ep*. 46 permet-elle d'éclairer le débat sur la paternité basilienne de la lettre ? Quatre hypothèses de lecture sont possibles. 1. L'auteur du traité *De la véritable intégrité* et l'auteur de l'*Ep*. 46 sont une seule et même personne. Les parallèles accuseraient l'identité d'origine et témoigneraient de la reprise par l'auteur de motifs déjà traités par lui. Cette hypothèse mérite sans doute considération, mais une lecture attentive montre que le rapport au traité *De la véritable intégrité* n'est pas un simple 'copier-coller', ou une simple reprise de notes, mais une refonte littéraire, faite d'adaptations subtiles. L'auteur agit semblablement avec l'Écriture. On suppose un 'copier-coller', et, en réalité, l'Écriture est modifiée et étoffée par des insertions, correspondant au contexte particulier de la parénèse. Le traité *De la véritable intégrité* ressemble donc davantage à une source d'inspiration retravaillée, ce qui n'est guère étonnant pour un texte très diffusé. 2. L'auteur de l'*Ep*. 46 est un auteur dont on sait qu'il a utilisé, ailleurs dans son œuvre, le traité *De la véritable intégrité*. Or, une telle attestation n'est pas avérée, à ce jour, chez Basile de Césarée. L'image de la vaisselle sacrée du Temple associée à la virginité consacrée que l'on trouve dans l'*Ep*. 199 (canon 18) ou dans quelques lignes de l'*Homélie sur le Psaume 44* ne suffit pas à documenter l'utilisation du traité. En revanche, on sait que Grégoire de Nysse, dans son propre traité *De la virginité*, a utilisé le traité *De la véritable intégrité*. Certains critiques ont proposé Grégoire comme 'père' de l'*Ep*. 46[19]. L'usage du traité *De la véritable intégrité* dans l'*Ep*. 46, resté inaperçu jusqu'ici, peut apporter de l'eau à leur moulin. L'argument, cependant, peut se retourner très facilement. Grégoire n'utilise pas les passages que nous avons mis en évidence, et s'il était possible à l'un des Pères Cappadociens de lire le traité

[19] Voir Jean-Robert Pouchet, *Basile le Grand et son univers d'amis d'après sa correspondance. Une stratégie de communion*, Studia Ephemeridis 'Augustinianum' 36 (Rome, 1992), 587-8.

De la véritable intégrité, l'autre le pouvait aussi, sans doute. 3. L'*Ep*. 46 est d'un auteur inconnu qui a emprunté à plusieurs sources la matière de sa parénèse littéraire. Il serait le représentant d'un 'âge de l'anthologie', à l'instar de l'auteur de l'*Ep*. 366, qui a fabriqué un discours construit sur l'ἐγκράτεια à partir d'emprunts aux *Stromates* de Clément d'Alexandrie qu'il a fondus de façon originale[20]. La différence est que l'*Ep*. 46 a une toute autre histoire textuelle que l'*Ep*. 366. Elle est de longue date et constamment attribuée au même auteur et ne nous est pas transmise dans le contexte paléographique fragile d'une *Ep*. 366, toujours attestée en fin de manuscrit, parmi des pièces toutes douteuses, et souvent non numérotées. 4. L'auteur de l'*Ep*. 46 est bien Basile de Césarée et l'usage unique du traité *De la véritable intégrité*, à côté du matériau exégétique spécifique mobilisé, est un élément de plus à verser au dossier de la grande originalité de l'*Ep*. 46 au regard de l'œuvre conservée de Basile.

En l'état actuel, la question ne peut être tranchée. Mais on voit ici comment une enquête sur les instruments de travail de l'auteur, sur les sources littéraires dont il dispose et sur sa manière de les retravailler, permet d'éclairer sous un jour nouveau un débat sur l'authenticité d'un texte original, dont on sait qu'il figure, dès la fin du IV^e^ siècle, parmi les œuvres de Basile de Césarée, ce qui ne suffit pas à lever les soupçons.

[20] Walther Völker, 'Basilius, Ep. 366 und Clemens Alexandrinus', *VC* 7 (1953), 23-6.

Basil of Caesarea and the *Praise of the City**

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Abstract

This article deals with Basil's use of the rhetorical form of the *encômion poleôs* ('praise of city'). In his *Homily on the Martyr Gordius*, the Cappadocian Father built Gordius the genuine hero of Caesarea. On that occasion, Basil criticises the traditional way of praising a city. His emphasis on the qualities of the Saint leads him to reject the classical rules of urban rhetorics, according to which Greek rhetors needed to review the natural settings of a city, its history, including its mythical roots, its institutions and its buildings. However, Basil' construction of the sainthood of Gordius reveals the ambivalence of Christian authors toward their local and terrestrial fatherland. On the one hand, they criticise that a city's material goods could be a source of glory and, more generally, they refuse to praise a place symbolising earthly sins. On the other hand, Basil's discourse on the Caesarean martyr extoling the virtues of a local character betrays his civic patriotism and pride.

In Late Antiquity, urban rhetorics still played an important role in shaping civic identities. Describing the city's landscape, history and buildings was, as in past centuries, a means for rhetors to present to their audiences an ideal city. As such, Libanius' review of Antioch's monuments overlooked religious buildings, temples and churches.[1] This was a way to claim that the fourth-century city was a space belonging to a secular sphere that could be shared by pagan and Christian Antiochenes alike.[2] Some years later, his fellow citizen John Chrysostomus used the same rhetorical rules to show that, on the contrary, the traditional places linked to urban life, such as the agora, were places devoted to sins, which good Christians should not attend, in contrast to churches,

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[1] Lib., *Antioch*. § 196-229.

[2] Maria Francesio, *L'idea di Città in Libanio* (Stuttgart, 2004), 78-85 ; Catherine Saliou, 'Antioche décrite par Libanios: La rhétorique de l'espace urbain et ses enjeux au milieu du quatrième siècle', in Eugenio Amato (ed.), *Approches de la troisième sophistique: Hommages à Jacques Schamp* (Brussels, 2006), 273-85; Isabella Sandwell, *Religious Identity in Late Antiquity. Greeks, Jews and Christians in Antioch* (Cambridge, 2007), 160-9.

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presented as the only places were Christian Antiochene citizens could live their community life.[3]

This article deals with the way Basil of Caesarea referred to the classical *topoi* of a specific literary genre, the *Praise of the City* (*encômion poleôs*), in his attempt to christianise his mother city. I will focuss on the *Homily on Martyr Gordius*, a panegyrical sermon delivered by the Cappadocian Father in Caesarea between 370 and 379, during the time he was bishop of the city.[4] The text recalls the life and sufferings of a certain Gordios, native of Caesarea, killed for having refused to give up his faith. Basil made his speech on the occasion of the annual *panègguris* at the martyr's shrine, located outside – though not far from – the city's walls (see *infra*). Whilst he mentioned that some people in the audience may have had some remembrance of what happened,[5] Basil admitted that he was himself short on facts about this martyr and that he allowed himself to alter and magnify information circulated by an obscure rumour (ἀμυδρά … τις φήμη).[6] It is worth noting that historical accuracy was not, in any case, the homilist's primary concern, nor was it expected by his audience. The deliverance of this praise was the climax of the celebrations of the anniversary of the local martyr's passing. In front of his people, the prominent bishop produced a free reconstruction of the life of the local martyr wearing a name typical in Cappadocia.[7] Gordios is said to have been a centurion who abandoned city life during a persecution and took refuge in the mountains, where he lived a secluded life. Gordios came back, looking like a savage,

[3] For example, J. Chrys., *Homily on Statues* 15 (PG 49, 134-9). See Luke Lavan, 'The agorai of Antioch and Constantinople as seen by John Chrysostom', in John Drinkwater, Benet Salway (eds), *Wolf Liebeschuetz Reflected: Essays Presented by Colleagues, Friends, & Pupils* (London, 2007), 157-67.

[4] Basil, *A homily on Martyr Gordius* (PG 31, 489-508) (CPG 2862, BHG 703). On the date, see Johan Leemans, 'Martyr, Monk and Victor over Paganism. An Analysis of Basil of Caesarea's Panegyrical Sermon on Gordius', in Johan Leemans (ed.), *More than a Memory. The Discourse of Martyrdom and the Construction of Christian Identity in the History of Christianity* (Leuven, 2005), 45-79, 48-9. There is no room here to discuss whether the speech can be dated more precisely in 373, see Pauline Allen, 'Basil of Caesarea', in Johan Leemans, Wendy Mayer, Pauline Allen and Boudewijn Dehandschutter (eds), *'Let us Die that we may live'. Greek Homilies on Christian Martyrs from Asia Minor, Palestine and Syria (c. AD 350- AD 450)* (London, New York, 2003), 55-77, 77 n. 9, with previous bibliography.

[5] Basil, *A homily on martyr Gordius* (PG 31, 497).

[6] Basil, *A homily on martyr Gordius* (PG 31, 493).

[7] I share R. Van Dam's scepticim about the historicity of Basil's martyrdom: Raymond Van Dam, *Becoming Christian. The Conversion of Roman Cappadocia* (Philadelphia, 2003), 90: 'At Caesarea Basil celebrated the festivals of two rather obscure local saints, the centurion Gordius and the shepherd Mamas. In his commemorative panegyrics he hardly knew what to say about them. Since their names were apparently traditional indigenous names, perhaps he was simply trying to embellish some local traditions into full Christian cults'. On the name Gordios, see Sophie Métivier, *La Cappadoce (IV^e^-VI^e^ siècle). Une histoire provinciale de l'Empire romain d'Orient* (Paris, 2005), 310 n. 401.

when the entire city was gathered in the stadion to attend horse races. The appearance of Gordios there created quite a stir. He was brought before a judge and condemned to death, and as a consequence all inhabitants of Caesarea turned their back on the hippodrome and rushed to attend the spectacle of his execution.

J. Leemans produced a thorough study of this *Homily*, aiming to show that this sermon contributed to the construction of a Christian identity.[8] All in all, Basil succeeded in presenting to the people of Caesarea a Gordios capable of functioning as an example of Christian virtue. Leemans showed that the sermon was developed along three axes, which present Gordios as a martyr, a monk and the victor over paganism.

This article aims at showing that this praise also painted the local celebrity as an iconic citizen of Caesarea. The civic dimension of the homily was made explicit when Basil said that 'he (Gordios) was born in this city, which is why we love him more, because he is our own ornament of the city'[9] and that he 'gives the enjoyment of his own fruit of piety to the land which produced and reared him'.[10] In the words of Basil, the saint was, or should be, a source of pride for the inhabitants of Caesarea. The idea that a city is glorified by its great men is a *topos* inherited from classical rhetoric, and widely utilized in hagiography.[11] In form and content, the *Homily in Praise of Gordius* also contributed to the promotion of Basil's ideal of the city.

The influence of Greek rhetors on the Cappadocian Father is well-known, as well as his ambivalence towards the manner in which Christians could use and refer to classical *paideia*.[12] As such, this panegyric is a good illustration of his twofold attitude: on the one hand, Basil resorted to classical stylistic features such as ecphrasis, hyperbole, monologues and dialogues[13] as well as followed the rules of epideictic rhetoric, as systematised by authors of the Second Sophistic; on the other hand, in the peroration he rejected the rules advocated for praising a man. According to him, 'divine teaching, therefore, does not recognise the rule of encomia, but counts the witness of the exploits rather than

[8] J. Leemans, 'Martyr, Monk and Victor' (2005).

[9] Basil, *A homily on martyr Gordius* (PG 31, 493): Οὗτος ἔφυ μὲν ἀπὸ τῆς πόλεως ταύτης, ὅθεν καὶ μᾶλλον αὐτὸν ἀγαπῶμεν, διότι οἰκεῖος ἡμῖν ὁ κόσμος ἐστίν. All quotations are translated following P. Allen, 'Basil of Caesarea' (2003), 57-67.

[10] Basil, *A homily on martyr Gordius* (PG 31, 493): ... ἐνεγκούσῃ καὶ θρεψαμένῃ τῶν οἰκείων τῆς εὐσεβείας καρπῶν τὴν ἀπόλαυσιν ἐχαρίσατο.

[11] See Helen Saradi, 'The Kallos of the Byzantine City: The Development of a Rhetorical Topos and Historical Reality', *Gesta* 34 (1995), 37-56, 43.

[12] See James Marshall Campbell, *The Influence of the Second Sophistic on the Style of the Sermons of St. Basil the Great* (Washington, D.C., 1922).

[13] J. Leemans, 'Martyr, Monk and Victor' (2005), 56-8; Mattia C. Chiriatti, 'ἀγών/θέαθέαμα and στάδιον/θέατρον: A Reviewed ἔκφρασις of the Spectacle in Basil's *In Gordium martyrem*', in this volume, pp. 189-199.

encomia, on the grounds that it is quite sufficient in order to praise the saints, and enough to profit those striving for virtue'.[14]

Then, Basil criticised that a man usually draws his glory from the particularities of the city: 'For the rule of encomia is to examine the fatherland, and investigate pedigree, and discourse on education, but our rule, silencing mention of the people around them, fills the witness of each from their individual deeds'.[15] Thus, according to Basil, intrinsic virtues alone must suffice to praise a prominent Christian.[16]

The evocation of the *topos* of the fatherland led the author to make a digression aiming at underlining the vanity conveyed by traditional discourses. Basil questioned his audience:

'For why am I more august on this account, if the city which once bore the burden of grievous and huge struggles sets up glorious trophies over its enemies? Why [am I more august] if it enjoys a favourable location such that it is comfortable in both winter and summer? But if it both produces men, and is suitable for raising cattle, what benefit do I have from that? But also with regard to the herds of horses it outdoes any city under the sun. How, then, can these facts make us better with regard to human virtue? Or even if we were to discourse on the peaks of the neighboring mountain, [saying] both how they are above the clouds and how much they protrude into the sky, shall we deceive ourselves, on the grounds that we have piled up praise for these men on account of these facts?'[17]

Through its use of anaphora, the tirade accumulated rhetorical questions in order to denigrate material sources of pride.[18] In his critique, Basil listed the topics of the *encômion poleôs*. In this passage, the author scrupulously followed

[14] Basil, *A homily on martyr Gordius* (PG 31, 492): Οὐκ οἶδεν οὖν ἐγκωμίων νόμον τὸ θεῖον διδασκαλεῖον, ἀλλὰ τὴν μαρτυρίαν τῶν πεπραγμένων ἀντ' ἐγκωμίων λογίζεται, ὡς καὶ τοῖς ἁγίοις ἐξαρκοῦσαν πρὸς ἔπαινον, καὶ τοῖς ὡρμημένοις πρὸς ἀρετὴν αὐτάρκη οὖσαν εἰς ὠφέλειαν.

[15] Basil, *A homily on martyr Gordius* (PG 31, 492): Ἐγκωμίων μὲν γὰρ νόμος πατρίδα διερευνᾶσθαι, καὶ γένος ἀναζητεῖν, καὶ ἀγωγὴν διηγεῖσθαι· ὁ δὲ ἡμέτερος νόμος, τοὺς τῶν γειτόνων λόγους κατασιγάσας, ἀπὸ τῶν ἰδίων ἑκάστου τὴν μαρτυρίαν πληροῖ.

[16] The same critics are expressed in Basil's *Homily on martyr Mamas* (PG 31, 592).

[17] Basil, *A homily on martyr Gordius* (PG 31, 492): Τί γὰρ ἐγὼ παρὰ τοῦτο σεμνότερος, εἰ ἡ πόλις ποτὲ χαλεποὺς καὶ μεγάλους ἀγῶνας διενεγκοῦσα, λαμπρὰ κατὰ τῶν πολεμίων ἀνέστησε τρόπαια; τί δὲ, εἰ θέσεως εὐκαίρως ἔχει, ὡς πρὸς χειμῶνά τε εἶναι καὶ θέρος ἐπιτηδείαν; Εἰ δὲ καὶ ἡ αὐτὴ ἀνδρῶν τέ ἐστιν εὔφορος, καὶ βοσκήματα τρέφειν αὐτάρκης, τί μοι ἐκ τούτων ὄφελος; Ἀλλὰ καὶ ταῖς τῶν ἵππων ἀγέλαις τῆς ὑφ' ἡλίῳ κρατεῖ. Τί οὖν ἡμᾶς δύναται ταῦτα τὴν ἀνθρωπείαν ἀρετὴν βελτίους ποιῆσαι; Ἢ που καὶ τὰς τοῦ γείτονος ὄρους κορυφὰς διηγούμενοι, ὡς ὑπερνεφεῖς τέ εἰσι καὶ ἐπὶ πολὺ τοῦ ἀέρος διανεστήκασιν, ἑαυτοὺς ἀπατήσομεν ὡς τοῖς ἀνδράσι διὰ τούτων ἐκπληροῦντες τὸν ἔπαινον;

[18] Basil, *A homily on martyr Gordius* (PG 31, 492): Πάντων ἐστὶ καταγελαστότατον, ὅλου τοῦ κόσμου παρὰ τῶν δικαίων ὑπεροφθέντος, ἡμᾶς ἐξ ὀλίγων τῶν ἀτιμασθέντων πληροῦν αὐτοῖς τὰ ἐγκώμια. ('Most ridiculous of all, when the entire world was disdained by the just, is that we should piled up encomia to them from the paltry objects which they despised').

the main *topoi* prescribed by the third century AD handbooks attributed to Menander Rhetor, such as the past military exploits, the situation of the city (*thesis*), its geographical features, its climate and the goods produced by its country.[19] This sharp use of these *topoi* of epideictic rhetoric is what Louis Robert called a 'contre-éloge', mirroring the traditional praises in order to better criticise their aims.[20] Both Gregory of Nazianzus and John Chrysostom made similar ironic uses of the *encômion poleôs* in their critiques of the classical city.[21]

Basil's detailed evocation of the fatherland, uncommon in praises for men, should not be seen as a mere oratory demonstration nor as what H. Delehaye called a 'sham independence'.[22] More fundamentally, this piece of rhetoric can be analysed as being part of Basil's promotion of a new model for the Caesarean city.

At the time Basil delivered this homily, he was bishop of his mother city. This was a time of crisis for Caesarea, as Emperor Valens had decided in 371-372 to divide the province of Cappadocia into two smaller provinces, Cappadocia I and II, which caused the desertion of the *curiales* of Caesarea.[23] Basil, as citizen of the metropole of Cappadocia, deplored this fact and tried on several occasions to improve this disastrous situation. In the same years, we know that the bishop initiated to build in the suburbs an entire new district dedicated to the care of the poor, including a church, a clerical residence, hospitals and houses.[24] This famous foundation was successful to the extent that it was considered as a 'new city',[25] which would be named 'Basilias', after its founder.[26]

The form and content of the panegyric in honour of Gordios takes a new meaning if we read it in connection with these contemporary events, both the critical situation of Caesarea and the creation of the city of charity. Let us consider the place where the homily celebrating Gordios' victory over his persecutors was delivered, that is to say the martyr's shrine. According to Basil,

[19] Menander Rhetor I 347-52. See Laurent Pernot, *La rhétorique de l'éloge dans le monde gréco-romain* (Paris, 1993), 178-216; *id.*, *Epideictic Rhetoric. Questioning the Stakes of Ancient Praise* (Austin, 2015), 42-5.

[20] Louis Robert, 'Les Kordakia de Nicée, le combustible de Synnada et les poissons-scies. Sur des lettres d'un métropolite de Phrygie au X^e^ siècle. Philologie et réalités, 1', *Journal des Savants* 3 (1961), 97-166, 151.

[21] *E.g.*, Greg. Naz., *Or.* 33. 6-7; J. Chrys., *Hom. de Stat.* 17 (PG 49, 176). For Gregory's dependance upon Menander, see Laurent Pernot, 'Grégoire de Nazianze (*or.* XXXIII, 6-7) et l'éloge rhétorique des cités', *Euphrosyne* 31 (2003), 271-86.

[22] Hippolyte Delehaye, *Les Passions des martyrs et les genres littéraires* (Brussels, 1921), 193.

[23] See Thomas A. Kopecek, 'The Cappadocian Fathers and Civic Patriotism', *Church History* 43 (1974), 293-303, 298-303; Raymond Van Dam, *Kingdom of Snow. Roman Rule and Greek Culture in Cappadocia* (Philadelphia, 2002), 28-38; S. Métivier, *La Cappadoce* (2005), 24, 67-8.

[24] Basil, *Ep.* 94.

[25] Greg. Naz., *Or.* 43, 63.

[26] Firmus, *Ep.* 43; Sozom., *Hist. eccl.* VI 34,9.

Gordios' martyrion was located at the outskirts of the city, as the bishop said that his audience had reached 'the ornate [shrine] outside the city'.[27] It is worth noting that the bishop made a clear parallel between the people hastening to attend Gordios' execution and the people coming to celebrate the martyr's festival and listen to his deeds. A passage pointed out that the spectacle of the martyr's death could be followed from the city walls,[28] thus not far from the city.

There is no contraindication to suppose that the hippodrome where the martyr was allegedly condemned was the place where people considered that Gordios died and was buried. Modern scholars usually consider that this hippodrome was located *intra muros*, thus, at some distance from the place where he was martyred.[29] However, Anastasios Levides could still see at the end of the 19th century the ruins of a stadium outside the town at the foot of the walls,[30] precisely where literary evidence proclaims the martyrion was located. The proximity between the hippodrome and the place of burial makes it even more significant why Basil named Gordios' martyrion as 'the revered and very beautiful stadium of the martyrs'[31] and 'the stadium of that crowned man'.[32] At the end of the fourth century, the hippodrome of Caesarea was in all likelihood still in use and spectacles organised there in honor of the tutelary gods still gathered the whole Caesarean community, including pagans, Jews and Christians.[33] Therefore, telling the episode of Gordios' martyrdom at this very place, regardless of the historicity of the story, was a means to christianise one of the nerve centres of civic life by transforming it into a place of Christian memory, where virtue won over impiety.[34] Basil's vivid depiction of the crowd abandoning the city empty to see Gordios' heroic execution symbolised the shift the bishop wanted to establish between pagan and Christian Caesarea. This transfer was replayed at

[27] Basil, *A homily on martyr Gordius* (PG 31, 489): τὸν προπόλεον κόσμον.

[28] Basil, *A homily on martyr Gordius* (PG 31, 501).

[29] *E.g.* S. Métivier, *La Cappadoce* (2005), 92-3 n. 45, 310; J. Leemans, 'Martyr, Monk and Victor' (2005), 50.

[30] Anastasios M. Levidis, *Ai en monolithois monai tes Kappadokias kai Lykaonias* (Constantinople, 1899), 46, quoted by Gregorios Bernardakis, 'Notes sur la topographie de Césarée de Cappadoce', *Échos d'Orient* 11 (1908), 22-7, 26, *pace* S. Métivier, *La Cappadoce* (2005), 92-3 n. 45.

[31] Basil, *A homily on martyr Gordius* (PG 31, 489): τὸ σεμνὸν τοῦτο καὶ πάγκαλον τῶν μαρτύρων στάδιον, πανδημεὶ κατειλήφασιν.

[32] Basil, *A homily on martyr Gordius* (PG 31, 507-8): Τοῦτό ἐστι τὸ στάδιον ἐκείνου τοῦ στεφανίτου.

[33] See S. Métivier, *La Cappadoce* (2005), 91; R. Van Dam, *Becoming Christian* (2002), 116; Johan Leemans, 'The Cult of Mars in Late Antique Caesarea according to the Panegyrics of the Cappadocians', *SP* 39 (2007), 71-7.

[34] On the same process in Antioch, see Catherine Saliou, 'Les lieux du polythéisme dans l'espace urbain et le paysage mémoriel d'Antioche-sur-l'Oronte, de Libanios à Malalas (IVe-VIe s.)', in Aude Busine (ed.), *Religious Practices and Christianization of the Late Antique City (4th-7th cent.)*, (Leiden, Boston, 2015), 38-70.

the occasion of the yearly procession leading the people to the martyrion. The location, just outside the city walls on the road to the new suburbs, was highly strategic, as it constituted a link between the old heathen town and the new one, in accordance with Christian values and practices.

In this context, the sophisticated recusation of the *topoi* as advocated by the classical rules of a *Praise of the city*, takes a new dimension. When he condemned the vainglorious and extrinsic reasons for praising a city, Basil condemned what old-fashioned praises of Caesarea looked like, in form and content. Many of his rhetorical questions actually targeted what had always constituted a source of civic pride in the metropole of Cappadocia. For example, Caesarea (and Cappadocia in general) was known for breeding horses and cattle[35] and the quality of its horses was still highlighted in at the end of the fourth century.[36] The high peak Basil mentioned in his tirade referred to Mount Argaeus, the highest mountain of the region, which dominates the city. Mount Argaeus, sometimes worshipped as a protecting god, was the symbol of Caesarea on many coins in the imperial period.[37] These regional assets were in all likelihood items invoked by local orators willing to extol the qualities of the Cappadocian metropole.

All in all, the construction of Gordios' life allowed the bishop of Caesarea to provide a new model for the city. Basil's Gordios was not only a new hero capable of embodying the Christian ideal, but the evocation of this local martyr also allowed the bishop to provide both a new civic history, in which past military victories were replaced by the acts of a prominent local figure, and a new topography, wherein Christian processions connected together the old and new loci of the city. The story of this man having left the vanities of civic life to hide in the mountains answered the form of the homily, resorting to epideictic rhetoric, in order to criticise the classical ways of praising a city. As such, Basil's rejection of the classical rules of encomia also contributed to shaping a new civic identity for Christian Caesarea.

[35] See J. Eric Cooper, Michael J. Decker, *Life and Society in Byzantine Cappadocia* (New York, 2012), 76-94.

[36] *E.g.*, Greg. Naz., *Or.* 43. 3-4.

[37] See, *e.g.*, Nicole Thierry, *La Cappadoce de l'Antiquité au Moyen Âge* (Turnhout, 2002), 48-9.

Le voyage de Basile de Césarée en Orient : hypothèses sur le silence des sources externes

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ABSTRACT

Basil's travel into the East, it seems, has left little traces in his life and work, except the few lines, contained in his letter 223 to Eustathius of Sebaste about twenty years later. If one admits the conclusions of J. Gribomont (article from the year 1959) with regards the dating to the year 356 and the motifs of this travel, the silence of external witnesses can be explained which until now have been rarely understood.

Le long voyage de Basile en Egypte et en Orient, fait bien établi, a laissé fort peu de traces dans son œuvre, parmi ses parents ou amis, chez les historiens de l'Eglise ou du monachisme. Pourquoi ? Pour y répondre, nous rappellerons quelles sont nos sources, la datation du voyage et ses motifs, puis nous dégagerons l'itinéraire de Basile, pour nous interroger en conclusion sur les relations qu'a pu – ou surtout n'a pas pu – nouer le jeune Basile (il a environ 27-28 ans), étant donné les circonstances.

I. Les sources proprement basiliennes sont au nombre de deux : la lettre 1[1], à Eustathe le Philosophe et quelques lignes de l'*ep.* 223, 2[2] adressée à l'été 375 à Eustathe – c'est-à-dire, au même personnage devenu évêque, selon la magistrale analyse de dom Jean Gribomont en 1959[3] – analyse que je suis. Il est le premier à identifier le « philosophe », destinataire de la lettre 1, à Eustathe, récemment élu évêque de Sébaste[4] en Arménie, et il date cette missive de 357 au plus tard (la fin de 356 est possible, si les études de Basile se sont un peu

[1] Saint Basile. *Lettres.* Texte établi et traduit par Yves Courtonne (Collection des Universités de France), t. I (Paris, 1957), 3-5. Voir aussi Basilio di Cesarea, *Le Lettere. Introduzione, testo criticamente riveduto, traduzione, commento* a cura di Marcella Forlin Patrucco (Corona Patrum), t. I (seul paru) (Torino, 1983), 58-9 et 250-4 (avec la collaboration de Jean Gribomont).

[2] Y. Courtonne, t. III (Paris, 1966), 10-1.

[3] 'Eustathe le Philosophe et les voyages du jeune Basile de Césarée', *RHE* 54 (1959), 115-24 (a notamment collationné le *Vat. Graecus 2209*, s. X/XI) ; repr. dans son recueil d'articles *Saint Basile. Evangile et Eglise. Mélanges*, Spiritualité orientale et vie monastique 36-7 (Abbaye de Bellefontaine, 1984), t. I, 107-16 (p. 539-557, précieux index).

[4] 'Eustathe de Sébaste', *DHGE* 16 (1964), 26-33 ; repr. dans *Evangile et Eglise*, I, 96-102 et 103-6 réimpression du 2e § de son article du *DSp* 4 (1961), 1709-12.

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moins prolongées). Beaucoup plus tardive, la lettre 223 est écrite en 373, après le grave différend survenu entre eux en 373 :

« Καὶ δὴ πολλοὺς μὲν εὗρον κατὰ τὴν Ἀλεξάνδρειαν, πολλοὺς δὲ κατὰ τὴν λοιπὴν Αἴγυπτον καὶ ἐπὶ τῆς Παλαιστίνης ἑτέρους καὶ τῆς κοίλης Συρίας καὶ τῆς Μεσοποταμίας· ὧν ἐθαύμαζον μὲν τὸ περὶ δίαιταν ἐγκρατές, ἐθαύμαζον δὲ τὸ καρτερικὸν ἐν πόνοις, ἐξεπλάγην τὴν ἐν προσευχαῖς εὐτονίαν ὅπως τε ὕπνου κατεκράτουν ὑπ' οὐδεμίας φυσικῆς ἀνάγκης κατακαμπτόμενοι, ὑψηλὸν ἀεὶ καὶ / ἀδούλωτον τῆς ψυχῆς τὸ φρόνημα διασώζοντες *ἐν λιμῷ καὶ δίψει, ἐν ψύχει καὶ γυμνότητι*[a], μὴ ἐπιστρεφόμενοι πρὸς τὸ σῶμα, μηδὲ καταδεχόμενοι αὐτῷ προσαναλῶσαι τινα φροντίδα, ἀλλ' ὡς ἐν ἀλλοτρίᾳ τῇ σαρκὶ διάγοντες ἔργῳ ἔδειξαν τί τὸ παροικεῖν τοῖς ὧδὲ καὶ τί *τὸ πολίτευμα ἔχειν ἐν οὐρανῷ*[b]. Ἐκεῖνα θαυμάσας καὶ μακαρίσας τῶν ἀνδρῶν τὴν ζωήν, ὅτι ἔργῳ δεικνύουσι *τὴν νέκρωσιν τοῦ Ἰησοῦ ἐν τῷ σώματι περιφέροντες*[c], ηὐχόμην καὶ αὐτός, καθόσον ἐμοὶ ἐφικτόν, ζηλωτὴς εἶναι τῶν ἀνδρῶν ἐκείνων. » (*ep*. 223, 2 : Courtonne, t. 3 [Paris, 1966], 10, 20-11, 35 ; deux des citations bibliques sont omises par l'éditeur : [a] 2*Cor*. 11 :27 [b] *Phil*. 3 :20 et [c] 2*Cor*. 4 :10).

Les éloges funèbres de Basile sont quant à eux bien discrets sur son voyage de jeunesse. Grégoire de Nazianze en 381 laisse entendre que son absence aux côtés de son ami a amené celui-ci à « entreprendre certains voyages indispensables qui n'étaient pas étrangers à son projet de philosophie[5] », comprenons, selon le sens bien établi du mot à cette époque et pas seulement dans les milieux ascétiques, projet de vie « monastique ». Pas la moindre indication chez Grégoire sur la géographie de ces voyages, mais retenons que le but du voyageur est explicité. L'éloge de Grégoire de Nysse (1er janvier 381) est, lui, totalement muet sur l'expérience de son frère, silence qui s'explique, selon son récent éditeur, Pierre Maraval, par les « règles du genre épidictique[6] », mais nous ajouterons que tous les prédicateurs ne s'y soumettent pas.

La vie de Basile du pseudo-Amphiloque[7] est si dépréciée par les chercheurs qu'on hésite à s'y référer. En fait Michel Van Esbroeck me confiait il y a une trentaine d'années, en se fondant sur ses versions orientales, qu'il s'y révèle des faits historiques. En tout cas, l'auteur non identifié relate un déplacement de Basile en Egypte auprès d'un archimandrite nommé Porphyrios, auquel il demanda les livres sacrés, s'imprégna durant une année entière des divines doctrines (θείων δογμάτων), tout en se nourrissant d'eau et de légumes[8] (ὕδατι

[5] *Or*. 43, 25 ; éd. Jean Bernardi, Sources Chrétiennes 384 (Paris, 1992), 182. Sens de « philosophie » : P. Miquel, 'Monachisme', *DSp* 10 (1979), 1555-6 (bgr.).

[6] CPG 3185. Pierre Maraval, Sources Chrétiennes 573 (Paris, 2014), 54 n. 1. Pour la date et le lieu, *ibid*. 50-3.

[7] CPG 3253. On doit encore recourir à l'éd. du dominicain François Combefis, *SS. Patrum Amphilochii Iconiensis (…) opera omnia* (Paris, 1644). Pour la traduction latine (BHL 1024) d'Anastase le Bibliothécaire († 879), voir PL 73, 293-312 (les §§ 5 et 6 sont repr. en PG 29, CCXCIII-CCXCV).

[8] F. Combefis, 158 D ; trad. latine, PL 73, 296A.

καὶ λαχάνοις τρεφόμενος). Nous connaissons effectivement un Porphyrios[9], non mentionné dans les apophtegmes grecs, mais qui vécut un temps (cinq ans) à Scété, avant d'être évêque de Gaza, mais il y avait peut-être d'autres personnages du même nom.

Les historiens ecclésiastiques Socrate[10], Sozomène[11], Théodoret[12] sont muets sur ce voyage de Basile : ce qui les intéresse, ce sont ses prises de position doctrinales et ses relations avec les pouvoirs publics et l'empereur en particulier. Dans sa continuation en latin de l'*Histoire* d'Eusèbe, Rufin[13], qui consacre un chapitre à la fois à Basile et Grégoire de Nazianze[14], est également silencieux sur le sujet. Les vies de saints moines ont-elles gardé le souvenir du passage du futur évêque de Césarée ? Non seulement l'*Historia monachorum in Aegypto*[15] et l'*Histoire Lausiaque*[16] ne consacrent aucune notice à Basile, mais les quelques mentions de son nom (chapitres 38, 2 ; 45, 3 et 55, 3 : Evagre et Mélanie l'Ancienne) se réfèrent à la maturité de l'évêque. Il est notable que les collections grecques d'apophtegmes n'ont conservé qu'une pièce de Basile (n° 155), dans la seule collection alphabétique[17] ; elle exalte l'obéissance. Une pièce de la collection systématique géorgienne (traduction d'Euthyme l'Hagiorite, † 1028) reproduit une définition de la sagesse par « l'archevêque saint Basile ». Mentionnons un texte de Basile (coll. alphabétique grecque, n° 433) qui n'est autre qu'un emprunt aux *Institutions cénobitiques* de Cassien (7, 14), et non l'inverse – pièce reproduite aussi en syriaque, arménien et copte.

Ne nous attardons pas à enfin à des extraits, l'un (lapidaire) de la *Grande Règle* 43, 1, contenu dans la collection systématique grecque (I, 37), l'autre de

[9] S'il est bien né « vers 347 » (J.-M. Sauget, dans *DECA*, *s. v.*), l'évêque de Gaza doit être écarté.

[10] *H. E.* 4, 26 ; P. Maraval, Sources Chrétiennes 505 (Paris, 2006), 108-17.

[11] *H. E.* 6, 15 ; Guy Sabbah et André-Jean Festugière, Sources Chrétiennes 495 (Paris, 2005), 314-23.

[12] *H. E.* 4, 19 ; Annick Martin, Pierre Canivet *et al*., Sources Chrétiennes 530 (Paris, 2009), 250-61. Rien à tirer non plus de Philostorge, notamment dans le L. VIII ; Jean.-Marie Prieur (†) *et al*., Sources Chrétiennes 564 (Paris, 2013) : voir à l'index.

[13] *H. E.* XI, 9 ; éd. Theodor Mommsen, *Eusebius Werke,* GCS Neue Folge, Bd VI, 2, 2 (Leipzig, 1909) ; nouv. éd. revue par F. Winkelmann (Berlin, 1999), 1014-7.

[14] Commenté par Françoise Thelamon, « *Instar duorum caeli luminarium :* Basile et Grégoire dans l'*Histoire ecclésiastique* de Rufin d'Aquilée », *L'Antiquité en ses confins. Mélanges offerts à Benoît Gain*. Textes rassemblés et préparés par Aline Canellis et Martine Furno, Recherches et Travaux, Hors-série n°16 (Grenoble, 2008), 151-62.

[15] Voir CPG 5620.

[16] Voir CPG 6036. Pour notre sujet, aucune information notable dans la traduction latine (recensions I et I*a*), éd. par Adelheid Wellhausen, Patristische Texte und Studien 51 (Berlin, 2003). Voir *REAug* 52 (2006), 240-2. La notice 116 (Basile) du *De viris* de Jérôme est également muette sur le sujet.

[17] Cette enquête sur la paternité basilienne de certaines pièces est grandement facilitée par *Les sentences des Pères du désert. Troisième recueil et tables* par Dom L. Regnault (Solesmes, 1976), à compléter par B. Outtier, 'Le modèle grec de la traduction géorgienne des Apophtegmes par Euthyme', *AB* 95 (1977), 119-31.

l'*Histoire Lausiaque*, 34, reproduit dans la même collection (XVIII, Περὶ διορατικῶν, c. 24 : « Sur ceux qui feignent la folie »). Le nom de Basile – comme narrateur – n'apparaît que dans la traduction latine (recension de Pélage/Jean, XVIII, 19). La collecte est donc fort modeste, et même nulle en ce qui concerne le voyage du jeune Basile[18].

II. Itinéraire et emploi du temps de Basile

L'itinéraire est à tirer essentiellement de l'*ep*. 1, – en prêtant attention à la tradition manuscrite – écrite par Basile en Cappadoce, donc à son retour, alors qu'il est de nouveau malade.

(1) Basile étant malade à Césarée, Eustathe part pour la Syrie. (2) Basile se rend à son tour en Syrie (par un itinéraire inconnu), mais quand il y parvient, il apprend qu'Eustathe a quitté la Syrie pour l'Egypte. (3) Basile décide de le rejoindre, ce qu'il fait par voie de terre, puisqu'il précise : « δολιχὴν ὁδὸν ἀργαλέην τε, long et pénible voyage » (expression tirée de l'*Odyssée* 4, 483). (4) Ayant atteint l'Egypte, Basile pousse jusqu'à *Alexandrie même* (avec tous les mss en effet, sauf C, il faut lire : ἢ αὐτοῦ καθῆσθαι *ἢ* ἐπὶ τῆς Ἀλεξάνδρου). Basile suit sans doute ici la distinction entre la *chôra* (dont les habitants, Αἰγύπτιοι, sont hellènes ou de langue copte) et la cité (πόλις) d'Alexandrie (ses habitants sont les πολιτικοί[19]).

Mais Basile n'y trouve pas davantage Eustathe et (5) le voyageur rentre en Cappadoce – par voie de terre ou de mer, nous ne possédons aucun élément déterminant pour nous prononcer. (6) Une fois dans sa patrie, Basile trouve la lettre, non conservée, mais assez « édifiante[20] » d'Eustathe, qui était rentré de son côté. (7) Malgré son désir de rencontrer Eustathe, le voyageur, à nouveau sérieusement malade (ligne 36), renonce pour des mois (« jusqu'à l'hiver » : ligne 37) à se remettre en route. Eustathe a donc, lui aussi, tenu à compléter sa connaissance des foyers monastiques, alors qu'il venait d'être élu évêque et qu'il devait être appelé, dès son retour, à participer à plusieurs synodes. Il est donc équivoque avec Yves Courtonne de qualifier de « fiction littéraire[21] » cette succession de rendez-vous manqués. Parmi les pays visités, la lettre 223 citait « l'Égypte, la Palestine, la Coelésyrie et la Mésopotamie ». La Palestine

[18] D'une collection à l'autre et d'une langue à l'autre, il arrive que la mention de Basile disparaisse (par ex. en J 681 = Nau 650).

[19] Voir Annick Martin, 'L'Eglise et la *khôra* égyptienne au IV^e^ s.', *REAug* 25 (1979), 5 n. 12. Mais la question n'est peut-être pas aussi simple : voir Raphael Taubenschlag, *The Law of Graeco-Roman Egypt in the Light of the Papyri (332 BC – 640 AD)*, t. 2 : *Political and Administrative Law* (Warsaw, 1948), 14-8.

[20] J. Gribomont (1959), 118.

[21] Y. Courtonne (1957), 4 n. 2.

peut très probablement avoir été traversée à l'aller ; la Coelésyrie[22], depuis Septime Sévère, embrasse toute la partie nord, Commagène comprise, avec Antioche : Basile l'a visitée à l'aller et peut-être aussi au retour. Enfin la Mésopotamie n'est pas la vaste région désignée ainsi par les Grecs de l'époque classique, mais seulement le nord de celle-ci, et sans doute plus précisément sa partie occidentale, l'Osrhoène (capitale Edesse) Nous ne saurions dire à quel moment de son voyage Basile l'a parcourue, la durée de celui-ci s'étant étendue d'un hiver à l'autre (1er mars - 1er décembre ?), soit pendant huit à neuf mois.

III. Quelles rencontres ?

Reprenons l'itinéraire retracé plus haut.

1°) *En Syrie :*

En dehors des questions de toponymie, souvent difficiles, retenons avec Pierre Canivet[23] que « la chronologie confirme l'existence de monastères organisés en Osrhoène, en Antiochène et en Euphratésie dès la première moitié, peut-être dès le premier quart du IVe siècle, sous l'influence des milieux ascétiques mésopotamiens » et que « le phénomène érémitique paraît avoir atteint son apogée dans les dernières années du IVe siècle et s'être laissé absorber par le mouvement cénobitique ». Peut-on donner des localisations ? Gindaros (sur la route de Cyrrhus à Edesse) et Téléda[24].

2°) *En Egypte :*

Tout d'abord, rappelons qu'Antoine le Grand meurt le 17 janvier 356 à Kolzim. En 357, quand Basile arrive à Alexandrie, le siège archiépiscopal est occupé depuis le 24 février par un Cappadocien, Georges[25] l'intrus, de mauvaise réputation (affairiste), ignorant des affaires ecclésiastiques, et par ailleurs inculte ou, selon l'empereur Julien, possesseur d'une importante bibliothèque. Son intronisation n'avait pu avoir lieu que sous la protection du *dux* Sebastianus[26]. Il va de soi que Basile ne songea pas à rencontrer un personnage aussi impopulaire.

[22] Cf. Maurice Besnier, *Lexique de géographie ancienne (…)* (Paris, 1914), 222 ; A. Martin, *Athanase d'Alexandrie et l'Église d'Égypte au IVe siècle (328-373)*, Coll. de l'École Française de Rome 216 (Rome, 1996), 559 n. 48.

[23] Pierre Canivet, *Le monachisme syrien selon Théodoret de Cyr*, Théologie historique 42 (Paris, 1977), 205.

[24] *Ibid.* 169.

[25] Sur Georges de Cappadoce (ou le Foulon), voir Denys Gorce, *DHGE* 20 (1984), 601-10 ; A. Martin, *Athanase d'Alexandrie* (1996), 518-27.

[26] A. Martin, *Athanase d'Alexandrie* (1996), 518.

En 357, Athanase est non seulement « exilé », surveillé, pourchassé, il se cache au désert ou, selon l'*Index* des Lettres festales, dans la ville et ses faubourgs[27]. Dans sa lettre 80, Basile exprime nettement son regret de ne pas l'avoir encore rencontré et ses cinq autres lettres à Athanase[28] sont muettes sur son séjour en Basse Egypte. Regret corroboré dans deux lettres, l'une aux prêtres Jean et Antiochos, l'autre à Palladios[29], où l'Alexandrin loue l'orthodoxie et la droiture de Basile, mais sans faire allusion à la présence de ce dernier dans le Delta.

A quelles communautés monastiques Basile a-t-il pu rendre visite ? De moines mélitiens ? On comprend que Basile, si soucieux de communion ecclésiale, n'ait pas mentionné une telle rencontre, si jamais elle eut lieu. Il n'est pas sûr que l'Ennaton (à neuf milles à l'ouest d'Alexandrie) existât déjà ; à cette époque Canope (ou Metanoia) était encore un centre païen, jusqu'à la reprise en main de Théophile d'Alexandrie (vers 391). D'ailleurs, comme le remarque Jean Gribomont, dans les villes l'ascétisme tendait à s'unir à « la vocation cléricale en se mettant au service de la communauté chrétienne[30] ». A quelque distance d'Alexandrie, des groupements d'ermites ont pu retenir l'attention de Basile : la montagne de Nitrie (fondation par Amoun vers 325) ; à dix-huit km plus au sud, le site des Kellia (Cellules) fondées en 338 (1500 ermitages repérés de nos jours), où vivait alors Macaire d'Alexandrie (vers 296/297 – 394), recordman d'austérités, notamment en matière de sommeil (peut-être est-ce à lui que pense Basile, *ep*. 223, 2 ; p. 10, 25) ; enfin le « désert de Scété » plus au sud encore, mal connu, où s'installa vers 330 Macaire l'Egyptien († vers 390). A fortiori, nous ne savons si Basile a eu connaissance de groupements de femmes, sur lesquels nous avons quelques témoignages pour le IV^e^ siècle[31].

Basile a-t-il eu le temps de gagner la Haute Egypte et de prendre contact avec les communautés pachômiennes ? Jean Gribomont relève que bien des visiteurs qui séjournèrent même durablement en Egypte, à commencer par Jérôme, n'entreprirent pas de remonter la vallée du Nil. En outre, Pachôme est mort le 9 mai 347 et son successeur à la tête des tabennesiotes est démissionnaire : Horsièse, dont Théodore s'estime seulement le coadjuteur. Malgré ces circonstances peut-être défavorables, Basile a-t-il au moins entendu parler de ces établissements cénobitiques ? C'est bien probable. La *Première vie* grecque

[27] *Ibid*. 527.

[28] Basile, *ep*. 61, 66, 67, 69, 80 et 82, toutes éditées *in* Courtonne 1957.

[29] Voir CPG 2130 et 2131. La traduction de la seconde lettre, conservée dans les dossiers de Marcel Richard († 1976), est publiée par dom Jean-Robert Pouchet, *Basile le Grand et son univers d'amis d'après sa correspondance. Une stratégie de communion*, Studia Ephemeridis Augustinianum 36 (Rome, 1992), 244-5.

[30] J. Gribomont (1959), 123.

[31] Karin Vogt, 'Ascétisme féminin en Égypte aux IV^e^ et V^e^ siècles', *Le Monde copte* 21-2 (1993), 107-14.

de Pachôme rapporte en effet que deux bateaux servaient à deux frères pour porter à Alexandrie les produits du monastère, chaque année en automne[32].

3°) *En Palestine :*

Peut-être des souvenirs de voyage sont-ils perceptibles, comme l'évocation des grottes de Jéricho[33]. Chariton s'installe vers 330 à Pharan, à onze km au nord-est de Jérusalem, puis dans le Djebel Qarantal. Hilarion, après avoir demeuré auprès d'Antoine le Grand, retourne en Palestine et s'installe vers 330 à onze km au sud de Maiouma (port de Gaza). Mais selon Jérôme, il prit la fuite en 356 ou 357 : Basile n'aurait donc pu le rencontrer. Par ailleurs, on date les débuts du monachisme latin en Palestine de 376 environ (Mélanie l'Ancienne), mais dès 370 environ, des moines s'établirent sur le mont des Oliviers, tels Innocent et Palladios, avec lequel Basile[34] (*ep*. 258, 2 et 259) et Athanase[35] sont en relations épistolaires. Enfin, à Jérusalem comme dans d'autres grandes villes, existent déjà des groupements de σπουδαῖοι (φιλόπονοι, *conversi*) notamment à l'Anastasis, auxquels vers 348 font allusion les *Catéchèses*[36] de Cyrille de Jérusalem († 387).

Ainsi, même si Basile n'a pu rencontrer qu'une partie des ascètes mentionnés ci-dessus, il a été en mesure d'observer bien des styles de vie et d'en tirer des enseignements pour ses propres fondations quelques années plus tard. La mention de la Mésopotamie dans l'*ep*. 223 a pu favoriser la constitution du récit légendaire d'une rencontre de Basile et d'Ephrem. Légendaire[37], notamment parce que le texte qu'on lit dans la *Vita* du ps. – Amphiloque fait mourir Basile

[32] *Vita G 1,* 113 ; trad. d'A.-J. Festugière, *Les moines d'Orient* IV/2 (Paris, 1965), 221. Voir Derwas J. Chitty, *Et le désert devint une cité (…)*, Spiritualité orientale 31 (Abbaye de Bellefontaine, 1980), 66 et 95 n. 74. Sur les bateliers pachômiens, voir la thèse de Sung-Hyun Nam, *Les cénobitismes primitifs de Pachôme et de Basile de Césarée*, thèse de la Faculté de Théologie protestante de l'Université de Strasbourg (2004), 385-91 (bgr.).

[33] Remarque de Godefroy Hermant, *La vie de S. Basile le Grand (…) et celle de S. Grégoire de Nazianze*, t. 1 (Paris, 1679), 86. Il s'agit de l'homélie à Lakizoi (toponyme anatolien ; voir CPG 2912), § 9 : PG 31, 1456D-1458A. Evocation de son séjour à Jérusalem rappelée par Sébastien Le Nain de Tillemont, *Mémoires […]*, t. 9 (Paris, 1703), 25, mais l'*ep*. 45 (PG 32, 365C) n'est plus considérée comme authentique. La mention d'une coutume phénicienne (comm. *In Isaiam* V, § 153 ; PG 30, 370D) est peu probante.

[34] Y. Courtonne (1966), 101 (*ep*. 258 à Épiphane de Salamine, datable de 376), 104 (*ep*. 259 à Palladios et Innocent). A noter que le moine Innocent est l'objet du c. 44 de *l'Histoire Lausiaque*. Site de Pharan : voir *Les laures du désert de Juda*, n° 169 de *Bible et Terre Sainte* (1975), 4-5 (Irénée - Henri Dalmais) et 9 (Amédée Brunot) ; Yizhar Hirschfeld, *Le Monde de la Bible* 68 (janv.-fév. 1991), 21.

[35] CPG 2131 ; PG 26, 1168.

[36] IV, 24 ; XII, 33. Ces *conversi* seront mentionnés plus tard par Égérie. Voir D.J. Chitty, *Et le désert devint une cité* (1980), 109 et 132 n. 23.

[37] Voir Olivier Rousseau, 'La rencontre de saint Ephrem et de saint Basile', *L'Orient syrien* II, 3 (1957), 261-84 et III, 2 (1957), 73-90.

avant Ephrem († 373) et que ce dernier résidait encore à Nisibe en 357. Inversement, on oublie trop souvent qu'en 355, à la fin de ses études, Basile a pu étudier à loisir les formes de vie monastique qui fleurissaient déjà à Constantinople, sous l'impulsion du diacre Marathônios[38], très soucieux des pauvres et des malades.

* * *

Au terme de cette analyse, le silence des sources externes trouve une ou des explications. D'abord, on comprend que l'entourage de Basile ait fait silence sur ses efforts pour recueillir l'enseignement spirituel d'Eustathe : après 373, le « patronage » de ce dernier risquait de compromettre les fraternités. Deuxièmement, en 357 Basile n'a pas la trentaine et est encore un inconnu, qui n'a peut-être pas fait jouer les relations que sa famille de haut rang avait sans doute dans les contrées visitées. Même s'il était très cultivé et a pu susciter l'intérêt ou la curiosité de ses hôtes, Basile n'était pas d'âge à laisser à ces derniers des paroles dignes d'un « ancien ». Cette considération nous autorise, semble-t-il, à nuancer l'appréciation de dom Jean Gribomont fondée sur la rareté des fragments coptes des *Ascétiques* : « Les vieux moines égyptiens auront rendu à l'évêque de Césarée la défiance respectueuse qu'il leur accordait[39] ». Mais surtout Basile a visité l'Egypte au mauvais moment : son compatriote Georges n'était guère fréquentable et Athanase était contraint de se cacher. En Palestine et en Syrie, Basile n'avait pas encore noué les relations fraternelles qu'il devait entretenir plus tard avec Eusèbe de Samosate[40] et les moines du Mont des Oliviers. Enfin, mesurer l'influence des institutions monastiques, en particulier égyptiennes, sur les fraternités basiliennes supposerait une vaste enquête dont seulement quelques pistes ont été à ce jour dégagées[41].

[38] Gilbert Dagron, 'Les moines et la ville', *Travaux et mémoires* 4 (1970), 248. *Id*., *Naissance d'une capitale. Constantinople et ses institutions de 330 à 451*, 2e éd. (Paris, 1984), 513-7.

[39] J. Gribomont, *Histoire du texte des Ascétiques de s. Basile*, Bibliothèque du Muséon 32 (Louvain, 1953), 86. Des découvertes sont toujours possibles : dans son panégyrique d'Antoine le Grand, Jean le Reclus, évêque d'Hermopolis (vers 578-604) mentionne les recommandations de Basile : Eliane Poirot ocd, *Saint Antoine le Grand dans l'Orient chrétien. Dossier littéraire, hagiographique, liturgique, iconographique en langue française*, Patrologia 30, t. 1 (Bern, 2014), 327 n. 36 et 340.

[40] Dom Prudent Maran, *Vita S. Basilii,* III, 4 (PG 29, page XIV) n'exclut pas une rencontre. J.-R. Pouchet († 2012) fait de lui le « père spirituel de Basile », *BLE* 85 (1984), 179-95 ; repr. dans id., *Vivre la communion dans l'Esprit Saint et dans l'Église. Études sur Basile de Césarée* réunies et présentées par Etienne Baudry ocso, Spiritualité orientale 92 (Abbaye de Bellefontaine, 2014), 341-63. D'autre part, Anna Silvas émet l'hypothèse qu'Eusèbe de Samosate pourrait être le traducteur du *Petit ascéticon* syriaque, dont elle procure l'éd. princeps : *Questions of the Brothers. Syriac Text and English Translation* (Leiden, 2014) : voir p. 44.

[41] Pour les rapports avec le cénobitisme pachômien, voir J. Gribomont, 'Obéissance et Évangile selon saint Basile le Grand', *La Vie spirituelle. Supplément* 21 (1952), 193 et 214 ; Philip Rousseau, *Basil of Caesarea* (Berkeley, 1994), 72-3 (sceptique) ; S.-H. Nam, *Les cénobitismes primitifs de Pachôme et de Basile de Césarée* (2004), 359-64.

Contested Ground: Basil's Use of Scripture in *Against Eunomius* 2

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ABSTRACT

In light of ongoing reconfigurations of our understanding of the Trinitarian debates that dominate the fourth century theological agenda, this article specifically examines Basil's second book of *Against Eunomius* for the interplay between polemical doctrinal argument and hermeneutic strategies applied to Scripture. This article demonstrates that Basil's argumentation is not only about competing models of Trinitarian theology, but part of an ongoing attempt to contest the way in which Scripture is read and interpreted, itself a part of the broader pattern in the period of doctrinal debate as exegetical debate. Specifically, Basil's contesting of the classic 'battleground' verse of *Acts* 2:36, as well as Basil's employment of a theory of language and meaning, supply a point of comparison with other pro-Nicene authors, supporting the larger claim that pro-Nicenes are not merely asserting 'correct theology' but a 'correct understanding' that emerges from 'correct practices of reading'. Within that similarity of reading practices there remains a diversity that defies attempts to reduce pro-Nicenism to particular instantiations of exegetical technique.

It has become commonplace to assert that, whatever unites pro-Nicene theological advocates of the fourth century, one of those elements is a common approach to scriptural texts within their doctrinal frameworks. What remains lacking from some of those discussions, however, is detailed engagement with how pro-Nicenes engage in exegetical practice that consistently and pervasively demonstrates that common approach. In this article, I show how this is true with specific reference to Basil of Caesarea's treatment of *Acts* 2:36. By comparing Basil's treatment with other pro-Nicene authors, namely Gregory of Nyssa and Athanasius, it becomes apparent that there are indeed shared exegetical manoeuvres, even as there remain discrete differences in how those manoeuvres are applied and the theological points drawn from them.

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Basil's exegetical practice

Both Ayres[1] and Anatolios[2] treat, in differing but parallel ways, a shared theological culture as a unified element of the emergence of pro-Nicene theology in the fourth century. Although Ayres subjects Basil's *Against Eunomius* to extended analysis, his treatment of exegetical practice within that text is relatively absent. Behr, in his introduction to *The Nicene Faith*, remarks that 'the issue between the Nicenes and the non-Nicenes is a matter of exegesis'.[3] This, of course, can only be evidenced by examination of exegetical practice itself.

Basil's use of scriptural references in *Against Eunomius* more generally may be analysed under three broad categories. These are (1) 'Direct' applications of Scripture to his opponents or himself, (2) Propositional support without any further elaboration, and (3) Sustained exegetical engagement and analysis. His treatment of *Acts* 2:36 falls into the final category.

Acts 2:36 in *Against Eunomius*

Acts 2:36 at first glance appears to provide an arsenal of material for a non-Nicene theological position. 'Therefore let the entire house of Israel know with certainty that God has made him both Lord and Messiah, this Jesus whom you crucified'. The crucial element of this verse is that it states plainly 'God made him [Jesus]'.

In *Against Eunomius* it is Basil who raises the verse in 2.2, in response to Eunomius' claim that the Only-Begotten is 'something begotten' and 'something made'.[4] Basil deals with the latter term, ποίημα, first, and then γέννημα at great length from 2.5 onwards.

It is important to note that Basil is reacting to this claim from Eunomius' *Apology*, but Eunomius himself does not refer to *Acts* 2:36 at this point, and in his *An Apology for the Apology* claims that his argument here is based rather on *Prov*. 8:22 and 1*Cor*. 1:24.[5] Eunomius does, however, discuss *Acts* 2:36 – in *Apology* 26. However, Basil is not erroneous in thinking that Eunomius' claim for the term ποίημα is related to *Acts* 2:36, since in *Apology* 26 Eunomius both employs this term, and cites *Prov*. 8:22 and 1*Cor*. 8:6, the other two verses to which he refers in *Apology for the Apology* as the basis for ποίημα in *Apology* 12.

[1] Lewis Ayres, *Nicaea and its Legacy* (New York, 2004).

[2] Khaled Anatolios, *Retrieving Nicaea: The Development and Meaning of Trinitarian Doctrine* (Grand Rapids, 2011), 11.

[3] John Behr, *The Nicene Faith*, 2 vols. (Crestwood, 2004).

[4] γέννημα and ποίημα.

[5] Eunomius of Cyzicus, *The Apology*, ed. and trans. Richard P. Vaggione, *Eunomius: The Extant Works* (Oxford, 1987), 116.

Therefore Basil is not misrepresenting, only mislocating, Eunomius' collocation of verses.

The focus of Eunomius' argument at this point is the status of the Holy Spirit, that he is both 'something made' (ποίημα) and made 'through him' (δι' αὐτοῦ). Basil discusses the Holy Spirit primarily in Book Three, and at this section of Book Two only engages the term ποίημα in light of *Acts* 2:36. The discussion is thus confined to the applicability of ποίημα to the Son, and thereby restricted to the sense of ἐποίησεν in the text under discussion.

Basil here employs three distinct exegetical moves. Firstly, Basil clearly employs a version of the economy-theology distinction. He does this by citing *John* 1:2 briefly as something 'concerning the very essence of God the Word',[6] in contrast to *Phil*. 2:7, 3:21, and 2*Cor*. 13:4. Then he goes on:

> And this is well-known to everyone that has paid even a little attention to the intention of the apostolic word, that they do not give a tradition according to the mode of *theology*, but intimate the reasons of the *economy*. For he says, 'God has made him Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified'.[7]

We can make three observations about the way Basil deploys this economy-theology distinction. Namely, that Basil does not at any particular point stop to outline or define what that distinction is; neither does he elaborate how that distinction's implementation is to be decided. Rather, Basil takes it for granted as something understood, and likewise assumes that taking any particular scriptural statement as spoken 'according to theology' or 'according to economy' is readily understandable.

This is notable because, while instances of this kind of distinction appear in other authors, non-Nicenes appear to make scant use of the concept. This suggests that even though it might be well-known, it is not part of the way non-Nicenes read Scripture. The distinction between the two groups is not whether particular verses are according to theology or to economy, but whether one employs this distinction at all.

Consequently, our second observation is that Basil likewise has a clear sense of which verses may be taken in which sense. This is not one-off, but rather part of a consistent and comprehensive 'method of interpretation' that has found 'off-stage' use for other relevant texts. That Basil doesn't need to outline the distinction, and at the same time is operating with a field of verses understood according to one sense or the other, strongly suggests that this exegetical manoeuvre is part of a more extensive practice of theology-economy distinctions.

[6] περὶ τῆς οὐσίας αὐτῆς τοῦ Θεοῦ Λόγου. Basil of Caesarea, *Against Eunomius* 2.3, in B. Sesboüé, G.-M. de Durand and L. Doutreleau (eds), *Basile de Césarée, Contre Eunome suivi d'Eunome Apologie*, SC 305 (Paris, 1983), 16.

[7] Basil, *Against Eunomius* 2.3. Emphasis mine.

Finally, a third observation is that caution is required. The economy-theology distinction when employed in this form of partitive exegesis is not as simple as asking whether something refers to the divinity of the Son or the humanity. While some instances do more explicitly refer to the two natures (the way the two Gregorys speak tends in this direction), that is neither the whole nor the sum of partitive exegesis, and the danger of reading it solely in this way is to suggest a kind of proto-Nestorianism that is anachronistic and misses the nuances of these authors and the variety within their positions.

The second of Basil's distinct exegetical moves is that he refers to the use of the pronoun τοῦτον to mark the distinction between two senses of the verb 'to make': 'to make' said absolutely of bringing a thing into existence, and 'to make' said of rendering a new predicate to a pre-existent subject.[8] He writes: 'By use of the demonstrative pronoun he clearly drives home that it is indeed a reference to his humanity and to what was seen by all'.[9] Basil appears to sum up the elements of this citation as involving the construction 'to make X to be Y' – the use of the demonstrative to indicate the Son in reference to the economy, and the further designation in reference to the crucifixion – to decisively conclude that the scope or reference of the statement must be understood economically.

Thirdly, Basil treats the predication of κύριος as a designation of authority, not essence, in contravention to Eunomius' theory of names. This point is related to how to understand the construction of 'make X Y'. For Eunomius, the construction is understood absolutely, so that the verse means something like 'God made him, Jesus, Lord, Christ', where all four objects stand in apposition and describe the same created thing. Just a little further on in 2.4, Basil represents Eunomius' thought as being 'difference of names indicates difference of essence'. Basil's counter-theory of linguistic practice is that, where the essence is already common, names are indicative of distinguishing marks. For Eunomius' theory to render *Acts* 2:36 accurately, it must treat 'him', 'Jesus', 'Lord', and 'Christ' as synonymous terms. What we see here is the interaction between linguistic theory and philosophy of language brought to bear on exegetical practice itself in a polemic context.

Having considered Basil's treatment of the verse, it is now time to compare this to two other significant treatments of the same verse in other pro-Nicene writers, namely Athanasius and Gregory of Nyssa. Both these writers have clear relationships with Basil's work. In the case of Athanasius, it is the one clear place that DelCogliano and Radde-Gallwitz recognise Basil as drawing upon Athanasius,[10] though I will demonstrate that the nature of Athanasius'

[8] *I.e.* to make X to be Y, where X does not cease being X.

[9] Basil, *Against Eunomius* 2.3.

[10] Mark DelCogliano and Andrew Radde-Gallwitz, introduction to Basil of Caesarea, *Against Eunomius,* Fathers of the Church 122 (Washington, 2011), 64.

argument differs in details from Basil's. In respect of Gregory, he refers to this passage in a number of places, but nowhere as extensively as when he is self-consciously developing and defending the Basilian line in his own *Against Eunomius*. There too, however, his own treatment of the verse differs in its details from Basil's.

Athanasius on *Acts* 2:36

Athanasius discusses *Acts* 2:36 explicitly in his second *Discourse against the Arians*, chapter fifteen. Although his interpretive strategy shares features with Basil and Gregory, it is not identical. The value of Athanasius' contribution is two-fold.

Firstly, in *Discourses* I 11 Athanasius explains that he takes up a series of texts to offer an orthodox interpretation of them, against what his opponents such as Arius and Eusebius of Nicomedia have dared to write. It is in this broader context that *Acts* 2:36 is treated, and as such is an indication that the verse had found discussion and circulation within non-Nicene writings.

Secondly, Athanasius' treatment itself is illuminating. It follows directly a discussion of *Heb.* 3:2 and the use of the word 'made'.[11] Athanasius understands 'made' to refer to the body, *i.e.* the humanity, and tantamount to 'became man'. As such, all 'creaturely' language does not designate 'the Essence of the Word'.[12]

Developing this, Athanasius argues that there is no scriptural proof-text of 'made' being applied to the Word or Son or Essence, and that simply drawing upon texts that say 'God made X' would render the Son equivalent to all created things, or *vice versa* all things would be divine to the same extent that the Son is.[13] At this point Athanasius employs a theology-economy distinction very similar to Basil's: 'And the Word is not a 'product', and it is necessary not to accept such sayings as related to his divinity, but to inquire for what reason and how these things are written: and the *human economy* will altogether encounter those that inquire, which he undertook for our sake'.[14]

Athanasius grounds this in two elements. Firstly, in the phrase 'this Jesus whom you crucified', the triplet of demonstrative pronoun, the human name, and the reference to the crucifixion all serve to draw attention to the humanity and the economy. Secondly (and this differs from Basil), Athanasius understands

[11] πιστὸν ὄντα τῷ ποιήσαντι αὐτὸν ὡς καὶ Μωϋσῆς ἐν τῷ οἴκῳ αὐτοῦ.

[12] τὴν οὐσίαν τοῦ λόγου. Athanasius, *Oratio II contra Arianos*, 11, in Karin Metzler, Dirk U. Hansen and Kyriakos Savvidis (eds), *Athanasius: Werke, Band I. Die dogmatischen Schriften*, vol 2 (Berlin, 1998), 177-260.

[13] Athanasius, *Oratio II contra Arianos* 11.

[14] καὶ οὐ δεῖ τὰς τοιαύτας λέξεις εἰς τὴν θεότητα αὐτοῦ λαμβάνειν, ἀλλ' ἐρευνᾶν διὰ τί καὶ πῶς ταῦτα γέγραπται· καὶ πάντως ἀπαντήσει τοῖς ζητοῦσιν ἡ ἀνθρωπίνη οἰκονομία, ἣν δι' ἡμᾶς ἀνεδέξατο. *Ibid.* 12.1.

that the word 'made' as concerning the body. Furthermore, Athanasius does not treat the phrase 'he made him Lord and Christ' to be so much a change of status, a rendering, but rather a manifestation. He supports this with citations of *Acts* 2:22, in which 'manifested' is found, and with *John* 5:16, 18, in which Jesus 'makes himself equal with God', understood not as Jesus actually undergoing transformation, but rather manifesting his status (there is *some* element of transformation, in that Athanasius sees this manifestation as 'towards us' and 'in the midst of us', on the basis of Acts 2:22 and so an extension of his dominion as Lord and Christ 'towards us who were once disobedient'[15]).

Athanasius extends this in II 13. He rejects the interpretive possibility that the Son was previously not Lord and King and later became so as being in line with Paul of Samosata, presumably in the adoptionist rather than the monarchian sense.[16] Similarly, he repeats that 'made' means 'manifested', and complements this by also repeating and expounding that the sense of 'made' is that of a change of relationship: the one who *is* Lord and King *becomes* Lord and King in relation to the individual.[17]

This sense of 'becoming *for*' is extended by Athanasius to become the key to understanding *Acts* 2:36. The assumption of humanity through the economy is not a loss of the status as Lord and King, nor a becoming Lord and King that he was not so prior, but that he who was and is Lord and King becomes Lord and King 'for all'. It is thoroughly in keeping with the economy that the 'made' is understood.

Athanasius then goes on a tangent to treat how *Acts* 2:36 addresses what he terms the Jewish view, that the Christ is not the Word but a man only, and will not undergo a passion. He treats numerous verses before returning to *Acts* 2:36[18] and identifying the Arian position with the Jewish one. Then, almost in closing, Athanasius provides a parallel example of the usage of 'made' and 'become' in the case of Jacob becoming lord over Esau.[19] The significance of such a parallel is that here the two phrases are used in the case of a creature, and so likewise a created essence, but even still they do not bear the absolute sense of 'make' but rather the subsequent change in the authority relationship between the two. If the Arians are prepared to concede such a reading in the case of Jacob and Esau, how much more so ought they in the case of *Acts* 2:36.

When we compare Athanasius' interpretation of *Acts* 2:36 with Basil's, we see clear elements of both similarity and dissimilarity. Basil, like Athanasius, understands *Acts* 2:36 to be spoken economically not theologically, and this is

[15] πρὸς τοὺς ἀπειθήσαντας. *Ibid.*

[16] In regards to which he cites *Gen.* 19:24, *Ps.* 110:1, 45:6, 145:13, as proof-texts that the pre-incarnate Son is called Lord and King.

[17] Similarly, Athanasius cites *Ps.* 71:3 and 9:9 as expressions consistent with this sense.

[18] Athanasius, *Oratio II contra Arianos* 15-6.

[19] *Gen.* 27:29, 37.

a guiding principle of his exegesis. For Athanasius this is grounded in his immediately prior discussion of what 'made' means in the context of *Heb*. 3:2, a reference that is not brought into the discussion by Basil. However, Athanasius understands 'made' to refer to a manifestation of current status, not a change of status in respect of the humanity. This is a subtle but important point of difference.

Gregory of Nyssa, *Against Eunomius*

Gregory of Nyssa discusses *Acts* 2:36 in a number of places throughout his writings. Two brief references are of interest before we turn to the significant and lengthy section dealing with the verse in his *Against Eunomius*.

The first is in his letter to Theophilus of Alexandria,[20] where the context is a discussion of the divinisation of the humanity in the Christ so that there is no duality but rather a singular person possessed of two natures and the communication of names. He writes:

For the divinity has exalted the humble, and the name that is above every name has been graced by being named in a human manner; that which is subject and slave, he made Lord and King, just as Peter says that 'God made him Lord and Christ' (for we consider him 'king' through the term 'Christ').[21]

Gregory's treatment of the verse here differs from Athanasius' 'manifestation' treatment precisely in understanding a change of status to occur in 'that which is subject and slave', *i.e*. the humanity is made 'Lord and King'. While no ontological change is understood, this is definitely a change of status in respect to the humanity, not in relation to human beings.

The text is also referenced in Gregory's *Against Arius and Sabellius*, where it is brought into a discussion of the significance of the notorious *Prov*. 8:22.

But 'he created me as the beginning of his ways' signifies 'he entrusted to me his ways so that they might be under my *arche*'. For he means not *arche* in the temporal sense, but the ruling one. For the apostles also affirm it, 'he made him both Lord and Christ'. But if 'he made' denotes something made and a creation, there would be two things which he made, one 'Lord' and another 'Christ'. But 'Christ' designated that he is king, and everyone knows this; but 'he made' signifies that two *archai* were entrusted to him

[20] Technically this work is later than Gregory's *Contra Eunomium*, but I here deal with it briefly first in preparation for the longer text below.

[21] Ἡ γὰρ θεότης τὸ ταπεινὸν ὑπερύψωσεν· τῷ κατωνομασμένῳ ἀνθρωπικῶς τὸ ὑπὲρ πᾶν εἶναι ὄνομα ἐχαρίσατο· τὸ ὑποχείριον καὶ δοῦλον κύριον καὶ βασιλέα ἐποίησεν, καθὼς ὁ Πέτρος φησὶν ὅτι Κύριον αὐτὸν καὶ Χριστὸν ὁ θεὸς ἐποίησεν (νοοῦμεν γὰρ διὰ τοῦ Χριστοῦ βασιλέα). Gregory of Nyssa, *To Theophilus, Against Apollinarius*, in F. Mueller (ed.), *Gregorii Nysseni opera*, vol. 3.1 (Leiden, 1958), 127.

from the Father, the one of dominion, the other regal, or rather that the one *arche* is honoured with two designations.[22]

Here Gregory is not so much exegeting *Acts* 2:36 as he is exegeting *Prov*. 8:22 in such a way as to make sense of 'he made' in a pro-Nicene manner. He does so by utilising the 'alternate' meaning of ἀρχή, as well as considering what 'he made' can mean, and it is in relation to this that he brings in *Acts* 2:36, and echoes the problems that Basil is contesting with Eunomius – that the naming of two things 'made' suggests two-made-things in the Eunomian theory of names. While the context and the text are different, there are similarities in the set of questions about meaning, sense, and context that both Gregory and Basil are employing.

The lengthiest discourse of Gregory on *Acts* 2:36 occurs in Book 3 of his *Against Eunomius*,[23] and it dominates the whole chapter. In the first section (§§ 1-11), by way of prolegomena, Gregory makes a clear Creator/creation distinction. If this were not a clear principle earlier in the fourth century debates, it certainly operates as a clear category within Cappadocian thinking, and equally is applied as a doctrinal principle for exegetical practice. Gregory supports this distinction with reference to a combination of *Isa*. 41:4, 44:6, 48:12 – 'I am the first, and hereafter am I, and no God was before Me, and no God shall be after Me' – which he says is spoken in the person of God.[24]

Gregory then proceeds to *Acts* 2:36. Valuably, he sets forth both his sides' reading, and the Eunomian reading:

> Peter says to the Jews, 'God has made him Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified' (*Acts* 2:36). Our own position 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. Those however who twist the passage the opposite way say that, what the Apostle meant by the word 'made', is the begetting of the Son before the ages.[25]

[22] ἀλλὰ τὸ Ἔκτισέ με ἀρχὴν ὁδῶν αὐτοῦ σημαίνει ὅτι ἐνεχείρισέ μοι τὰς ὁδοὺς αὐτοῦ, ἵν' ὦσιν ὑπὸ τὴν ἐμὴν ἀρχήν· ἀρχὴν γὰρ οὐ χρονικὴν λέγει, ἀλλὰ τὴν κρατητικήν. καὶ γὰρ καὶ οἱ ἀπόστολοί φασιν, ὅτι καὶ κύριον καὶ Χριστὸν αὐτὸν ἐποίησεν. εἰ δὲ τὸ ἐποίησε ποίημα καὶ κτίσμα ὀνομάζοιτο, δύο ἂν εἶέν τινες οὓς ἐποίησεν, ἕτερον μὲν κύριον, ἕτερον δὲ Χριστόν. Χριστὸς δὲ ὅτι βασιλεὺς προσαγορεύεται, οὐδενὶ τοῦτο ἄγνωστον· ἀλλὰ τὸ ἐποίησε σημαίνει δύο ἀρχὰς ἐγκεχειρίσθαι αὐτῷ παρὰ τοῦ πατρός, τὴν μὲν κυριακήν, τὴν δὲ βασιλικήν, μᾶλλον δὲ μίαν ἀρχὴν δυσὶ προσηγορίαις γεραιρομένην [πλείοσιν]. Gregory of Nyssa, *Against Arius and Sabellius*, in F. Mueller (ed.), *Gregorii Nysseni opera*, vol. 3.1 (1958), 75-6.

[23] Johan Leemans and Matthieu Cassin (eds), *Gregory of Nyssa: Contra Eunomium III: an English Translation with Commentary and Supporting Studies: Proceedings of the 12th International Colloquium on Gregry of Nyssa* (Leiden, 2014).

[24] Whether the Father or the Son, he says, makes no difference as both will equally affirm his case. This is prosopological reading hedging its bets.

[25] Gregory of Nyssa, *Against Eunomius* III 3.12, in J. Leemans, *Gregory of Nyssa*, trans. by Stuart Hall (2014), 108. See also 3.12.4-13.1 in W. Jaeger, *Gregorii Nysseni opera*, vols. 1.1 and 2.2 (Leiden, 1960), 111.

Gregory moreover proposes to set forth Eunomius' articulation word-for-word as the argument for the opposition, while following the line of argument of Basil for the defence.

Gregory quotes Eunomius at considerable length,[26] which we will summarise:

1. That Basil's attribution of the object of the verb 'made' to the one who 'emptied himself to take the form of a servant' means there are two Christs and two Lords.
2. That consequently Basil is asserting that the one who *had* the form of a servant then *took* the form of a servant, and this is both redundant and absurd.
3. That unless the 'him' that is the object in *Acts* 2:36 has as its referent the divine Logos, then there is no incarnation and no salvation.
4. That Basil's position is tantamount to two referents, two subjects, *etc*., a form of proto-Nestorianism.
5. That a consistent reading of the passage is to take the referent of 'him' as the Word, and so the Word *became* or *was made* Lord and Christ (implied: subsequently).
6. The dilemma that Basil faces is that either he is talking about two subjects (the eternal Word and the man) as two separate entities, or else he is saying that prior to the incarnation, the Son was not Lord.[27]

Gregory's response begins in 3.26, as he summarises these accusations and then bypasses the rhetorical slanders. His own response deals first with the accusation that Basil and he are ashamed of the Cross. His defence, in brief, is that this charge rather applies to Eunomius, who considers that it is unfitting for God to be passible and to experience the Passion, and so must refer the shame of the Passion to a nature that is not divine. Rather, the doctrine of Gregory and others is that God himself was manifested in the flesh. He, in the second place, rejects the charge of slandering the saints as having no basis.

It is then that Gregory turns to consider *Acts* 2:36.[28] Gregory argues that the context[29] guides the reader to understand that it is referring to the humanity – specifically, the mention of crucifixion, the human name ('Jesus') and 'the indicative turn of phrase'.[30] So Gregory's reading echoes Basil's in both attention to context and reference to the humanity. Gregory goes on though, to consider two *aspects* in the one event: that the Jews wrought the Passion but

[26] §§ 15-25.

[27] Gregory of Nyssa, *Contra Eunomium* 3.3.56b-66, in J. Leemans, *Gregory of Nyssa* (2014), 126, see Andrew Radde-Gallwitz's summary of the same, 'Contra Eunomium III 3', in J. Leemans, *Gregory of Nyssa* (2014), 295.

[28] Gregory of Nyssa, *Against Eunomius* 3.3.42, in J. Leemans, *Gregory of Nyssa* (2014), 115.

[29] ἡμεῖς ταῦτα παρ' αὐτοῦ μεμαθηκότες φαμὲν περὶ ἓν πᾶσαν βλέπειν τῶν εἰρημένων τὴν σύμφρασιν. Gregory of Nyssa, *Against Eunomius* 3.3.42.

[30] τὸ δεικτικὸν τῆς φωνῆς. Gregory of Nyssa, *Against Eunomius* 3.3.42.

God, *in the same event*, wrought 'honour'. This does not require two referents though: it is one referent – what Gregory calls 'one person'. That said, there are two 'things' also in view: the divinity and the humanity. The divinity could not be exalted, but the humanity was exalted, by becoming Lord and Christ. This then combines with the theme of divination so that both the unity of two natures and the economy of the Passion result in the exaltation and transformation of the Son's assumed human nature.

Gregory's refutation goes on in §§47-56a to the charge that Basil asserted that man had emptied himself to become man. This, Eunomius appears to say, is implicit in Basil's referring to *Acts* 2:36 as something said in the mode of the economy. Gregory's defence is firstly that this is not the assertion of Basil nor an implication. Gregory takes it as an occasion to again charge Eunomius with error, in that Eunomius articulates a change of the Son 'from like to like in the dispensation of the Passion'.

The last argument of this section is the refutation of the charge of speaking of two Christs and two Lords. This argument arises from Basil's statement that the verse refers to the economy and the incarnation, particularly that the use of the demonstrative pronoun emphasises 'that in him which was human and was seen by all'.[31] For Eunomius, this means speaking of two referents, two Christs: one the Son, the other the man. Gregory responds by quoting Eunomius who adduces *John* 1:14 as a statement inasmuch to say that the Word that becomes incarnate must be a singular subject and referred to singularly. Gregory offers an elaboration of Basil's argument that makes more explicit the way a two-nature theology handles partitive exegesis. In so doing he extends the concept from simply things said according to the economy or theology to things referred to the human or divine natures. This defense against a proto-Nestorian charge can sound very 'two subjects', after all. In resolving this, Gregory outlines a doctrine of two natures, distinct yet united, with a *communicatio idiomatum*, and a way of reading this verse that understands 'make' to mean the transformation of the human nature by its union with the divine, and its transformation *into* the divine effected through the Cross. It is vital to note that for Gregory, though not for Basil, that transformation is effected 'after the passion', as Radde-Gallwitz highlights.[32] Gregory deliberately shifts the referent of 'make' to fit post-Basilian developments as well as his own theological commitments.

Although Gregory of Nyssa clearly builds upon Basil's treatment of the verse and his understanding, particularly the general practice of partitive exegesis, as well as giving attention to very specific elements of how the verse indicates that it is 'according to the humanity' – the mention of the crucifixion, the human signifier 'Jesus', and the demonstrative pronoun usage – overall Gregory's

[31] πρὸς τὸ ἀνθρώπινον αὐτοῦ καὶ ὁρώμενον πᾶσι προδήλως. Basil of Caesarea, *Against Eunomius*, 2.3.

[32] A. Radde-Gallwitz, 'Contra Eunomium III 3', in J. Leemans, *Gregory of Nyssa* (2014), 297.

interpretation of the verse moves away from Basil's precisely in how he understands the term 'made'. While Basil's manner of speaking remains more guarded, if more vague, Gregory's reference to the humanity and divinity becomes more explicit and grounded in his own Christological concerns. Absent from Basil, at least at this point of discussion, is any of Gregory's more developed theology of the transformation of the Son's human nature by its union with the divine nature, and the soteriological consequences of that deification. For Gregory, 'made' refers to what happens to the humanity *in* the union. For Basil, 'made' refers to the change of status effected for the one who has (already) been made human.

Diversity in applying the Theology/Economy distinction

We are now in a position to summarise the unity and diversity among these three authors concerning their treatment of *Acts* 2:36, and so cast better light on Basil's exegetical practice as a representative of 'pro-Nicenism'.[33] In respect of the treatment of this verse, there is a clear trajectory of influence in how these three authors exegete it in light of its central place in certain opponents' theological treatments of the difference of the Son from the Father – as highlighted in Athanasius' need to engage it in his context, and the re-emergence of the verse as a point of contention with Eunomius and other Anomoians. The considerable temporal gap between Athanasius' treatment in *Discourse* II and Basil's *Against Eunomius* suggests that in the interim it was not given such prominence. Athanasius' exegesis very clearly relies upon the practice of partitive exegesis and applies 'made' to the humanity of the incarnate Son. Basil, and Gregory in turn, will both follow that lead and employ this technique which becomes more and more standard through the period, at least for proponents identified with this theological trajectory. At the same time, all three theologians differ subtly in how they understand 'made' to apply to the incarnate Son. For Athanasius, it is best illuminated by reference back to *Acts* 2:22 and understood in the sense of 'manifested' and the extension of pre-existent rule and dominion to those that were disobedient. Basil modifies this, and appears to suggest that it is not so much a manifestation of a pre-existent status as the change of status, but only in regards to the economic Christ. Gregory's treatment is the most radical of the three, moving well away from Athanasius, since he applies 'made' to the humanity as occurring 'after the passion', and referring to the change in the humanity concurrent with its union with the divine nature. This diversity of approaches within a single technique highlights the caution to be employed when assessing partitive exegesis, even as it emphasises the pervasiveness of this feature of pro-Nicene hermeneutics.

[33] With the necessary caveat that this may well still be a construct, albeit a useful one.

An Unpublished Funerary Speech (CPG 2936) and the Question of Succession to St. Basil the Great

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Abstract

The article provides analysis and translation of the unpublished *Encomium on the Bishop who was his Predecessor*, which survives only in two manuscripts under the name of St. Basil the Great. Internal evidence of the text rules out this attribution. Numerous thematic and verbal parallels with *Oration* 43 by Gregory of Nazianzus suggest that Basil is not the author but the subject of the encomium. If this identification is correct, then the speaker must be Helladius, who succeeded Basil as metropolitan of Caesarea. Gregory's oration responds to the encomium by re-interpreting its images, vastly expanding the scope and demonstrating rhetorical superiority. This relationship matches the chronological sequence of the two orations: Gregory spoke at the third anniversary of Basil's death, whereas the encomium was delivered soon after the burial of the preacher's predecessor. Helladius was known for his difficult relations with both Basil's brother Gregory of Nyssa and his friend Gregory of Nazianzus, apparently due to competition for the position of Basil's spiritual heir after his death. Authorship of Helladius would match these circumstances precisely, as the encomium is openly aiming at establishing credentials of the speaker versus unnamed rivals closely connected to the deceased. In addition the text provides a unique example of an unedited transcript of a funerary speech, whereas virtually all other surviving texts of such speeches result from substantial revision for publication purposes.

An unpublished speech *Encomium on the Bishop Who Was His Predecessor* attributed by manuscripts to St. Basil the Great[1] has been preserved in two codices: of the 10th century in Venice[2] and of the 11th century in Lyons.[3] Both of them are exclusively devoted to works attributed to Basil and contain homilies on the *Psalms* and a large number of homilies on martyrs, moral, biblical

[1] The article is dedicated to my teacher Professor Anthony Applemore Mornington Bryer (1937-2016). I would like to thank Natalia Smelova for reading the article and making valuable suggestions.

[2] Venezia, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana gr. 55 (coll. 455) 254r-v. Paul Fedwick, *Bibliotheca Basiliana Universalis* II *The Homiliae Morales, Hexaemeron, De Litteris* part 1 Manuscripts *CC* (Turnhout, 1996), 116 (h199).

[3] Lyon, Bibliothèque de la Ville 121 (51) 157v-158v. P. Fedwick, *Bibliotheca Basiliana Universalis* II, 1 (1996), 62-3 (h106).

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and doctrinal issues. Along with the genuine works of Basil both manuscripts contain works of doubted authenticity. The two collections mostly overlap but do not coincide, as the former is more extensive and contains a larger number of unpublished homilies.[4] The text of the encomium in both manuscripts is essentially the same and differs only in spelling of some words, as the scribe of the Venetian codex was prone to confuse homophonic vowels and diphthongs.[5]

The speech is a praise of a recently deceased bishop in the form of a lament. Although the word ἐπίσκοπος is not used, the status is clear from the fact that he had ordained the speaker to a priestly order not long ago (ἐνχειρίσας ἱερωσύνην), exercised teaching (διδάσκαλος, παιδευτής) and leadership as 'protector' (κηδεμών) in the local Church which 'mourns her orphanhood' without him (ὀρφανίαν ὀδύρεσθαι). He is described as a 'common father of the people' and in the words of the *Gospel of John* as a 'good shepherd'.[6] In the church he had his 'throne' (θρόνος) and was teaching from a 'high platform' (ὑψηλὸν βήμα). The bishop is credited with 'indwelling of the Holy Spirit' who granted him 'foreknowledge' of the approaching death. His appearance and character were admirable and his words were delightful both in public preaching and individual conversations. The bishop travelled by foot and on horseback to reach those who needed him. He suffered from an illness, got better and spoke to the congregation about his recovery but then suddenly died. The departed is praised for philosophical attitude to glory and wealth as well as for bravely facing enraged rulers and resisting their unjust demands. The late bishop enjoyed high authority in the Church as he was able to designate his own successor. In a similar way Gregory the Theologian chose chorepiscopos Eulalius as a replacement for himself at Nazianzus, but had to petition his metropolitan Helladius of Caesarea to allow this.[7]

The preacher is in ordained ministry. The general term 'sacred office' (ἱερωσύνη) could apply either to the priestly or episcopal order. However, his predecessor acting by himself could only ordain up to the level of priesthood. Yet the speaker represents himself as a deliberate replacement for the departed bishop, who acted in anticipation of his passing away: 'Where is he, who through the foreknowledge of his advent to the Lord, [granted to him] by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, took things in hand having given you me?' Presumably the

[4] These and other unpublished homilies attributed to St. Basil are the subject of my ongoing research project. Nikolai Lipatov-Chicherin, 'Preaching as the Audience Heard it: Unedited Transcripts of Patristic Homilies', *SP* 64 (2013), 277-97; *id.*, 'The "Statement of Faith" Attributed to St. Basil the Great', *SP* 37 (2001), 147-59.

[5] Full analysis of the textual variation will be given in my forthcoming edition of the encomium. The English translation is provided after the article.

[6] *John* 10:11,14.

[7] Gr. Naz., *Ep*. 152, 182, 183. On the practice of some bishops nominating their own successors see Peter Norton, *Episcopal Elections 250-600. Hierarchy and Popular Will in Late Antiquity* (Oxford, 2007), 204-14.

bishop chose his own successor and ordained him a priest with an expectation or an instruction for him to be raised to episcopal position by a gathering of local bishops. At the time of the encomium the speaker is 'established' in the local Church as her 'allotted portion' (λάχος) and his preaching is the 'word of teaching' (λόγος διδασκαλικός). Moreover, he is able to say that in his own person he represents his predecessor: 'I manifest you to those who yearn after you'. This can be effected only by having the same position and performing the same duties as the departed rather than being one of several priests. All this suggests that by the time of delivering the homily the preacher was an ordained bishop. The current oration is described as the first one for the speaker: 'Did you wish, O father, your son to break in this way the first speech in the church filled with tears?' Was it the first experience of preaching as a bishop or in any capacity? The latter is much more likely, since his ordination to priesthood was a very recent one (πρώην) and speeches at the funeral were probably given by bishops from neighbouring sees rather than presbyters.

The speaker claims a unique connection with his predecessor. He describes himself as the 'genuine child' (γνήσιον τέκνον) of the one who ordained him. The phrase represents a quote from the *Epistle to Titus* 1:4 and implies that the relationship is of the same kind as between Paul and his disciple whom he, according to Eusebius, ordained bishop of Crete.[8] This is further underscored by an allusion to the following verse 1:5 of the *Epistle* later in the oration, when the speaker, addressing the departed, asks: 'Who will from now on make up what is wanting' (τὰ λείποντα)*?* The hint is that just as Paul entrusted Titus in this verse with ordaining presbyters for the cities of Crete, administering the local ecclesiastical province is now left to him. The encomiast several times describes himself as the son and directly addresses the predecessor as his father. This generation was effected by the teaching given by the venerable bishop: 'He ... received us at the young age like leaping colts, tamed us by the word of instruction and encouraged to display the race of his own kin'. Although the plural 'us' is used, it is clear that the preacher applies the words to himself in his capacity as a successor, since the word 'race' (δρόμος) in the New Testament usage is an equivalent of 'performance' and 'a course of one's life'.[9]

The gathering takes place in the episcopal church, as the speaker is looking and possibly pointing at the bishop's throne (which means that at the time he is not using it himself). Presumably he is addressing the people from the bema, from which earlier his predecessor talked rather informally to the congregation about his illness and recovery.

Since the speaker addresses the audience as 'fellow pupils and disciples of the same instructor', they are clearly members of an urban Christian community who have attended the episcopal services of his predecessor for some time.

[8] Eus. Caes., *Hist. eccl.* III 4.5.
[9] *Acts* 13:25; 20:24; 2*Tim.* 4:7.

It is not a restricted monastic or ascetic community, but rather a large and diverse congregation including both men and women of all ages and needs. Various categories of people listed as recipients of help from the bishop at different occasions could be reasonably representative of those who would turn up for the commemoration of his death: 'old men, children, young and old women, orphans, widows, the poor, the destitute, the suppliants, the wronged', but also men seeking knowledge and theological instruction. Occupations of those assembled and possible presence of people from the countryside in addition to the city dwellers are not mentioned.

The amount of interaction between the preacher and the audience is very limited. Only in one place the speaker refers to the pain and distress felt by his congregation, addressing them directly in the second person plural and observing that their faces are changed by crying. Otherwise he is heavily preoccupied with his own emotions.

Described collectively in the third person, the listeners 'mourn the orphanhood' of their Church and regard the late hierarch as their 'common father'. This allusion to 1*Cor*. 4:15 is continued later in the speech, but with a noticeable change of focus, when the words about spiritual birth 'begot a child' (ἐγέννησα) are applied to the relationship of the departed only with the speaker himself rather than with all the followers, so as to emphasize his special inheritance and position.

The encomiast is predominantly concerned with ethical issues and moral instruction. He singles out 'godly character, reasonableness, guilessness', charity, 'steadfastness of faith, purity' and 'chastity' as the defining characteristics of his hero. The homily is very brief on specific theological and even ecclesiastical matters, although the deceased is acknowledged as a theologian. Only two points are singled out. Almost at the very beginning we are told that the commemorated bishop had in him the Holy Spirit, suggesting a special significance of the third person of the Trinity for him. This may help with the dating, as discussions about the role of the Holy Spirit are characteristic for the period between the first and the second Ecumenical Councils (325-381).[10] The other point may reflect concerns of the speaker, as it indicates a somewhat extreme ascetic attitude to marriage: 'You did not slip (ἐφθάρης) into procreation of children, you were not worsted (ἡττήθης) by the pleasures. You remained blameless (ἀμώμητος), having associated yourself with incorruption (ἀφθαρσία)'. This could be an implicit criticism of those, who entered the episcopal order after married life, but equally it could be an expression of one's own belated regrets (like those of Gregory of Nyssa in his treatise *On Virginity*[11]). The praise of virginity started from the very beginning of Christianity but the

[10] Analysis of this development on the basis of a particular creedal statement is provided in N. Lipatov, 'The "Statement of Faith"' (2001).

[11] Gr. Nyss., *Virg*. 3-4; 10-3.

4th and the early 5th century were the time of a particularly large number of writings and debates on the subject.[12]

The most striking feature of the whole encomium is the disproportionate place allocated by the speaker to himself with much emphasis on his own relationship with the departed and his personal feelings. References to the community are less prominent and feel like additional considerations. Some examples will give an idea:

> I observe the throne and do not see him that I yearn after. I search for the instructor in order to thank him for the things he taught me but do not find him ... Woe is me, I have been deprived of your holy public sermons and your intimate discourses ... I do not have strength to bear the misfortune, my reason is overcome by the affliction ... What shall I remind myself of in order to outwit sadness and to comfort the affliction with reason?

And so he goes on.

The outpouring of personal grief may be understandable, but what makes it feel overemphasized is the almost total lack of counterbalancing references to (and presumably consideration for) the feelings of others. This attitude quite strongly contrasts with the expectation of humility from the preacher in general and the bishop in particular which became established fairly early.[13]

What could be a possible reason for this? We may recall that the encomiast consistently stresses the closeness of his connection with the previous bishop by insisting that he is the 'genuine child' who received special instruction, has been apportioned to the local Church by his predecessor, has become as it were the bishop's own kin and is able now to be a manifestation of the departed. Such heavy emphasis suggests that in spite of having been elected and installed the new bishop still feels insecure. The insecurity is not to do with the episcopal appointment, for this issue is not argued. The speaker feels the need to prove that he is the rightful successor to his teacher not only formally (this is beyond doubt) but also essentially. Who could have been the feared competitor or competitors with a claim to informal but powerful spiritual succession? Already at the beginning of the speech the preacher asserts that his predecessor 'encouraged us to display the race of his own kin'. This suggests a concern about a relative of the deceased being perceived at least by some as a proper spiritual heir carrying on his work as an instructor and theologian. He must also have had the episcopal rank to be perceived as a real challenger. The speech contains almost nothing of theology, so, presumably, the speaker could not compete in this area. Therefore he had to reclaim the sphere of kinship, albeit by adoption.

[12] Treatises, sermons and letters by Athanasius of Alexandria (CPG 2145-54), Basil of Ancyra (CPG 2827), Basil of Caesarea (*Ep. 44-6*), Gregory of Nyssa (CPG 3165), Ambrose of Milan (CPL 145, 147-9), Jerome (CPL 610-1) and Augustine (CPL 300).

[13] 1*Tim.* 3:1-7; 6:11; Andrea Sterk, *Renouncing the World Yet Leading the Church: The Monk-Bishop in Late Antiquity* (Cambridge, Mass., 2004), 48-65.

Several questions arise about the circumstances of delivery of the encomium. How soon after the death was the speech pronounced? Was it given at the burial itself or some time after it? Was the preacher the only person to speak? If the assessment that the speaker was already a bishop is correct, then it would follow that the sermon was delivered after the funeral of his predecessor and the subsequent election and ordination of the new incumbent of the see. This is his first speech in the church, as he declares himself. That may give a clue for the unusual brevity of the encomium in comparison with even the shorter of the other surviving funerary speeches and the fact that it contains so little specific information about life, activities and theology of the departed bishop. The funeral had already taken place and the career of his predecessor had already been described in at least one and probably several speeches by the local bishops who must have attended the proceedings. Then the current occupant of the see was still a presbyter and so was unlikely to preach when the bishops were available. Now he was free to address the issues that mattered to him: to praise the predecessor and to confirm that he was the rightful heir.[14]

The encomium does not have an introduction or an address to the audience and opens with a series of seven rhetorical questions in the 3rd person 'Where is he, who...?' or 'Where is his...?' to highlight dramatically the absence of the bishop everybody was accustomed to see. The preacher follows with a statement in the first person which is twice interrupted suddenly by direct appeals to the departed bishop: 'Did you wish, O father, your son to break in this way the first speech in the church filled with tears?' and a little later: 'Woe is me, I have been deprived of your holy public sermons and your intimate discourses!' After that he continues to speak on his own behalf and makes four more rhetorical questions. Then, presumably moved by the subject of purity, as he was mentioning it, the bishop again emotionally addresses his predecessor. Before he returns to the flow of the prepared homily he offers this explanation for the abrupt interruptions: 'I hoped to deliver these words in the church with mournful utterances calling upon you, O father'. Then the speech adopts the same thoroughly prepared character as at the beginning and proceeds with enumeration of those who mourn the departed bishop and the reasons for their grief, listing 13 different groups. This is followed by two series of rhetorical questions 'Who is...?' or 'Who will...?' (15 in total). Finally the speaker lists seven major qualities of his predecessor and ends with a brief doxology. The sudden changes of direction sound like unscripted diversions from the prepared oration, which was either being recited from memory or, more likely, read from a script. It remains uncertain whether the encomium had originally been

[14] In a similar way Gregory of Nyssa's encomiastic laments on Meletius of Antioch, princess Pulcheria and empress Flacilla are not dealing with their life stories and instead concentrate on evaluation of their qualities.

intended to be so brief, or the bishop decided to cut it short because, as he openly admits it, he was overcome by emotions.[15] These considerations suggest that the text we have is an unedited record of what actually was said on the occasion as taken down by an attendant or a secretary and then converted from short-hand signs into usual writing. The unrevised state of the text may explain why it had a limited circulation and survived only in two manuscripts.

The internal evidence of the text makes it clear that the manuscript attribution of it to St. Basil the Great is impossible. From the commemorative oration by Gregory of Nazianzus and from the letters he exchanged with his friend at the time when Basil's predecessor Eusebius was in charge we know that the relations were strained, Basil felt insulted and withdrew to his monastery in Pontus.[16] After a reconciliation he was regarded as the leading theologian, not a disciple of Eusebius. Basil loved Dianius, who had occupied the see of Caesarea before Eusebius, and had even been baptised by him. However, when Dianius signed an Arian creed, Basil withdrew from ecclesiastical communion with his bishop and later described him as a kind but simple soul not versed in the nuances of theology (the communion was restored when on his death-bed Dianius professed his continuous adherence to the faith of Nicaea).[17] Basil's dealings with his two predecessors are not matched by what we can read in the text under consideration. However, preservation of the encomium among his homilies could be due to a connection that was misinterpreted. Basil's circumstances match those of the subject rather than the speaker of the oration.[18]

[15] For an example of sudden interruption of preaching: N. Lipatov-Chicherin, 'Preaching as the audience heard it' (2013), 283-7.

[16] Gr. Naz., *Or*. 43.28-9,31-2; *Ep*. 16-19. *Funeral Orations by St. Gregory of Nazianzus and St. Ambrose*, FC 22 (Washington, 1953), 27-99. On the election of Basil's predecessor: Federico Fatti, 'An extraordinary bishop: Eusebius of Caesarea in Cappadocia', in Johan Leemans *et al*. (eds), *Episcopal Elections in Late Antiquity*, Arbeiten zur Kirchengeschichte 119 (Berlin, 2011), 343-55; on the possible background to Basil's fallout with Eusebius and withdrawal to Pontic monasteries, see N. Lipatov-Chicherin, 'Preaching as the audience heard it' (2013), 283-7; on Basil's own promotion to the episcopate, see P. Norton, *Episcopal Elections 250-600* (2007), 215-23; on the nature of ecclesiastical selection and leadership, see Jacklyn Maxwell, 'Education, humility and choosing ideal bishops in Late Antiquity', in J. Leemans *et al*. (eds), *Episcopal Elections* (2011), 449-62; A. Sterk, *Renouncing the World Yet Leading the Church* (2004); Claudia Rapp, *Holy Bishops in Late Antiquity: The Nature of Christian Leadership in an Age of Transition* (Berkeley, 2005).

[17] Bas., *Ep*. 51.

[18] A record of the encomium could be kept together with Basil's own papers by those who were preserving them after his death (his successor Helladius is the most likely candidate). At a later date this probably resulted in the text being copied with the works of Basil and given his name. Manuscript attribution of Nyssen's *Letter* 1 to Nazianzen, and his *Letter* 35 to Basil could be due to a similar process of misfiling in personal archives. On the process of re-attribution see Gregory of Nyssa, *The Letters*, tr. Anna M. Silvas, SVigChr 83 (Leiden and Boston, 2007), 105-7, 247-9. Several other commemorative orations on Basil have survived: by Gregory of Nazianzus (CPG 3010), Gregory of Nyssa (CPG 3185), Greek Ephrem (CPG 3951) and a Syriac translation of an encomium attributed to Amphilochius of Iconium (CPG 3252).

Comparison with the speech on Basil by Gregory of Nazianzus shows that information about the bishop celebrated in our text matches in detail what is known about Basil: an influential and charismatic bishop with younger disciples, who rejected theological demands made by the emperor and his prefect, had to face wrath of a local magistrate because of protection he gave to a widow, organiser of food distribution during famine, builder of charitable institutions, a gifted preacher, an aristocrat who adopted very simple life-style, worked with his own hands and suffered from ill health. Soon before his death Basil ordained some of his disciples in order to ensure succession.

The most extensive parallel between the two speeches is provided by detailed enumeration of the mourners:

> Let those of you who have supreme authority consider the lawgiver; you public officials, the founder of the city; you of the people, his orderliness; you men of letters, the teacher; ... you contemplatives the theologian; you exuberant souls, the bridle; you unfortunate, your consolation; old age, its staff; ... poverty, its relief ... widows should praise their protector; orphans their father; the poor, the lover of the poor; strangers their host...[19]

Close similarity of personal features and events described in the two orations is further reinforced by numerous verbal parallels (they are given in the footnotes to the translation of the encomium). Taken together these parallels spread throughout both texts are too numerous and too systematic to be accidental. They suggest that Gregory of Nazianzus knew this encomium and had it in mind when composing his own oration. Such attention could not be warranted by the information contained in the text itself, so it must have been given due to significance of the event and the people involved.

Moreover, on some occasions Gregory adapts and re-interprets phrases of his model text by adding new words (they are underlined and briefly discussed in the footnotes). It seems that by doing this he was trying to show how a true master would use the opportunities provided by themes and images of a different and not entirely successful speaker. The encomium could not cover all the information on Basil provided by Nazianzen not only due to the big disparity in volume of the two texts, but also because of the difference of genre. The text under consideration is properly a lament (more akin stylistically to the funerary speech of Gregory of Nyssa on Meletius of Antioch, Libanius' lament for Julian and a lament of Himerius for his son Rufinus) and as such it does not consider many background topics natural for a funerary panegyric (like the oration by Nazianzen), concentrating instead on personality of the deceased and sadness of the loss.

[19] Gr. Naz., *Or*. 43.81.4-18. English translation by Leo McCauley in *Funeral Orations by St. Gregory of Nazianzus and St. Ambrose*, FC 22 (Washington, 1953), 98.

The encomium cannot be a later rhetorical exercise based on Gregory's famous oration because information about the speaker does not match the circumstances of Nazianzen. Furthermore, spontaneous outpourings of emotion accompanied by sudden addresses to the deceased, which are not properly integrated into the fabric of the speech, make it too imperfect for a school exercise normally based on good examples for imitation. The text also does not qualify as an imaginary speech of rhetorical ethopoeia (giving an example of a preacher overcome by emotions) because of the absence of customary introduction and brevity uncharacteristic for the genre of declamation.[20]

All these considerations suggest that the subject of the encomium is likely to be Basil and the speaker – his successor Helladius, who soon developed problems in relations with two Gregories, the brother and the friend of his predecessor.[21] The cause of the ill feeling, which Helladius harboured against both Gregories, is not clearly explained in surviving texts.[22] Nyssen describes their frosty encounter in his *Letter* 1, but does not specify the reason for Helladius' attitude, which he could have guessed.[23] Very probably it was the fundamental question of succession and authority. Although Helladius got the see of Basil, he must have remained uneasy for a long time, suspecting that many could view the subordinate bishops of Nyssa and Nazianzus as the true spiritual heirs of his predecessor.

[20] Proper examples of ethopoeia are given by Libanius in many of his Declamations. Libanius, *Imaginary Speeches*, trans. by Donald Russell (London, 1996).

[21] Vasiliki Limberis, 'Bishops behaving badly: Helladius challenges Gregory of Nazianzus and Gregory of Nyssa', in Christopher Beeley, *Re-reading Gregory of Nazianzus* (Washington, 2012), 159-77; Paul Devos, 'S. Grégoire de Nazianze et Hellade de Césarée en Cappadoce', *AB* 79 (1961), 91-101. However, Severus of Antioch speaking about competition between Helladius of Caesarea and Theodore of Tyana for ecclesiastical control over some territory describes Gregory of Nyssa as a supporter of the former, who was his metropolitan. *Select Letters of Severus Patriarch of Antioch in the Syriac Version of Athanasius of Nisibis*, ed. and trans. E.W. Brooks II 1, section II, letter 2 (London, Oxford, 1903), 205-6.

[22] Gr. Nyss., *Ep*. 1, 17; Gr. Naz., *Ep*. 120-1, 172, 183, 215, 219, 220.

[23] Gr. Nyss., *Ep*. 1. Translation in Gregory of Nyssa: *The Letters*, trans. by Anna Silvas (Leiden, 2007), 105-15.

Laudatory Oration On The Bishop Who Was His Predecessor (CPG 2936)

Where is the 'good shepherd'?[24]
Where is the common father,[25] who has recently handed to his genuine child the sacred office?
Where is he, who through the foreknowledge of his advent to the Lord, [granted to him] by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, took things in hand having given you me?[26]
Where is his tongue flowing with honey[27] and the word which 'distils the honeycomb'?[28]
Where is his apostolic appearance and godly character?[29]
Where is his habitual reasonableness[30] and the guilelessness of his conscience?[31]
Where is he, who received us at the young age like leaping colts,[32] tamed us by the word of instruction and encouraged us to display the race of his own kin?

I observe the throne[33] and do not see him that I yearn after.
I search for the instructor in order to thank him for the things he taught me[34] but do not find him.

[24] *John* 10:11,14.

[25] ὁ κοινὸς πατήρ (quotations without reference are from the text of the laudatory oration by Helladius). See 1*Cor*. 4:15; 1*Thess*. 2:11. See Gr. Naz., *Or*. 43.42.6-7: ὁ τοῦ κοινοῦ κηδεμὼν καὶ προστάτης; 78.15-6: τῆς κοινῆς μεμνημένος ζημίας. Greek text of *Or*. 43 is quoted following Grégoire de Nazianze, *Discours 42-43*, ed. by Jean Bernardi, SC 384 (Paris, 1992).

[26] ἐνχειρίσας γνησίῳ τέκνῳ τὴν ἱερωσύνην ... προμηθείᾳ τοῦ ἐν αὐτῷ Ἁγίου Πνεύματος ... δεδωκώς. See *Tit*. 1:4. See Gr. Naz., *Or*. 43.78.9-12: χειροτονίαις τῶν γνησιωτάτων αὐτοῦ θεραπευτῶν, τὴν χεῖρα δίδωσι καὶ τὸ Πνεῦμα, ὥστε μὴ ζημιωθῆναι τὸ βῆμα τοὺς ἐκείνου μαθητὰς καὶ τῆς ἱερωσύνης συλλήπτορας. 71.10-3: οὐδὲ κατεσοφίσθη περὶ τὴν τῶν τέκνων προτίμησιν … μετὰ τῆς τοῦ Πνεύματος κρίσεως (Here and subsequently the underlined words represent additions and changes apparently made by Gregory in the images used by Helladius in order to reinterpret them. The substitution of plural for singular and 'attendants' for 'the son' undermines Helladius' claim of uniqueness and lowers his status as the heir of Basil). The author of the oration proceeds to make a point of his predecessor's intimate relationship with the Holy Spirit. The issue of veneration of the Holy Spirit features very prominently in St. Gregory's oration on St. Basil (Gr. Naz., *Or*. 43.68-9) where he almost always uses the word Πνεῦμα speaking about Godhead. Apparently Helladius was just as anxious as Gregory to defend his subject from accusations of insufficiently clear position on divinity of the Spirit.

[27] ἡ μελίρρυτος αὐτοῦ γλῶττα. See Gr. Naz., *Or*. 43.82.1-2: τῆς ἡδίστης σοί ποτε γλώττης. 64.38-9: τίς μὲν οὕτως ἡδὺς ἐν ταῖς συνουσίαις...

[28] *S. of S*. 4:11.

[29] τὸ ἀποστολικὸν πρόσχημα καὶ τὸ ἔνθεον ἦθος. See Gregory's description of St. Basil's appearance (*Or*. 43.77) and character 64.16: τὸ τοῦ ἤθους εὐσταθές.

[30] ἡ ἐπιείκεια τῶν τρόπων. See Gr. Naz., *Or*. 43.40.8-9: ἐπιεικείᾳ μὲν τὸ ἀντιτυπές … κερασάμενος. 50.6-7: ἐπιεικεῖς ἡμεῖς … καὶ παντὸς ἄλλου ταπεινότεροι.

[31] See *Acts* 24:16.

[32] ἐκ νέας ἡλικίας ὥσπερ πώλους σκιρτῶντας. See Gr. Naz., *Or*. 43.12.25-7: Ὥσπερ τοὺς πώλους καὶ τοὺς μόσχους ὁρῶμεν ὁμοῦ τῇ γενέσει ταῖς μητράσιν ἑαυτῶν παρασκαίροντας, οὕτω καὶ αὐτός (the contrasting addition of mightier animals by Gregory deflates the image of the colts used by Helladius).

[33] Περιαθρῶ τὸν θρόνον. See Gr. Naz., *Or*. 43.37.4-5: ἐπὶ τὸν ὑψηλὸν τὴς ἐπισκοπῆς θρόνον ἀνάγεται. 38.11: συμμετρεῖν τῇ ἀξίᾳ καὶ τῷ θρόνῳ τὴν ἀρετήν. 68.9-10: μὴ ὅτι θρόνων ἐκπεσεῖν.

[34] Ζητῶ τὸν διδάσκαλον ἵνα εὐχαριστήσω ἐφ' οἷς ἐπαίδευσε. See Gr. Naz., *Or*. 43.65.1-2: τὴν ἐν λόγοις τοῦ ἀνδρὸς ἀρετὴν καὶ τὸ τῆς διδασκαλίας κράτος, τὰ πέρατα οἰκειούμενον.

For me the word of instruction has turned into a funeral lament. Did you wish, O father, your son to break in this way the first speech in the church filled with tears?
I venture to speak since the affection compels me. I would not expose my father's innermost feelings.

For you established me in this Church most beloved of God, as her portion, though I am not ripe, and allowed her to mourn her orphanhood. She is not comforted, for although her protector begot a child,[35] yet he greatly lacks your parental love.
Woe is me, I have been deprived of your holy public sermons and your intimate discourses.[36]

From my own [feelings] I can appreciate yours, o fellow pupils and disciples of the same instructor. I know the pain and have the same distress as you. He who just a little while ago would be at the high pulpit speaking about what he had suffered and how he escaped the hardship of illness[37] has been suddenly snatched away.
I do not have strength to bear the misfortune, my reason is being overcome by the affliction.[38] Disposition of the son deeply affects innermost feelings of the father, and unintentionally provoked tears distort [your] faces. What shall I remind myself of in order to outwit sadness and to comfort the affliction with reason?[39]
Steadfastness of his faith?[40]
His memory of the divine teachings?
Purity of his way of life?[41]
That from 'the very pangs of the womb and swaddling clothes' you were brought up in chastity?[42]

[35] κηδεμὼν εἰ καὶ ἐγέννησε. See Gr. Naz., *Or*. 43.42.6-7: ὁ τοῦ κοινοῦ κηδεμὼν καὶ προστάτης. 34.1-2: τοῦ ἀνδρὸς κηδεμονίας καὶ προστασίας. 71.28-9: τήν τε καλὴν πολυτεκνίαν τῶν κατὰ Θεὸν γεννηθέντων. See 1*Cor*. 4:15.

[36] ἀπεστέρημαι τῶν ἱερῶν σου λόγων καὶ τῶν ἐν συνηθείᾳ σου διατριβῶν. See Gr. Naz., *Or*. 43.69.2-4: καὶ δημοσίᾳ τοῦτο πολλάκις ἐκήρυξεν, εἴ ποτε καιρὸς ἦν, καὶ ἰδίᾳ τοῖς ἐρωτῶσι προθύμως ἀνωμολόγησε… (Gregory's reference to multiple interlocutors instead of one removes from Helladius the special status of Basil's confidant intimated by him). 64.38-41: τίς μὲν οὕτως ἡδὺς ἐν ταῖς συνουσίαις, ὅσα ἐμὲ γινώσκειν τὸν μάλιστα ἐκείνου πεπειραμένον...;

[37] See St. Basil's frequently poor state of health: Gr. Naz., *Or*. 43.23,49,57 and a remarkable improvement of his condition just before death: 78.

[38] νικᾶται ὁ λογισμὸς ὑπὸ τοῦ πάθους. See Gr. Naz., *Or*. 43.79.6-7: ἐποίει γὰρ αὐτοὺς καὶ παράφρονας τὸ πάθος. 80.11-2: καὶ τὸ φιλόσοφον τῷ πάθει καταλυόμενον.

[39] Τί μνησθῶ περ ἵνα παίσω τὴν λύπην καὶ λογισμῷ τὸ πάθος παραμυθήσωμαι; see Gr. Naz., *Ep*. 76.5: ἐμὲ δὲ τίς παραμυθήσεται χρόνος ἢ λόγος (St Grégoire de Nazianze, *Lettres*, Paul Gallay I [Paris, 1964], 94). Gr. Naz., *Or*. 43.78.14-6: Οὐ γὰρ ἔχω φιλοσοφεῖν ἐν τῷ πάθει καὶ εἰ σφόδρα φιλοσοφεῖν ἐσπούδακα, τῆς κοινῆς μεμνημένος ζημίας καὶ τοῦ κατασχόντος πάθους τὴν οἰκουμένην (even the inability to be philosophical on this occasion stresses that for Gregory, unlike for Helladius, it is a habitual pursuit).

[40] Τῆς πίστεως τὸ ἀσφαλές; see Gr. Naz., *Or*. 43.33.4-5: τὸ τῆς πίστεως ἀρραγές.

[41] Τῆς πολιτείας τὸ καθαρόν; see Gr. Naz., *Or*. 43.80.33: λογογραφῶ τὴν τοῦ ἀνδρὸς πολιτείαν.

[42] ἐξ αὐτῶν ὠδίνων μήτρας καὶ σπαργάνων ἁγνείᾳ συνετράφης; see Gr. Naz., *Or*. 43.73.5-6: ἐκ βρέφους Θεῷ καθιερωμένος ἀπὸ μήτρας.

You did not slip into procreation of children, you were not worsted by the pleasures.[43] You remained blameless, having associated yourself with incorruption.[44] Although you have departed, O father, hallowed you abide in my heart.[45] I see you and embrace you.[46] I manifest you to those who yearn after you.[47] 'The angry earth did not carry you away at all, nor did the city, as many keep on telling me', but you came from heaven to where you hastened to depart again.[48]

I hoped to deliver these words in the church with mournful utterances calling upon you, O father[49].

Old men[50] lament him as a staff and call by the name of a common support of their old age.[51]

Children alike seek their father,
younger women – their brother,
aged women – their son,
orphans – their guardian,
widows – their protector,[52]
destitute – their provider,
infirm – their helper,[53]

[43] οὐχ ἡττήθης ἡδοναῖς. See Gr. Naz., *Or*. 43.61.1-2: τὸ μὴ κρατεῖσθαι τῶν ἡδονῶν.

[44] συνοικειώσας σεαυτὸν ἀφθαρσίᾳ. See Gr. Naz., Or. 43.62.6-7: Τίς οὖν ἐκείνου μᾶλλον ᾗ παρθενίαν ἐτίμησεν ᾗ σαρκὶ ἐνομοθέτησεν...;

[45] Εἰ καὶ μετέστης πάτερ, ἐν τοῖς στέρνοις μου καθιέρωσαι. See Gr. Naz., *Or*. 43.80.25-6: οὐδὲ γὰρ ἀπολιπὼν ἡμᾶς παντάπασιν ἀπολέλοιπεν (Gregory's reference to a group connection with the departed contrasts with the claim of individual inheritance by Helladius).

[46] Ὁρῶ σε καὶ περιπτύσσομαι. See Gr. Naz., *Or*. 43.80.30-1: ᾧ καὶ νῦν ἔτι νουθετοῦμαι καὶ σωφρονίζομαι διὰ νυκτερινῶν ὄψεων.

[47] Δείκνυμί σε τοῖς ποθοῦσί σε. See Gr. Naz., *Or*. 43.80.38: πρὸς αὐτὸν ἀεὶ βλέπειν καὶ ὡς ὁρῶντος καὶ ὡς ὁρωμένου. Gr. Naz., *Ep*. 76.5: ἐν σοὶ τὰ ἐκείνου καθορῶντες ὥσπερ ἐν ἐσόπτρῳ καλῷ τε καὶ διαυγεῖ, κἀκεῖνον ἔχειν νομίζωμεν (Gregory emphasises a possibility of direct vision of Basil by others and the special role of Gregory of Nyssa, as against the usurpation of the role of the intermediary by Helladius).

[48] ἦλθες ἀπὸ οὐρανοῦ εἰς ὃν πάλιν ἀπελθεῖν ἔσπευσας. See Gr. Naz., *Or*. 43.78.2: ἐπόθει τὴν ἀνάλυσιν. See *Phil*. 1:23.

[49] Ταῦτα ἤλπισα ἐν ἐκκλησίᾳ δημηγορῆσαι πενθικοῖς ῥήμασι πάτερ ἀνακαλούμενος. See Gr. Naz., *Or*. 43.80.32-3: οὐκ ἐγὼ μὲν οὕτω θρήνους ἀναμίγνυμι τοῖς ἐπαίνοις (Gregory's contrasting refusal to engage in a lament plays down the genre chosen by Helladius for his speech).

[50] The whole paragraph contains numerous parallels with Gr. Naz., *Or*. 43.81.4-15: ζητοῦντες ... οἱ περὶ λόγους τὸν παιδευτήν, αἱ παρθένοι τὸν νυμφαγωγόν, ... οἱ τῆς ἐπιμιξίας τὸν δικαστήν, ... οἱ τῆς θεωρίας τὸν θεολόγον, ... τὴν βακτηρίαν ἡ πολιά, ... χῆραι τὸν προστάτην ἐπαινέσεσθαι καὶ ὀρφανοὶ τὸν πατέρα καὶ πτωχοὶ τὸν φιλόπτωχον ... ἀδελφοὶ τὸν φιλάδελφον...

[51] τινα βακτηρίαν καὶ κοινὸν ἔρεισμα τοῦ γήρους. See Gr. Naz., *Or*. 43.33.15-6: γήρως βακτηρία, πίστεως ἔρεισμα (a theological justification is added).

[52] κηδεμόνα χῆραι. See Gr. Naz., *Or*. 43.42.6-7: ὁ τοῦ κοινοῦ κηδεμὼν καὶ προστάτης. 34.1-2: τοῦ ἀνδρὸς κηδεμονίας καὶ προστασίας. Gr. Naz., *Or*. 43.56-7: a detailed narrative about protection of a widow pursued by a magistrate.

[53] βοηθὸν ἀσθενεῖς. See Gr. Naz., *Or*. 43.63.2: ἀσθενείας βοήθημα. Gr. Naz., *Or*. 43.63-4: Basil's caring for the sick.

suppliants[54] – their advocate,
wronged – the judge,
unjustly enslaved – their liberator,
those eager after knowledge – the educator,
the more pious – the theologian.

Who so edified souls of men?
Who will from now on make up what is wanting?
Who will further adorn the 'divine courts'?[55]
Who is so prompt?
Who is so affectionate?
Who will travel by night and by day, will bear the toil of walking, will ride with haste and will reach everywhere even sooner than the needs themselves arise?

Will we find on earth another man such as this
who will cast away property nearly like him,
will willingly gain destitution,[56]
will trample under foot and treat philosophically the glory of this life,[57]
will hold fearless freedom above his legal rights,
will resist exasperated authorities,[58]
will speak freely in the face of rage of rulers[59] and in this way will drive them to shame with a trustworthy speech and will put them out of countenance by his manner of living?[60]

Who in the Church brought about such love?

He left us, the divine head,[61]
the common ornament of the people,[62]
the character of apostles,[63]
a match for the patriarchs,[64]

[54] συνήγορον πρόσφυγες. See Gr. Naz., *Or*. 43.56.5-6: Τῇ ἱερᾷ τραπέζῃ προσφεύγει καὶ Θεὸν ποιεῖται προστάτην.

[55] *Ps*. 91:14 [92:13].

[56] On St. Basil's voluntary poverty see Gr. Naz., *Or*. 43.49,60.

[57] καταπατήσει καὶ φιλοσοφήσει τοῦ βίου τὴν δόξαν. See Gr. Naz., *Or*. 43.10.25: οὕπω φιλοσοφίᾳ τῶν σαρκῶν κατεκράτησεν.

[58] πρὸς ἐξουσίας τραχυνομένας ἀπαντήσει. See Gr. Naz., *Or*. 43.73.17-8: βασιλέων θράσος δαιμονώντων καταμαλάσσειν… Gr. Naz., *Or*. 48.6-7: Τούτῳ βρέμοντι κατὰ τῆς ἐκκλησίας.

[59] πρὸς ἀρχόντων ὁρμὰς παρρησιάσεται. See Gr. Naz., *Or*. 43.34.2-3: παρρησία πρὸς ἄρχοντας.

[60] See St. Basil's fearless behaviour with Pretorian Prefect Modestus, emperor Valens and a judge in Caesarea as described in Gr. Naz., *Or*. 43.48-51,52-3,56-7.

[61] ἡ θεία κεφαλή. See Gr. Naz., *Or*. 43.82.7: ὦ θεία καὶ ἱερὰ κεφαλή (the addition by Gregory to enhance the image used by Helladius).

[62] τὸ κοινὸν ἀνθρώπων ἀγλάισμα. See Gr. Naz., *Or*. 43.80.34: κοινὸν ἀρετῆς πίνακα.

[63] ὁ τῶν ἀποστόλων χαρακτήρ. See Gr. Naz., *Or*. 43.75.11-2: τι τοῦ χαρακτῆρος ἐκείνου (Ἰωάννου) ἐν ἑαυτῷ φέροντα.

[64] See for a detailed comparison of St. Basil with patriarchs, prophets and judges Gr. Naz., *Or*. 43.70-4.

the genuine servant of Christ,
the imitator of angels,[65]
he who on earth demonstrated heavenly way of life
by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ to Whom be glory in the ages of ages. Amen.

[65] ὁ Χριστοῦ θεράπων γνήσιος, ὁ τῶν ἀγγέλων μιμητής. See Gr. Naz., *Or*. *43*.63.44: ἡ Χριστοῦ μίμησις. Gr. Naz., *Or*. 62.1-2: τὸ μετ' ἀγγέλων τέταχθαι (both images are reinterpreted by Gregory to increase their impact).

Basil and Augustine: Preaching on Care for the Poor

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Abstract

In their preaching on care for the poor, Basil and Augustine call for a transformation of one's relationships. While the Roman patronage system rested on relationships of privilege and dependency, Basil and Augustine cultivate a different type of relationship between the giver and receiver of charity, a relationship based not on status and need but on a shared life and identity. For Basil, that relationship is rooted in the common humanity of all people, regardless of economic or social status. Giving is natural in Basil's worldview because humanity shares in a common human nature and thus holds all goods in common. Those who fail to share with others risk cutting themselves off from their human nature. Basil's call to care for the poor is a call to recognize that to be human is to share in what is κοινός, held in common. And for Augustine, the relationship of giver and receiver is grounded in Christ. In loving others, Christians come to discover Christ not only present in them, by virtue of their baptism, but also present in those they serve, wherever there is human need, as promised in *Matthew* 25. Augustine draws the attention of Christians to those in need, including those outside the usual ties of kinship and citizenship, and even church membership, and teaches them to see in the poor, people of dignity, defined not by dependency but by Christ's loving solidarity. In laying claim to a common bond between giver and receiver, Basil and Augustine offer a counter-cultural social vision in which giver and receiver are defined not by power or need, but by mutuality and love.

The radical nature of the early Christian commitment to the poor could easily be overlooked. Peter Brown has keenly observed that readers of history tend to privilege instead those Christians who renounced wealth 'as the heroes and heroines of a "true" Christianity', with works of charity seen more as an accommodation for Christians who could not bring themselves to part with their wealth.[1] I think there also can be a danger of missing the significance of the call to care for the poor by hearing it as a platitude such as 'be nice to others' or 'be a good neighbor'. Yet in their sermons, Basil and Augustine offer a

[1] Peter Brown, *Through the Eye of a Needle: Wealth, the Fall of Rome, and the Making of Christianity in the West, 350-550 AD* (Princeton, NJ, 2012), xxiv-xxv. Brown's study points to a more complex view of wealth and charity among Christians of late-antiquity.

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deeper, richer message: a call for a transformation of one's life, including one's relationships.

This transformation of relationships is the focus of my analysis of selections from Basil and Augustine's preaching on care for the poor. My initial driving question for this project, however, was how Basil and Augustine present the poor in their preaching. Basil puts a striking focus on the humanity of the poor. Rich and poor come to life in vivid imagery in which the display of wealth of the rich clashes with the uncertainty of the lives of the poor. Augustine fills his sermons with the call to love God and neighbor, ascribing great dignity to the neighbor who is poor.

What I have come to realize, though, is that the poor cannot be analyzed in isolation from the giver because both Basil and Augustine establish the identity of the poor in terms of a relationship between giver and receiver. The character of the relationship that Basil and Augustine find between the giver and receiver of charity challenges the cultural norms of Roman society, where the social divide was not so much that of rich and poor, but rather patron and beneficiary, held together in relationships of responsibility and dependency. Peter Brown has explained in his *Through the Eye of a Needle* that the social relations of late antiquity were enmeshed in relationships of patrons and friends. Status was built around power and wealth. Status, whether great or modest, brought a responsibility to use its privileges not only for one's own comfort but also for others, specifically for fellow citizens. Civic favors could include the recommendation of a resident of one's hometown for an imperial position or benefices of buildings or lavish games. Gifts and favors were meant to be seen by others so that the patron would receive an enhanced reputation with the reward of praise for the display of civic responsibility. Brown has described the Roman Empire as 'held together by personal ties expressed and cemented through massive giving' with the web of patronage running through relationships on a local level all the way up to the imperial level.[2] It is in this context that Basil and Augustine preach about the care of the poor.

This article shows that Basil and Augustine cultivate a different type of relationship between the giver and receiver of charity, a relationship based not on status and need but on a shared life and identity. In fact, Allan Fitzgerald says that for preachers of late antiquity, the very goal of almsgiving was 'to seek communion with the other person'.[3] For Basil, that relationship is rooted in the common humanity of all people, regardless of economic or social status. And for Augustine, the relationship of giver and receiver is grounded in Christ.

[2] P. Brown, *Eye of a Needle* (2012), 58-61.

[3] Allan Fitzgerald, 'Almsgiving in the works of Saint Augustine', in Adolar Zumkeller (ed.), *Signum Pietatis: Festgabe für Cornelius Petrus Mayer, OSA, zum 60. Geburtstag* (Würzburg, 1989), 445-59, 450-1.

A note about vocabulary for 'the poor'

Generally when they speak of 'the poor', Basil and Augustine seem to have in mind day laborers whose lives are marked by instability and dependency. Basil's word choice makes this clear. As Susan Holman observes, he often uses the term πένης (plural πένητες), which would be akin to a day laborer, rather than choosing the word for those in abject poverty, πτωχός (plural πτωχοί).[4] As for Augustine, Richard Finn notes that he tends to use the word *pauper* (plural *pauperes*), a word that can describe people from a range of economic states from one with minimal possessions all the way to those who are destitute. Finn adds, though, that Augustine often includes descriptions of the *pauperes* that suggest that he is speaking more of those facing economic insecurity rather than the *mendici* (singular *mendicus*) or beggars, when referring to the recipient of alms and that he tends to collapse many categories of poverty into *pauperes*, using it as a collective term.[5]

Basil: Defining the poor by their common humanity

Basil's preaching on care for the poor speaks about the challenge of wealth as much as about charity.[6] He himself came from a family with a certain amount of privilege, giving him access to education and professional opportunities, while his family's long-standing Christian faith shaped him as well. He reports that as a young adult, hearing Christ's words to the young man of *Matthew* 19 to sell all and give the proceeds to the poor prompted his desire to live a monastic life.[7] His commitment to care for the poor grew to include his own personal benefactions during the 368 famine and the development of ecclesial ministry centers to offer food and shelter to those in need.

[4] Susan R. Holman, *The Hungry are Dying: Beggars and Bishops in Roman Cappadocia* (Oxford, 2001), 5-6. See also πένης and πτωχός, in *An Intermediate Greek-English Lexicon: Founded upon the Seventh Edition of Liddell and Scott's Greek-English Lexicon* (Oxford, 2000), 619, 709.

[5] Richard Finn, '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, UK, 2006), 130-61, 135-6.

[6] This study focuses primarily on three of Basil's homilies. Both *Homily* ('*Hom.*') 6, *Homilia in illud: 'Destruam horrea mea'* ('I Will Tear Down My Barns'), and *Hom.* 8, *Homilia dicta tempore famis et siccitatis* ('In Time of Famine and Drought'), were likely written in the aftermath of the 368 famine in Cappadocia. Both call for those with resources to share with those who do not. Basil's most direct challenge to wealth comes in *Hom.* 7, *Homilia in divites* ('To the Rich'); the date for this homily is uncertain (S. Holman, *The Hungry are Dying* [2001], 76-9, 102-9). For the Greek text of these homilies, see PG 31. For an English translation, see Basil, *On Social Justice*, trans. C. Paul Schroeder (Crestwood, NY, 2009). The English titles that I cite come from this translation.

[7] Basil, *Epistula* 223.2. For a discussion of Basil's family background, see Philip Rousseau, *Basil of Caesarea* (Berkeley, 1994), 1-26.

He has harsh words for wealth in this selection of sermons. He describes accumulation of wealth as unnatural, contrary to nature. What is natural is generosity. It is the design of nature, reflecting the goodness of the Creator.[8] Two of his sermons, both likely preached during the famine of 368 and 369, give an idyllic view of the generosity of creation. In Homily 6, he observes that the earth produces its fruit for others,[9] while in Homily 8, he says animals recognize instinctively that they hold all goods in common. For example, they share pastures with one another: 'Flocks of sheep graze together upon the same hillside, herds of horses feed upon the same plain, and all living creatures permit each other to satisfy their need for food'.[10]

Basil wants Christians likewise to share generously with others. He makes frequent use of the word κοινός, or common, in urging others to share their goods. He speaks of common goods,[11] a common nature shared by all people (κοινῆς φύσεως),[12] even the common distress of the famine.[13] Paul Schroeder sees in the word κοινός an expression of a basic moral principle for Basil: 'The world was created for the common benefit of all, and given by God to humanity for their shared use'.[14] While he stops short of calling for renunciation of material goods, Basil urges generous sharing rather than accumulation of wealth. He does not limit generosity to the wealthy but recognizes ways that the poor too can be generous and assures that even a meager gift can help another person in need.[15]

Giving is natural in Basil's worldview. What is unnatural is human greed, and that greed is the source of wealth.[16] He contrasts the generosity of nature and human greed, describing creation as fertile, cooperative, and generous, while human greed is 'bitter' and 'miserly'.[17] In another sermon, he suggests that human greed is so serious that it can cause even the generosity of God and creation to dwindle: 'This is why God does not open his hand: because we have closed up our hearts towards our brothers and sisters. This is why the fields are arid: because love has dried up'.[18]

[8] Basil, *Hom.* 6.1.

[9] Basil, *Hom.* 6.3. In contrast, the rich man of *Luke* 12 clings to his harvest even as his barns overflow.

[10] Basil, *Hom.* 8.8, *On Social Justice* (2009), 86; PG 31, 325.

[11] Basil, *Hom.* 6.7, 8.8.

[12] Basil, *Hom.* 6.1. PG 31, 264

[13] Basil, *Hom.* 8.6.

[14] C. Paul Schroeder, introduction to *St. Basil the Great, On Social Justice* (Crestwood, NY, 2009), 31.

[15] Basil, *Hom.* 8.6.

[16] Basil, *Hom.* 6.1.

[17] Basil, *Hom.* 6.1, *On Social Justice* (2009), 60.

[18] Basil, *Hom.* 8.2, *On Social Justice* (2009), 76. Διὰ τοῦτο καὶ ὁ Θεὸς οὐκ ἀνοίγει τὴν χεῖρα, ἐπειδὴ τὴν φιλαδελφίαν ἡμεῖς ἀπεκλείσανεν. PG 31, 309.

Basil accuses the rich of hoarding the goods that belong to the whole human family. He paints satirical word pictures of the rich decking themselves out in the finest jewels, weaving them into the very fabric of their clothing, showing more concern for the lineage of their horses than for the needs of the poor.[19] While the wealthy have been gathering and flaunting their wealth, he says what actually has been taking place is that their possessions have grown to be a part of them, like an additional part of the body, a malformation that can be remedied only by a painful amputation.[20] While material goods were meant to be held in common, the rich cling to their possessions as a security, and a false one at that.[21]

Basil turns the tables on the rich, saying that by failing to share what is held in common, κοινός, the rich have become ἀκοινός, not common, cut off from what is common. While power and wealth may bring status in Roman society, Basil sees the accumulation of wealth as separating the rich from the human community. Preaching during the famine, Basil speaks of those who, according to *Matthew* 25, will be cast into fire at the final judgement because they failed to care for others. He says that by failing to care for others, they have failed to reflect God's own generosity. Basil calls them ἀκοινώνητος, un-common.[22] This word choice is chilling in light of Susan Holman's note that this is the same term used for excommunication from the Church.[23] The word, then, would carry strong connotations for Basil's community. It suggests that those who do not share what is κοινός cut themselves off from human nature, which is also κοινός, and may even find themselves cut off from salvation.

A poignant story in one sermon drives home how far the rich have distanced themselves from their own humanity while gathering their wealth. With his words, Basil takes the assembly into the struggle of a father in agony trying to decide which child to sell into slavery so his other children will not starve. Basil traces the father's thoughts as he asks which child would bring in the most money. As he considers the qualities of each one, he cannot bear to part with any of them. He also realizes that if he sells one child, however noble his intentions may be, he will lose the trust of the other children. Basil's telling of the story is heart-wrenching. The suffering of the father is vividly real and human. Meanwhile, the wealthy come off as heartless, unable to feel normal human emotion for the struggles of others. Basil writes: 'While the parents come with tears streaming down their faces to sell the dearest of their children, you are not swayed by their sufferings ... They come offering their very heart

[19] Basil, *Hom.* 7.2, 4.

[20] Basil, *Hom.* 7.1.

[21] Basil, *Hom.* 7.3.

[22] Basil, *Hom.* 8.7, *On Social Justice* (2009), 85. PG 31, 324. Earlier in the sermon, Basil contrasts God's generosity with those who neglect the needy, calling them 'grudging' (ἐγενόμεθα) and 'unsociable' or un-human (ἀκοινώνητοι). (Basil, *Hom.* 8.2, *On Social Justice* [2009], 76. PG 31, 309).

[23] S. Holman, *The Hungry are Dying* (2001), 185 n. 4.

in exchange for food ... Tears do not move you, groans do not soften your heart'.[24] The concern of the wealthy is only gold.[25]

Basil's preaching claims a human face for the poor. He finds their foundational identity not in their need but their common humanity. Rather than any lack on their part, Basil sees their poverty as a critique of those around them who have failed to share.[26] While not ignoring distinctions of walks of life, Basil places the poor in the middle of a vision of humanity defined not by social and economic status as in Roman society, but defined by κοινός, what is held in common.[27] Both giver and receiver are at the root, human. Basil calls the rich to return to their humanity through charity. Those who fail to give fall short. To be human, then, is to share in κοινός, sharers in common humanity who also share common goods generously.

Augustine: A community in Christ

Love is central to Augustine's theology, so it is no surprise that works of charity and care for others, whether poor or not, hold a prime place in his preaching.[28] In comparison to Basil's sharp focus on the humanity of the poor, it could seem that Augustine depersonalizes the poor. In fact, Peter Brown observes that Augustine has much to say about alms, but relatively little to say about the poor.[29] Yet, for Augustine, care for the poor must include love for

[24] Basil, *Hom.* 6.4, *On Social Justice* (2009), 65. Καὶ ὁ μὲν μετὰ μυρίων δακρύων τὸν φίλτατον τῶν παίδων ἀπεμπολήσων ἔρχεται· σὲ δὲ οὐ κάμπτει τὸ πάθος ... Καὶ ὁ μὲν τὰ σπλάγχνα προτείνεται τιμὴν τῶν τροφῶν ... Οὐ δάκρυον σοι ἐλεεινόν, οὐ στεναγμὸς καρδίαν μαλάσσει. PG 31, 269.

[25] *Ibid*.

[26] When preaching on wealth, Basil places essentially no blame on the poor. In *Homilia II in Psalmum XIV* (*Hom. Ps.* 14b), he does make a brief mention that the poor only make their situation worse when they take loans, especially at interest (Basil, *Hom. Ps.* 14b.2, PG 29, 268-72; 'Against Those Who Lend at Interest', *On Social Justice* [2009], 91-3).

[27] Rousseau suggests that Basil does not seek to undo the social order but instead calls the powerful to see those over whom they have authority and control as their equals. He also urges the rich to recognize the temporal nature of their wealth and heaven as culmination of their aspirations (P. Rousseau, *Basil of Caesarea* [1994], 138-9).

[28] I have drawn from a cross-section of Augustine's preaching on almsgiving, particularly during the season of Lent; the two-fold love of God and neighbor (*Matthew* 22); and Christ's promise that where mercy is offered to 'these least of these' it is offered to him (*Matthew* 25). For the Latin text of Augustine's *Sermones* ('*s.*'), see PL 38. For an English translation, see Augustine, *Sermons*, trans. Edmund Hill, ed. John E. Rotelle, Works of Saint Augustine (WSA) pt. 3, vol. 1-11 (New York, 1990-1997). While charity runs through his preaching in general, many of Augustine's homilies relate directly to almsgiving. Richard Finn counts 113 such sermons. (Richard Finn, *Almsgiving in the Later Roman Empire: Christian Promotion and Practice, 313-450* [Oxford, 2006], 147).

[29] P. Brown, *Through the Eye of a Needle* (2012), 154. Richard Finn also notes that the poor often are not visible in Augustine's preaching about alms and care for the poor. Even so, in

the poor, so others can never be reduced to a means to an end. Rather, like Basil he reconfigures the relationship of the rich and the poor, in this case by emphasizing a shared identity in Christ.

Unlike Basil, Augustine had not grown up with the privileges of wealth and was himself a clear beneficiary of the patronage system. His father was a minor town councilor, giving him some status in the community, but Augustine relied on a patron, Romanianus, to finance his education.[30] Later as a bishop, Augustine saw wealth not necessarily as a problem but as an opportunity when used rightly, that is, for the benefit of others.[31]

Almsgiving is one concrete way that Augustine names to share one's resources.[32] He values not the amount of the gift but the generosity of the giver, thus, like Basil, making room for the poor to be both givers and receivers of charity.[33] Rather than focusing on what is given, he often places his emphasis what the giver gains from the act of charity, particularly forgiveness of sin.[34] This focus on what one gains from almsgiving could give the impression of reducing the poor simply to a means to an end, but the spiritual growth of which Augustine speaks points to a deepening of relationships with others.

For example, Augustine gives particular attention to almsgiving during the Lenten season, often speaking of alms drawing a person closer to God. In one sermon, he calls alms and fasting 'wings of loving kindness' that help prayers fly to God because these acts of penance and self-denial help Christians to identify more fully with Christ's humility and thus also to be lifted into his

Augustine's writings, Finn finds evidence of a bond between the giver and the poor, particularly as the poor serve as a reminder that the giver stands in need before God (R. Finn, 'Portraying the Poor' [2006], 133-5).

[30] P. Brown, *Through the Eye of a Needle* (2012), 153-4.

[31] In contrast to the Pelagian emphasis on full renunciation of wealth, Augustine took a more moderate approach. Peter Brown describes Augustine's efforts to form Christians in 'a habit of steady giving' that would provide ongoing support for the poor and the needs of the church. (Peter Brown, *Ransom of the Soul: Afterlife and Wealth in Early Western Christianity* [Cambridge, MA, 2015], 93-5). Also, Augustine emphasized that one should not divest oneself of all resources without first providing for the needs of one's family (Boniface Ramsey, 'Almsgiving in the Latin Church: The Late Fourth and Early Fifth Centuries', *Theological Studies* 43 [1982], 226-59, 233).

[32] Brown notes that Augustine recognized three types of gifts as alms: 'care of the poor, support for the clergy, and the building and maintenance of churches' (P. Brown, *Ransom of the Soul* [2015], 94).

[33] Augustine, *s.* 85.6.

[34] Peter Brown has highlighted this expiatory nature of almsgiving. He says that Augustine saw life as a daily accumulation of sin that brought with it a daily need for cleansing and forgiveness. Both almsgiving and praying the Lord's Prayer offers this necessary expiation (P. Brown, *Ransom of the Soul* [2015], 99-100). Brown says that Augustine turned to the Lord's Prayer to counter the Pelagian belief that humans could achieve perfection in this life. The prayer calls for forgiveness of sins and offers that possibility daily (Augustine, *s.* 261.10).

exaltation.[35] This image, though, carries more than an instrumental view of alms, and with them, of the poor, because the value of alms lies not in the rote action of giving but in promoting growth in humility, becoming more like Christ.[36] This humility is more than acquired personal virtue but a way of being, a manner of relating to others. Where Augustine would understand pride as self-sufficiency, humility involves embracing the interconnectedness of humanity.[37]

Growth in humility brings growth in relationship. One aspect of this growth involves mercy as Augustine says that one cannot seek God's mercy without also offering mercy to others. Thus, Augustine places mercy at the heart of almsgiving, both God's mercy and human mercy.[38] This growing resemblance to Christ reaches into human relationships, expanding one's capacity for forgiving and loving others.[39]

Spiritual growth builds on the transformation that Augustine says begins in baptism: that is, in baptism Christians are brought into the life of Christ and receive a new identity, that of Christ. He explains this transformation to newly baptized Christians one Easter: 'So if you want to understand the body of Christ, listen to the apostle telling the faithful, *You, though, are the body of Christ and its members* (1*Cor.* 12:27)'.[40] Augustine frequently reminds Christians of their call to live as Christ in the world, especially by loving others. What they will soon discover is that Christ not only is present in them but also present in those they serve, in the hungry, in the homeless, wherever there is human need, as promised in *Matthew* 25.

He makes this point in a lively sermon on Martha and Mary when he speaks as if his hearers envy the two biblical sisters because they were able to serve Christ in their home while present day Christians cannot. Citing *Matthew* 25, he assures them that they need not worry because Christ continues to come to them in the needs of others. He says: 'Don't be disappointed, don't grumble because you were born at a time when you could not now see the Lord in the flesh. He [has], in fact, [not] deprived you of this privilege

[35] Augustine, *s.* 206.1-2. WSA 3/6, 106-7. PL 38, 1041.

[36] Augustine, *s.* 206.1. As Brown notes, the right intention of the almsgiving is crucial to the value of the charity. Augustine insists that alms cannot be given to attract attention or gain glory as a civic beneficence might but must be done with a different intention: to receive forgiveness of sins (P. Brown, *Ransom of the Soul* [2015], 103).

[37] I would like to thank Allan Fitzgerald, OSA, for offering me these insights about humility as a way of being connected to others, including the 'loving solidarity' of acts of charity as the Christian humility of which Augustine speaks.

[38] Augustine, *s.* 207.1.

[39] See, for example, Augustine, *s.* 210.12.

[40] Augustine, *s.* 272. WSA 3/7, 300. *Corpus ergo Christi si vis intelligere, Apostolum audi dicentem fidelibus,* Vos autem estis corpus Christi, et membra. PL 38, 1247.

and honor: *when you did it*, [Christ] says, *to one of the least of mine, you did it to me* (*Matth.* 25:40)'.[41]

Augustine does not limit Christ's presence to the Christian poor but recognizes Christ wherever there is human need; likewise, Augustine does not limit acts of charity to the Christian poor.[42] In recognizing all those who are poor as bearing the presence of Christ, Augustine does not attempt to claim them all as Christians. Rather, his focus is on Christ's promise to be present wherever there is human need and suffering. While Christians bear the identity of Christ by virtue of their transformation in baptism, Augustine considers all those who are poor, both Christians and non-Christians, to bear the identity of Christ by virtue of Christ's fidelity to his promise made in *Matthew* 25. Whether the one who is poor is Christian or not, Augustine would say that the person bears great dignity because of Christ's presence and that to serve one who is poor is to serve Christ himself.

Augustine places Christ at the center of the relationship of giver and receiver, uniting them in a shared identity and life as Christ. Thomas Martin said it well of Augustine: 'The Christ of one's heart is also the Christ of every human relationship'.[43] Augustine does not give a highly personalized view of the poor as Basil does. Yet, Augustine affords great dignity to those in need with his conviction that wherever there is human need there Christ is. Augustine may focus primarily on the givers of alms, but as he does so, he draws their attention to those in need, including those outside the usual ties of kinship and citizenship, and even church membership, and teaches them to see there, in the poor, people of dignity, defined not by dependency but by Christ's loving solidarity.

Conclusion: A new relationship

In promoting Christian charity, Basil and Augustine redefine the relationship of giver and receiver in terms of what they hold in common. Their message was counter-cultural in the context of the Roman patronage system that rested

[41] Augustine, *s.* 103.2. WSA 3/4, 77. *Noli dolere, noli murmurare quia temporibus natus es, quando jam Dominum non vides in carne: non tibi abstulit istam dignationem.* Cum uni, *inquit,* ex minimis meis fecistis, mihi fecistis. PL 38, 613.

[42] At times, he specifies that Christ is present in needy Christians; see, for example, his *s.* 18.4, 53A.6, 113.1, 178.4-5, 197.5, 236.3. In other places, Augustine is less specific about the needy ones with whom Christ identifies and seems to suggest that Christ is present in needy humanity as a whole; see his *s.* 9.20, 25.8, 42.2, 86.3-4, 103.2, 107A.2, 113B.4, 114A.4; *en. Ps.* 49.19-20. In *s.* 38.8, however, Augustine explicitly identifies Christ with all people who are poor regardless of their religious affiliation. Boniface Ramsey notes that Augustine refers to the custom and expectation that Church would give to anyone, including those outside the Church (B. Ramsey, 'Almsgiving in the Latin Church' [1982], 230-2).

[43] Thomas F. Martin, *Our Restless Heart: The Augustinian Tradition* (Maryknoll, NY, 2003), 33. He adds that the poor hold a place of privilege in the Christian life as taught by Augustine.

on relationships of privilege and dependency. Patrons offered beneficences from a sense of duty toward fellow Roman citizens and received in return honor and praise for their demonstration of loyalty to imperial values. In their preaching, Basil and Augustine root the relationship of charity instead in a common identity that unites giver and receiver; for Basil, common humanity, and for Augustine, a shared identity in Christ. These claims of a common bond are far from pious sentiment. Rather, they offer a counter-cultural social vision in which giver and receiver are defined not by power or need, but by mutuality and love.

Sojourning and the Sojourner in Gregory of Nazianzus

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Abstract

Gregory of Nazianzus wrote that God may lead the believer through this changeable world to a more enduring one. In his orations, that changeable world is described as a sojourn, whether in the shadow of death, which must be distinguished from home, or within which some fixity might be found in asceticism. Believers are located in the role of sojourners who must decide between the country of their true home and the alienation into which evil has cast them. Such believers should view passage out of the sojourn to their true home with relief. Although this theme does not appear often in Gregory's writings, occurrences are not bound to specific occasions as might be expected, such as in funeral speeches, but range more broadly. Gregory's broad, but not self-evidently deep, use of the theme of the sojourn and the sojourner relies on a range of biblical texts, and is strongly expressive of his anthropology and his soteriology. This short communication is particularly interested in what texts Gregory used, how he interpreted them, and the soteriological content of the theme. In considering how Gregory's interpretation arose, attention is also given to other uses of sojourn language in non-Biblical sources, and in particular to parallels in Basil of Caesarea and Augustine.

Introduction

Gregory of Nazianzus adopted the language of sojourn (*paroikos*) to express the alienation of fallen humanity from the world which was their temporary home, and from the divine home which was their destiny. Gregory's use of sojourn language must be understood as indicating the place of alienation, the world and the actions of humanity within it, but not indicative of the path out of it. Although sojourn language is not common in Gregory, when it does occur it is expressive of his anthropology and soteriology. In illustrating Gregory's use of sojourn language, I will focus on three areas. First, on Gregory's interaction with biblical usage broadly taken. Second, on demonstrating how Gregory expands the biblical category of sojourners from a specific to a general one, and how it ultimately relates to his understanding of redemption – that is, the path out of the sojourn. Finally, I will offer a few preliminary thoughts on how Gregory's use of sojourn compares with that of other late antique authors.

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Sojourn rather than pilgrimage

Gregory wrote, in *Or*. 44.7: 'Do not despise the stranger, it was for his sake that Christ, whose sojourners (πάροικοι) and strangers we all are, became a stranger on earth; otherwise you will be estranged from paradise as before'.[1] This highlights a critical element of Gregory's reception of sojourn language: that the journey is not the end – that is, a pilgrimage from home to somewhere new – but a sojourn, the spatial setting of alienation, and which is not an end in itself. In Gregory's case, where passage out of the sojourn is so critical, the use of pilgrimage can be helpful when used as a self-conscious, descriptive conceptual frame, but which can be problematic when it conditions interpretation.[2] It is noteworthy that biblical scholarship has more or less abandoned the use of pilgrim, or pilgrimage, in favour of sojourn, or alienation, sojourner, or resident alien. Feldmeier, conditioning his reading with reference to a possible historical background in Philo, argues for a reading of *paroikos* in 1*Peter* as an eschatological metaphor.[3] By interpreting *paroikos* in 1*Peter* as describing the alienation of the Christian from the world, Feldmeier sees the text as absorbing and repurposing an older tradition. This earlier 'biblical and Jewish' tradition saw humanity as alienated from God, whereas, for Feldmeier, 1*Peter* sees the Christian as alienated from the world.[4] Pilgrimage is unsuitable in either case. A similar fate happened in the case of *peregrinatio* in Augustine by way of Schmidt, who argued that pilgrimage was a mistranslation of the Latin.[5] Translations of Gregory have absorbed these developments, as evidenced by the lack of pilgrimage language from modern translation, but the texts themselves are largely unexamined.

Sojourn as life

Although we have already seen an example from *Or*. 44, in which Gregory described the sojourn as a past alienation from paradise, those uses in the funeral speech for his brother Caesarius, and the funeral speech for his sister

[1] *Or*. 44.7. Translations are modified from NPNF, or as specified.

[2] Two positive examples of this kind of framing can be found in Christopher Beeley and Brian Daley: Christopher Beeley, *Gregory of Nazianzus on the Trinity: In Your Light We Shall See Light* (New York, 2008), 84; Brian Daley, introduction to *Re-Reading Gregory of Nazianzus* (Washington, D.C., 2012), 12.

[3] Reinhard Feldmeier, 'The "Nation" of Strangers: Social Contempt and its Theological Interpretation in Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity', in Mark G. Brett (ed.), *Ethnicity and the Bible* (Leiden, 2002), 241-70, 243. See also Torrey Seland, 'πάροικος καὶ παρεπίδημος: Proselyte Characterizations in 1 Peter?', *Bulletin for Biblical Research* 112 (2001), 239-68, 246.

[4] R. Feldmeier, 'The "Nation" of Strangers' (2001), 264-5.

[5] Ernst Schmidt, *Zeit und Geschichte bei Augustin* (Heidelberg, 1985), 84. See also R. Feldmeier, 'The "Nation" of Strangers' (2001), 264 n. 94-5.

Gorgonia show the significance of persistent alienation in his thought. In his oration on his brother he wrote, 'Compassionate, sympathetic, snatching many a treasure from moths and robbers, and from the prince of this world, to transfer it from their sojourn (παροικίας) here to home (κατοικίαν), laying up in store for their children the heavenly splendour as their greatest inheritance'.[6] This reading of life as an ongoing sojourn, an alienation from a true, heavenly home to which return is possible, is further emphasised later in the same oration when Gregory references *Ps*. 119:5-6:

> Are we not, even if we are somewhat grieved, to be on the contrary distressed at our lengthened sojourn (παροικίᾳ), like holy David, who calls things here the tents of darkness, and the place of affliction, and the deep mire, and the shadow of death; because we linger in the tombs we bear about with us, because, though we are gods, we die like men the death of sin? This is my fear, this day and night accompanies me, and will not let me breathe, on one side the glory, on the other the place of correction: the former I long for till I can say, my soul faints for your salvation.[7]

However, this view seems something of a contrast with the closing remarks of his oration for his sister, where he wrote: 'Yet may my only honour be that which is in God, and may my sojourn (παροικοῦντες) and my home be in Christ Jesus our Lord…'[8] This is not just a case of a phrase having a greater breadth of meaning: the form used here is the same as that found in 1*Chr*. 29:15 when David declares his people 'aliens and strangers' in the sight of God.[9] Although these more positive associations of sojourn language would suggest conditioning by a reading of 1*Peter*, identifying Christians as a discrete category apart from the world, those uses in his oration for his brother are strongly negative, representing the sojourn as alienation from God. At the same time, it is clear that Gregory was drawing on the theological content of extant language.[10] While there is no secure consensus on the literal or metaphorical nature of the use of *paroikos* in a New Testament context, *Eph*. 2:19 is broadly accepted as an example of non-sociological use.[11] Paul's assertion that his hearers are no longer sojourners cuts across the Israelite and Jewish tradition, as well as the Petrine. While Gregory was familiar with *Eph*. 2:19-22, drawing on its

[6] *Or*. 7.4.

[7] *Or*. 7.22.

[8] *Or*. 8.23.

[9] Joshua Jippp, *Divine Visitations and Hospitality to Strangers in Luke-Acts: An Interpretation of the Malta Episode in Acts 28: 1-10* (Leiden, 2013), 152.

[10] Although they are hardly the only ones to make this identification, it is noteworthy that Gregory's contemporary, Emperor Julian, also described the Jews as δουλεῦσαι δὲ ἀεὶ καὶ παροικῆσαι, alongside an appeal to *Gen*. 15:13 Abraham as πάροικος ἦν ἐν ἀλλοτρίᾳ, in *Contra Galileos*. See *Works, Vol 3. Julian the Emperor*, trans. William Cave Wright (Cambridge, MA, 1923), 209.

[11] Ben Witherington, *Letters and Homilies for Hellenized Christians, Volume 1: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on Titus, 1-2 Timothy and 1-3 John* (Downers Grove, 2006), 24.

language of temple-making for his own pneumatology, his use of sojourning language bears little apparent relation.[12] Unlike Paul, Gregory does not allow for the possibility of escape from the sojourner status in this life, but instead expands the category of sojourner.

Sojourner as expansive category

Holding this exegetical interaction with different biblical usages in in mind, when we turn our attention towards who occupied Gregory's category of sojourner, some of the contours resolve themselves. A fuller representation of Gregory's position is suggested by his description of the Israelite exile in his second oration on peace:

> Sad it was too when the ark fell into foreign hands and Jerusalem was razed and trampled by the nations, and the sons of Zion, prized and precious as gold, were led off into captivity to remain scattered to this very day, a people strangers and sojourners (πάροικος) in the world.[13]

While the sojourners of 1*Peter* are decidedly Christians, for Gregory Jews are also sojourners in the world. *Paroikoi*, then, are not just Christians alienated from the world by dint of their faith, but others as well. He does not merely have a special category for the so-called sons of Zion. In his oration against the Arians, Gregory makes clear that we are all sojourners, and that the true home, open to those of 'high mind', who guard their archetype as the image of the divine, is the heavenly Jerusalem:

> My friend, every one that is of high mind has one country, the heavenly Jerusalem, in which we store up our citizenship. […] And these earthly countries and families are the playthings of this our temporary life and scene. For our country is whatever each may have first occupied, either as tyrant, or in misfortune; and in this we are all alike strangers and sojourners (πάροικοι), however much we may play with names.[14]

In seeming to point towards both the older biblical sojourner tradition which 1*Peter* drew on, as well engaging with its recapitulation in 1*Peter* itself, Gregory suggests the sojourn as a place of almost total alienation – from God and from the world. This reading seems to owe more to *Eph*. 2:19. Paul asserts that his readers are no longer sojourners. Gregory's argument is less positive than this, despite his speaking to a sympathetic church audience. His listeners, and he himself, remain sojourners. The apparent permanency of the sojourn in life, that

[12] *Or*. 34.12. See *Or*. 20.4, 31.29, and 33.15. See also Timothy Wardle, *The Jerusalem Temple and Early Christian Identity* (Tübingen, 2010), 215.

[13] *Or*. 22.2, trans. Martha Vinson, *St. Gregory of Nazianzus: Selection Orations* (Washington, D.C., 2003), 118.

[14] *Or*. 33.12. Parallels with *Phil*. 3:20 and *Heb*. 13:14 are also apparent here.

is to say, the sojourn as life, must be understood alongside the hope of restoration. These apparently disparate concepts come together within Gregory's anthropology: humanity, as 'dust and breath' has 'affection for one of the ways of life because of my earthly component, while I have in my heart a longing for the other life through the divine part in me'.[15] The ante-lapsarian humanity, however, now clothed in flesh that muted its divinity, and in need of reconciliation, is necessarily inclined towards the sojourn, rather than towards home. This sentiment is expressed in his funeral oration for his father, where Gregory wrote:

> For this would lessen our pain because of friends departed before us, no, we should rejoice if your words should carry us hence and set us on high, and hide distress of the present in the future, and persuade us that we also are pressing on to a good master, and that our home is better than our sojourn (παροικίας); and that translation and removal thus is to us who are tempest-tossed here like a calm haven to men at sea.[16]

The present sojourn is set in contrast with the future hope of a return home. Death, as return and reconciliation, is not to be feared but is to be embraced. Not only does this comparison draw together the disparate expressions of the sojourn found in Gregory, but it shows precisely why it is necessary to avoid pilgrimage language when translating it. The sojourn is not to anywhere, it is instead a place in itself: it is the space of human alienation, that is alien by dint of human citizenship ultimately belonging to heaven.[17] None of this obviates the hope Gregory can attach to the concept, such as in his sister's funeral oration. Gregory there asked that his sojourn and his home be in Christ. This apparent deviation is further explained by the possibility of finding some security in the sojourn as one of the virtues of asceticism that Gregory praised in his first oration on peace:

> … a middle ground between involvement in society and withdrawal from it, the one educating others to the world, the other to the mysteries of the Spirit, the one preserving solitude in the midst of community, the other fraternity and fellowship amid the solitary life; and, still nobler and more uplifting than these, riches in poverty; firm tenure in sojourning (παροικίᾳ)…[18]

Gregory's anthropology, of humanity as divine and earthly, but with those elements now imbalanced, leads him to regard each living person as necessarily

[15] *Carm*. 1.1.7.76-7, ed. Claudio Moreschini, trans., int., and com. Donald Sykes, *St Gregory of Nazianzus: Poemata Arcana* (Oxford, 1997), 37. See Sykes' comments about the powerfully conflicted language of *stergo*, leading to his rendering '"have affection for", rather than the weaker "acquiesce in". There is a tension, with strong force likely to be exerted in both directions', *ibid.* 241.

[16] *Or*. 18.3.

[17] See *Or*. 33.11-2. Vinson's translation of *Or*. 16.14 would seem to contradict my argument here. However, although she uses sojourn there, it is not to translate any form of *paroikos*. M. Vinson, *St. Gregory* (2003), 187.

[18] *Or*. 6.2, trans. M. Vinson, *St. Gregory* (2003), 4.

alienated from the world and God. Soteriologically, this means that the end of the sojourn is in returning home, to God, to paradise, through Christ. The sojourn is not itself that journey out, but is instead just it's setting. Thus, while the use of pilgrimage with relation to Gregory's soteriology can be helpful, conflating pilgrimage with *paroikos* unhelpfully obscures the degree to which the sojourn is seen negatively. Such conflation threatens to collapse two related ideas that nevertheless need to be held distinct from one another: the journey towards purification, and the sojourn out of which it occurs.

Comparisons with other uses

Finally, in considering some of the implications of this reading, we can find a number of points where similar or greater engagement with *paroikos* language can be found. Gregory of Nyssa stands out among the Cappadocians for having done relatively little with it. Basil of Caesarea, on the contrary, outstrips either of his immediate contemporaries, with over fifty instances of *paroikos* language. Not all of these, of course, consist of theologically loaded language. Enough individual instances are to suggest something of a shared sense of life as a sojourn, defined negatively.[19] Looking more broadly what 'constitutes the foreign', as Feldmeier puts it, can vary quite widely between early uses of this language. In particular, Feldmeier cites the 'radical' foreignness of Christians from the world as a consequence of ejection from paradise in the *Shepherd of Hermas*, as compared with the more intentional self-alienation from the world as expressed in the *Letter of Diognetus*.[20] While it is possible to locate Gregory of Nazianzus' own use with reference to these works, in that, again, he seems to suggest elements of both positions, this is quite likely as a result of his use of *paroikos* language not necessarily extensively, but consistently over the entirety of his career. A more valuable, though less linguistically direct, comparison could therefore be made to Augustine's use of *peregrinatio*, already mentioned earlier. Although Augustine made more extensive use of *peregrinatio* than Gregory did of *paroikos*, they both returned to the language over long careers, replete with opportunities for greater nuance and development. Likewise, his use of the sojourner, or the resident alien, compares well with Gregory's own: to use Brown's description, Augustine's sojourner is 'radically otherworldly', while still 'dependant on the world around him'.[21] This is born out in Augustine's description of life as sojourn, which bears marked similarities to Gregory's own. Out of the numerous examples, one in particular bears in a

[19] As with Nyssen and Gregory of Nazianzus, some uses are questionably theological – descriptions of actual sojourns, for example.

[20] R. Feldmeier, 'The "Nation" of Strangers' (2001), 265. See *Herm.* 1.1; 1.3. *Dg*. 5.1.

[21] Peter, Brown, *Augustine of Hippo: A Biography* (London, 1967), 323.

striking resemblance to *Or*. 18.3: 'We know many things from the pledge; for we have received a pledge, and the fullness of this pledge shall be given later. Meanwhile, let the pledge console us in our sojourn here (*Interim in hac peregrinatione pignus nos consoletur*)…'[22] In these cases, Gregory and Augustine appeal to knowledge of later salvation is appealed to as a comfort in the present sojourn.

Concluding remarks

As a minor part of Gregory's thought, particularly when compared to Augustine, it is clear that sojourn language is not a central pillar of Gregory's thought in itself, such language is reflective of and interacts with numerous areas of his thought which are more central. As Gregory put it in expressing the dichotomy between the sojourn and the destination, and summing up much of his view on the proper path of the Christian: 'Who will distinguish between appearance and reality, ignore the one and court the other? Who between fact and fiction? Who between the tabernacle below and the city above? Who between sojourn (παροικίαν) and home? Who between dark and light?'[23] For Gregory, to be a sojourner is to be lost in the tents of darkness, dwelling insecure in an unfamiliar and hostile place. These elements are emphasised in his appeals not just to the tents of darkness, but to the temporariness, insecurity, and the dangers of storm-tossed sea travel. It is not to be a pilgrim on the way home then, but to be lost. To find fixity within it, or to ask that your sojourn be with Christ, is not to transform the sojourn. The recreation of human nature in Christ which frames Gregory's use of this language calls for an end to the sojourn, and for a return home. Thus, for Gregory, it is not the sojourn which gives the believer the means to realise their true home and inheritance through a sojourn ended in Christ.[24]

[22] Augustine, *In Evangelium Ioannis tractatus centum viginti quatuor*, 32.5. Other examples of the *Tractatus* include 6.2; 6.15; and 40.10. These suggest the *peregrinatio* as a temporary alienation to be suffered through, but are just a few of many uses.

[23] *Or*. 14.21, trans. M. Vinson, *St. Gregory* (2003), 54.

[24] See Donald Winslow, *The Dynamics of Salvation: A Study in Gregory of Nazianzus* (Cambridge, MA, 1979), 154. See also Torstein Tollefsen, '*Theosis* according to Gregory', in *Gregory of Nazianzus: Images and Reflections*, ed. J. Børtnes and T. Hägg (Copenhagen, 2006), 257-70, 267.

The Grave Politics of Gregory Nazianzen's Eulogy for Gorgonia[1]

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Abstract

The tragic deaths of their sisters impelled both Gregory of Nyssa and Gregory Nazianzen to write moving encomia for the departed women. While Nyssa's biography of Macrina has received a great amount of attention, scholars have not fully realized the potential in studying Nazianzen' eulogy for Gorgonia. This is particularly troubling because this oration offers a compelling source for the study of gender dynamics in fourth-century Cappadocia. An investigation into Gregory's language reveals a great amount of continuity with pre-Christian gender expectations. Gregory's rhetoric places him in a centuries-long tradition of *laudatio memoriae* for women that emphasize traditional feminine qualities of the departed. Such speeches, scholars agree, were political acts designed to reestablish or increase the political standing of the woman's family, especially in cases involving scandal. In particular, this paper juxtaposes Gregory's oration with the so-called *Laudatio Turiae*, a late first-century BCE inscription dedicated to an unconventional *matrona* by her husband. A comparison between this encomia and Gregory's oration reveals that Gorgonia's virtues, as Gregory describes them, fit neatly with what would be expected of an elite Roman *matrona*. Indeed, Nazianzen emphasizes Gorgonia's matronly qualities and goes to great lengths to excuse behaviors that might appear unseemly for a married woman. If this eulogy can, as Virginia Burrus (2006 [see n. 2]) suggests, be considered the first female hagiography, then we might say that Gregory's sanctification of Gorgonia attempted to solidify social expectations among the elite rather than troubling them. However, the fact that Gorgonia's actions speak to us so strongly suggests that her brother failed at writing her into the narrative of his choosing.

Introduction

The tragic deaths of their sisters impelled both Gregory of Nyssa and Gregory Nazianzen to write moving encomia for the departed women. While Nyssa's biography of Macrina has received a great amount of attention, scholars have not fully realized the potential in studying Nazianzen' eulogy for Gorgonia.

[1] All Greek and Latin translations within this article are my own. The Greek text of Gregory's oration follows Marie Ange Calvet-Sebasti (ed.), Grégoire de Nazianze: *Discours 6-12*, SC 405 (Paris, 1995). Latin text of the *Laudatio Turiae* follows Dieter Flach, *Die Sogenannte* Laudatio Turiae*: Einleitung, Text, Übersetzung und Kommentar* (Darmstadt, 1991).

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The *Romanitas* of Cappadocia

Before taking a closer look at these texts, it is necessary to address a larger methodological concern. Comparisons involving material from Republican or Early Imperial Rome and those from fourth-century Cappadocia might seem, at first blush, problematic. After all, the epigraphic texts that I will mention were written in a different time period, in a different language, by a seemingly different culture altogether than the Christian near east. However, these two cultures were less dissimilar than they might seem. Indeed, there is a great amount of evidence that the societies of Byzantium were by and large Roman in nature. Anthony Kaldellis argues quite convincingly that this was always the case, reminding us that 'the people we call Byzantines today called themselves Romans.'[3] Kaldellis continues, in assiduous detail, to show how it was Roman culture that ruled the Byzantines, despite their Greek-speaking ways. Indeed, he argues that the use of Greek in Asia Minor has prevented scholars from fully realizing the extent of Romanization in that area.[4] Setting aside preconceived

[2] Virginia Burrus, 'Life after Death: The Martyrdom of Gorgonia and the Birth of Female Hagiography', in Jostein Børtnes and Tomas Hägg (eds), *Gregory of Nazianzus: Images and Reflections* (Copenhagen, 2006), 153-70.

[3] Anthony Kaldellis, *Hellenism in Byzantium* (Cambridge, UK, 2011), 42.

[4] *Ibid*. 45.

notions of the definition of 'Romanization', Kaldellis discovers that there is a great amount of cultural continuity between even the Republic and the height of the Byzantine Empire. The Cappadocians considered themselves 'Roman', and the ethnonym 'Greek' (*i.e.* Ἕλλην) came to be used as a term of abuse for their non-Christian opponents.[5] Therefore, we should have very few reservations about utilizing Roman sources in order to illuminate elements of Cappadocian culture.

Precedents for *laudatio memoriae* for women

Although *laudatio memoriae* for women were more rare than those given for men, they were by no means uncommon. Cicero seems to suggest that the mother of Lutatius Catulus was the first woman to receive a public funeral oration, in this instance performed by her surviving the son in the second century BCE.[6] T.W. Hillard challenges this notion, believing that evidence exists for families publicly performing these rituals for women much earlier.[7] Whatever the case may be, it is clear that the practice becomes more common – or is perhaps popularized – after Catulus' speech. As Emily A. Hermelrijk notes, Roman politicians could not help but notice the benefit to their public profiles that a good eulogy for a family member might bring. In her words:

> … the political profit to be gained from public funeral laudations – also those for women – was such that [the] initial reserve was soon laid aside: from [the late first century BCE] onwards, funeral eulogies for women, including young ones, of distinguished families are mentioned as a matter of course.[8]

Public eulogies provided Roman men of standing the opportunity to build the reputation of their family in public while mediating the risk of appearing to boast.[9] It also allowed the aristocracy the opportunity to 'correct the record', so to speak, by realigning what might perhaps be considered unconventional

[5] See Alan Cameron, *The Last Pagans of Rome* (New York, 2011), 16-8 and Susanna Elm, *Sons of Hellenism, Fathers of the Church: Emperor Julian, Gregory of Nazianzus, and the Vision of Rome* (Berkeley, 2012), 370. Cameron, does not style the term as one of abuse as Elm does, but I find his argument that it lacks abusive qualities because Julian uses it to be lacking.

[6] *De oratore* 2.44.

[7] T.W. Hillard, 'Popilia and « Laudationes Funebres » for Women', *Antichthon* 35 (2001), 45-63.

[8] Emily A. Hemelrijk, 'Masculinity and Femininity in the "*Laudatio Turiae*"', *CQ* 54 (2004), 185-97, 187.

[9] One of the primary reasons why Athens prohibited publicly held funerals for individual families was the control this practice afforded over the memory of the dead. The publicly instituted ἐπιτάφιος λόγος and appropriated those deceased in war in order to further the glory of the city, thus stabilizing the amount of honor and prestige any one family could gain from their deceased. In the Roman Republic, it seems that families began to realize that they might do something similar for the benefit of their own *auctoritas*. For the social and political functions of

behavior with societal norms. As I will show below, Gregory's eulogy for his sister falls neatly into this category of political expedience. For now, we should be careful with claims that Gregory requires the opening *recusatio* of his speech because Gorgonia is a *woman*.[10] This is not to say that Gorgoina's gender has nothing to do with the way we should analyze the text. It is merely that Gorgoina's portrayal *as* a woman should rather occupy our attention.

The *Laudatio Turiae*

The inscription referred to as the *Laudatio Turiae* is perhaps the most well known funerary speech for a woman in antiquity, mostly owing to its being well preserved on a stele.[11] Based on epigraphic analysis and historical references within the text, scholars have dated the speech to the last decade of the first century BCE.[12] Turia does not exactly conform to the picture of a meek and cloistered Roman housewife. Indeed, she shows a great amount of initiative and involvement in public affairs. According to the inscription, Turia played an integral role in avenging the death of her parents in the absence of her husband, apparently through the law courts.[13] When her inheritance was thereafter tied up in a legal battle, Turia vigorously 'protected with the truth [her and her husband's] common cause' – that is, the property rights to which she and, by

the ἐπιτάφιος λόγος, see Nicole Loraux, *The Invention of Athens: The Funeral Oration in the Classical City*, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York, 2006).

[10] Virginia Burrus points out as evidence for this claim that no such defense against the charge of boasting appears in Nazianzen's eulogies for his brother or father. However, I would suggest that the frequency of public eulogies given for women in Roman culture presents a problem for such an interpretation. Therefore, I feel that the fact that Nazianzen goes out of his way to justify his ability to fairly eulogize Gorgonia and not his other family members might still remain an issue. Perhaps it is not because Gorgonia is a woman, but because she is Gregory's sister. The public eulogies for women that survive are presented by fathers, sons, and husbands but not at all by brothers. Alternatively, Gregory's insistence on his right to give the eulogy may stem from the facts surrounding *this very woman*; that is to say, it is possible that Gorgonia's public persona necessitated extra care from Nazianzen lest he be accused of revising history for the purpose of self-aggrandizement. V. Burrus, 'Life after Death' (2006), 158.

[11] Although the deceased is not named within the text, the inscription has been called the *Laudatio Turiae* because there was an initial assumption that the eulogy's creator was the Roman statesman Q. Lucretius Vespillo, the husband of a certain Turia. Marcel Durry provides a good summary of the controversy over this attribution, concluding that no such assumption can be made. Marcel Durry, *Éloge funèbre d'une matrone Romaine (éloge dit de Turia); texte établi, traduit et commenté*, Collection des Universités de France 129 (Paris, 1950), liv. I have not come across any recent scholarship that accepts Turia as the eulogy's subject. I refer to her as 'Turia' throughout this article only for the sake of convenience.

[12] For specifics on the dating of the stele, see *ibid*. liv.

[13] *LT* 1.3. Her husband and her sister's husband – to whom such a responsibility would have fallen in the absence of the former – were apparently away from Rome on business.

means of their marriage, her husband were entitled.[14] She physically defends their home when its former owner hires a band of mercenaries to burglarize it.[15] And she even secures her husband's return home in what undoubtedly appeared an unseemly fashion:

[*reddito iam*] *cive patriae beneficio et iudicio apsentis Caesaris Augusti,* [*quom abs te ---*] *de restitutione mea M. L*[*epi*]*dus conlega praesens interp*[*ellaretur et ad eius*] *pedes prostrata humi non modo n*[*on*] *adlevata, sed tra*[*ducta et indignum in*] *modum rapsata,* livori[bus *c*]*orporis repleta, firmissimo* [*animo eum admone*]*res edicti Caesaris cum gratulatione restitutionis me*[*ae atque vocibus* eti]am *contumeliosis et cr*[*ud*]*elibus exceptis volneribus pa*[*lam conquereris*]*, ut auctor meorum peric*[*ul*]*orum notesceret.*

For when I had been restored as a citizen of my homeland by the kindness and judgment of Caesar Augustus (who was absent at the time) … his colleague Marcus Lepidus (who was there at the time) was accosted by you for my restitution. You threw yourself upon the ground at his feet and were not only hauled up, but even dragged away and handled in a shameful manner. Your body was filled with bruises, but with a most resolute spirit you kept reminding him of Caesar's edict with congratulations for my restitution. Even though you heard insulting words and took on cruel wounds, you publicly wailed so that the author of my peril would be known.[16]

Turia publicly subjects herself not only to an ostentatious public display, but also to socially degrading violence such that her body is now 'filled with bruises'. As Hemelrijk reminds us, such a display does not match what one would expect from traditional Roman gender roles.[17] Other epitaphic inscriptions for Roman wives praise the women's beauty, skills in household management, piety, sobriety, and chastity.[18] Turia's performance would not have gone unnoticed by her husband's political rivals. Thus, he must recast her actions as evidence of overwhelming devotion to him. Hemelrijk conducts a comparison with three famous couples of antiquity in order to reveal how women at the forefront of public life could have such publicity turned either for or against them posthumously. The key for their politically embattled kin was to highlight a mixture of what were considered male and female virtues. 'The *laudator*', Hemelrijk writes, 'could not omit traditional virtues … they were essential to the reputation of any woman, and perhaps even more so to those who lived an unconventional life'.[19] Turia's husband therefore must also praise her so-called 'womanly' qualities, but he does so obliquely:

Domestica bona pudici[*t*]*iae, opsequi, comitatis, facilitatis, lanificii, stud*[*i religionis*] *sine superstitione, o*[*r*]*natus non conspciendi, cultus modici cur* [*memorem*]*?*

[14] *LT* 1.18. *Veritate caussam communem tutata es*.
[15] *LT* 2.6a-9a.
[16] *LT* 2.11-8.
[17] E.A. Hemelrijk, 'Masculinity and Femininity' (2004), 190.
[18] See, for example, CIL 6.12853, ILS 8402 and ILS 8444.
[19] E.A. Hemelrijk, 'Masculinity and Femininity' (2004), 194.

Your domestic virtues of chastity, obedience, courtesy, affability, your wool-working, your piety without superstition, your inconspicuous dress, and your moderate style: Why should I even mention them?[20]

Clearly, her husband knows very well why he mentioned them. Even though the author quickly moves on, Hemelrijk points out, the list appears at eye level and is followed by more tales that may perhaps seem scandalous.[21] Not only, then, is the viewer's gaze drawn to Turia's matronly qualities, but the stories of her outlandish behavior are literally built around those qualities, giving them central importance in Turia's public persona. Her unconventional behavior is thus conventionalized and set into a context wherein her loyalty to her husband is stressed even if her actions may at first appear controversial.

Gregory's eulogy

It is with this history of *laudatio memoriae* in mind that I would like to return to Nazianzen. In Nazianzen's eulogy for her, Gorgonia receives praise for various traditionally feminine virtues. In Cappodocia, the virtue most comparable with the *pudicitia* and *sobria* mentioned by Turia's husband – and indeed the most primary virtue for any Roman *matrona* of the East – was σωφροσύνη. It is this very virtue with which Gregory begins to laud Gorgonia's superiority among women:

Σωφροσύνῃ μέν γε τοσοῦτον διήνεγκε καὶ τοσοῦτον ὑπερῆρε τὰς καθ' ἑαυτὴν ἁπάσας – ἵνα μὴ λέγω τὰς παλαιάς, ὧν ὁ πολὺς ἐπὶ σωφροσύνῃ λόγος –, ὥστε εἰς δύο ταῦτα διῃρημένου πᾶσι τοῦ βίου, γάμου λέγω καὶ ἀγαμίας … ἀμφοτέρων φυγοῦσα τὸ ἀηδὲς ὅσον κάλλιστόν ἐστιν ἐν ἀμφοτέροις ἐκλέξασθαι, καὶ εἰς ἕν ἀγαγεῖν … καὶ γενέσθαι σωφρῶν ἄτυφος…

In σωφροσύνῃ she so excelled and even surpassed all women of her own day – I shouldn't mention those of ages past who are reputed for their σωφροσύνῃ – that, seeing as everyone's life is divided into a married or unmarried path … avoiding the unpleasant things of both, she managed to pick out the best quality in each and combine them into one thing … thus becoming wise but not arrogant.[22]

Putting Gorgonia's σωφροσύνη front and center allows Gregory to contextualize the episodes he will recount later. Comparing her σωφροσύνη with that of the women of his day also provides Gregory with an opportunity to shift the light of criticism to other elite women. Indeed, Gregory goes on to praise Gorgonia for the modesty of her dress and uses the memorializing of this quality to chastise and exhort the women among his audience:

[20] *LT* 1.30.

[21] E.A. Hemelrijk, 'Masculinity and Femininity' (2004), 193.

[22] *Orationes* 8.8.797A. I choose to leave σωφροσύνῃ untranslated because I believe no English term captures its full range of meaning.

Ἀλλὰ πολλοὺς μὲν ἤδει καὶ παντοίους γυναικῶν κόσμους τοὺς ἔξωθεν, τιμιώτερον δὲ οὐδένα τοῦ ἑαυτῆς τρόπου καὶ τῆς ἔνδον ἀποκειμένης λαμπρότητος. Ἓν μὲν ἔρευθος ἐκείνῃ φίλον, τὸ τῆς αἰδοῦς, μία δὲ λευκότης, ἡ πάρα τῆς ἐγκρατείας. Τὰς δὲ γραφὰς καὶ ὑπογραφὰς καὶ τοὺς ζῶντας πίνακας καὶ τὴν ῥέουσαν εὐμορφίαν ταῖς ἐπὶ θεάτρων παρῆκε καὶ τῶν τριόδων καὶ ὅσαις αἰσχύνη καὶ ὄνειδος τὸ αἰσχύνεσθαι.

But even though she knew of many such outer ornaments of women, none were more honorable than her own custom or the splendor that lay inside. There was one blush for that woman: that of modesty. And there was one powder: that of self-control. As for rouge, applications of eye shadow, living pictures or flowing elegance, those things she left to actors, ladies of the corner, and such women for whom feeling shame is a shame and reproach.[23]

Nazianzen lauds Gorgonia while simultaneously attacking those women, presumably among the elite, who utilize cosmetics by associating the use of makeup with prostitution.[24] Gorgonia was especially virtuous, he says, because she used her modesty and acting and self-control to bolster her appearance. As Virginia Burrus puts it, Gregory 'boldly makes a spectacle of her very modesty'.[25] We cannot assume that Gregory bucks some cultural trend or doing something uniquely 'Christian' here. A distaste for cosmetic refinery as well as gaudy adornments of jewelry had been a trope of Roman culture for centuries.[26] Gorgonia's renunciation of makeup would therefore come across as matronly rather than as explicitly Christian.

As Gregory nears the end of his eulogy, he promises to reveal to his audience 'incidents that are known by all and those kept secret from the masses'.[27] The first is the wreck of Gorgonia's carriage and her subsequent recovery. Despite the extent of her injuries, Gregory claims, Gorgonia refuses the care of a doctor, 'since she both had shame before the eyes and hands of men'.[28] This passage presents an interesting confluence of social cues. The accident occurs in public and becomes widely known, quite brutally exposing Gorgonia's body. Gorgonia's refusal to be seen by a doctor is rather outlandish, but it is also an extreme extension of her pious modesty. In brief, Gregory reminds his audience of an

[23] *Orationes* 8.10.800C-801A. I have corrected ὑπογραφὰς the typographical error ὑποφραφάς in Calvet-Sebasti.

[24] For a discussion of the *infamia* associated with these professions, see Catherine Edwards, 'Unspeakable Professions: Public Performance and Prostitution in Ancient Rome', in Judith P. Hallett and Marilyn B. Skinner (eds), *Roman Sexualities* (Princeton, N.J., 1997), 66-95.

[25] V. Burrus, 'Life after Death' (2006), 159.

[26] Juvenal, for instance, rails against *matronae* whom he thinks use this make-up mendaciously. *Satires* 6.457. Xenophon also has one of his interlocutors upbraid his wife for deception because she wears cosmetics. *Oeconomicus* 10.4. Xenophon's text had been translated into Latin by Cicero, so some familiarity with it among Roman elites may be plausible. *Cf*. Susan Treggiari, *Roman Marriage: Iusti Coniuges from the Time of Cicero to the Time of Ulpian* (New York, 1991), 185-6.

[27] *Orationes* 8.15.808A.

[28] *Orationes* 8.15.808A.

event – one that he claims they already know – that reveals the radical nature of Gorgonia's faith yet still emphasizes her greatest feminine quality. This rhetorical move sets up nicely the ostensibly secret episode of miraculous healing that Gorgonia performs on herself. The passage is worth quoting at length:

Τί οὖν ἡ μεγάλη καὶ τῶν μεγίστων ἀξία ψυχὴ, καὶ τίς ἡ ἰατρεία τοῦ πάθους; Ἐνταῦθα γὰρ ἤδη καὶ τὸ ἀπόρρητον. Πάντων ἀπογνοῦσα τῶν ἄλλων, ἐπὶ τὸν πάντων ἰατρὸν καταφεύγει, καὶ νυκτὸς ἀωρίαν τηρήσασα, μικρὸν ἐνδούσης αὐτῇ τῆς νόσου, τῷ θυσιαστηρίῳ προσπίπτει μετὰ τῆς πίστεως, καὶ τὸν ἐπ' αὐτῷ τιμώμενον ἀνακαλουμένη μεγάλῃ τῇ βοῇ, καὶ πάσαις ταῖς κλήσεσι, καὶ πασῶν αὐτὸν τῶν πώποτε δυνάμεων ὑπομνήσασα – σοφὴ γὰρ ἐκείνη καὶ τὰ παλαιὰ καὶ τὰ νέα –, τέλος εὐσεβῆ τινα καὶ καλὴν ἀναισχυντίαν ἀναισχυντεῖ· μιμεῖται τὴν τοῖς κρασπέδοις Χριστοῦ ξηράνασαν πηγὴν αἵματος. Καὶ τί ποιεῖ; Τῷ θυσιαστηρίῳ τὴν κεφαλὴν ἑαυτῆς προσθεῖσα μετὰ τῆς ἴσης βοῆς, καὶ δάκρυσι τοῦτο πλουσίοις, ὥσπερ τις πάλαι τοὺς πόδας Χριστοῦ καταβρέχουσα, καὶ μὴ πρότερον ἀνήσειν ἢ τῆς ὑγιείας τυχεῖν ἀπειλοῦσα· εἶτα τῷ παρ' ἑαυτῆς φαρμάκῳ τούτῳ τὸ σῶμα πᾶν ἐπαλείφουσα, καὶ εἴ πού τι τῶν ἀντιτύπων τοῦ τιμίου σώματος ἢ τοῦ αἵματος ἡ χεὶρ ἐθησαύρισεν, τοῦτο καταμιγνῦσα τοῖς δάκρυσιν, ὢ τοῦ θαύματος, ἀπῆλθεν εὐθὺς αἰσθομένη τῆς σωτηρίας…

Therefore what [did] this great soul (worthy of the greatest things) [do], and what was the medicine for her suffering? Here is the thing that has been kept silent. Despairing of all other cures, she fled to the doctor of all for protection. Awaiting the dead of night, when the disease had slightly abated, she faithfully fell before the sacrificial altar. Calling out with a loud cry to the one honored on it – indeed, with all sorts of cries – recalling the fact of all his powerful deeds (both the old and the new, for this woman knew them), she finally performed a shameless act of pious impudence, in imitation of the woman whose font of blood was dried by Christ's hem. What did she do? She placed her head upon the altar with such a cry, soaking it with tears as a woman had Christ's feet, threatening that she would not let go until she was made healthy. She smeared her entire body with the ointment before her; that is, her hand took forth a part of the representations of the honored blood and body and mixed it with her tears. Oh what a wonder! She left forthwith feeling salvation…[29]

Out of context, Roman aristocrats would most certainly have considered Gorgonia's behavior unsuitable for a *matrona*. She sneaks away, by herself, in the middle of the night to enter a public (or at least semi-public) location. Once there, she puts on a histrionic performance of lamentation and entreaty. Gregory even feels compelled to call upon Scriptural precedence for this behavior, explicitly claiming that Gorgonia imitated the women in *Matth*. 9:20 and *Luke* 7:38, two figures whose actions are public, daring, and outside the boundaries of social normativity. Yet, he implies, these women receive healing and praise from Christ for those very actions. Such an argument may excuse his sister's behavior thus far, but there is one more feat of her boldness Gregory must deal with.

[29] *Orationes* 8.18.809B-812A.

In one final gesture of what even Gregory must call 'a shameless act of pious impudence', Gorgonia steals the 'honored blood and body' and utilizes it as a φάρμακον, smearing it across her body in what is certainly not its intended usage.[30] What a display this must have been! Indeed, it is a wonder she kept this action secret for so long. I am not sure how McGuckin can claim that 'Gorgonia's attitude at the altar, this desperate bargaining for divine favor, and quest for bodily purification in illness, was something her contemporaries, pagan or Christian, would have found natural'.[31] It is true that seeking healing from a god such as Aesculapius was quite common, but the level of ostentation in Gorgonia's supplication would have been considered inappropriate. Had she performed this self-healing during the day, under the view of the community, the outrage would have been incredible. What is more, there is a question of why a consecrated host was sitting unattended at the altar in the first place. Indeed, there may be room to suggest that Gorgonia, with her tears and prayers, consecrates the host herself for her own time of dire need.[32] In any case, Gorgonia's actions cannot be taken as conformative in the context of her social and political class. And because she was a woman, the shame for these actions would have fallen upon her entire family.

Gregory himself would not have been immune from such feelings. Indeed, I am taken by George Demacopoulos' suggestion that, 'had [Gorgonia] not been his sister, or, perhaps, had she not been a member of the elite, Nazianzen's attitude might have been different'.[33] But Gorgonia does not merely receive special dispensation for her pious impudence; Gregory unambiguously lauds for it. Here we might recall the political benefits bestowed on the author of the *Laudatio Turiae* for transforming his wife's unmatronly behavior into a manifestation of the her 'womanly' virtues. By enumerating the qualities of Turia that Romans would consider positive, her husband dulls the possible criticism of her public actions. Gregory, likewise, praises Gorgonia's σωφροσύνη and recalls her carriage accident as a revelation of her traditional values before revealing another, 'secret' narrative full of events that might call those values into question. Presenting these two incidents side-by-side colors Gorgonia's outrageous behavior with the tint of womanly virtue.

[30] Φάρμακον is an interesting word to use, as it is associated not only with the drugs that a doctor would use, but also with certain 'magical' spells and potions of less respectable healers.

[31] John McGuckin, *St. Gregory of Nazianzus: An Intellectual Biography* (Crestwood, NY, 2001), 30.

[32] I must thank Katherine Shaner for suggesting this possibility to me. Such an idea has various implications, which I unfortunately must leave for another time.

[33] George E. Demacopoulos, *Five Models of Spiritual Direction in the Early Church* (Notre Dame, 2007), 76.

Gorgonia endures

Gregory had every reason to feel anxiety over his sister's behavior. Although scholars often assume that the structure of the Roman family demanded that women – and along with them the social and political implications of their behavior and public persona – were completely transferred to their husbands upon marriage, this has been shown not to be the case. Mary Harlow and Tim Parkin argue quite convincingly that this notion results from far too strongly projecting Attic social and legal attitudes regarding marriage into a Roman context. In truth, they say, a matron's father and extended paternal family held the most *manus* – power, authority, and responsibility – over her.[34] Gorgonia's actions would therefore have had as much of a socially stigmatizing impact upon Nazianzen and his father as they would upon her husband Alypius. Thus, Gregory had self-interest in spinning Gorgonia's non-normative behavior as matronly. Just as the author of the *Laudatio Turiae* utilized the occasion of his wife's eulogy as a platform for self-promoting propaganda, the one-year anniversary of his sister's death allowed Gregory to deflect criticism from his family and rewrite the social script through which his sister's memory was to be read.[35]

Highlighting Gregory's apologetic program within this eulogy also throws into sharp relief the ways in which he sought to transform the ideal of the holy woman in his time. Burrus observes how this text affords to Gorgonia's memory ascetic holiness even though she had been married and bore children.[36] Just as Gregory benefits politically among the aristocracy by portraying Gorgonia as the ideal wife, he also adds to the ascetic credibility of his family by making her the impossible: an ascetic *matrona*. Susanna Elm shows how this concern permeates Gregory's writings concerning all his family members. As she writes:

> Gregory's first step had to be, and indeed was, the creation of his own family as a guarantor of his own, fully realized masculinity. This masculinity was a masculinity which had to be perceived as more authoritative than that of other, competing men, precisely because it included a very specific aspect of the feminine, namely maternity.[37]

Rewriting the rules of asceticism challenged the radical ascetic attitude, which, as Kate Cooper argues, would accuse married men of being somehow

[34] Mary Harlow and Tim Parkin, 'Looking for the Family: The Greek and Roman Background', in Leslie Brubaker and Shaun Tougher (eds), *Approaches to the Byzantine Family* (Burlington, VT, 2013), 1-19, 12.

[35] Nazianzen delivers his eulogy around 372 on the first anniversary of Gorgonia's death. We should not read too much into this delay, as a second sort of funerary ritual would occur on this day among the Byzantines. See Elena Velkovska, 'Funeral Rites according to the Byzantine Liturgical Sources', *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 55 (2001), 39-43.

[36] V. Burrus, 'Life after Death' (2006), 159.

[37] Susanna Elm, 'Gregory's Women: Creating a Philosopher's Family', in *Gregory of Nazianzus: Images and Reflections* (Copenhagen, 2006), 171-91, 173-4.

tainted by virtue of their wives.[38] As it turns out, the new holiness of a virtuous *matrona* could be transferred to her relatives just as easily as could the social contamination of shame. I am surprised, however, that more scholars have not fully considered Peter Brown's observations on Gregory's elevation of marital life. Brown points out that the landed elite depended upon the system of marriage and reproduction in order to secure the continuation of their families' social position. He writes: 'For young males, the potential fathers of noble families, to mediate sexual renunciation was to mediate social extinction'.[39] In other words, unmarried asceticism threatened the social foundation upon which Gregory's education and political position were built. Nazianzen desired both the authority of a strong family and the holiness that was being afforded to ascetics.[40] With Gorgonia's eulogy, he worked to secure both.

Elizabeth Clark points to a genuine problem with casting figures like Gorgonia and Macrina as strong or revolutionary women, namely that the women of these texts only have shape through the words of their brothers.[41] But they do take *a* shape. This essay has not tried to suggest that the 'historical' Gorgonia did not have an impact on her community. To be clear, I do not wish to erase Gorgonia from history. This is far from the case. The fact that Gregory needed to spin Gorgonia's life into the tale of a properly acting *matrona* who still attains holiness puts the lie to the idea that she was just another silent woman. Indeed, Gorgonia, to my mind, cannot be contained by Gregory's text. She escapes his meticulously chosen, politically oriented words and bubbles to the surface as a daring woman in the Cappadocian world.

[38] Kate Cooper, 'Insinuations of Womanly Influence: An Aspect of the Christianization of the Roman Aristocracy', *JRS* 82 (1992), 150-64.

[39] Peter Brown, *The Body and Society: Men, Women, and Sexual Renunciation in Early Christianity* (New York, 1988), 286-7.

[40] Although Nazianzen had no children, he did show a healthy obsession with the education and elevation of his grandnephew. See Raymond Van Dam, *Families and Friends in Late Roman Cappadocia* (Philadelphia, 2003), 59.

[41] Elizabeth A. Clark, 'The Lady Vanishes: Dilemmas of a Feminist Historian after the "Linguistic Turn"', *CH* 67 (1998), 1-31, 26-30. At least Macrina is given a voice in Nyssen's biography. Gorgonia utters not a word, but an animalistic cry (βοή).

Divine, Yet Vulnerable: The Paradoxical Existence of Gregory Nazianzen's *Imago Dei*

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Abstract

Discussions about patristic models of the *imago Dei* often focus on the difference between image and likeness, the human being's ontology, and to what extent the philosophical influences can be defined. Whilst these approaches are valid, the nature of a human being's existence as the *imago Dei* is overlooked. Gregory's narrative of the *imago Dei* presents a particular picture where the existence of the human being is one of perpetual warfare with the devil and demons. In spite of this, Gregory's vision is one of hope, since Christ's incarnation, death and resurrection has secured an eschatological promise of victory and the eventual *theosis* of the *imago Dei*. Through a careful consideration of the role that spiritual warfare plays in Gregory's narrative of the *imago Dei* from her creation to her death, I argue that Gregory's approach to the *imago Dei* is far broader than viewing the *imago Dei* as a category within the human being, such as the intellect. Rather for Gregory, the *imago Dei* encompasses the concept of human existence, which entails wrestling with the devil.

Introduction

The life of Gregory Nazianzen's human being is best summarized as a paradox. She is becoming a god, but is also extremely fragile; consequently, the human being is described most accurately using phrases such as, 'on the one hand … on the other hand'. This paradoxical existence is, in part, due to the way in which Gregory envisages the human being's creation, where the *imago Dei* is God's very breath and is mixed with matter to form a living being.[1] The result of this unity is that on the one hand the human being has the potential to achieve theosis through the gift of the *imago Dei*, but on the other hand, she can be found wrestling with the flesh and the devil. For Gregory, the paradoxical existence of the human being becoming divine, whilst being extremely vulnerable, becomes even more apparent through observing the battle between the human being and the demonic powers of the spiritual realm. This struggle is evident through the creation, fall, and restoration of the human being, where

[1] *Oration* 38.11, SC 358, 124-6. Translations are my own, unless stated otherwise.

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her movement towards God is constantly under threat by the devil, who seeks to prevent her theosis.[2]

Discussions surrounding Gregory's theological anthropology often relate to questions of structure, with scholars observing that Gregory identifies the human image of God as the spiritual intellect, an aspect of the human soul.[3] Fruitful research has shown where Gregory can be seen to draw from various philosophical sources to inform his understanding of the human image of God, which range from Plato through to Plotinus and Iamblichus.[4] Whilst these observations are valid, the predominant focus upon structure can mean that the human image of God is perceived as a static category, with no further comment. Conclusions about the experience of the human being, which might be drawn through observing the constant attack upon the human image from a spiritual enemy, are overlooked. Therefore, my contribution to the current discussions pertaining to Gregory's approach to the human image of God considers the way in which Gregory uses the devil to highlight the paradox of the human existence as a human image of God.[5] In order to ascertain this, I shall begin by offering a brief overview of Gregory's prevailing thoughts about the devil and demonic powers; against this backdrop I shall move on to demonstrate that Gregory depicts the creation of the human image of God as one where the human image is vulnerable to the spiritual realm. After this, I consider the interaction between the devil and the human being at her creation and restoration. My observations will culminate in considering Gregory's vivid response to the devil's attacks during his oration *On Baptism*, where he demands that the

[2] Philippe Molac, *Douleur et transfiguration. Une lecture du cheminement spirituel de saint Grégoire de Nazianze* (Paris, 2006), 25; Brian Daley, *Gregory of Nazianzus* (London, 2006), 22.

[3] Kenneth Paul Wesche, '"Mind" and "Self" in the Christology of Saint Gregory the Theologian: Saint Gregory's Contribution to Christology and Christian Anthropology', *GOTR* 39 (1994), 33-61, 51; Jostein Børtnes, 'Rhetoric and Mental Images in Gregory', in Jostein Børtnes and Tomas Hägg (eds), *Gregory of Nazianzus: Images and Reflections* (Chicago, 2006), 37-57, 56; Heinz Althaus, *Die Heilslehre des heiligen Gregor von Nazianz* (Münster, 1972), 72-4; Ben Fulford, *Divine Eloquence and Human Transformation: Rethinking Scripture and History through Gregory of Nazianzus and Hans Frei* (Minneapolis, 2013), 80-1; Hannah Hunt, *Clothed in the Body: Asceticism, the Body and the Spiritual in the Late Antique Era* (Surrey, UK, 2012), 194; Anca Vasiliu, *Eikôn* (Paris, 2010), 49; Hilarion Alfeyev, *La chantre de la Luminère: Introduction à la spiritualité de saint Grégoire de Nazianze* (Paris, 2006); Manfred Kertsch, *Gregorio Nazianzeno: Sulla virtù. Carme giambico [I, 2, 10]* (Pisa, 1995), 195; Anna S. Ellverson, *The Dual Nature of Man: A Study in the Theological Anthropology of Gregory of Nazianzus* (Stockholm, 1981), 25; Joseph Barbel, *Gregor von Nazianz. Die fünf theologischen Reden* (Düsseldorf, 1963), 284.

[4] Susanna Elm, 'Inscriptions and Conversions: Gregory of Nazianzus on Baptism (Or. 38-40)', in Kenneth Mills and Anthony Grafton (eds), *Conversion in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages* (New York, 2003), 1-35.

[5] Thus, differentiating my approach from those who concentrate on Gregory's philosophical influences in relation to his concept of the human image of God, for example, A.Vasiliu, *Eikôn* (2010).

devil worship him and all those who are baptized, precisely because they are human images of God. It is at this point that the paradoxical existence of the human being becomes most apparent; for Gregory acknowledges that the human image is under attack and extremely vulnerable; yet close enough to being divine to expect worship from the devil.

Devil and Demons

All the early church fathers had 'a lively sense of the reality of Satan'[6] which they inherited from the Jewish Apocalyptic tradition and the Christian monastic tradition. Whilst Gregory emphasizes that God did not create evil, nevertheless, he maintains a perpetual awareness of the power that Satan and his demons exert against the human image.[7] He understands the evil intentions of the demonic powers as a privation of good, rather than an ontological category of evil with its own substance. However, when Gregory addresses Satan with statements such as 'You have come, O villainous one! I know your plans',[8] it is difficult to imagine that he saw Satan as a purely literary construction; rather, Gregory 'disclosed an intimate knowledge of the devil himself' with his orations and poems portraying an extremely personal and vivid demonology.[9] This has led Morwenna Ludlow to suggest that demons are best understood as having a liminal existence, where they are real spiritual beings, who are morally inferior.[10]

Satan is described with over twenty-five different epithets and metaphors, which serve to highlight the significance and pervasiveness of this fallen angel in Gregory's thought.[11] For example, Gregory refers to him as 'the Enemy',[12]

[6] Frances M. Young, *The Making of the Creeds* (London, 1991), 88. Following the patristic Christian tradition Gregory draws together the characters of Lucifer, the serpent in the garden of Eden, the devil, and Satan, treating them as the same persona (for example, Origen, *Princ*. 2.9.2). For an overview of the tradition, see Henry Ansgar Kelly, *Satan: A Biography* (Cambridge, 2006), 191-214.

[7] *Oration* 2.22, SC 247, 118; 11.5, SC 405, 338; 17.9, PG 35, 796; 19.6, PG 35, 993; 22.13, SC 270, 248; 24.15, SC 284, 74; 38.5, SC 358, 110; 40.10, SC 358, 218; 40.14, SC 358, 226; *Carm*. 1.1.8, PG 37, 453; 1.1.10, PG 37, 467.

[8] *Carm*. 2.1.54, PG 37, 1397.

[9] Dayna Kalleres, 'Demons and Divine Illumination: A Consideration of Eight Prayers by Gregory of Nazianzus', *VC* 61 (2007), 157-88, 186.

[10] Morwenna Ludlow, 'Demons, Evil and Liminality in Cappadocian Theology', *JECS* 20 (2012), 179-211, *passim*.

[11] Many of Satan's names exist as a list in the poem *Aversion of the Evil one and Invocation of Christ*: *Carm*. 2.1.55, PG 37, 1399-401. For example, 'Thief, Serpent, Fire, Belial, Vice, Death, Gulf, Dragon, Beast, Night, Ambusher, Rage, Chaos, Slanderer, and Murderer'.

[12] *Carm*. 2.1.70, PG 37, 1418; 2.1.88, PG 37, 1441; see *Luke* 10:19.

'the Adversary',[13] 'Envy',[14] the 'Evil One',[15] and in relation to this discussion specifically: 'the Destroyer of the image'.[16] Likewise, demons are regarded as being an enemy to the human image in a number of ways; inciting murder, anger, disunity, greed, pride,[17] and sin.[18]

Whilst it may appear that Satan and his minions are free to wreak as much havoc as they should wish, Gregory informs his readers that Christ could have annihilated them, but he chose to set them loose in order that they should fight one another so that those who struggle against them for virtue would have eternal glory.[19] It is through this encounter with the demonic powers that the paradoxical existence of the human being is apparent from its very creation, to which I shall turn next.

Creation

> And there was not yet a mixture from both,[20] nor yet a particular mingling of opposites …[21] the Creator-Logos, wanting to exhibit this [makes] a single living creature from both, by which I mean from the invisible and visible nature, fashioned the human being. While taking the body from the existing matter, he blew in the breath of himself, which Scripture knew to be the spiritual, intellectual soul and an image of God.[22]

Above, Gregory combines the creation narratives found in *Genesis* 1 and 2, depicting the human image of God as the breath of God mixing with matter.[23]

[13] *Oration* 26.3, SC 284, 230; 22.13, SC 270, 248; 40.16, SC 358, 230; see Francis X. Gokey, *The Terminology for the Devil and Evil Spirits in the Apostolic Fathers* (Washington, 1961), 68-9; Jeffrey B. Russell, *Satan: The Early Christian Tradition* (New York, 1987), 34.

[14] *Carm*. 2.1.63, PG 37, 1406. Envy is a prevalent metaphor for Satan in Gregory's thought; see *Or*. 6.10, SC 405, 146; *Carm*. 1.1.7, PG 37, 444; 1.1.10, PG 37, 466; 1.2.1, PG 37, 531.

[15] ὁ πονηρός, *Or*. 2.88, SC 247, 202; 6.10, SC 405, 146; 28.15, SC 250, 132; 30.6, SC 250, 236; 37.10, SC 318, 292; 37.12, SC 318, 296; 38.14, SC 358, 134; 40.10, SC 358, 216; also see *Matt*. 5:37; *Eph*. 6:16; 2*Thess*. 3:3.

[16] *Or*. 2.21, SC 247, 118; 24.18, SC 284, 80; 39.7, SC 358, 162; 40.10, SC 358, 218; *Carm*. 1.1.4, PG 37, 419; 1.1.9, PG 37, 457; 2.1.13, PG 37, 1230; 2.1.65, PG 37, 1407.

[17] *Carm*. 1.1.7, PG 37, 444-5.

[18] For example *Or*. 22.13, SC 270, 248; 37.7, SC 318, 284; 39.13, SC 358, 176; 40.10, SC 358, 216-8; see William O.E. Oesterley, 'Angelology and Demonology in Early Judaism', in Thomas W. Manson (ed.), *A Companion to the Bible* (Edinburgh, 1939), 332-47, 44.

[19] *Carm*. 1.1.7, PG 37, 445-6.

[20] *Or*. 20.11, SC 270, 80; 14.7, PG 35, 865. See *Song of Songs* 7:2 where it is used to describe a mixture of wine and water, and in *Paed*. 2.2 where Clement discusses the union of soul and body.

[21] *Or*. 38.11, SC 358, 124; 2.23, SC 247, 120; 2.54, SC 247, 162; 4.49, SC 309, 152; 6.2, SC 405, 124; 21.23, SC 270, 156; 45.9, PG 36, 633; *Carm*. 1.1.4, PG 37, 423; 1.1.8, PG 37, 453.

[22] *Or*. 38.11, SC 358, 124.

[23] *Or*. 14.2, PG 35, 860; 20.11, SC 270, 80; 32.27, SC 318, 142; *Carm*. 1.1.8, PG 37, 452; 1.2.1, PG 37, 552; 1.2.14, PG 37, 761; 2.1.45, PG 37, 1354. Gregory draws our attention to the human being as a mixture of spiritual and material frequently; see John A. McGuckin, 'The Vision of God in St. Gregory Nazianzen', *SP* 32 (1997), 145-52, 150.

Throughout his work, Gregory varies between describing God as mixing the image with matter (ἡ ὕλη), clay (ἡ πηλός) and dust (ὁ χοῦς) respectively.[24] The most frequent terminology that Gregory applies for the mixing of the image with dust or matter is μίξις, which he uses in conjunction with κρᾶσις, appearing to apply them indiscriminately and in a variety of ways.[25]

If we were to read Gregory's description of the image as described above, without taking into account his view of how the invisible and visible realms are mixed, we might conclude that Gregory considers the image of God only to be the breath of God, vis à vis the spiritual, intellectual soul. On the contrary, I argue that Gregory presents different ideas about the human person as an image of God, reflecting the complexity and mystery of human existence. Whilst Gregory applies 'image' to the soul or the spiritual intellect on some occasions, he does this in such a way that the image transforms the dust and renders it spiritual. This results in the image of God depicting a dynamic, human being, which is a broader concept than that proposed by a more essentialist approach. For further insight into the transformation of dust by the image, we must turn to Gregory's writing about Christ, the Identical Image.[26] This allows humanity and divinity to come together in a unique way in Christ, so that Christ remains a unified hypostasis or person, where the divine transforms the human.[27] If we consider Gregory's writing about the human image of God, we may see that a similar process ensues to her as to Christ. Gregory approaches God's mixing of the image of God and matter as a unification, where the image bestows upon the dust its proper end, which is to be made spiritual. This is evident in Gregory's short poem below entitled *Concerning Human Life*, in which the dust is made spiritual by the image:

And now peeping out, just like from some depth,
the dust, made spiritual by the divine image (ὁ χοῦς ὁ θείᾳ πνευματωθεὶς εἰκόνι)
cries out the earthly tragedies…[28]

[24] Image mixed with matter (ἡ ὕλη), *Or*. 38.11, SC 358, 124; clay (ἡ πηλός), *Or*. 14.6, PG 35, 865A; dust (ὁ χοῦς), *Or*. 14.2, PG 35, 860B-D; *Carm*. 1.2.1, 529, 97; 2.1.45, PG 37, 1362.

[25] Gregory also speaks of mixing in relation to the elements of the universe, see *Or*. 2.29, SC 247, 128; 2.54, SC 247, 162; 6.2, SC 405, 124; 6.15, SC 405, 160; 38.13, SC 358, 134. Also, drawing from Saint Paul, Gregory uses the terms rhetorically when he states that ideally one should approach the congregation with a mixture of strictness and gentleness, see *Or*. 2.54, SC 247, 162.

[26] ἡ ἀπαράλλακτος εἰκών; *Or*. 38.13, SC 358, 132; 1.4, SC 247, 76; 2.98, SC 247, 216; 4.78, SC 309, 200; 14.2, PG 35, 860C; 14.7, PG 35, 865C; 29.17, SC 250, 212; 30.3, SC 250, 230; 30.20, SC 250, 268; 38.13, SC 358, 132; 45.9, PG 36, 633C; *Carm*. 1.1.2, PG 37, 40; 1.1.10, PG 37, 469; 1.2.1, PG 37, 533; 1.2.14, PG 37, 762; 2.1.1, PG 37, 1016, 1017; 2.1.38, PG 37, 1326; 2.1.45, PG 37, 1356.

[27] Andrew O.P. Hofer, *Christ in the Life and Teaching of Gregory of Nazianzus* (Oxford, 2013), 92-120.

[28] *Carm*. 1.2.18, PG 37, 787, 13-4; 1.1.8, PG 37, 452, 74-5; 1.1.10, PG 37, 469, 58; *Or*. 3.7, SC 247, 250; 40.10, SC 358, 218; 40.14, SC 358, 226.

In order that the transformation of dust or matter should occur, and in order that a dynamic human being should be formed, the material realm must be vulnerable to the divine, spiritual realm. Thus, material vulnerability to God is a necessary aspect of being a human image. As Gregory depicts the creation of the human image of God, the vulnerability of matter is wholly positive. It is this transformation of the dust that allows Gregory to refer to the whole human person as God's image:

I am a human being, a model and an image of God.[29]

Therefore, when Gregory speaks about the image of God as the soul or the spiritual intellect, it is possible that he also implies the whole human being because the image transforms the dust and the two together form a unity. Thus, Gregory's interpretation of the human image is much broader than it appears at first glance. Gregory's broad interpretation creates space for mystery and continued exploration of human existence and what it means for the human being to image God. This concept of the human image of God as a dynamic person becomes clearer still when she is observed in light of her interactions with the devil, as we shall see shortly.

Gregory depicts the human image of God as being created with the potential to become divine: 'a spiritually alive being, provided for here and being transferred elsewhere, and, to cap the mystery off, being made divine by her inclination towards God'.[30] However, in spite of being made divine, being given the authority to reign over the earth and being comparable to the angels, the human being is far from invincible. Satan, in the form of the serpent in the Garden, is envious of the human image's status,[31] and persuades the first human images to forget the commandment given to them about refraining from eating the fruit in the garden of Eden.[32] Gregory describes the behaviour of the devil in his encounter with humanity at creation as the 'envious murderer's wrestlings'.[33] This is a battle which the devil wins, persuading the first human images to eat the fruit. The result is that they are cast out of paradise rendering them even more vulnerable, since the human image has been wounded and is in need of restoration.

[29] *Carm.* 1.2.34, PG 37, 947, 20.

[30] *Or.* 38.11, SC 358, 126.

[31] *Or.* 6.10, SC 405, 146; 36.5, SC 318, 250; 40.10, SC 358, 216-8; 44.4, PG 36, 619B; *Carm.* 1.1.7, PG 37, 444; 1.1.8, PG 37, 455-7; 1.1.10, PG 37, 466; 1.2.1, PG 37, 531. Also see Irenaeus, *Adv. haer.* 1.10.1.

[32] *Or.* 38.11, SC 358, 126; 6.10, SC 405, 146; 36.5, SC 318, 250; 40.10, SC 358, 216-8; 44.4, PG 36, 619B; *Carm.* 1.1.7, PG 37, 444; 1.1.8, PG 37, 455-457; 1.1.10, PG 37, 466; 1.2.1, PG 37, 531.

[33] *Carm.* 1.1.8, PG 37, 456.

Restoration

The key to restoration of the human image lies in the fact that Gregory presents Christ as the identical Image of God, into whose Image believers are being transformed. Paul describes Christ in this way in the New Testament, and it is followed by the early church fathers, where Christ is understood to be the second Adam, recapitulating the image.[34] Therefore, the way in which the human image is restored to her divine potential and former authority is through Christ, the identical Image, who came to earth, triumphed over the serpent and made good the fallen image.[35] Baptism is the means through which the human image receives the healing that Christ has actuated; Gregory describes it as 'a restoration of the image wounded by evil'.[36] Key to Gregory's presentation of baptism is the power of the Holy Spirit at work in the person being baptized. Gregory goes to great lengths to argue the consubstantial deity of the Holy Spirit, through which the believer begins her theosis at baptism.[37] Gregory is far more outspoken than his fellow Cappadocians on the deity of the Holy Spirit, thus baptism in the Holy Spirit means that God, Godself is deifying believers.

Scholars have written extensively on Gregory's use of Platonic cosmology in relation to baptism, observing that his particular use of inscription language describes a moment of cosmological change alongside a lifelong process of conversion.[38] Whilst the research regarding the philosophical influences upon Gregory's notion of baptism is enlightening, there is more to be gleaned about his view of the human image of God by considering the interaction between the human image and Satan at baptism.

Satan plays a significant role throughout Gregory's thoughts about baptism. Exorcism of Satan is an integral aspect of the sacrament, which Gregory advises should not be treated lightly.[39] Gregory envisages the sacrament itself as a triumph over Satan, saying: 'Therefore let us be baptized so that we might be victorious'.[40] Whilst Gregory is confident that the baptism sacrament cleanses, heals and restores the human image to her prelapsarian glory, after baptism she is both divine, yet still vulnerable since Satan makes his presence known immediately after the sacrament has taken place. Drawing his examples from Christ's

[34] *Adv. haer.* 5.21.1.

[35] *Or.* 7.23, SC 405, 238-40.

[36] *Or.* 40.7, SC 358, 210. Gregory extols the virtues of baptism at great length in his oration on the sacrament, describing baptism as a gift, grace, unction, illumination, a garment, a bath, a seal, and 'a remodelling of our very composition'. See *Oration* 40.3, SC 358, 202.

[37] *Or.* 30.6, SC 250, 236.

[38] Susanna Elm, '"O Paradoxical Fusion!" Gregory of Nazianzus on Baptism and Cosmology (Orations 38-40)', in Anette Y. Reed and Ra'anan S. Boustan (eds), *Heavenly Realms and Earthly Realities in Late Antique Religions* (New York, 2004), 296-316.

[39] *Or.* 40.7, SC 358, 210.

[40] *Or.* 40.11, SC 358, 220.

temptation in Luke's gospel, Gregory mentions a number of different ways in which Satan might attack the newly restored human image, providing the various defenses and responses that should be taken. During this piece of advice, Gregory addresses how the human image should respond when Satan tries to tempt her to bow down and worship him. He recommends a response which addresses Satan directly; it is the only occasion where he speaks to Satan in this way in his public orations,[41] and what he suggests is quite provocative:

> Say, confident in the seal, 'I, myself, am also an image of God, I have not yet been thrown down through pride from the glory above, like you. I am clothed in Christ; I have been remodelled Christ by baptism, you ought to worship me!' He will depart, I know well, yielding and being shamed by these words, as he was by Christ the first light, thus will he depart from those who are enlightened by that same Christ.[42]

In demanding the worship of all those who are baptized, we should not think that Gregory envisaged himself or other believers as committing idolatry, since he was strongly opposed to 'that first and last of all evils, idolatry and the transfer of worship from the Creator to the creatures'.[43] Nevertheless, Gregory demands 'worship' from the devil. Crucial to this discussion is Gregory's appropriation of προσκυνέω which I have translated here as 'worship'.[44] The term has a wide semantic field and can be applied in a number of ways from 'making obeisance to an emperor', 'pay respect' to 'fall down and worship'.[45] Gregory himself employs προσκυνέω in a variety of ways; from attacking the worship of idols,[46] through to his worship of the Trinity, where he writes,

[41] Gregory does address the devil in several prayers and poems, for a translation and analysis of these see D. Kalleres, 'Demons and Divine Illumination' (2007), 157-88.

[42] Ἐὰν ἐξ ἁπληστίας καταπαλαίῃ σε, πάσας ὑποδεικνύων τὰς βασιλείας, ὡς αὐτῷ διαφερούσας, ἐν μιᾷ καιροῦ τε ῥοπῇ καὶ ὄψεως, ἁπαιτῶν τὴν προσκύνησιν· ὡς πένητος καταφρόνησον. Εἰπέ, τῇ σφραγῖδι θαῤῥήσας· Εἰκών εἰμι καὶ αὐτὸς Θεοῦ· τῆς ἄνω δόξης οὔπω δι' ἔπαρσιν, ὥσπερ σύ, καταβέβλημαι· Χριστὸν ἐνδέδυμαι· Χριστὸν μεταπεποίημαι τῷ βαπτίσματι· σύ με προσκύνησον. Ἀπελεύσεται, σαφῶς οἶδα, τούτοις ἡττημένος καὶ ἠσχυμμένος, ὥσπερ ἀπὸ Χριστοῦ τοῦ πρώτου φωτός, οὕτω τῶν ἀπ' ἐκείνου πεφωτισμένων. Text from *Or*. 40.10, Grégoire de Nazianze, *Discours 38-41*, Paul Gallay, SC 358 (Paris, 1990), 218.

[43] *Or*. 38.12, SC 358, 128-30.

[44] Harrison translates προσκυνέω as 'worship', in Gregory Nazianzen, *Festal Orations*, trans. Nonna V. Harrison (Crestwood, New York, 2008), 106. For 'pay reverence to', see B. Fulford, *Divine Eloquence and Human Transformation: Rethinking Scripture and History through Gregory of Nazianzus and Hans Frei* (2013), 96.

[45] Lampe, *A Patristic Greek Lexicon* (Oxford, 1961), 1174-6. Aristotle includes it in his list of ways to honour men who are famous for doing good, *Rhetoric* 1361a. Liddell, Scott and Jones offer a similar variety: 'Make obeisance to the gods or their images, fall down and worship, throw a kiss to a god, do reverence to, respect', Henry George Liddell, Robert Scott and Henry Stuart Jones, *A Greek-English Lexicon* (Oxford, 1996), 1518. Also see Frederick W. Danker and Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (3rd ed.; Chicago, 2000), 82-3.

[46] *Or*. 4.81, SC 309, 206.

'I worship the Father, I worship the Son, I worship the Holy Spirit'.[47] I follow Gregory's application of προσκυνέω, and assume that he does understand it to be an action directed towards that which is divine, because he uses it on many occasions to express his adoration of the Trinity. Therefore, when Gregory demands worship from the devil, he expects the devil to worship him as he would worship Christ himself, since the theosis occurring through the Holy Spirit at baptism effects a real transformation.

Gregory provides three reasons why the devil should worship the newly baptized; first, she is an image of God; second, she is clothed in Christ; and third, she is remodelled Christ. These correspond with the three stages of creation,[48] baptism,[49] and subsequent theosis. It should not be a surprise that Gregory associates the concept of the human image with spiritual warfare, in light of Christ as the identical Image of God being one who has conquered all evil. For Gregory, being both clothed in Christ and remodelled Christ means that the devil should now behave toward believers in the same way that he behaves toward Christ. However, even the divinity conferred through baptism does not mean that the Christian is invincible, which is where the paradoxical existence of the human life becomes apparent. On one hand, the baptized believer is considered to be restored to her divine potential and worthy of worship by Satan, but on the other hand, she is still extremely vulnerable, of which the devil himself is a constant reminder.

When speaking of the Christian life after baptism, Gregory continues to use the devil as a means of highlighting that Christians are both becoming divine

[47] *Or*. 37.24, προσκυνῶ πατέρα, προσκυνῶ τὸν υιόν, προσκυνῶ τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον. Also see *Or*. 22.4, SC 270, 226; 22.12, SC 270, 244; 33.15, SC 318, 188; 34.5, SC 318, 204; 37.24, SC 318, 318; 39.6, SC 358, 160; 39.18, SC 358, 190; *Carm*. PG 37, 470. In the eighth and ninth centuries during the Byzantine iconoclast controversy, a distinction was made between προσκυνέω and λατρεύω; the former encompassed the worship of images and icons, whereas the latter was the term used for the service of God alone. However, since this controversy was several centuries later than Gregory was writing, it would be anachronistic to assume that he made this particular distinction. Gregory often applies λατρεύω to the service or adoration of God, see *Or*. 26.5, SC 284, 236; 11.6, SC 405, 342; 23.1, SC 270, 280; 37.18, SC 318, 304. On two occasions Gregory also uses the verb apologetically to argue that one cannot serve that which is created rather than God; *Or*. 5.28, SC 309, 350; 37.17, 318, 306.

[48] *Or*. 38:11, SC 358, 124-6. Gregory follows *Gen*. 1:26 by depicting the human being at creation as the image of God.

[49] The association of baptism with being clothed in Christ can be found in Paul's *Letter to the Galatians*, where he writes: 'As many of you as were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ' (*Gal*. 3:27). Whilst the author of Colossians does not use this particular metaphor in relation to spiritual warfare, many scholars have observed that the notion of hostile angelic powers threatening humanity; see Clint E. Arnold, *The Colossian Syncretism: The Interface between Christianity and Folk Belief at Colossae* (Tübingen, 1995), 158; Peter T. O'Brien, *Colossians, Philemon*, WBC (Waco, Texas: 1982), 46; John Behr, 'Colossians 1:13-20: A Chiastic Reading', *VTQ* 40 (1996), 247-64.

but at the same time, remain vulnerable, for the human being is presented consistently as requiring protection; Gregory writes,

> There is only one distinction of kin, the safeguarding of the image and becoming like the archetype as far as is possible … and there is but one dominion: power over the Evil One…[50]

This battle does not endure eternally, since Gregory looks forward expectantly to the day where Christ will 'destroy and make an end of him [Satan]'.[51] From thereon, there will be no adversary, and the baptized will be perfected as gods. Until then however, the devil remains as a reminder to the human beings that whilst they might be God's images, they are not, in fact God.

The 'Divine, yet Vulnerable' Human Image of God

The frequent interaction between the human image of God and the devil highlights the paradox of human existence, where the human image is divine to the extent that she may expect worship from the devil, but vulnerable because she is subject to his constant attacks. When we consider together Gregory's theological anthropology where the image of God transforms matter to form a whole dynamic human being, alongside the constant wrestling between the human image of God and the devil, we may see that Gregory treats the human image of God in a far broader manner than scholars often assume. Whilst undoubtedly Gregory determines the human image of God as the spiritual intellect on a number of occasions, he also applies the concept to depict an important aspect of human existence; namely the way that living as a human image of God invokes envy from the devil, and thus entails no small amount of wrestling with a spiritual enemy.

[50] *Or*. 24.15, SC 284, 74.
[51] *Or*. 24.9, SC 284, 56-8.

Reconsidering Gregory of Nazianzus' Letter Collection

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Abstract

Previous studies of Gregory of Nazianzus' letter collection have failed to fully consider the implications of its self-authored status. This paper argues that the letter collection is best understood as a special form of self-writing – epistolary autobiography. Gregory's direct control over its contents and publication pushes readers to consider the collection's self-presentational and even propagandistic aspects in light of his career and personal authority within Constantinopolitan and Cappadocian circles. Such an approach highlights a coherent body of thematic currents that run throughout the collection, and it permits readers to ask new questions regarding the ways that late antique bishops and literary elites crafted personal authority.

Gregory of Nazianzus' letter collection has long been viewed as a neutral assemblage of texts otherwise unrelated except for their shared authorship. Scholars have traditionally found nothing distinctive or literarily worthwhile about late antique letter collections, but recent publications have begun to appreciate their ability to operate as literary, rhetorical, and political texts, meant to circulate a character-portrait of the epistolographer within a more-or-less defined social world.[1] This is especially true of collections made and published by the epistolographer himself.[2] Such is the case with Gregory, who explicitly constructed his collection to highlight some aspects of his public persona and downplay others.

[1] N.B. All primary sources mentioned here are Gregory's unless explicitly noted otherwise. Special thanks are due to the anonymous reviewer, who helpfully suggested a few references that I would have otherwise missed.

See the two groundbreaking articles by Roy K. Gibson, 'On the Nature of Ancient Letter Collections', *JRS* 102 (2012), 56-78, and 'Letters into Autobiography: The Generic Mobility of the Ancient Letter Collection', in T.D. Papanghelis, S.J. Harrison and S. Frangoulidis (eds), *Generic Interfaces in Latin Literature: Encounters, Interactions and Transformations* (Berlin, 2013), 387-416. See also Bronwen Neil and Pauline Allen (eds), *Collecting Early Christian Letters: From the Apostle Paul to Late Antiquity* (Cambridge, 2015); Cristiana Sogno, Bradley K. Storin and Edward Watts (eds), *Late Antique Letter Collections: A Critical Introduction and Reference Guide* (Berkeley, 2017).

[2] Such as those made by Ambrose of Milan, Jerome of Stridon, Symmachus of Rome, Cassiodorus, and possibly Libanius of Antioch, Gregory of Nyssa, Evagrius of Pontus, and John Chrysostom.

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To brush past Gregory's role as compiler is to miss the tremendous self-presentational opportunity that he saw in it. By determining the collection's content and organization he could shape the contours of his professional identity in new ways.[3] And so sometime between mid-382 and early 384 he sent presumably quite a few letters to his great-nephew Nicobulus as pedagogical aids,[4] two of which – *Ep.* 52 and 53 – announced the collection's content and purpose. *Ep.* 52 describes the collection as 'something expedient for eloquence', a display of his 'signature style' that he would bequeath to Nicobulus as a literary inheritance should he successfully appropriate Gregory's style (*Ep.* 52.1, 3). Here he observes that, 'just like in a legitimate child, the father always appears in eloquence, no less than parents in bodily characteristics, for the most part. Well, such are my features'. That is, this is Nicobulus' chance to inherit Gregory's fortune in eloquence. *Ep.* 53, however, claims that the collection will show Gregory's essential connection with Basil: 'Since I've always preferred the great Basil to myself, even if the opposite would have seemed true to him, still now I prefer him because of the truth no less than because of our friendship. I therefore offer my epistles with his set down first. For I also desire that we be linked with each other in every way while simultaneously providing a model of measure and moderation to others' (*Ep.* 53.1-2). The collection is no random anthology plucked from personal archives, but a single curated text, constructed from previously written texts for the purpose of showcasing his superior epistolary eloquence and depths of his friendship with Basil. Ultimately *Ep.* 52 and 53 complement each other: eloquence was, it turns out, the basis for Gregory's epistolary relationship with Basil.

The young Nicobulus may not have cared about any of this, but others around him in Caesarea would have. *Ep.* 52 quips that a student bears a teacher's characteristics just as a child does his parents', which solicits learned readers to investigate *Gregory's* epistolary style so as to discern *his* educational ancestry, an overture no doubt lost on the less-than-scholarly Nicobulus,[5] but not on the eloquent Caesareans charged with his education: Bishop Helladius, the sophists Stagirius and Eustochius, and the rhetor Eudoxius.[6] Each would

[3] Indeed, Gregory's collection is the earliest that survives in Greek.

[4] *Ep.* 52.2. Because epistolary training began early in rhetorical studies, and because Gregory twice referred to his episcopal position in letters to Nicobulus' Caesarean educators at the start of his rhetorical training (*Ep.* 167.3 and 188.1) – *i.e.* around the time that Nicobulus would have been studying epistolary style – we can surmise the collection's publication date.

[5] See *Ep.* 175.1.

[6] Gregory notes that Helladius was a 'lover of eloquence' (*Ep.* 167.3), highlights Stagirius and Eustochius' respective Athenian training (*Ep.* 188.1, 190.3), and perhaps intimates Eudoxius' Athenian training, if his references to Plato, Aristophanes, and an ancient Athenian social custom indicate the rhetor's educational background (*Ep.* 178.1-3, 5, 7, 9, 12). For a brilliant account of Nicobulus' entrance into the culture of sophistic competition, see Neil McLynn, 'Among the Hellenists: Gregory and the Sophists', in Jostein Børtnes and Tomas Hägg (eds), *Gregory of Nazianzus: Images and Reflections* (Copenhagen, 2006), 214-9.

have detected Gregory's stylistic connection to his famous Athenian teachers Prohaeresius and Himerius, and thereby discerned Gregory's sly boast about his own academic pedigree. And *Ep*. 53's claim that Gregory and Basil were best friends would have intrigued Nicobulus' Caesarean educators, all of whom knew, or at least knew of, Basil.[7] Even further, Gregory's contemporary orations and poems were directed at an audience of elites in church and government throughout Cappadocia, Asia Minor, and Constantinople, and so we may perhaps assume the same audience here.[8]

This audience would have cared about the collection's self-presentational claims because all would have heard rumors of Gregory's professional missteps. As is well known, Gregory had led the pro-Nicene community in Constantinople from 379 to 381. Here he rose from imperial preacher to bishop of Constantinople and ultimately president of the Second Ecumenical Council of Constantinople. During his tenure there, he miscalculated the tactics and motives of his opponents while making a series of poor political choices.[9] In the end, he resigned from the very presidency that represented the apex of his career, and judging from his own writings and self-defenses, the fallout was significant. His reputation was in tatters, and we can glean the type of accusations leveled against him from the revisionary writings composed after his time in Constantinople, especially his longest and most explicitly autobiographical poem, *Carm.* 2.1.11.[10] In addition to challenging the canonical legitimacy of his appointment to the Constantinopolitan episcopacy (*Carm.* 2.1.11.1807-14), his detractors accused him of personal flaws, like naiveté in matters of church diplomacy (*Carm.*2.1.11.1054), extreme rigidity in doctrinal matters (*Carm.* 2.1.11.1745-73), and taking too much personal time in the midst of important goings-on (*Carm.* 2.1.11.1442-4) – something that constituted philosophical withdrawal from Gregory's perspective, but self-indulgence from his opponents'.

[7] Helladius was Basil's successor and probably the former tax-assessor for whom Basil wrote *Ep*. 281 (see *PLRE* 1:412 s.n. Helladius 2). Eustochius received assistance from Basil in negotiating a conflict with a certain Callisthenes (*Ep*. 72 and 73). Gregory of Nyssa, Basil's brother, wrote two letters to Stagirius (*Ep*. 9 and 27), and indeed Stagirius' only extant text is included in Gregory of Nyssa's collection (*Ep*. 26). If not personally, Eudoxius likely knew of Basil through Eustochius, Gregory, or local lore.

[8] See John McGuckin, 'Autobiography as Apologia in St. Gregory Nazianzen', *SP* 37 (2001), 160-77; Frederick W. Norris, 'Your Honor, My Reputation: St. Gregory of Nazianzus's Funeral Oration on St. Basil the Great', in Tomas Hägg and Philip Rousseau (eds), *Greek Biography and Panegyric in Late Antiquity*, The Transformation of the Classical Heritage 31 (Berkeley, 2000), 140-59.

[9] I am specifically thinking of his legal conflicts with Demophilus, his trust in the Alexandrian Maximus, and his backing of Paulinus for bishop of Antioch after the death of Meletius.

[10] These also include a farewell address to an imagined audience of Constantinopolitan elites (*Or*. 42) and a funeral oration for Basil (*Or*. 43), a slew of autobiographical poetry, and of course the letter collection itself. On the two orations see Susanna Elm, 'A Programmatic Life: Gregory of Nazianzus' *Orations* 42 and 43 and the Constantinopolitan Elites', *Arethusa* 33 (2000), 411-27.

His response was ferociously apologetic: his adversaries were demonic havoc-wreakers whose only interest was self-advancement, and he – a new Job, a new Christ – was the victim of their wiles.[11] Gregory also used these post-Constantinople writings both to hitch his star to the now-sainted Basil[12] and to distance himself from the capital and its councils. The letter collection is but one part of this wide-ranging literary campaign, complementing the barrage of apologetic autobiography that he produced in this period.

Seen in this context, the collection is no benign epistolary anthology, but an autobiographical text, something greater than the sum of its parts, a self-portrait in letters. Four programmatic and intersecting motifs pervade the collection and link it with his other post-Constantinople apologetic work: 1) the collection almost categorically divorces Gregory from any connection with the imperial capital and its episcopal gatherings; 2) it ties his identity to the praiseworthy, if vaguely defined, pursuit of 'philosophy'; 3) it establishes his credentials in the possession of literary excellence, or 'eloquence'; and 4) it demonstrates the depth of his friendship with Basil, and in doing so, thematically unites the collection as a whole.

First, the collection divorces Gregory's identity from Constantinople and episcopal councils in general. Out of the 245 authentic letters in the collection, only two (*Ep*. 77 and 78) date to his twenty-two months in the imperial capital, and each of these emphasizes Gregory's pacifism in the face of opposition, a quality that emerges in many other post-Constantinople writings. Consider also that the collection features twenty-five letters dating to the ten months immediately following his return to Cappadocia in July 381, and in these letters Gregory condemns Constantinople and his time there.[13] His distaste for the capital endures into the following two summers: a small dossier of six letters dating to 382 reject invitations to a second council of Constantinople,[14] while a single letter to his old friend Philagrius rebuffs an invitation to a third in 383: 'I've grown weary of fighting against jealousy and the hallowed bishops who break down the common concord and regard their own rivalries as a natural byproduct of the faith … If, as you write, it's dangerous to forsake the church, how so? If [the church] were mine, I would agree, and it would be rightly said.

[11] For references and elaboration, see Bradley K. Storin, 'In a Silent Way: Asceticism and Literature in the Rehabilitation of Gregory of Nazianzus', *JECS* 19 (2011), 239-41, 250-1.

[12] See *Or*. 43; *Carm*. 2.1.11, 2.1.93; *Epig*. 2-11.

[13] Five address two Cappadocian bishops (*Ep*. 89, 138, 153 to Bosporius of Colonia; *Ep*. 139, 157 to Theodore of Tyana) and eight address friends in Constantinople (*Ep*. 90 to Anysius; *Ep*. 93 to Sophronius; *Ep*. 94 to Amazonius; *Ep*. 95 to Leontius; *Ep*. 96 to Hypatius; *Ep*. 97 to Heraclianus; *Ep*. 99 to Sacerdos; *Ep*. 100 to Gigantius). Others pertain to Gregory's vow of silence, which he takes to purify his tongue of the pollution in acquired in Constantinople (*Ep*. 107-14, 116-9).

[14] *Ep*. 130 to Procopius; *Ep*. 131 to Olympius; *Ep*. 132 to Saturninus; *Ep*. 133 to Victor; *Ep*. 135 to Sophronius; *Ep*. 136 to Modarius.

But if it has nothing to do with me or the one proclaimed by me, I'm not accountable' (*Ep*. 87.3-5). While it is possible that none of the letters that Gregory wrote while in Constantinople made the trip back to Cappadocia, I think it no coincidence that we find only negative characterizations accompanying any mention of Constantinople and its occasional gathering of bishops. And so Gregory's exclusion of almost all the letters from his time in the capital and inclusion of letters that condemn the city and the bishops convening there comprise editorial choices made to diachronically depict himself as the unflagging critic of Constantinople and its political culture.

Now, it appears, he needed to find new sites where he could claim authority. He found it first in his fervor for philosophical practice. Thirty-five letters to various holders of government and ecclesiastical positions advertise Gregory's self-identification with philosophy,[15] a multivalent term that could connote cultivating ascetic endurance,[16] dispassionately tolerating any hardship,[17] and withdrawing from political conflicts into tranquility.[18] In some letters to rhetors and government officials, Gregory touts his philosophy in different sense, as the union of rhetorical prowess and moral virtue *à la* the ancient Athenian orator Isocrates.[19] For instance, in a letter to Themistius on behalf of Amphilochius (the future bishop of Iconium and Gregory's cousin), Gregory writes: 'Eloquence is in danger, and the opportunity is yours, if you are indeed the king of eloquence' (*Ep*. 24.1). As a 'philosophical man' who heeds Plato's warning that 'cities would not put an end to their vices until power consorted with philosophy', Themistius 'could practice no better philosophy than now joining us in the fight for what's right' (*Ep*. 24.2, 4, 6). The letter's logic – and that of other similar letters – relies on the Isocratean link between philosophy, rhetorical prowess, and moral virtue.[20] The identification of Themistius as philosophical also reflects back on Gregory since, simply put, it takes one to know one.

[15] *Ep*. 1, 8, 47 to Basil; *Ep*. 15 to the official Lollianus; *Ep*. 24 to Themistius of Constantinople; *Ep*. 31-34 to his friend Philagrius; *Ep*. 56, 222, 223 to Sacerdos' sister Thecla; *Ep*. 76, 197 to Gregory of Nyssa; *Ep*. 94 to Amazonius; *Ep*. 111 to the monk Eugenius; *Ep*. 116 to his cousin Eulalius; *Ep*. 123 to Theodore of Tyana; *Ep*. 135 to the official Sophronius; *Ep*. 164 to Timothy; *Ep*. 165, 166 to the sophist Stagirius; *Ep*. 170 to the official Palladius; *Ep*. 174, 178, 180 to the rhetor Eudoxius; *Ep*. 194 to Vitalianus; *Ep*. 200 to the official Nemesius; *Ep*. 209 to Castor; *Ep*. 213-15 to Sacerdos; *Ep*. 221 to Homophronius; *Ep*. 227 to Ursus; *Ep*. 228 to Pansophius.

[16] See *Ep*. 111, 116, 213, 215, 228; cf. *Ep*. 170.2.

[17] Such as illness (*Ep*. 31-4, 92, 209) or the death of a loved one (*Ep*. 76.4, 197.2, 222.5).

[18] *Ep*. 47.2, 94.1-2, 135.1, 170.2, 214.2, 215.2-3, 221.3. See also the letters documenting conflicts between Stagirius and Eustochius (*Ep*. 165, 166, 188, 190-2) and those between Eudocius and Sacerdos (*Ep*. 216-8, and perhaps *Ep*. 211-5, 219-21). He 'documents' his ascetic silence in *Ep*. 107-14, 116-9 and lauds it for the calm withdrawal from human society it provides.

[19] See *Ep*. 15 to Lollianus, *Ep*. 24 to Themistius, and *Ep*. 174 to Eudoxius. Gregory directly alludes to Isocrates' *Ad Demonicum* 2-5, 7 at *Ep*. 174.3-4.

[20] The same connection is operative in *Ep*. 15.6, 174.3-4. Indeed, Themistius himself draws on the same Isocratean concept of philosophy in his *Oration* 26.

Philosophy's multivalence was appealing to Gregory: whether ascetic exertion, a psychological disposition, isolation from politics, or the height of civic virtue, philosophy was a different foundation, outside of Constantinople and episcopal politics, where he could re-constitute his authority and identity.

Gregory's claim to eloquence works in the same way. Eloquence comprised the ability to speak and write with literary sophistication; it signaled its possessor's participation within elite society. It features prominently in the collection. From his mastery of ancient epistolary style[21] to his frequent use of honorific titles;[22] from his fawning praise for an addressee's success and virtue[23] to his frequent allusions to and quotations of classical playwrights (Aeschylus, Aristophanes, Euripides), orators (Aeschines, Demosthenes, Isocrates), poets (Antimachus, Callimachus, Cleobulus, Hesiod, Homer, Pindar, Simonides, Theocritus, Theognis), historians (Dionysius of Halicarnassus, Herodotus, Xenophon), and philosophers (Aristotle, Plato, Pythagoras).[24] This kind of dexterous intertextuality in concert with all the other hallmarks of eloquent discourse serves as Gregory's elite credentials, so to speak. This is why the collection features so many otherwise benign letters of recommendation, intercession, request, consolation, and friendship;[25] they allow Gregory to show how eloquence works in a social context, and his audience – Nicobulus and his Caesarean educators[26] as well as the Constantinopolitan and provincial elites – would likely have picked up on Gregory's successful use of it.

[21] Evidenced by the short treatise on epistolary style sent to Nicobulus (*Ep.* 51) and the range of epistolographical types included in the collection.

[22] For the most part, honorific titles indicate not professional position, but a quality personified by the addressee, one that Gregory hopes to highlight and exploit in an intercession, request, or recommendation. These include titles like 'Your Eloquence' (*hē sē logiotēs*; *Ep.* 148.6, 164.1, 175.2, 195.2, 198.3, 199.4, 234), 'Your Reverence' (*hē sē eulabeia*, a title not exclusively reserved for clerics; *Ep.* 16.4, 17.3, 18.1, 40.5, 58.1, 60.1, 77.2, 84.2, 115.2, 127.1, 138.3, 139.1, 139.2, 152.4, 152.5, 159.1, 159.2, 160.1, 162.1, 161.3, 163.2, 163.6, 183.3, 185.4, 222.1, 223.1, 223.13, 242, 246.1, 246.7), 'Your Godliness' (*hē sē theosebeia*, a title exclusively reserved for bishops; *Ep.* 64.1, 65.1, 66.1, 182.4, 186.5), 'Your Perfection' (*hē sē teleiotēs*; *Ep.* 64.2, 66.2, 93.2, 139.1, 157.3, 184.4, 204.8, 224.5), 'Your Dignity' (*hē sē timiotēs*; *Ep.* 3.4, 6.6, 76.5, 125.3, 137.1, 208.1, 230.5), 'Your Excellence' (*hē sē kalokagathia*; *Ep.* 21.2, 103.4, 126.3, 136.2, 170.2, 181.2, 195.4, 199.6, 208.1), 'Your Clemency' (*hē sē hēmerotēs*; *Ep.* 104.1, 126.4, 143.2, 146.1, 170.1, 219.7), and 'Your Nobility' (*hē sē eugeneia*; *Ep.* 29.4, 63.6, 79.5, 205.2, 207.2), among others.

[23] See *Ep.* 15.5-6, 21.5, 22.5, 23.2, 39.1, 70.5, 71.1, 103.2, 136.1, 140.1-3, 146.7, 154.1, 154.4, 155.3, 208.1.

[24] The citations are too numerous to list. See the full list of classical references in Paul Gallay, *Gregor von Nazianz. Briefe*, GCS 53 (Berlin, 1969), 193-5.

[25] Recommendations and intercessions emphasizing eloquence: *Ep.* 9, 21-3, 28, 37-9, 67, 83, 98, 103-6, 126, 128, 134, 137, 140-3, 146, 148, 150, 181, 195, 196, 198, 199, 207, 208, 224, 228, 236. Requests emphasizing eloquence: *Ep.* 125, 136, 173. Friendships and relationships built on eloquence: *Ep.* 2-6, 12, 13, 26, 30-2, 46, 70, 71 75, 80, 90, 96, 97, 112, 114, 131, 156, 164, 187, 203, 204, 230, 233-5, 239, 240. Praise on the basis of eloquence: *Ep.* 10, 154, 155.

[26] Nicobulus' training in eloquence: *Ep.* 51-4, 165-7, 174-80, 188-92.

The collection's fourth theme – his friendship with Basil – brings the others together. In twenty-eight letters, the collection depicts their friendship over a fifteen-year period. It begins, naturally, in a shared love of eloquence and philosophy (ascetically understood),[27] something that remains central despite Basil's post-ordination descent into conflicts for church office as well as conflicts with fellow divines like Bishop Eusebius of Caesarea and Anthimus of Tyana.[28] A specific dynamic can be traced in these letters: Gregory is Basil's most trusted advisor, his most intimate friend, someone who rebukes him for both engaging in petty conflicts and recoiling from important ones. The collection shows Gregory pushing Basil to proclaim Nicene orthodoxy to the Homoian Valens,[29] to contain a heretical deacon running around Cappadocia,[30] and to clarify his pneumatological views amidst criticism from other Christians.[31] In a late antique context, this dynamic shows not a strained relationship, but a tremendously intimate one: speaking unvarnished truth – using *parrhēsia*, indeed a quality that constitutes the philosopher's calling card in late antiquity – proves that Gregory is Basil's truest friend, indeed his spiritual brother.[32] And that is the precise claim that would resonate with his audience. The true heir to Basil's legacy is Gregory, not his successor Helladius and not his brother Gregory of Nyssa,[33] not the politicos whose bad behavior is exactly like that for which Gregory rebuked Basil. What emerges from the collection, then, is Gregory as the non-Constantinopolitan, eloquent philosopher who has the best claim to Basil's legacy.[34]

[27] *Ep*. 1, 2 (and Basil's response, *Ep*. 14), 4, 5, 6, 8 comprise the initial series. These early letters contain many classical allusions placed alongside scriptural ones; see *Ep*. 2.1, 4.3-7, 4.11, 5.1-2, 5.5, 6.2, 6.5-6. Indeed, the two formed their friendship while training in eloquence and quickly committed to leading the philosophical life together (see *Ep*. 1.1).

[28] For Gregory reminding Basil about their commitment to eloquence and philosophy, see *Ep*. 46.2, 58.4. Even *Ep*. 245, arguably the most cryptic letter in Gregory's collection, should be understood as an epistolary demonstration of the eloquence that joined him with Basil: 'The mimic actor, as you style him, but a reverent man, as I do, asked me to write to you so that he would be clearly heard'. And Basil's equally cryptic response survives: 'He who in our sight is a mimic actor, but in yours a pious man, having come to us on a propitious and brilliant day, has departed in a manner truly befitting a god'. (Basil, *Ep*. 368 [trans. DeFerrari, LCL 270, 356]). The eloquence resides in the formal properties of a laconic letter, an epistolary type that Gregory highlighted in his instruction to Nicobulus (*Ep*. 54). For Basil's conflict with Eusebius, see *Ep*. 16-9; for his election, see *Ep*. 40-6; for Basil's conflict with Anthimus, see *Ep*. 48-50.

[29] *Ep*. 47 to Basil.

[30] *Ep*. 246, 248 to Basil, and 247 directly to Glycerius directly.

[31] *Ep*. 58 (and Basil's response, *Ep*. 71), 59, 60 to Basil.

[32] See David Konstan, *Friendship in the Classical World* (Cambridge, 1997), 102-12.

[33] Indeed, I suspect that Gregory's negative remarks about the horse-lover in *Carm*. 2.1.12.405-14 are directed at Gregory of Nyssa, who was quick to adopt the Council's theological settlement, much to Gregory of Nazianzus' chagrin. See Gregory of Nyssa, *Ep*. 13.4, where he half-heartedly connects his own rhetorical expertise to that of Basil.

[34] *Ep*. 76 to Gregory of Nyssa, *Ep*. 80 to Philagrius. These two letters, along with *Ep*. 115 to Theodore of Tyana (accompanied by the *Philocalia*, a text jointly compiled by Gregory and Basil) and *Ep*. 25 to Amphilochius of Iconium (a letter written in the 370s that affirms to a third-party

Gregory has built his letter collection on these thematic cornerstones, which are evident within the collection as it currently exists. But whether or not the content of the modern version of the collection would match Gregory's original is open to debate; my own view is that the two largely correspond. All comments on the original collection's shape and content must remain speculative, for its earliest manuscripts date to the tenth century, and Gregory's only direct statement on its arrangement is a brief note that Basil's letters precede his own (*Ep*. 53.2).[35] We can, however, surmise that the Maurists' chronological arrangement does not reflect Gregory's original.[36] Paul Gallay, who produced the collection's most recent critical edition, has identified six main manuscript families:

u-family:[37] 233 letters + Bas. *Ep*. 169-71 (= Gr. Naz. *Ep*. 246-48) + Gr. Nyss. *Ep*. 1 (= Gr. Naz. *Ep*. 249) = 237 total letters

v-family:[38] 228 letters + Bas. *Ep*. 71 and 115 + Gr. Nyss. *Ep*. 1 (= Gr. Naz. *Ep*. 249) = 229 total letters

d-family:[39] 235 letters + Bas. *Ep*. 169-71 (= Gr. Naz. *Ep*. 246-48) and 208 = 239 total letters

Gregory's friendship with Basil), would have certainly given the impression to *the collection's* readers that his inheritance of the Basilian authority had already been confirmed by other important figures in the region. Gregory's claim is best summed up in a few lines from a letter to Basil: 'The greater the intimacy, the greater the experience; the fuller the experience, the more valid the testimony. If being alive offers me any additional benefit, it would have to be your friendship and intimacy … [I am] the one who knows you and your affairs best of all' (*Ep*. 58.1-2, 15).

[35] Perhaps he interspersed some of Basil's letters with his own and selectively presented a few epistolary conversations: Gregory's *Ep*. 2 responds point-by-point to Basil's *Ep*. 14; Gregory's *Ep*. 59 responds to Basil's *Ep*. 71, which itself responds to Gregory's *Ep*. 58; Basil's *Ep*. 368 responds to Gregory's *Ep*. 245.

[36] The critical edition of P. Gallay, *Briefe* (1969) follows enumeration and arrangement of the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Maurist editors (*Ep*. 1-244; PG 37, 21-388), with four additions (*Ep*. 245-9). *Ep*. 245 was published in J. Forschall, *Catalogue of the Manuscripts in the British Museum*, New Series, Volume 1 (London, 1840), 34, and again by G. Mercati, *Studi e testi* 9 (Rome, 1903). *Ep*. 246-8 had been included in Basil's collection (*Ep*. 169-71), but Gallay rightly restored them to Gregory's collection. Gallay should not have included *Ep*. 249 since Gregory of Nyssa is its author. See Paul Gallay, *Les manuscrits des lettres de Saint Grégoire de Nazianze* (Paris, 1957), 105-22, for an account of editions appearing after V. Opsopoeus' 57-letter *editio princeps* in 1528.

[37] U-family's primary manuscripts are Marcianus graecus 79 (11th cent.; Biblioteca Marciana in Venice) and Mutinensis α-o-4-15 (11th cent.; Biblioteca Estense in Modena); it lacks the following letters: *Ep*. 28, 42, 57, 88, 171, 212, 243, and 244. N.B. *Ep*. 101, 102, and 202 were transmitted outside the collection and are absent in all manuscript families. All manuscript information has been compiled from P. Gallay, *Les manuscrits* (1957), 15-91.

[38] V-family's primary manuscripts are Laurentianus 4-14 (10th cent.; Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana in Florence) and Londinensis British Museum Additional 36.7489 (11th cent., British Museum in London); it lacks the following letters: *Ep*. 4, 5, 28, 42, 57, 66, 88, 171, 212, 241, 243, 244, and 245.

[39] D-family's primary manuscripts are Parisinus graecus 506 (10th cent.; Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris) and Parisinus Suppl. gr. 763 (11th cent.; Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris); it lacks the following letters: 42, 57, 74, 88, 114, 171, 236, 241, 243, 244, and 245.

f-family:[40] 229 letters + Bas. *Ep*. 1, 71, 164, 169-71 (= Gr. Naz. *Ep*. 246-48), 174, 208, 213, and 282 = 239 total letters

g-family:[41] 233 letters + Bas. *Ep*. 14, 26, 71, 169-71 (= Gr. Naz. *Ep*. 246-48), 279, and 280 = 241 total letters

h-family:[42] 231 letters + Bas. *Ep*. 1, 112, 169-71 (= Gr. Naz. *Ep*. 246-48), and 341 = 237 total letters

Remarkably, in none of the families is chronology the principle of arrangement. Instead, to a greater or lesser degree, each one arranges the letters into dossiers based on the identity of the addressee (a principle implied by Gregory's comment in *Ep*. 53). The letters addressed and pertaining to Basil, then, constitute one dossier, those to Nectarius another, those to Nicobulus another, and so on. The position of one dossier in relation to another can vary among the families, but the dossiers themselves and the basic arrangement principle are largely stable.[43] In particular, it is the u-family (which Gallay thought to mirror Gregory's original most closely)[44] as well as the v- and d-families that are quite systematic in their arrangement.

If we move away from chronology and reconceptualize the collection's arrangement in terms of addressee-dossiers, connective threads emerge that unite the dossiers into a coherent whole. In particular, various connections among addressees, carriers, friends, and family members – previously impossible to

[40] F-family's primary manuscript is Patmiacus 57 (10-14th cent.; Monastery of St. John the Evangelist on Patmos); it lacks the following letters: 12, 42, 50, 74, 88, 114, 183, 184, 185, 236, 243, 244, and 245.

[41] G-family's primary manuscripts are Athous τῆς ἱερᾶ μονῆς Ἰβήρων 335, nunc 2413 (10th cent.; Iviron Monastery Library on Mount Athos), Athous τῆς μεγίστης Λαύρας Γ 59 (10th cent.; Monastery of the Great Lavra Library on Mount Athos), and Laurentianus 57, 7 (11th cent.; Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana in Florence); it lacks the following letters: 12, 16, 28, 57, 127, 170, 171, 184, 186, 209, 236, 241, 243, 244, and 245.

[42] H-family's primary manuscripts are Athous τῆς ἱερᾶς μονῆς Βατοπεδίου 114 (12th cent.; Monastery of Vatopdei Library on Mount Athos) and Marcianus graecus 81 (13th-14th cent.; Biblioteca Marciana in Venice); it lacks the following letters: 12, 28, 42, 57, 62, 64, 66, 74, 88, 171, 184, 185, 236, 241, 243, and 245.

[43] For instance, the u-family begins the collection with the epistolary dossier (*Ep*. 51-4), followed by the Basil dossier, and then the Palladius dossier (*Ep*. 103, 170, 119, 110) The v-family moves the epistolary dossier to roughly three-quarters the way through, but otherwise matches the u-family. The d-family begins with the epistolary dossier (in a different order than the u-family) followed by the Basil dossier, and then provides the Nemesius dossier (*Ep*. 201, 199, 198, 200). The f-family begins with the epistolary dossier (in the u-family's order), followed by the Basil dossier, a letter to Aburgius, one to Nemesius, and a portion of the Olympius dossier. The g-family begins with half the Basil dossier, but then sprinkles in some letters and short dossiers before presenting the rest of the Basil dossier. The h-family begins with the epistolary dossier (in an order different from the u-, d-, and f-families), then the Basil dossier, and then moves into apparent organizational anarchy.

[44] P. Gallay, *Les manuscrits* (1957), 20-1, 83.

see – become apparent. For example, Bishop Helladius figures into the Nicobulus dossier since he is involved in the young man's education (*Ep*. 127 and 167), but Helladius as his own small dossier of which the two recommendations for Nicobulus are a part (*Ep*. 120, 127, 167, 172, 219, 220); within Helladius' dossier are recommendation letters for Sacerdos (*Ep*. 219, 220), who also has his own dossier of letters written to him (*Ep*. 99, 212-15), for him (*Ep*. 168-70, 209, 211, 216, 218-21), and for his wife Thecla (*Ep*. 56, 57, 222, 223). As a result, a prosopographical coherence running through the collection becomes clear: a web of addressees and carriers emerges, one based on relationships of patronage, kinship, friendship, and education. The collection's two primary linchpins – the dossiers of letters surrounding Basil and Nicobulus, respectively – should not be surprising. The Basil dossier naturally features Gregory's letters to Basil and Basil's letters to him,[45] per *Letter* 53, along with subdossiers of letters written to Eusebius of Samosata,[46] Gregory of Nyssa,[47] Amphilochius of Iconium,[48] Philagrius,[49] and Theodore of Tyana,[50] each of whom (save Theodore, whose episcopacy comes after Basil had died) not only received a letter from Gregory mentioning his relationship with Basil,[51] but also received letters from Basil himself.[52] Other addressees in Gregory's collection received letters from Basil too: his brother Caesarius,[53] the governor Olympius,[54] the sophist Leontius,[55] the magistrates Sophronius and Julian,[56] Nectarius of Constantinople,[57]

[45] Perhaps Basil, *Ep*. 2, 14, 19, 71, 368.

[46] *Ep*. 42, 44, 64-6.

[47] *Ep*. 11, 72-4, 76, 81, 182, 197.

[48] *Ep*. 13, 25-8, 62, 171, 184, as well as letters *Ep*. 9 and 63 to Amphilochius' father, and *Ep*. 22-4, letters written on behalf of Amphilochius.

[49] *Ep*. 30-6, 80, 87, 92.

[50] *Ep*. 77, 115, 121-4, 139, 152, 157, 159-63.

[51] *Ep*. 42 asks Eusebius of Samosata to get involved in Basil's election, and *Ep*. 44 thanks him for doing so; *Ep*. 25 to Amphilochius jokes about Gregory's friendship with Basil; *Ep*. 76 to Gregory of Nyssa (Basil's brother) and *Ep*. 80 to Philagrius (a mutual friend) document Gregory's reaction to Basil's death in 379; Gregory commemorates his friendship with Basil by sending *Ep*. 115 to Theodore of Tyana along with a copy of the *Philocalia* (composed by the two friends).

[52] Eusebius received Basil, *Ep*. 27, 30, 34, 48, 85, 98, 100, 127, 128, 136, 138, 141, 145, 162, 166, 167, 198, 237, 241, 268, 271. Gregory of Nyssa received Basil, *Ep*. 38, 58. Amphilochius received Basil, *Ep*. 150, 161, 176, 188, 190, 191, 199-202, 217, 218, 231-6, 248. Philagrius received Basil, *Ep*. 323.

[53] Caesarius received Gregory, *Ep*. 7, 20 and Basil, *Ep*. 26.

[54] Olympius received Gregory, *Ep*. 104-6, 125, 126, 131, 140-4, 146, 154 and Basil, *Ep*. 4, 12, 13, 131, 211.

[55] Leontius received Gregory, *Ep*. 95 and Basil, *Ep*. 20, 21.

[56] Sophronius received Gregory, *Ep*. 21, 22, 29, 37, 39, 93, 135 and Basil, *Ep*. 32, 76, 96, 177, 180, 192, 272. Julian received Gregory, *Ep*. 67-9 and Basil, *Ep*. 293.

[57] Nectarius received Gregory, *Ep*. 91, 151, 185, 186 and Basil, *Ep*. 4, 290.

Bosporius of Colonia,[58] Epiphanius of Salamis,[59] the chorepiscopus Timothy,[60] the noblewoman Simplicia,[61] the officials Victor and Palladius,[62] the physician Meletius,[63] and a certain Cyriacus.[64] Whether or not Gregory accessed Basil's collection to find common addressees is impossible to know since we do not know which collection was published first, but if Gregory's construction of their friendship had any link to the one in social reality,[65] his knowledge of Basil's social network would likely have been robust, and coordinating his own list of addressees with those suspected to be in Basil's collection would only further buttress Gregory's claim of intimacy with Basil.

Furthermore, the Nicobulus dossier shares several, occasionally loose, prosopographical connections with the Basil dossier: Amphilochius, Sophronius, and Olympius,[66] Palladius and Cyriacus,[67] Nectarius of Constantinople and Theodore of Tyana,[68] and even Gregory of Nyssa[69] all pop up in the Nicobulus dossier. However, its focus on bequeathing eloquence to Nicobulus brings Gregory to include letters written directly to Nicobulus, those written to his Caesarean educators – Helladius, Stagirius, Eustochius, and Eudoxius. More than mere engagement with eloquent men, Gregory showed his mastery of it by showing his ability to recommend and interceded for others using eloquence. That is, he opted to show eloquence's social utility (which redounded to his claim of its mastery) in practice through recommendations, intercessions, and acts of patronage.[70]

The collection as a whole, then, consists of a series of dossiers, primarily determined by the identity of the addressee and his or her connection to Basil

[58] Bosporius received Gregory, *Ep*. 89, 138, 153 and Basil, *Ep*. 51.

[59] Epiphanius received Gregory, *Ep*. 239 and Basil, *Ep*. 258.

[60] Timothy received Gregory, *Ep*. 164 and Basil, *Ep*. 291.

[61] Simplicia received Gregory, *Ep*. 79 and Basil, *Ep*. 115.

[62] Victor received Gregory, *Ep*. 133, 134 and Basil, *Ep*. 152. Palladius received Gregory, *Ep*. 103, 110, 119, 170 and Basil, *Ep*. 292.

[63] Meletius received Gregory, *Ep*. 240 and Basil, *Ep*. 193.

[64] Cyriacus received Gregory, *Ep*. 211 and Basil, *Ep*. 114.

[65] See David Konstan, 'How to Praise a Friend: St. Gregory of Nazianzus's Funeral Oration for St. Basil the Great', in T. Hägg and P. Rousseau (eds), *Greek Biography* (2000), 160-79.

[66] Amphilochius (*Ep*. 13), Sophronius (*Ep*. 21), and Olympius (*Ep*. 126, 146) each received recommendations for Nicobulus' father.

[67] Both Palladius and Cyriacus received recommendations for Sacerdos (*Ep*. 170 and 211, respectively), who was also recommended to Helladius (*Ep*. 219, 220), who was involved in Nicobulus' Caesarean education (*Ep*. 127, 167).

[68] Nectarius and Theodore each received recommendations for George (*Ep*. 151 and 163, respectively), whom Gregory also recommended to Asterius (*Ep*. 150), to whom Gregory recommended Nicobulus' father (*Ep*. 147, 148).

[69] Gregory of Nyssa wrote *Ep*. 9, 27 to Stagirius.

[70] Thus we find recommendations for Nicobulus (*Ep*. 127, 167, 174-7, 188-92, 195, 196), Nicobulus' father (*Ep*. 13, 21, 67, 126, 146-8, 224), Sacerdos (*Ep*. 168-70, 209, 211, 216, 218-21), George (*Ep*. 150, 151, 163), and Nicobulus' rhetor Eudoxius (*Ep*. 37, 38, 181).

or Nicobulus and thereby back to Gregory. Without ruling out the possibility of later additions to the collection,[71] the letters that Gregory selected for each subdossier would highlight the thematic motifs corresponding to his broader autobiographical project, which sought to re-establish his identity outside the offices of church and government. Instead, it was personal accomplishments and qualities – his enduring commitment to philosophy, eloquence, and his friendship with Basil – that became the basis for his authority.

Any interpretation of Gregory's letters, then, or the letters from any self-made collection, must be contextualized by the *collection's* publication, not a given letter's composition. Gregory's revisionary and apologetic agenda in the years following Constantinople loom over the collection; any individual letter, I would argue, should be read as contributing to his rehabilitative efforts in the early 380s, during which Gregory did not retire into quiet withdrawal but textually maintained consistent engagement with public life. Here he continues his autobiographical interest but in a different way, one that puts a 'historical' shine on it by using past 'documents'.

[71] Perhaps this is how *Ep*. 227-42, an undatable series of letters to individuals otherwise unknown, found their way into the collection.

Gregory on Gregory: *Catechetical Oration* 38

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Abstract

In *Catechetical Oration* 38, Gregory of Nyssa refers to other works he has written on the disputed topics of Christian faith. Most of the scholarly discussion of the passage has focused on whether the passage can be used to date the *Catechetical Oration*. I propose to read it instead for what it says about Gregory's self-understanding as a writer of dogmatic texts. Gregory's way of describing himself here matches what he says about other authors in various places in his corpus. Gregory emerges as a self-conscious literary stylist, emphasizing his own rigor and contentious polemical engagement with adversaries to the proper understanding of the baptismal creed.

Gregory of Nyssa can be an elusive author. He published nothing like Augustine's *Retractationes*; his autobiographical references are highly selective; compared to Basil or Gregory of Nazianzus, his corpus of letters is slender; as far as we know, upon his death, no panegyrist took Gregory's virtue and erudition for his theme, as he and Nazianzen had done for Basil; moreover, the fifth-century historians give no attention to the details of his life. As a result, two important scholarly questions – knowing when he wrote his surviving writings and what he thought of them – have proven difficult to answer. When it comes specifically to the various works we have by Gregory on disputed Trinitarian and Christological issues, certain facts can be established, especially surrounding the composition of the three books *Against Eunomius* and the *Refutation of Eunomius' "Confession"*. But the context for many other works remains murky.[1]

[1] In addition to important passages in other works, the works that are principally devoted to Trinitarian and Christological topics are: *To Eustathius On the Holy Trinity*, *To the Greeks based on Common Notions*, *To Ablabius On Not Thinking We Say "Three Gods"*, *To Simplicius On the Faith*, *On the Holy Spirit Against the Macedonians*, *To Theophilus Against the Apollinarians*, *Antirrheticus Against Apollinarius*, *Homily On the Day of Lights*, *Homily on the Holy Pascha*, *Homily on the Three Day Interval*, *Homily on the Holy and Saving Pascha*, *Homily on the Holy Resurrection of the Lord, Homily on the Ascension of Christ*, *On the Deity Against Evagrius*, *Against Eunomius* 1-3, *Refutation of Eunomius' "Confession"*, *Letters* 3, 4, 5, 24 (with important passages in other letters), *Homily on the Deity of the Son and the Holy Spirit*, *Homily on Pentecost*, *On the passage: Then the Son too … (1Cor. 15:28)*, and the *Catechetical Oration*.

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With respect to the anti-Eunomian works, we fortunately have some commentary from Gregory himself. Matthieu Cassin's important recent study has urged scholars to take account of three letters as crucial 'paratexte' for reading *Against Eunomius*.[2] Gregory's prefatory letter to Peter and Peter's reply, as well as a letter to disciples of an unnamed sophist (perhaps Libanius) with which Gregory sent the first book to the great orator, tell us a great deal about how he understood the work and the kind of elite, educated readership he hoped to cultivate for it. In this article, I argue that one chapter of Gregory's *Catechetical Oration* is best read similarly as a 'paratexte' for reading Gregory's controversial writings on Christian doctrine generally.

The crucial details for Gregory's self-characterization come in the first three sentences of *Catechetical Oration* 38:

> In what we have said [*i.e.* up to this point in *Catechetical Oration*], I think we have not overlooked any of the questions about the mystery except the discourse about the faith, which we will set forth briefly in the present treatise. For those who are looking for the fuller discourse, we have already set it forth in other works, rigorously unfolding the discourse with all possible seriousness. In those works, we both engaged with our adversaries in a controversial manner and investigated for ourselves the questions posed to us. But in the present discourse, we have deemed it suitable to say only as much about the faith as is encompassed by the Gospel's statement that the one who is born in the spiritual rebirth knows from whom he is born and what kind of living creature comes into being. For only this kind of birth has it in its power that one becomes whatever one chooses.[3]

Let us first briefly set the passage's context within the *Catechetical Oration*. This is chapter 38 of 40. The preceding chapters deal, as Gregory says here, with 'questions about the mystery'. The work aims at providing a guide for 'those who preside over the mystery' in their task as catechists.[4] Gregory likens catechesis to 'therapy': just as a physician adapts the healing to the disease, so

[2] Matthieu Cassin, *L'Écriture de la controverse chez Gregoire de Nysse: Polémique littéraire et exégèse dans le* Contre Eunome, Collection des Études Augustiniennes, Série Antiquité 193 (Paris, 2012), 111-33.

[3] *Or. Catech.* 38, Raymond Winling (ed.), *Grégoire de Nysse: Discours Catéchétique*, Sources Chrétiennes (SC) 453 (Paris, 2000), 324; Ekkehard Mühlenberg (ed.), *Opera minora dogmatica, Part IV: Oratio Catechetica*, Gregorii Nysseni Opera (GNO) 3.4 (Leiden, 1996), 98: Οὐδὲν οἶμαι τοῖς εἰρημένοις ἐνδεῖν τῶν περὶ τὸ μυστήριον ζητουμένων πλὴν τοῦ κατὰ τὴν πίστιν λόγου, ὃν δι' ὀλίγου μὲν καὶ ἐπὶ τῆς παρούσης ἐκθησόμεθα πραγματείας, τοῖς δὲ τὸν τελεώτερον ἐπιζητοῦσι λόγον ἤδη προεξεθέμεθα ἐν ἑτέροις πόνοις, διὰ τῆς δυνατῆς ἡμῖν σπουδῆς ἐν ἀκριβείᾳ τὸν λόγον ἁπλώσαντες, ἐν οἷς πρός τε τοὺς ἐναντίους ἀγωνιστικῶς συνεπλάκημεν καὶ καθ' ἑαυτοὺς περὶ τῶν προσφερομένων ἡμῖν ζητημάτων ἐπεσκεψάμεθα. Τῷ δὲ παρόντι λόγῳ τοσοῦτον εἰπεῖν περὶ τῆς πίστεως καλῶς ἔχειν ᾠήθημεν ὅσον ἡ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου περιέχει φωνή, τὸ τὸν γεννώμενον κατὰ τὴν πνευματικὴν ἀναγέννησιν εἰδέναι παρὰ τίνος γεννᾶται καὶ ποῖον γίνεται ζῷον· μόνον γὰρ τοῦτο τὸ τῆς γεννήσεως εἶδος κατ' ἐξουσίαν ἔχει ὅτιπερ ἂν ἕληται τοῦτο γενέσθαι.

[4] *Or. catech.* Prologue (SC 453, 136; GNO 3.4, 5).

too must catechists start from catechumens' existing beliefs, showing that what is best in their own belief system implies Christian belief or at least is consonant with it.[5] On this basis, he seeks first to show that both Greek and Jewish belief already includes or implies not simply exclusive belief in a single God, but also a 'distinction of hypostases'.[6] Then he turns to the creation and fall of humanity and the economy of salvation, addressing Greek objections to the incarnation. Throughout this section, his method is to show how Greek intuitions about God, morality, death, and so on find their logical terminus in the Christian doctrine of incarnation. He then turns to Eucharist and baptism immediately before our passage.

In chapter 38, Gregory refers to a 'discourse about the faith' that appears in compressed form within *Catechetical Oration*. 'The faith' names the profession one makes at baptism. The treatment of the faith appears in chapter 39, where Gregory seeks to show that only properly Trinitarian faith – that is, belief in the Father together with the uncreated Son and Spirit – secures the 'birth from above' promised in Christian baptism. The rather brief treatment of the topic in chapter 39 in some ways echoes arguments made elsewhere in his corpus. He alludes to *Matth.* 28:19, a key verse that Gregory treats throughout his Trinitarian writings as Jesus' own creed. He provides a brief exegesis coordinating biblical passages in which the predicate of 'giving life' is applied to all three hypostases in scripture. Clearly, from his opening remarks in chapter 38 and his arguments in chapter 39, Gregory means for his readers to look for parallel works, even if in chapter 39 he compresses the 'discourse about the faith' and tailors it to match the *Catechetical Oration*'s 'therapeutic' purpose.

'Other works'

Difficulties arise, however, with this project of correlating the *Catechetical Oration* with the unnamed 'other works'. The basic problem is that Gregory's hints are insufficient to determine precisely which works he has in mind. It is commonly assumed that Gregory must be referring to *Against Eunomius*. This association is very likely, especially given parallels between his description here and in Cassin's para-texts. However, it has not been universally accepted. In particular, Raymond Winling, the editor of the *Catechetical Oration* for Sources Chrétiennes, posited on thematic grounds that the *Catechetical Oration* must have been written by a younger Gregory, someone more enamored of the powers of reasoning for unlocking divine mysteries than the seasoned anti-Eunomian polemicist would allow.[7] While Winling's reasoning relies on an

[5] *Or. catech.* Prologue (SC 453, 138; GNO 3.4, 5).
[6] *Or. catech.* 1 (SC 453, 144; GNO 3.4, 8).
[7] SC 453, 125-30.

unconvincing portrait of Gregory's intellectual development, his doubts serve as a reminder that Gregory is not explicit about identifying the 'other works', and so we must approach the question carefully.

Based solely on what he says in chapter 38 and the arguments he develops in chapter 39, Gregory could be referring to any of the following: *Letter* 5, *Letter* 24, *To Eustathius On the Holy Trinity*, *On the Holy Spirit Against the Macedonians*, *To Ablabius*, *To Simplicius On the Faith*, *Against Eunomius* 1-3, *The Refutation of Eunomius' "Confession"*, *On the Deity of the Son and the Holy Spirit*, *To Peter*, *To the Greeks*, and possibly even the *Antirrheticus against Apollinarius*. Moreover the scope of the words 'other works' is vague: he could be referring to all of these works, to some of them, or to none of them (if he is referring to otherwise unknown works). Perhaps there are ways of eliminating some of these titles as candidates. Joseph Barbel proposed a connection between chapter 38 and *Letter* 5, and on thematic grounds this is correct.[8] However, Gregory's claim that his treatment in the 'other works' is lengthy seems incompatible with *Letter* 5, which is an intentionally brief creedal statement. The remaining works just listed are longer than *Letter* 5 (though *Letter* 24 and *To Simplicius* are also relatively brief). Perhaps some others can be eliminated on thematic grounds. Given the Trinitarian and baptismal focus of these chapters in the *Catechetical Oration*, the *Antirrheticus against Apollinarius* does not seem to be in view here. But we are still left with several works. Some scholars have posited a distinction within Gregory's corpus between works such as *To Eustathius* with private addressees and those like *Against Eunomius* intended for a public audience; in line with this distinction, when Gregory sends his readers to available works he could only be referring to the open works.[9] Along this line of interpretation, the three books *Against Eunomius* and the imperially-commissioned *Refutation of Eunomius' "Confession"* seem most likely to be the 'other works' (not to mention the fact that they are lengthy works that engage opponents, as Gregory says here). The circumstances in which Gregory produced *Against Eunomius* 1 in particular suggest a wide audience: he first read it to a group of luminaries including Gregory of Nazianzus and Jerome and sent part of it to students of rhetoric and separately as a whole to his own brother Peter who would become bishop of Sebasteia.[10] We should not, however, rule out a wide circulation of the so-called *Opera dogmatica minora*, even for works with individual addressees such as *To Eustathius* and *To Ablabius*. Such private publication was common in antiquity and did not imply an author's

[8] Gregor von Nyssa, *Die grosse katechetische Rede (Oratio catechetica magna)*, eingeleitet, übersetzt, und kommentiert von Joseph Barbel, Bibliothek der Griechischen Literatur, Band 1 (Stuttgart, 1971), 209 n. 343.

[9] See the criticism of this approach in Reinhard Jakob Kees, *Die Lehre von der* Oikonomia *Gottes in der* Oratio Catechetica *Gregors von Nyssa*, VCS 30 (Leiden, 1995), 202.

[10] Jerome, *De viris illustribus* 128.

intention to limit a work's circulation.[11] Both formally and thematically, those privately-addressed works match Gregory's description here. In sum, we cannot rule out the possibility that Gregory had those shorter works in mind in addition to the anti-Eunomian works or perhaps even instead of the anti-Eunomian works.

There is a further ambiguity in the sentence about the 'other works'. When Gregory says that in those works, he both engaged with adversaries and investigated problems for himself, he could be read in two ways. In the first way, he is saying that the other works come in two sets: in some of them, he engaged polemically with adversaries, while in others he investigated topics proposed for him.[12] If such a distinction between controversial and non-controversial works is meant, one could assign *Against Eunomius* to the first set and works like *To Ablabius*, *To Peter* (assuming it was written by Gregory), and *To the Greeks* to the latter set. According to the other way of reading the sentence, he is referring to works in which he *both* engaged adversaries *and* examined proposed topics independently.[13] One could argue that Gregory maintains such a double focus in many of the works just listed. Perhaps the ambiguity is unresolvable, and in any event, it is not necessary to resolve it here.

The question of which works Gregory has in mind is logically distinct from two other questions: (1) what does *Catechetical Oration* 38 tell us about the work's date or at least its place within a relative chronology of Gregory's works? (2) What does this chapter tell us about the nature of those works – that is, what sort of commentary does Gregory offer on his own writings? Answering the chronological question requires definitively identifying the other works, whereas answering the other question about Gregory's self-conception does not. Unfortunately, the scholarly discussion on this passage has focused exclusively on the question of chronology.[14] I hope that my argument thus far has cast doubt on whether the chronological usage of the chapter is a helpful approach. If the identification of the 'other works' is uncertain, and if some of the potential candidates are themselves impossible to date with certainty, then any chronological claim based solely on this passage must be based on partial evidence or circular thinking or both. All we can say is that Gregory was a seasoned writer of available doctrinal works when he wrote this chapter; while this very likely points to a time after he wrote *Against Eunomius*, we cannot rule out the idea that he has other works in mind also. Besides the reference in

[11] For an overview, see Harry Gamble, *Books and Readers in the Early Church: A History of Early Christian Texts* (New Haven, 1997), 82-143, with the literature cited there.

[12] Johannes Zachhuber apparently endorses this reading: *Human Nature in Gregory of Nyssa: Philosophical Background and Theological Significance* (Leiden, 2000), 206.

[13] Reinhard Jakob Kees supports this interpretation: *Die Lehre* (1995), 202.

[14] Note, *e.g.* Winling's note on chapter 38: 'Passage-clé pour la question de la datation' (SC 453, 324 n. 1). He does not comment on the chapter's contents. See the literature he cites on pages 125-30.

chapter 38, there are additional, weighty considerations when it comes to the question of dating the *Catechetical Oration*, which are not in focus in this study, though I note that all of them point to the conventional dating in the mid-to-late 380's, that is, after *Against Eunomius*.[15] But chapter 38 by itself does not clinch the argument. The problem, however, with focusing on chronology is not simply the circular or conjectural nature of the arguments, but more importantly that the chronological approach has suppressed an attentive reading of the passage's language itself in light of Gregory's use of similar language elsewhere.

There are three phrases here that have almost a technical sense in Gregory's corpus; in the following, we will use parallel occurrences across Gregory's corpus to flesh out the sense of these key terms in Gregory's self-portrait.

'The discourse about the faith'

In chapter 38, Gregory distinguishes between 'the questions about the mystery' and 'the discourse about the faith'. The two are distinct, though related: the discourse about the faith is one part of the questions about the mystery. 'Mystery' appears 24 times in the *Catechetical Oration*; in chapter 38, it refers specifically to baptism. 'The faith', as used in chapters 38 and 39, means the profession of faith at baptism, especially as embodied in Jesus' words in *Matth.* 28:19.[16] As for the *logos* (discourse, speech, account, teaching) that addresses this creed, Gregory refers to it in the singular, though he notes that it appears in multiple works (ἐν ἑτέροις πόνοις) as well as in the present treatise (ἐπὶ τῆς παρούσης … πραγματείας). The *logos* therefore is not to be identified with any treatise or work. Gregory portrays himself as adapting the same *logos* to various occasions or purposes in his various works. The self-same speech can be expanded, as in the other works mentioned here, or compressed, as in *Catechetical Oration* 39.

To get at what this *logos* is, we can first ask how it relates to the *pistis*? In our paragraph, the two terms are connected with prepositional phrases – first *kata* with accusative, then *peri* with genitive. If we look at similar phrases throughout Gregory's works, we see that typically the terms are bonded via a simple genitive, as in the phrase ὁ τῆς πίστεως λόγος. For instance, Gregory's *On the Holy Spirit Against the Macedonians* begins with these sentences:

When it comes to those whose words are empty, it is perhaps best not to give any answer at all. Solomon's wise instruction seems to lead in this direction, when he bids

[15] See the full, though somewhat inconclusive, discussion in R. Kees, *Die Lehre* (1995), 200-7.

[16] Barbel was correct on this point: Gregor von Nyssa, *Die grosse katechetische Rede (Oratio catechetica magna)*, eingeleitet, übersetzt, und kommentiert von J. Barbel, Bibliothek der Griechischen Literatur, Band 1 (1971), 209 n. 343.

us 'not to answer a fool according to his folly' [*Prov*. 26:4]. But there is a danger that, through our silence, falsehood will overpower the truth and when this rotting gangrene of heresy has spread itself widely against the truth, it will completely wreck the healthy teaching of the faith (τὸν ὑγιαίνοντα τῆς πίστεως λόγον).[17]

Gregory does not specify exactly what the *logos* is; it could be a creed-like summary or his own broader discourse about doctrinal matters. After detailing the Pneumatomachian charges against his doctrine, Gregory pivots to his defense with a rhetorical question that is common in his works: 'What, then, is our *logos*?'[18] Presumably what follows contains 'the healthy teaching of the faith', though it is unclear whether this *logos* is restricted to the short summary of Trinitarian principles that immediately follows the rhetorical question or is Gregory's label for the entire account.

Similar ambiguity appears in other works. In *To Eustathius On the Holy Trinity*, Gregory first offers a narrative of accusations against him; he then pivots to his own counter-speech with this: 'What then is our *logos*? When the Lord handed over the saving faith to those being trained in the *logos*, he connected the Holy Spirit with the Father and the Son'.[19] Note that *logos* occurs twice here. The first instance names Gregory's own reply to the accusations leveled against him. As in *On the Holy Spirit Against the Macedonians*, the *logos* could refer to the initial summary statement of his case or it could refer to the entire discourse that follows. The second occurrence of *logos* in the quoted passage, however, refers to Jesus' own teaching to his disciples. Jesus' *logos* is identical with the contents of *Matth*. 28:19; it is 'the saving faith'. Gregory argues that the connective particle between the names in this formula signifies a real connection linking the hypostases. That argument – an interpretation of the risen Lord's own *logos* – is Gregory's *logos*.

In *To Ablabius*, Gregory says: 'But if our *logos* is shown to be not quite up to the task, we shall forever guard the tradition which we received from the fathers firm and unmoved, and ask of the Lord for the *logos* that is the faith's advocate (τὸν δὲ συνήγορον τῆς πίστεως λόγον)'.[20] Once again there are two *logoi*: from the context, the first refers to the entire argument of the work as a response to the dilemma Ablabius has proposed, namely that if one confesses the divinity of the Son and Spirit along with the Father, one thereby proclaims three gods, whereas if one denies their divinity, one commits impiety. Gregory's response to the dilemma represents his best effort at a difficult problem.[21] Even

[17] *Spir*., Fridericus Mueller (ed.), *Gregorii Nysseni Opera Dogmatica Minora, Pars I*, GNO 3.1 (Leiden, 1958), 89.

[18] *Spir*. (GNO 3.1, 90).

[19] *Trin*. (GNO 3.1, 7).

[20] *Tres dii* (GNO 3.1, 39).

[21] *Tres dii* (GNO 3.1, 38): Ἔστι δὲ μικρὸς οὗτος ὁ λόγος ὃν ἡμῖν οὐδὲ τοιοῦτος ὡς ὀλίγην φέρειν ζημίαν ... Ὁ μέν οὖν λόγος, καθὰ προέφην, πολὺ τὸ δυσμεταχείριστον ἔχει...

if this account fails, he says that he will maintain the baptismal tradition. In such a scenario, he envisions a second *logos*, one that would successfully defend this baptismal faith. This *logos* would be a divine gift.[22]

Examples of similar expressions in Gregory's works could be multiplied. In the homily *In diem luminum*, Gregory makes a brief Trinitarian digression, before recalling himself to the festal topic with this remark: 'Now that's enough on [such] examples. For our current goal is not to restore the *logos* of the faith, so let us return to the present occasion and the topic set before us...'[23] Here it seems to mean the correct 'teaching' of the faith. Gregory tags the restoration of this *logos* as a potential subject of writings, even if it is not the subject of that particular homily. Similar expressions appear in *Against Eunomius*.[24] In sum, then, while the pairing of *logos* with *pistis* is relatively common across Gregory's doctrinal writings, the *logos* in question, however, alternates between the baptismal profession itself and the argument offered in its defense. Accordingly, it can be something of Gregory's own composition or something he has inherited. Despite the ambiguity, we have uncovered a commonplace in his self-characterization.

'Rigorously'

Returning to *Catechetical Oration* 38, Gregory says that his other works contain the same *logos* as does the following chapter, although in those works the speech is given a lengthier unfolding. It is not only that those 'other works' are longer, however, but that in them the discourse is unfolded ἐν ἀκριβείᾳ. The exact phrase used here appears only one other time in Gregory's corpus. In the 7th *Homily on the Song of Songs*, in the midst of a complicated analogy, Gregory says that a function of the eyes is 'to discern ἐν ἀκριβείᾳ the lily from the thorn and to prefer the one that is saving while rejecting the one that causes harm'.[25] The idea of knowing discrimination is crucial for the sense of ἐν ἀκριβείᾳ here, as it is for the equivalent expression δι' ἀκριβείας, a phrase which occurs 91 times in Gregory's works. Take the following example from Gregory's work *On the Dead*. It is the beginning of a scripted speech in which

[22] For a comparable account of someone being inspired (in this case by the Holy Spirit) to make rational arguments, see Gregory, *On the Life of Macrina*, Virginia Woods Callahan (ed.), *Vita S. Macrinae*, in Werner Jaeger, Johannes P. Cavarnos and Virginia Woods Callahan (eds), *Gregorii Nysseni Opera Ascetica*, GNO 8.1 (Leiden, 1952), 390-1.

[23] *In diem luminum*, Gunterus Heil (ed.), *De Mortuius*, in *id. et al.* (eds), *Sermones, Pars 1* GNO 9 (Leiden, New York, and Köln, 1992), 230.

[24] *Eun.* 1.499, 648.

[25] *Hom.* 7 *in Cant.*, Hermannus Langerbeck (ed.), *Gregorii Nysseni In Canticum Canticorum*, GNO 6 (Leiden, 1986), 241.

'our mind' addresses humanity and calls us to self-knowledge. Mind bids humanity to remember Paul:

> O human being – everyone who partakes of the nature, 'attend to yourself and know yourself!' in keeping with Moses' commandment, and recognize what precisely (ἀκριβῶς) who you are, distinguishing in your reasoning what you truly are and what is [merely] observed in connection with you ... Learn from blessed Paul who examined the nature rigorously (παρὰ τοῦ μεγάλου Παύλου τοῦ δι' ἀκριβείας ἐπεσκεμμένου τὴν φύσιν), who says that there is one human being external to ourselves and another internal.[26]

Paul's examination was done δι' ἀκριβείας, which means that it drew the appropriate distinction. Gregory applies the same verb to Paul's rigorous investigation that he uses for his own investigative works in *Catechetical Oration* 38.

Note Gregory's citation of unnamed experts in the *Antirrheticus against Apollinarius*: 'Those who rigorously (δι' ἀκριβείας) distinguish realities say that opposite names retreat from being present with one another – for example, life with death, and conversely, death with life'. The combination of linguistic expertise and the drawing of distinctions marks their work as being done δι' ἀκριβείας. Referring to linguistic experts in *Against Eunomius* 2, Gregory says he has learned 'from those who use the expression [namely, ἀγάλλειν, to glorify] correctly and who are thoroughly trained in the usage of words (δι'ἀκριβείας τῶν ὀνομάτων τὴν χρῆσιν πεπαιδευμένων)...'[27] The same phrase is used for medical experts in *On the Making of Humanity*.[28] The phrase δι' ἀκριβείας often has the added sense of describing or examining something 'in detail' or 'one by one' as opposed to in an overview or in a summary fashion, including in its earlier appearances in the *Catechetical Oration*.[29] So, when Gregory describes his own works as being done ἐν ἀκριβείᾳ, he is portraying them as containing precise, detailed distinctions of the kind drawn by an expert. The notion that Gregory's doctrinal works contained such distinctions should not surprise us; recall the striking claim in *To the Greeks* that the distinction of *ousia* and *hypostasis* accords with 'the strict canon of logical science' – that is, an expert's viewpoint – rather than with ordinary (mis)usage.[30]

[26] *Mort*. (GNO 9, 40; *cf*. p. 34).

[27] *Eun*. 2.156; *cf*. *Ref*. 110.

[28] *Hom*. *Opif*. (PG 44, 157).

[29] Among many examples, see *titt*. *Ps*., Jacobus McDonough and Paulus Alexander (eds), *Gregorii Nysseni In Inscriptiones Psalmorum, In Sextum Psalmum, In Ecclesiasticen Homiliae*, GNO 5 (Leiden, 1986), 80, 111, 115, 121, and 132; *trid*. *spat*. (GNO 9, 283); *hom*. *in Eccl*. (GNO 5, 279, 294, 317); *Eun*. 1.54; 3.7.28. *Cf*. *or*. *catech*. 6, 32.

[30] *Comm*. *Not*. (GNO 3.1, 32): εἰ δὲ κοινὴ χρῆσις ἀπορεῖ τούτου καὶ κατακέχρηται τοῖς τῆς οὐσίας ὀνόμασι εἰς προσώπου δήλωσιν, οὐδὲν πρὸς τὸν ἀκριβῆ κανόνα τῆς λογικῆς ἐπιστήμης. In the next sentence, he notes that even οἱ ἐπιστημονικοὶ τῶν λόγων occasionally use catachrestic expressions. See also τῷ πρὸς ἡμῶν ... ἐπιστημονικωτάτῳ λόγῳ... (GNO 3.1, 33).

'In a controversial manner'

Gregory says that in the 'other works' he not only examined topics on his own but also engaged his opponents ἀγωνιστικῶς.[31] Such agonistic language is prominent also in the three letters cited by Cassin as 'paratexte' for *Against Eunomius*.[32] As noted above, it could be that he is referring to two distinct sets of works: one controversial, the other investigative. If that is the case, then the study of ἀγωνιστικῶς in this section applies only to the controversial works. Our aim here is to determine how Gregory elsewhere uses this concept as a characterization of a certain kind of writing. Fortunately, Gregory describes other authors and himself with similar language elsewhere.

For instance, note this passage from *In illud: Tunc et ipse filius*:

> What, then, is our account? Perhaps one might be able to perceive the thought better through the context of what is written in this part [that is, in 1*Cor.* 15:28]. For since [Paul] included a contentious argument with the Corinthians (ἀγωνιστικὸν πρὸς τοὺς Κορινθίους ἐνεστήσατο λόγον), who accepted faith in the Lord but considered the dogma about the resurrection of humans to be a fable, saying, 'how are the dead raised up and with what sort of body do they come [1*Cor.* 15:35]…?'[33]

For Gregory, Paul's argument is ἀγωνιστικόν in that it juxtaposes an interlocutor's objection with his own persuasive counter-arguments. Gregory is so enamored of the practice that he expands Paul's imagined objection with words taken from his own *On the Making of Humanity*.[34]

Note too how Gregory describes Basil's *Hexaemeron* in his *Apologia in Hexaemeron*. According to Gregory, Basil wrote Moses' doctrines in a fully-developed (διηπλωμένον) form.[35] Incidentally, this root verb is the same one Gregory uses in *Catechetical Oration* to denote his own expansion in the 'other works' of the *logos* on the faith. In Basil's defense, Gregory claims that when Basil delivered his homilies on the six days, 'he did not insert a contentious argument'.[36] This omission was due to Basil's unprofessional audience and his

[31] For the martial origins of Gregory's language, see Demosthenes' *Third Philippic* (Oration IX).51, where the orator recommends Athenian defenses be placed far away from the city to prevent close engagement with the enemy (συμπλακέντας διαγωνίζεσθαι). *Demosthenes I: Orations I-XVII, XX*, ed. J.H. Vince, Loeb Classical Library 238 (Cambridge, MA and London, 1930), 252.

[32] M. Cassin, *L'Écriture de la controverse* (2012).

[33] *In illud: tunc et ipse filius*, J. Kenneth Downing, *In illud…*, in *id. et al.* (eds), *Gregorii Nysseni Opera Dogmatica Minora, Pars II*, GNO 3.2 (Leiden, New York, Copenhagen, and Köln, 1987), 10; *cf. anim. et res.*, Andreas Spira (ed.), *Gregorii Nysseni De Anima et Resurrectione. Opera Dogmatica Minora, Pars III*, GNO 3.3 (Leiden and Boston, 2014), 116-9.

[34] *Hom. Opif.* (PG 44, 224D).

[35] *Apologia in hex.*, Hubertus R. Drobner (ed.), *Gregorii Nysseni In Hexaemeron. Opera Exegetica in Genesim, Pars I*, GNO 4.1 (Leiden, 2009), 7.

[36] *Apologia in hex.* (GNO 4.1, 10): οὐ γὰρ ἀγωνιστικώτερον ἐνεστήσατο λόγον πρὸς τὰς τῶν ζητημάτων ἐνστάσεις ἐκθύμως διαπλεκλόμενος… Note the use of a *plekō* verb for engagement with adversarial objections.

work's *skopos*.[37] 'It was an account of the simpler exposition of the words, with the aim of setting forth an account that is useful to an uneducated audience'[38] – though Basil also mixed in various teachings from secular philosophy for easier comprehension and enjoyment. Gregory complains that his brother's critics have ignored his *skopos*. Gregory differentiates himself methodologically. He states that his *Apologia in Hexaemeron* is meant for readers, not hearers.[39] He also says that unlike Basil he has 'engaged with objections set before us'[40] – the same verb he uses in *Catechetical Oration* 38.

Toward the outset of the work *On Infants Who Have Died Prematurely*, Gregory distinguishes the method he will avoid in this work from that which he will employ: 'I maintain, moreover, that it is not right to become entangled right away confronting objections in a manner that it is rhetorical and combative (ῥητορικῶς τε καὶ ἀγωνιστικῶς εὐθὺς κατὰ στόμα πρὸς τὰς ἀντιθέσεις συμπλέκεσθαι). Rather, having first established a certain order for the treatise, one should in a logical sequence carry out the examination of the topic'.[41] By contrast, in *Against Eunomius* 2, in the context of an extended metaphor likening the works against Eunomius to David's battle against Goliath, Gregory says that 'we have arranged the treatise against our enemies expertly and contentiously' (ἐμπείρως καὶ ἀγωνιστικῶς).[42]

When Gregory says that he engaged ἀγωνιστικῶς, the sense is not simply that the works are polemical. He means also that he (like Paul) included a representation in *oratio recta* of the opponent's viewpoint – the familiar 'he says' or 'they say' statements. The adversary's objections appear in the work. Such appearances can occur either through direct citation or through scripted speech – what modern scholarship has labelled the 'diatribe'.[43] In *Catechetical Oration* 38, Gregory cites such representations of verbal conflict as a characteristic feature of his doctrinal works – or at least of one set of them.[44]

[37] See *Apologia in hex.* (GNO 4.1, 10).

[38] *Apologia in hex* (GNO 4.1, 10): … ἀλλὰ τῆς ἁπλουστέρας τῶν ῥημάτων ἐξηγήσεως ὁ λόγος ἦν, ὥστε πρόσφορον τῇ ἁπλότητι τῶν ἀκουόντων παραθέσθαι τὸν λόγον…

[39] *Apologia in hex.* (GNO 4.1, 13): … τὰ δὲ ἡμέτερα ὡς ἐν γυμνασίᾳ τινὶ στοχαστικῶς ἐπιχειρούμενα *τοῖς ἐντυγχάνουσι* προκείσθω…

[40] *Apologia in hex.* (GNO 4.1, 14): τὸ μὲν οὖν συμπλέκεσθαι πρὸς τὰς ἐνστάσεις … ἡμῖν προτεινομένας…

[41] *infant*., Hadwiga Hörner (ed.), *De infantibus praemature abreptis* in GNO 3.2, 76.

[42] *Eun.* 2.9 (GNO 1, 229).

[43] On the history of this scholarship, see Stanley K. Stowers, *The Diatribe and Paul's Letter to the Romans*, SBL Dissertation Series 57 (Chico, CA, 1991), chapter 1.

[44] Since Gregory includes a compressed version of that speech in *Catechetical Oration* without the opponents' voice, it would seem that a qualification is needed. Speaking *agōnistikōs* was necessary in the case of extended works, but not in the case of brief accounts. This distinction helps to account for little works like *epp.* 5 and 24, which include the creedal statements and proofs that we expect in the discourse about the faith, but lack the opponents' direct voice.

Naturally, this feature most closely matches *Against Eunomius*, the *Refutation of Eunomius's "Confession"*, and the *Antirrheticus Against Apollinarius*: works in which Gregory cites texts by the opponent in order to refute them. Yet, his claims about Paul and about his own *Apologia in Hexaemeron* suggest that the representation of the opponent's voice need not derive from any written text. One could more broadly view the description of agonistic engagement as applying to works like *To Eustathius On the Holy Trinity* and *On the Holy Spirit against the Macedonians*, where adversaries' objections are fleshed out in Gregory's own language. The description of the 'other works' as agonistic is therefore less helpful as an identification of *which* works he has in mind and more useful as a claim about how he understood his project of writing.

Conclusions

Three conclusions can be drawn. First, while our paragraph from *Catechetical Oration* offers no definitive evidence on the chronology of Gregory's works, it contains many elements of Gregory's self-conception as a writer, a point which can be seen by viewing it in the light of Gregory's corpus generally. What we see is that he uses similar language to describe himself as he uses for describing other authors. Second, if his characterization here accurately describes his working method, then when Gregory wrote his doctrinal works, he did so according to a twofold pattern characterized by both representation of an opponent and precise investigation into a proposed topic. Third, in our paragraph we see a sense of Gregory's own expertise – a claim that his work as an author is in some sense in line with that of experts in the learned arts and with the paradigmatic biblical authors such as Paul. The works Gregory refers to in *Catechetical Oration* 38 are defined as a set by their topic: they contain 'the discourse about the faith'. But when Gregory summarizes them, he gestures not to their theological contents, but to their literary form. Accordingly, the study of Gregory's doctrinal works should be attentive to the literary features he outlines here as well as their theological argumentation. In Cassin's study of *Ep*. 15, he notes that for Gregory, even the doctrinal parts of *Against Eunomius* are envisioned 'sous l'angle littéraire'.[45] The point applies equally well to Gregory's self-characterization in *Catechetical Oration* 38.

[45] M. Cassin, *L'Écriture de la controverse* (2012), 122.

Gregory Nazianzus' Mixture Language in Maximus the Confessor's *Ambigua*: What the Confessor Learned from the Theologian

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Abstract

In the contemporary revival of interest in Maximus the Confessor, Gregory the Theologian's influence remains understudied, due not least to a certain bias held by 20th century scholarship against Gregory's theological contribution. For this reason, many scholars passed Gregory over, considering him a 'second-rate theologian.'[1] By the 1960s, von Balthasar reduced Gregory to a mere 'ecclesial vehicle'[2] for Maximus' more 'sophisticated' theology. This claim overlooks the fact that Maximus' *Ambigua,* his largest work, is a commentary on Gregory's writings.[3] While some scholars[4] have dealt with the relationship between the Theologian and the Confessor, their general indications exhort further, more specific research.

[1] For example, Gregory was a simply an 'inspired poularizer' of Basil in G. Prestige, *God in Patristic Thought* (London, 1952), 234. For a detailed description of this phenomenon, see J.A. McGuckin, *Saint Gregory of Nazianzus: An Intellectual Biography* (Crestwood, NY, 2001), xxi-xxviii and F. Norris, *Faith Gives Fullness to Reasoning: The Five Theological Orations of Gregory of Nazianzus* (Leiden, 1991), 17-39.

[2] 'Gregory [Nazianzus], whose intellectual contours were often the weakest and whose attitude was more often eclectically aesthetic, provided the ecclesial vehicle'. H.U. von Balthasar, *Cosmic Liturgy: The Universe According to Maximus the Confessor*, trans. B.E. Daley (San Francisco, 2003), 37.

[3] Commentary on Gregory's sermons was a popular practice. See C. Macé, 'Gregory of Nazianzus as the Authoritative Voice of Orthodoxy in the Sixth Century', in A. Louth and A. Casiday (eds), *Byzantine Orthodoxies: Papers from the Thirty-sixth Symposium of Byzantine Studies, University of Durham,* 23-25 *March 2002* (Aldershot, 2006), 27-34. The regimen of reading Gregory's sermons in monasteries most likely made him an important source for Byzantine hymnography. See P. Karavites, 'Gregory Nazianzinos and Byzantine Hymnography', *The Journal of Hellenic Studies* 113 (1993), 81-98.

[4] Notably, G. Berthold, 'The Cappadocian Roots of Maximus the Confessor', in F. Heinzer and C. Schönborn (eds), *Maximus Confessor. Actes du Symposium sur Maxime le Confesseur, 1980*, Paradosis 27 (Fribourg-en-Suisse, 1982), 51-9. See also, A. Louth, 'St. Gregory the Theologian and St. Maximus the Confessor: The Shaping of Tradition', in S. Coakley and D.A. Pailin (eds), *The Making and Remaking of Christian Doctrine: Essays in Honour of Maurice Wiles* (Oxford, 1993), 117-30. More recently, see A. Casiday, *Remembering the Days of Old: Orthodox Thinking on the Patristic Heritage* (Crestwood, NY, 2014), 75-80.

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Maximus' use of the word παχύνομαι and related cognates is an example of how he reads and interprets Gregory the Theologian. Gregory uses the verb παχύνομαι, which means to thicken or to become coarse, in order to develop what some scholars have called 'mixture Christology', a feature of both of his[5] and Gregory of Nyssa's[6] thought. Unfortunately, usual narratives of *Dogmengeschichte* either minimalize[7] or leave out 'mixture' as part of the story, preferring the Cappadocians to be read as a prelude to Chalcedon, where mixture language is condemned for its relationship to Apollinarianism.[8] However, I argue that Gregory the Theologian's unusual use of παχύνομαι in his Christology is astutely retrieved by Maximus, allowing him to incorporate aspects of Gregory's concept of mixture of the divine and human nature in Christ in a way acceptable to a post-Chalcedonian context. First, I will attend to the immediate context of the word παχύνομαι and its cognates as developed in Gregory's work, highlighting the features of the philosophical problem that he faces, the choices he makes and his reasons for making them. Then, I will show how Maximus uses Gregory's mixture language in his work. Third, I will offer some conclusions.

[5] See recently, A. Hofer, *Christ in the Life and Teaching of Gregory of Nazianzus,* Oxford Early Christian Studies (Oxford, 2013), 91-122. Hofer's thorough exploration of this understudied aspect of Gregory's Christology is helpful. However, his conclusion that Gregory uses Aristotle's 'mixture of predominance' (following Wolfson) betrays the same Chalcedonian bias that he wishes to disprove. Also, historically, knowledge of Aristotle's work would have been general and of a strongly Platonized variety. Furthermore, Early Christian authors were typically quite hostile toward Aristotle. For Wolfson's mistaken account of types of mixture used by the Early Christian authors, especially that of Gregory of Nazianzus and Gregory of Nyssa, see H.A. Wolfson, *The Philosophy of the Church Fathers,* I: *Faith, Trinity, Incarnation* (Cambridge, MA, 1970), 372-99. For a recent summary on the influence of Aristotle on Early Christian authors, with specific reference to Gregory of Nazianzus and Maximus the Confessor, see M. Portaru, 'Classical Philosophical Influences: Aristotle and Platonism', in *The Oxford Handbook of Maximus the Confessor* (Oxford, 2015), 127-48, esp. 134-5.

[6] On Nyssa see S. Coakley, '"Mingling" in Gregory of Nyssa's Christology: A Reconsideration', in A. Schuele and G. Thomas (eds), *Who is Jesus Christ for Us Today? Pathways to Contemporary Christology (a Festschrift for Michael Welker)* (Louisville KY, 2009), 72-84.

[7] Grillmeier for example, considers Gregory of Nazianzius' mixture language as naturalizing, and Gregory of Nyssa as inconsistent and 'unsatisfactory'. See A. Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition* (London, 1975^2), 368 (for Gregory of Nazianzus) and 376-7 (for Gregory of Nyssa).

[8] ACO 2.1.2.34. For comment, see A. Hofer, *Christ in the Life and Teaching of Gregory* (2013), 3. K.M. Spoerl also argues cogently that Apollinarius is deeply committed to Nicene, anti-Arian Christology, even though his response is not without problems, see *ead*., 'Apollinarius and the Response to Early Arian Christology', *SP* 26 (1993), 421-7; *ead*., 'Apollinarian Christology and the Anti-Marcellan Tradition', *JTS* 43 (1994), 545-68. On Apollinarius' anthropology and its soteriological consequences, see B.E. Daley, '"Heavenly Man and Eternal Christ": Apollinarius and Gregory of Nyssa on the Personal Identity of the Savior', *JECS* 10 (2002), 469-88. For the historical context and Apollinarius' pro-Nicene commitments and affinities with Alexandria, see this still valuable work of M. Simonetti, *La crisi ariana nel IV secolo* (Rome, 1975), esp. 368-70.

In *Ambigua* 33, Maximus interprets the meaning of παχύνομαι found in Gregory's 38th oration, *On Theophany*,[9] where mixture Christology figures strongly into the panegyric of the Feast of the Nativity. Gregory first employs the παχύνομαι in a series of exclamations: 'The fleshless one is enfleshed, the Word becomes thick (παχύνεται), the invisible becomes visible, the untouchable touchable, the timeless one begins'.[10] The same concept of thickening comes into play later in the oration during his description of Christ's Incarnation as a type of mixture: 'O new mixture (μίξεως)! O paradoxical blending (κράσεως) … Through the mediating soul he negotiates between divinity and the coarseness (παχύνητι) of the flesh'.[11]

Lest Gregory be accused of crypto-Apollinarianism, it should be noted that Gregory employs mixture Christology in his criticism against Apollinarius. In *Letter 101 to Cledonius*, he responds to the Apollinarian criticisms that Nicenes are 'man-worshippers' (ἀνθρωπολάτρης). Gregory turns the tables, accusing the Apollinarians of being 'flesh-worshippers' (σαρκολάτρης) and uses mixture language to insist on a fuller picture of divine-human unity in Jesus that would include a human mind: 'What is my unphilosophical and unschooled rationale? The Mind is mixed (μίγνυται) with mind, in as much as it is nearer and more fitting, and for the one who negotiates between divinity and the coarseness (παχύτητι) of the flesh'.[12] Here, Gregory puts mixture language at the service of his soteriological concerns, characterized by his famous dictum earlier in the Letter, 'what is assumed is not healed'.[13] According to Gregory, salvation requires a more intimate union than the type Apollinarius' system can provide, and the 'mixture' of both human and divine mind seems to do the trick.

Gregory's description of the Incarnation demonstrates a problem in antiquity of how to conceive of the relationship between immaterial and material substances of soul and body. Several accounts would have been available to Gregory. Plato's concept of the soul wearing a body,[14] using a body,[15] or weaved throughout the body[16] may be helpful here. Yet, as the Stoics pointed out, the Platonic framework assumed – but did not argue for – a metaphysical unity of Body and Soul provided the basis for the evaluation of moral behavior.[17]

[9] *Grégoire de Nazianze: Discours 38-41,* SC 358, ed. C. Moreschini and trans. P. Gallay (Paris, 1990), 104-97.

[10] *Or.* 38.2 (SC 358, 106).

[11] *Or.* 38.13 (SC 358, 134).

[12] *Ep.* 101. 49 in *Grégoire de Nazianze: Lettres Théologiques*, SC 208, ed. and trans. P. Gallay (Paris, 1974) 56.

[13] *Ep.* 101.32 (SC 208, 50).

[14] *Phaedo* 87B.

[15] *Alc.* 1, 129C-E.

[16] *Tim.* 36E2.

[17] On the interplay between Platonic, Stoic, and Christian accounts of body-soul union, see J.M. Rist, 'Pseudo-Ammonius and the Soul/Body Problem in Some Platonic Texts of Late Antiquity', *American Journal of Philology* 109 (1988), 402-15.

Taking a more vitalist position, the Stoics posit that the soul is a material substance, totally interpenetrating the body, resulting in a blending (κράσις). Stoic mixture language offers an interesting alternative, for they argued that two substances, even of unequal value, can be completely blended and coextensive with each other,[18] while remaining theoretically distinguishable, citing the example of how water and wine can be completely blended, yet parsed out again by means of an oil-soaked sponge.[19] This sort of Stoic mixture is expressly denied by Nemesius of Nemesa as a true blending, but rather as juxtaposition.[20] Nemesius adopts 'unconfused union' as a more appropriate way to describe the relationship between body and soul, comparing it to the relationship between divine and human natures in Christ.[21] As well, Chalcedon's famous alpha-privatives prefer Nemesius' line of thinking to Stoic mixture language, though the new coinage of terms does little more than restate the problem.[22]

The Stoic mixture account was not uncommon as Christians attempted to grapple with the Incarnation, for they needed an image that preserved integrally humanity and divinity, yet a union intimate enough to satisfy their soteriological criteria.[23] However, Gregory's use of 'thickening' to describe the mixture of divine and human in Christ is an unusual explication of the Stoic account of mixture, owing more to Gregory's rhetorical imagination than to his philosophical erudition. In *On Theophany,* Gregory's uses 'thickening' to describe the resultant mixture by way of antithesis, opposing the immaterial Word to material existence. In doing so, he borrows for rhetorical effect παχύνομαι, a technical medical term to describe the conception of a child.[24] The word draws out the fleshly character of the Incarnation, meaning something like 'the word

[18] 'As clear evidence of this … the soul, which has its own individual existence, just like the body which receives it, pervades the whole of the body while preserving its own substance in the mixture with it. For none of the soul lacks a share in the body which possesses the soul'. Alexander, *De mixtione* 218, in A.A. Long and D. Sedley (eds), *The Hellenic Philosophers* 1 (Cambridge, 1987), 48 C.

[19] That the qualities of blended constituents persist in such blendings is quite evident from the fact that they are frequently separated from one another artificially. If one dips an oiled sponge into the wine, which has been blended with water, it will separate the water from the wine since the water runs up into the sponge. Stobaeus 1.155, 5-11 in *The Hellenic Philosophers* 1, 48 D.

[20] *De natura hominis* 3, ed. M. Morani (Leipzig, 1987), 39.

[21] *De natura hominis* 3, ed. M. Moriani, 41.

[22] See J.M. Rist, 'Pseudo-Ammonius and the Soul/Body Problem' (1988), 406.

[23] For Gregory of Nyssa see *Ad Theoph.* (GNO 3.1, 126.17-21), *c. Eun.* 3.4 (GNO 2, 156.26). Augustine, in trying to grapple with the issue supposes we are a 'mixture' (*mixtura*) of soul and body, *Ep.* 137 and *Ep.* 169. see Rist, 'Pseudo-Ammonius and the Soul/Body Problem', 409. Note here that in *Ep.* 169 Augustine compares the mixture of the body-soul with the 'mixture' of divine and human in Christ, similar to Nemesius. For further comment on the different uses of blending and mixture language in Augustine's thought see J.M. Rist, *Augustine: Ancient Thought Baptized* (Cambridge, 1994), 99-147. It seems that Augustine finds himself before a problem but does not know how to solve it.

[24] Hippocrates, *On the Nature of a Child* 12.1.

becomes heavy with flesh'. Also, the medical meaning fits the patristic context, since the association of words denoting heaviness and fertility is a theme present in patristic exegesis, used to derive Christological interpretations from troubling passages in the LXX.[25] Furthermore, this definition is suited well to the occasion of the oration – the feast of the Nativity.

Two centuries later, Maximus takes up the phrase 'and the word became thick (παχύνεται)' in *Ambiguum* 33 in a clearly neo-Chalcedonian context. He uses the term to describe the three Incarnations or 'thickenings' of the Word, proposing a three-fold division of the Logos' enfleshment: in the person of Jesus Christ; in the created world through the *logoi*; and in Sacred Scripture's 'sounds and symbols'.[26] Maximus explains these incarnations by means of antithesis, similar to Gregory's rhetorical strategy in *On Theophany*. He also shares Gregory's soteriological aims, teasing out man's consequent salvation because of Christ's Incarnation in a τοσοῦτον/ὅσον clause, a formula typical of the Confessor.[27]

The same verb παχύνομαι that Maximus treats in *Ambiguum* 33 appears elsewhere throughout his work. In *Ambiguum* 10, he uses the same verb to describe the Word's concealed presence in the world: 'the Word who, for our sake and by means of what we are, became flesh to be with us and was thickened (παχύνεται) in syllables and letters to be perceived by us, inclining every

[25] Lash makes this point in reference to Ps 67.16, where τὸ ὄρος πῖον, literally 'the fat mountain', was understood as an image of the Mother of God, 'the fertile mountain' made heavy with the incarnate Christ in her womb. See E. Lash, 'Mary in Eastern Church Literature', in A. Stacpoole, G. Pinnock and J. Pinnock (eds), *Mary in Doctrine and Devotion: Papers of the Liverpool Congress, 1989, of the Ecumenical Society of the Blessed Virgin Mary* (Dublin, 1990), 58-80.

[26] Here we follow the view that Maximus speaks of three distinct Incarnations. T. Tollefson makes a distinction between the historical Incarnation and two other 'metaphorical embodiments'. We have no indication from Maximus, nor can the text justify such a reading that reduces the latter two Incarnations to the realm of mere metaphor. It follows that there is no real relationship between the Creator who becomes incarnate and his creation. This short-circuits any theory of participation, and in so doing compromises Tollefsen's thesis that there is a theory of participation in Maximus the Confessor. For Tollesfsen's position, see *The Christocentric Cosmology of St Maximus the Confessor*, Oxford Early Christian Studies (Oxford, 2008), 66-7. For the opposite view, see P. Blowers, *Exegesis and Spiritual Pedagogy in Maximus the Confessor: An Investigation of the* Quaestiones ad Thalassium, Christianity and Judaism in Antiquity 7 (Notre Dame, 1991), 119; L. Thunberg, *Man and the Cosmos*: *The Vision of St. Maximus the Confessor* (Crestwood, 1985), 160; A. Cooper, *The Body in Maximus the Confessor* (Oxford, 2005), 42, E. Perl, 'Metaphysics and Christology in Maximus the Confessor and Eriugena', in B. McGinn and W. Otten (eds), *Eriugena East and West: Papers for the Eighth International Colloquium of the Society for the Promotion of Erugenian Studies, Chicago and Notre Dame, 18-20 October 1991* (Notre Dame, 1992), 253-70.

[27] On the recurrence of this formula, see J.-C. Larchet, *La divinisation de l'homme selon saint Maxime le Confesseur* (Paris, 1996), 376-82. Similarly, in *On Theophany*, Gregory argues that the ungraspable becomes graspable in order for the divine to draw all things to himself. *Or* 38.7 (SC 358, 116).

power of the intelligible within us towards himself'.[28] Note also the teleological dimension closely related to the Word's 'thickening'. Maximus goes on to make this point clearer: 'For it was especially and principally for the mind that the divinely fitting descent of the Word took place, to raise it up from the death of ignorance … to restore the mind appetite for what is naturally lovely'.[29] Elsewhere, in his *Capita theologica et oeconomica*, Maximus further extends his three-fold thickening scheme to include a fourth – the 'thickening' of Word in the lives of the saints through virtue: 'In praxis, the Word, by means of the exercise of virtue, becomes flesh'.[30] Here, Maximus' use of Gregory's 'thickening' contains within it soteriological orientation: virtue engendered in the soul of the saint permits the ascent to God.

Maximus announces something of a programmatic statement in *Ambiguum* 7: 'For the Word of God – who is God – wills always and in all things to effect the mystery of his embodiment'.[31] As I have tried to demonstrate, Gregory's rhetorical description of the Logos' 'thickening' becomes a key theme that Maximus uses to explicate his cosmic Christology. Maximus, an astute reader of Gregory, uses the verb παχύνομαι that expresses the sense of the Stoic-inspired mixture account of the Incarnation, while avoiding the classic terms (μείνυμι, κράσις, μίξις, *etc*.), now unwelcome in Maximus' post-Chalcedonian context. In this way, Maximus interprets and retrieves Gregory's rhetorical abilities and the more novel aspects of his Christology to help construct his own ontological and sweeping vision of the Incarnation.

[28] PG 91, 1131D.
[29] PG 91, 1132B.
[30] PG 90, 1411C.
[31] PG 91, 1084D.

Ἔκφρασις and Epistemology in Gregory of Nazianzus

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Abstract

In *Oration* 38, Gregory describes the difficulty of contemplating God. He notes that, at the end, all one is able to do is to gather together variegated impressions 'into one particular φαντασία of the truth' (38.7). For Gregory, this φαντασία is the only place on which to stand as the mind gazes 'into the depth above' (38.8). A similar idea is also present in *Oration* 30.17 where Gregory argues that God cannot be named, contrary to Eunomius, and all one can do is create a weak φαντασία from the facts about him. Of the twenty-one times that Gregory uses φαντασία, eleven refer to God, while of the twenty-seven times he uses the verbal form (φαντάζομαι), eighteen have God as the object. At first glance, Gregory's emphasis on φαντασία seems contrary to the antipathy of his contemporaries towards mental images (*e.g.* Evagrius of Pontus). Furthermore, and perhaps more importantly, φαντασία has a long philosophical history from Plato to Aristotle and the Stoics, as well as a significant rhetorical history in ἔκφρασις. Φαντασία as a concept was central to ἔκφρασις because through ἐνάργεια the orator was able to manipulate φαντασία stored in the mind. This short communication will examine Gregory's use of φαντασία in *Oration* 38 through his use of rhetorical devices of ἔκφρασις as his way of overcoming the epistemological problems for speaking truly about a transcendent God.

Introduction

When Gregory expresses the incomprehensibility of the subject of his panegyric in *Oration* 38.7, he makes the claim that because God transcends every concept the best humans can do is to roughly sketch an image of the things around God with their minds from impressions – φαντασία – gathered together from other sources.[1] These variegated impressions are brought together to form

[1] God always was and is and will be; or rather always 'is'. For 'was' and 'will be' are divisions of time as we see it and of our fluctuating nature; but he is always and he himself names himself this when he gave audience to Moses on the mountain. For holding the whole together in himself, he comprises being, having neither had a beginning nor will have an end, like some infinite and indeterminate sea of being, transcending every concept, both of time and nature, roughly sketched by the mind (νῷ) alone, and this very dimly and modestly, not from what belongs to him, but from what surrounds him, with each mental image gathered together (φαντασίας συλλεγομένης) from other sources into one, for some image (ἴνδαλμα) of the truth, fleeing before being fully comprehended, and escaping before being perceived by the mind; shining

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some kind of image (ἴνδαλμα) of the truth. This collage, however, is qualified in two significant ways. The first is that it appears as but a flash of lightning (ἀστραπή) before the mind.[2] As soon as one tries to grasp for the image, it disappears. Like the sun, lighting illuminates, but lightning's illumination is matched equally by its brevity.[3] The second is that the image appears only in proportion to the purity of the mind that perceives it.[4] Those who have been purified and are now able hold intercourse (προσομιλέω) with God as Moses did on the mountain.[5] In this article, I look at how Gregory *uses* ἔκφρασις in *Oration* 38 to explain what he means by φαντασία in chapters 7-8. In other words, what is the mental image of God that Gregory evokes in the minds of his listeners?

This analysis by Gregory is interesting for three reasons. First, Gregory's positive use of φαντασία is striking in contrast to the criticisms of mental images of any kind, even those of Christ, by his contemporary and one-time associate Evagrius of Pontus.[6] Secondly, speaking of φαντασία of an invisible God is *prima facie* nonsensical. While Ἕλληνες such as Dio Chrysostom, Maximus of Tyre, and Philostratus can speak of φαντασία of the Greek gods because of the role of images – paintings or statues – in the Greek religion,[7] the situation was more complex for a fourth century Christian who inherited an

around our governing faculty, and this having been purified, as a swift flash of lighting that does not remain (*Oration* 38.7.1-14).

[2] A possible reference to *Ex.* 19:16.

[3] For more on ἀστραπή in Gregory and the classical tradition, see Manfred Kertsch, 'Zum Motiv des Blitzes in der griechischen Literatur der Kaiserzeit', *WS* 13 (1979), 166-74.

[4] Τοσαῦτα περιλάμπον ἡμῶν τὸ ἡγεμονικόν, καὶ ταῦτα κεκαθαρμένον, ὅσα καὶ ὄψιν ἀστραπῆς τάχος οὐχ ἱσταμένης (7.12-4). On the role of purification in Gregory's theological epistemology, see Christopher Beeley, *Gregory of Naizanzus on the Trinity and the Knowledge of God: In Your Light We Shall See Light*, Oxford Studies in Historical Theology (Oxford, 2008), 65-90.

[5] C. Beeley, *On the Trinity* (2008), 95 n. 109 remarks that Gregory has confused the revelation of the divine name in *Ex.* 3:14 with Moses on Mt. Sinai. As a highly trained rhetorician, it is unlikely that such confusion was accidental. As Jostein Børtnes remarks ('Rhetoric and Mental Images in Gregory', in Jostein Børtnes and Thomas Hägg [eds], *Gregory of Nazianzus: Images and Reflections* [Copenhagen, 2006], 37-57, 48), '… the emphasis on memorization does not mean that the texts stored in the memory were also to be reproduced *verbatim* in rhetorical or literary practice. On the contrary, in rhetoric the whole point was that memorized texts could be played around with, taken apart, and recommend into new patterns and new discourses. This is what Gregory does in his oration on the Father when he remembers passages from scripture. He takes them out of their narrative contexts, "forgets" their original meaning, and in a process of recollective cognition transforms the narrative fragments into metaphorical or metonymical images of God's unknowability'.

[6] *E.g.*, *Prayer* 113-20. On this and Evagrius' relation to Gregory, see Elizabeth Clark, *The Origenist Controversy* (Princeton, 1992), 66-84, 61. Gregory himself is aware of the dangers that vision impose, namely, that they lead to idolatry (*Or.* 28.13).

[7] See Mark Edwards, *Image, Word, and God in the Early Christian Centuries* (Farnham, 2013), 69-74.

aniconic tradition.[8] How can a God who Gregory describes as by nature ὁ ἀόρατος, ὁ ἄσαρκος, ὁ ἀναφής, and πᾶσαν ὑπερεκπίπτων ἔννοιαν be subject to φαντασία?[9] Finally, Gregory's use of φαντασία evokes a rich philosophical and rhetorical tradition.[10] Philosophically, φαντασία was a term birthed by questions of epistemology and psychology in Plato and significantly expanded by Aristotle and, especially, the Stoics.[11] In terms of rhetoric, with a possible connection to the Stoic development of φαντασία,[12] φαντασία was a central concept for ἔκφρασις because through vivid description (ἐνάργεια) the orator was able to manipulate the impressions (φαντασίαι) stored in the audiences' memory as a means of persuasion.[13]

Ἔκφρασις

'Ekphrasis is a descriptive discourse which visibly brings the object being manifested before one's eyes'.[14] The subjects of ἔκφρασις are not only works of art, such as one finds in Philostratus' *Imagines*. Instead, ἔκφρασις can describe persons, places, times, and events; in other words, anything can be the subject of ἔκφρασις, even the gods.[15] Descriptions can range from epithets to elaborate descriptions, the shield of Achilles being one of the most famous

[8] *Ibid*. 135-51.

[9] *Or*. 38.2.17; 13.15; 2.16, 17; 7.5-8.

[10] On some of the relevant philosophical background of φαντασία for Gregory, see Ben Fulford, 'Divine Names and the Embodied Intellect: Imagination and Sanctification in Gregory of Nazianzus' Account of Theological Language', *SP* 50 (2011), 217-31.

[11] For a summary, see Gerard Watson, *Phantasia in Classical Thought* (Galway, 1988) and Jeffrey Barrow, *Propositional Perception:* Phantasia*, Predication and Sign in Plato, Aristotle and the Stoics* (Lanham, 2002).

[12] Claude Imbert, 'Stoic Logic and Alexandrian Poetics', in Malcolm Schofield, Myles Burnyeat, Jonathan Barnes (eds), *Doubt and Dogmatism: Studies in Hellenistic Epistemology* (Oxford, 1980), 182-216.

[13] Ruth Webb, Ekphrasis*, Imagination and Persuasion in Ancient Rhetorical Theory and Practice* (Farnham, 2009), 107-65. For an additional analysis of rhetoric and mental images that does not devote extended attention to ἔκφρασις in Gregory of Nazianzus, see J. Børtnes, 'Rhetoric and Mental Images' (2006), 37-57.

[14] Aelius Theon, in Leonardi Spengel, *Rhetores Graeci*, 3 vols. (Leipzig, 1854), 2:118: ἔκφρασις ἐστὶ λόγος περιηγηματικὸς ἐναργῶς ὑπ' ὄψιν ἄγων τὸ δηλούμενον. Quoted in Margaret Mitchell, *The Heavenly Trumpet: John Chrysostom and the Art of Pauline Interpretation* (Lousiville, 2002), 101 n. 27. Mitchell adds that this definition is also later quoted by Aphthonius, the contemporary of Gregory, and Hermogenes, whose corpus recognizably influenced Gregory. On the influence of Hermogenes on Gregory, see Frederick W. Norris, 'The Theologian and Rhetorical Technique: Gregory of Nazianzus and Hermogenes of Tarsus', in John Petruccione (ed.), *Nova & Vetera: Patristic Studies in Honor of Thomas Patrick Halton* (Washington, D.C., 1998), 84-95.

[15] R. Webb, Ekphrasis*, Imagination and Persuasion* (2009), 62-4; 165.

examples.[16] Since there are no long-form ἔκφρασεις in *Or*. 38,[17] I restrict my analysis to his use of epithets for God.[18] As Margaret Mitchell explains in her analysis of John Chrysostom's epithets for Paul, 'each epithet contains in shorthand a unique miniature portrait of the apostle by reference to one of his functions or attributes, or by a metaphorical characterization. The hermeneutical sensibility informing such portraiture requires that the imagination of the hearer form a mental image which corresponds to the brief title'.[19]

Epithets for God in *Oration* 38

In *Or*. 38, there are fifty-three epithets for God. Four epithets seem to refer to the divine nature and not to a particular person of the Trinity. These all occur in chapter 9 which follows Gregory's discussion of the ineffability of God in chapters 7-8. The divine nature is ἡ ἀγαθότης (9.1), ὁ ἀγαθός (9.2), ἡ ἄκρη ἀγαθότης (9.4), and ἡ πρῶτη λαμπρότης (9.7-8). Other than these, the majority of the epithets are clearly attributed to the Son, which is no surprise since the oration is for the feast celebrating the incarnation.[20]

In order to organize the remaining epithets for the Son, I will divide them into three categories according to their source, again following Margaret Mitchell:[21] pure biblical epithets, derived biblical epithets, and independent epithets. Pure biblical epithets are 'those which appear exactly as they do in the biblical writings',[22] derived biblical epithets are 'those which go back to a biblical text, story or incident but were not couched there in the form of an epithet',[23] and independent epithets are 'those which are not linked to a particular aspect of the biblical record'.[24] Twenty-six of the fifty-three epithets are derived;

[16] On epithets as miniature portraits (and so ἔκφρασις), see M. Mitchell, *The Heavenly Trumpet* (2002), 70-3.

[17] While there are a few places, notably chapters 7-8 and 16-8 that might be taken as ekphrastic when viewed as a whole, they are not technically examples of ἔκφρασις. This was suggested to me by Margaret Mitchell in comments on an earlier draft of this article.

[18] By which Gregory says he means Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (8.14-5).

[19] M. Mitchell, *Heavenly Trumpet* (2002), 71.

[20] The Father and Spirit are mentioned by those titles five times each: 2.14; 8.14; 13.18; 15.4, 8 (Father); 8.15; 9.6; 13.24; 14.21; 16.5-6 (Spirit). Some of the epithets for the Son might correspondingly be epithets for the Father (*i.e*., ἡ ἐκ τῆς ἀρχῆς ἀρχή [13.15-16] or τὸ ἐκ τοῦ φωτὸς φῶς [13.16]), but the subject of attribution is the Son and so I consider such epithets to be his alone.

[21] M. Mitchell, *The Heavenly Trumpet* (2002), 88-9. I find this useful for analyzing Gregory in a way that is historically sensitive, though I don't propose these as absolute categories.

[22] *Ibid*. 88.

[23] *Ibid*.

[24] *Ibid*. Mitchell identifies three sub-types of the independent epithet: 'those which depend upon an old (but not strictly biblical) tradition', 'those which employ everyday or colloquial speech' and 'neologisms' (*ibid*.).

seventeen are pure, and six are independent. Of the six independent, four might be identified as deriving from older tradition: ὁ ἀσώματος,[25] ὁ ἀπερίληπτος,[26] τὸ ἐκ τοῦ φωτὸς φῶς,[27] and ὁ ἀχώρητος.[28] Τὸ ἐκ τοῦ φωτὸς φῶς is clearly from the *Nicene Creed*. I take ὁ ἀσώματος, ὁ ἀπερίληπτος, and ὁ ἀχώρητος to be established terms for speaking of the divine nature by Gregory's time,[29] and a search of the *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae* confirms this. Ἀχώρητος is found in 2*Clement*, *Shepherd of Hermas*, Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, Athenagoras, Clement of Alexandria, and Theophilus, ἀσώματος is well established in the philosophical tradition by the time of the fourth-century, and ἀπερίληπτος, while not a term restricted to divine things, was used by Iamblichus in *De mysteriis* 1.7 to speak of the highest being in his taxonomy of being (gods, demons, heros, and souls). The last two I consider to be neologisms: ἡ ἐκ τῆς ἀρχῆς ἀρχή[30] and [τὸ ὢν] ὑπὲρ αἰτίαν καὶ λόγον.[31] According to a *TLG* search, the first epithet itself does not appear before Gregory, and in context the idea seems parallel to 'light from light' which immediately follows it. This is not to say that the idea was original with Gregory, only that the epithet is. The last phrase heightens the paradox (παράδοξα) Gregory is trying to establish early in the oration, namely, that the God who is beyond cause and word became subject to both. The seventeen pure biblical epithets are: ἡ ἀλήθεια,[32] ὁ Μελχισαδέκ,[33] ὁ Λόγος (×6),[34] ὁ ἀόρατος (×2),[35] ὁ Υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ,[36] υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου,[37] τὸ ὤν (×2),[38] ὁ ποιμὴν ὁ καλός,[39] ὁ νυμφίος,[40] and ὁ αἴρων τὴν ἁμαρτίαν τοῦ κόσμου.[41] Most of the pure biblical epithets are taken from the *Gospel of John*.

The derived biblical epithets range from a rephrasing of a scriptural text to a summary of an event or action, or the corresponding logical conclusions to

[25] 13.15.
[26] 13.15.
[27] 13.16.
[28] 13.29.
[29] Jaroslav Pelikan (*Christianity and Classical Culture: The Metamorphosis of Natural Theology in the Christian Encounter with Hellenism* [New Haven, 1993], 40) notes an increase in the use of alpha-privatives begins in the patristic era, and the use of these terms may reflect that.
[30] 13.15-6.
[31] 3.5.
[32] 2.6 (*John* 14:6).
[33] 2.7 (*Heb*. 5:6, 10; 6:20; 7:15-7).
[34] 2.16; 3.5; 9.6; 14.19; 17.8; 18.4 (*John* 1:1).
[35] 2.17; 13.15 (*Heb*. 11:27, 1*Tim*. 1:17).
[36] 2.18.
[37] 2.18.
[38] 3.4; 13.28 (*Ex*. 3:14).
[39] 14.7 (*John* 10:11).
[40] 14.19-20 (*John* 3:29, see also *Matth*. 9:15; *Mark* 2:20; *Luke* 5:34).
[41] 16.4 (*John* 1:29).

such events or actions.[42] Gregory introduces the Son as ὁ ἐπουράνιος,[43] and continues in various ways to give heavenly epithets for the Son: τὸ φῶς,[44] φῶς μέγα τῆς ἐπιγνώσεως,[45] ὁ ἀμήτωρ,[46] [ὁ] ἀπάτωρ,[47] ὁ ἄσαρκος,[48] ὁ ἀναφής,[49] ὁ ἄχρονος,[50] τὸ ἀεὶ ὢν ἐκ τοῦ ἀεὶ ὄντος,[51] ὁ τὸ εἶναι δούς,[52] [ὁ ... δοὺς...] τὸ εὖ εἶναι.[53] These are followed by a σύγκρησις between Greek and Christian festivals (chapters 5-6) where Gregory calls the Logos τὸ προσκυνούμενον.[54] This then leads into a longer discussion of the divine nature in chapters 7-8 that is followed by the epithets identified above as referring to the divine nature.

In his narration on the acts of God in the outflowing of goodness in the creation of an ordered cosmos and the creation of humanity (chapters 10-1), Gregory refers to the Son as ὁ δημιουργὸς Λόγος and ὁ τεχνίτης Λόγος.[55] After describing the various balms and remedies used by God in healing fallen humanity (chapter 12), Gregory describes the greatest healing act of all: the incarnation.[56] In chapter 13, Gregory explodes with epithets in a paradoxical encomium that reaches an almost frenzied height. He revels in the seeming absurdity of God acting in the way he describes by piling epithets on top of each other.[57] Some of these are the pure biblical or independent epithets already listed. Of the derived biblical epithets, Gregory refers to the Son as: ὁ τοῦ Θεοῦ Λόγος,[58] ὁ προαιώνιος,[59] ἡ πηγὴ τῆς ζωῆς καὶ τῆς ἀθανασίας,[60] τὸ

[42] If *John* 1:14 says ὁ λόγος σὰρξ ἐγένετο, then before this event, the Λόγος was ἄσαρκος.
[43] 1.5 (1*Cor*. 15:47).
[44] 2.1 (*Gen*. 1:3-5).
[45] 2.4 (*Is*. 9:2).
[46] 2.7 (*Heb*. 7:3).
[47] 2.8 (*Heb*. 7:3; *Matth*. 1:17-25).
[48] 2.16 (*John* 1:14).
[49] 2.17 (*Heb*. 12:18).
[50] 2.17-8 (*Heb*. 1:5-13).
[51] 3.4-5 (*Heb*. 1:5-13).
[52] 3.6-7 (*Gen*. 1:27; 2:7).
[53] 3.7. I take this to be Gregory's way of speaking about salvation and so εἶναι here is a play on words (*traductio*) in which the first instance speaks of coming into existence; the second, human flourishing: 'later being born because of us, in order that the one who granted being – indeed, well-being – might show mercy'.
[54] 6.5-6 (*Matth*. 2:2, 11; 14:33; 28:9, 17; *Mark* 15:19; *Luke* 24:52; *John* 9:38; *Rev*. 4:10; 5:14).
[55] 11.2-3 and 11.8 respectively (*John* 1:3; see *Heb*. 11:10 where δημιουργός and τεχνίτης are used both used to refer to God building the heavenly Jerusalem).
[56] This is an example of αὔξησις (amplification)
[57] Seventeen of the fifty-three epithets occur in this chapter alone.
[58] 13.14 (*John* 1:1).
[59] 13.14-5 (*Heb*. 1:5-13).
[60] 13.16-7 (*John* 1:4; 3:15-6, 36; 4:14; 5:24, 26, 39; 6:27, 33, 35, 40, 47-8, 51, 53, 63, 68; 8:12; 10:10, 28; 11:25; 14:6; 17:2-3; 20:31).

ἐξμαγεῖον τοῦ ἀρχετύπου κάλλους,[61] ἡ μὴ κινουμένη σφραγίς,[62] ἡ ἀπαράλλακτος εἰκών,[63] ὁ τοῦ Πατρὸς ὅρος καὶ λόγος,[64] ὁ ἄκτιστος,[65] ὁ πλουτίζων,[66] and ὁ πλήρης.[67] Finally, the last two derived epithets appear in chapter 14: ὁ τιθεὶς τὴν ψυχήν and τὸ φῶς … τὸ ὑπέρλαμπρον.[68]

Analysis of epithets

A few observations can be made from Gregory's use of epithets for God. First, as to be expected in this oration, almost all of the epithets are attributed to the Son. The only place where he doesn't is when he is speaking about the divine nature in chapters 7-9. There is not enough information from this oration alone to conclude whether or not Gregory prefers epithets of the Son in general. Secondly, most of the epithets have some Scriptural precedents. Thirdly, these epithets seem to correspond well with one of the main organizing principles of *Or*. 38, namely, the distinction between heaven and earth. Gregory introduces the distinction at the very beginning of the προοίμιον, supported with a quotation from *Ps*. 95(96):11, and this distinction becomes the basis for much of the paradox (παράδοξον ἐγκώμιον) in this oration.[69] Dividing the epithets according to what is heavenly and what is earthly shows that Gregory almost exclusively uses epithets for the Son to speak of his divine nature. Most of these epithets listed above are related to Christ's heavenly nature, which is the subject of the actions of what is seen happening on earth. Gregory almost never gives 'earthly' epithets for the subject of actions. Three exceptions are found in chapter 14 – the two pure biblical epithets, ὁ νυμφίος and ὁ ποιμὴν ὁ καλός,[70] and one derived biblical epithet, ὁ τιθεὶς τὴν ψυχήν – where Gregory attempts to refute the charge of his hypothetical opponent, perhaps the Eunomians, whom Gregory thinks would object to his portrayal of God.

[61] 13.17 (*Heb*. 1:3).
[62] 13.18 (*John* 6:27).
[63] 13.18 (*Col*. 1:15).
[64] 13.18-9 (*John* 17:6-8).
[65] 13.28 (*John* 1:1-3).
[66] 13.30-1 (*Col*. 2:19).
[67] 13.32 (*Col*. 2:19).
[68] 14.7 (*John* 10:5) and 14.18-9 (*Acts* 26:13), respectively.
[69] For a summary of the features of a παράδοξον ἐγκώμιον, see Theodore C. Burgess, *Epideictic Literature*, The University of Chicago Studies in Classical Philology (Chicago, 1902), 157-66.
[70] The bridegroom follows the friend of the bridegroom, the good shepherd went to the one who strayed, and the one who laid down his life went to the one who strayed on the mountains and hills (*Or*. 38.14; see *Hos*. 4:13).

Thus, a general – but not strict – pattern emerges for Gregory in *Or*. 38 when using epithets as the subject for an action, by which I mean Gregory is not just *listing* epithets. The pattern is X (heavenly) is or does Y (earthly). In this way, Gregory is here not so much *explaining* the divine nature as much as *picturing* it through lightning-like snapshots of God's activity. God is the one who acts, but his actions involve paradox, as Gregory himself exclaims: 'O new mixture, O paradoxical fusion!'[71] The creator is created, the invisible is made visible, the impalpable is touched, and so on.

Finally, when Gregory comes to narrating the life of Christ in chapters 16-8 at the very end of this oration, he recounts the events of the gospels in a rapid staccato-like fashion, jumping from one event to the next with minimal elaboration. While his retelling of the life of Christ is not technically ἔκφρασις, Gregory's rapid-fire summaries may function in a similar way by causing those who are familiar with the story to be able to picture the events through his brief references.

What emerges here is similar to the problem Chrysostom has when trying to portray Paul's soul through ἔκφρασις: how does one portray what is essentially invisible?[72] This, for Chrysostom, is a task for which the *mind* is more suitably fitted than the painters brush or sculptor's chisel.[73] More so, it is through the *actions* of Paul that provide Chrysostom with the colors with which he paints the virtues of Paul's invisible soul.[74] My analysis of *Or*. 38 points to a similar pattern for Gregory. Epistemologically speaking, the point of contact between God, who is incorporeal, and creation is the intellect. Gregory speaks of this specifically in 38.11 where the first creation (the incorporeal angels) and the second creation (material creation) are mixed in humanity. Thus, there is an inherent epistemological possibility to know incorporeal things. But is this enough to know God? This seems inherently beyond humanity's grasp for Gregory in 38.7, which I described at the beginning of this essay, affirms, and for which reason Gregory has recourse to φαντασία. Φαντασίαι – impressions in the mind – are the means by which we imagine the divine, since the intellect is still the point of contact of the corporeal with the incorporeal. But the images that the mind gathers point to God because they are concerning God's *actions*, paramount being the incarnation, revealed in Scripture. Thus, it seems, Gregory shows how the epistemological problem of God's transcendence, and the corresponding conundrums surrounding theological language are overcome through φαντασία.

[71] 13.27-8.
[72] See M. Michell, *Heavenly Trumpet* (2002), 135-99.
[73] *Ibid*. 136.
[74] *Ibid*. 265.

Conclusion

By examining Gregory's use of ἔκφρασις for God in *Or*. 38, we can see in some way what he meant by his statements about φαντασία in chapters 7-8. This is not to say that this analysis is all there is to say about Gregory's understanding of φαντασία. More work needs to be done in this regard. Yet my analysis has shown two things. First, that the mental image that Gregory has crafted in the mind of his audience is the God from heaven acting as a man on earth as seen in the narrative of Scripture, this knowledge being mediated by Gregory in his logos for the Logos. And second, how understanding Gregory's rhetoric – that is, looking at not just *what* he says but *how* he says it – can help illuminate his theology.

Implicit Stipulations in the *Testamentum* of Gregory of Nazianzos *vis-à-vis* the *Testamenta* of Remigius of Rheims, Caesarius of Arles, and Aurelianus of Ravenna

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Abstract

In his study of Roman wills, Champlin points out that the will of bishop Gregory of Nazianzos is the 'earliest complete' and extant Roman law testament (1991). Studies of this landmark document have traditionally focused upon paleographical, juridical, or prosopographical issues. Yet Champlin has demonstrated that many propertied Romans viewed writing a will as an ethical duty. Testators could expect that their surviving relatives, friends, and enemies would consider their wills very public, authoritative, and truthful last judgments upon them. In the following study, I extend the argument of Champlin. I approach Gregory's will from the perspective of the testator as a bishop who considered it his moral duty to issue authoritative judgments concerning the use of his wealth after his death.

In order to uncover these moral judgments within the testament by Gregory, I compare his will with the few extant testaments by other early bishops. Like them, Gregory adapts the formulaic requirements of Roman testamentary law to suit his particular view of good wealth management. In his case, Gregory bequeaths his possessions with the following implied Christian stipulations. First, he implicitly subordinates all bequests to his primary intention of establishing a patrimony to the poor of the church at Nazianzos. Second, to implicitly stipulate that his heir and legatees employ his bequests in ways that he approves, he praises them for past behavior. Third, Gregory the bishop bestows particular garments as concrete reminders to legatees to imitate his own example.

In his study of wills during the classical period of Roman law,[2] Edward Champlin points out that the will of bishop Gregory of Nazianzos is the 'earliest complete' and extant Roman law testament.[3] Studies of this landmark document

[1] This paper is dedicated to Anthony Carducci.

[2] I thank Dr. W. Klingshirn for a seminar on Caesarius of Arles, Dr. W. McCarthy of the Catholic University of America for useful suggestions on an earlier draft of this article, and the Classical Association of the Atlantic States for a professional development grant to present this paper at the Seventeenth International Conference on Patristic Studies at Oxford (13 August 2015).

[3] Edward Champlin, *Final Judgments: Duty and Emotion in Roman Wills (200 B.C.-A.D. 250)* (Berkeley, 1991), 29 n. 1. On the legality of Greek wills for Roman law, see the discussion in James G. Keenan, '3.3: Roman Law in Egyptian Documents', in *id.*, J.G. Manning and Uri Yiftach-Firanko (eds), *Law and Legal Practice in Egypt from Alexander to the Arab Conquest:*

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have traditionally focused upon paleographical, juridical, philological, or prosopographical issues.[4] Yet Champlin has persuasively argued that many propertied Romans viewed drawing up a will as an ethical duty. Testators could expect that their surviving relatives, friends, and enemies would consider their *testamenta* very public, authoritative, and truthful last judgments upon them.[5] In the following study, I extend the argument of Champlin. I approach Gregory's will from the perspective of the testator as a bishop who considered it his moral duty to issue authoritative judgments and guidance concerning the appropriate use of (his) wealth after his death.

In order to uncover the moral judgments and guidance within the testament by Gregory, I compare his will with the few extant testaments by other early bishops. Like them, Gregory adapts the formulaic requirements of Roman testamentary law to suit his particular view of good wealth management. In the case of Gregory, he bequeaths his possessions with Christian stipulations that are implicit and include the following. First, he implicitly subordinates all bequests to his primary intention of establishing a patrimony to the poor of the church at Nazianzos. Second, to implicitly stipulate that his heir and legatees employ his bequests in ways that he approves, he praises them for past behavior. Third, Gregory the bishop bestows particular garments as concrete reminders to legatees to imitate his own example.

Scholars generally agree that Gregory drew up the exemplar of his will in 380 or 381. Regardless of the exact month and day of its composition,[6] the document is clearly related to his ephemeral service as bishop of Constantinople. Other bishops, whose extant *testamenta* are most contemporaneous to Gregory,

A Selection of Papyrological Sources in Translation, with Introductions and Commentary (Cambridge, UK, 2014), 124 n. 44: 'Roman wills had to be in Latin until, according to the common view…, Greek was universally permitted by a constitution of Severus Alexander (AD 222-35)'. For an example of a Greek will in Roman Egypt, see PSI inv. 1686 verso (28.9.213), although the editor, Guido Bastinini, dates the text to 213 ('Versione in greco di un testamento romano', in Rodney Ast *et al.* [eds], *Papyrological Texts in Honor of Roger S. Bagnall*, American Studies in Papyrology 53 (Durham, 2012): 34, note to lines 11-2). Unless otherwise noted, I follow the edition of Gregory's will by Joëlle Beaucamp ('Le Testament de Grégoire de Nazianze', in Ludwig Burgmann and Dieter Simon (eds), *Fontes minores X* [Frankfurt, 1998], 1-100). Unless otherwise noted, and with the exception of rendering his 'Gregorius' as 'Gregory' and 'Caesarius' as 'Kaisarios', I follow the translation of Gregory's will by Raymond van Dam, 'Self-Representation in the Will of Gregory of Nazianzus', *JTS* 46 (1995), 118-48.

[4] *E.g.*, R. Van Dam, 'Self-Representation' (1995). In 'Le Testament' (1998), J. Beaucamp does contrast Gregory's will with those of other bishops, but she mainly emphasizes the differences between the wills of the former and the latter two bishops. Bernard Coulie contextualizes Gregory's will within his oeuvre as a whole, *Les richesses dans l'œuvre de Saint Grégoire de Nazianze: Étude littéraire et historique* (Leuven, 1985).

[5] E. Champlin, *Final Judgments* (1991), *passim*, *e.g.*, 28.

[6] For discussions of the evidence for dating the will, see, *e.g.*, Bernard Coulie, *Les Richesses* (1985), 10-1; R. Van Dam, 'Self-Representation' (1995), especially note 99; Joëlle Beaucamp, 'Le Testament' (1998), 43-9, 77-84.

include Remigius of Rheims and Caesarius of Arles.[7] Most scholars who study these testaments concur that they are probably authentic, especially the will by Gregory.[8] I concur with A.H.M. Jones, P. Grierson, and J.A. Crook that the *petit testamentum* of Remigius is authentic and antedates his death in 533.[9] I also agree with Germain Morin that Caesarius did draw up the extant version of his epistolary will sometime before his death in 542.[10] As Jan-Olof Tjäder rightly states, the papyrus record of the testament of bishop Caelius Aurelianus of Ravenna (contained in P.Ital.I.4-5) is not the bishop's *testamentum per se*. Instead, the text, which Tjäder dates to 520/521,[11] is part of 'ein Gesamtprotokoll über Testamentseröffnungen'.[12] Because of the paucity of other extant and relevant *testamenta*, and because the text preserved on the Ravenna papyrus does quote part of Aurelianus' will, I also include that text in this study. These are the three documents that provide the nearest extant *comparanda* for assessing the implicit stipulations within Gregory's will.[13]

[7] I follow the edition of the *petit testamentum* of Remigius edited by Henry M. Rochais, 'Appendix I.2: Testamentum Sancti Remigii Remensis Episcopi', in Henry M. Rochais (ed.), *Defensoris Liber Scintillarum*, CChr.SL 117.1 (Turnhout, 1957), 473-9, a reprint from MGH SRM 3:336-47, and the translation by Ralph W. Mathisen in *People, Personal Expression, and Social Relations in Late Antiquity* I (Ann Arbor, 2003), 242-8. I follow the edition of the *testamentum* of Caesarius of Arles in *Césaire d'Arles: Œuvres Monastiques*, ed. Adalbert de Vogüé and Joël Courreau, SC 345 (Paris, 1988), and the translation by William Klingshirn, *Caesarius of Arles: Life, Testament, Letters*, Translated Texts for Historians 19 (Liverpool, 1994).

[8] For a discussion of the arguments for and against the authenticity of the will by Gregory, see the commentary to Gregory's *testamentum* by Joëlle Beaucamp. She argues that the twenty-eight extant MSS containing the text of Gregory's *testamentum* may very well have descended from an authenticated copy deposited in the church at Nazianzos. For other possible interpretations of the *incipit* of the *testamentum* (Ἴσον τῆς διαθήκης τοῦ ἁγίου Γρηγορίου τοῦ θεολόγου, μεταγραφὲν ἐκ τοῦ ἀρχετύπου δικαιώματος, ἐν ᾧ καὶ ἰδιόχειροι ὑπογραφαὶ σώζονται αὐτοῦ τε καὶ τῶν ὑπογραψάντων μαρτύρων, ll. 1-3), see J. Beaucamp 'Le Testament' (1995), 42-3.

[9] A.H.M. Jones, P. Grierson, J.A. Crook, 'The Authenticity of the "Testamentum S. Remigii"', *RBPh* 35 (1957), 356-73. I follow these scholars and remain cautious about designating the *grand testamentum* by Remigius as authentic. For the arguments in favor of the authenticity of the *grand testamentum*, see, however, Noel Lazaro Delgado, *The "Grand Testamentum" of Remigius of Reims: Its Authenticity, Juridical "Acta", and Bequeathed Property*, Dissertation: University of Minnesota (Minneapolis, 2008).

[10] Germain Morin, 'Le Testament de S. Césaire d'Arles et La Critique de M. Bruno Krusch', *RBen* 16 (1899), 97-112. Scholars in agreement with Morin include, *e.g.*, Ulrich Nonn, 'Merowingische Testamente: Studien zum Fortleben einer Römischen Urkundenform im Frankreich', *Archiv für Diplomatik* 18 (1972), 1-129; Patrick J. Geary, *Aristocracy in Provence: The Rhône Basin at the Dawn of the Carolingian Age* (Philadelphia, 1985); W. Klingshirn, *Caesarius: Life, Testament* (1994), 67-8.

[11] Jan-Olof Tjäder, *Die nichtliterarischen lateinischen Papyri Italiens aus der Zeit 445-700:* I. *Papyri 1-28* (Lund, 1955), 192.

[12] J.-O. Tjäder, *Die nichtliterarischen lateinischen Papyri* I (1955), 190. I follow the edition and translation of P.Ital.I.4-5: *ibid.* 204-17. Plates are in *id.*, *Die nichtliterarischen lateinischen Papyri Italiens aus der Zeit 445-700:* III. *Tafeln* (Lund, 1954), Plates 14-28.

[13] For other wills not by bishops but contemporary to Gregory's testament, which I exclude from the study, see, *e.g.*, P.Col. VII 188 (testator: centurion, AD 320) and P.NYU inv. II 15 (testator:

Gregory the testator's employment of Christian stipulations for the appropriate uses of his wealth really begins with his modification of the traditional *intitulatio*. In wills not by bishops, testators often identify themselves by name, occupation, and father's name and/or location.[14] In his initial *intitulatio*, however, Gregory identifies himself as 'I, Gregory, bishop of the catholic church in Constantinople' (Γρηγόριος ἐπίσκοπος τῆς καθολικῆς ἐκκλησίας τῆς ἐν Κωνσταντινουπόλει, ll. 6f.). The other bishops introduce themselves similarly, namely as 'Ich, Caelius Aurelianus, vir venerabilis, Bischof der heiligen katholischen ravennatischen Kirche...' (*Caelius Aurelianus v[ir] v[enerabilis], episc[opus] sanctae ecclesiae catolicae Ravennatis*..., Fr B,V 5 in *P.Ital*.1.4-5, tr. Tjäder), or as 'I, Remigius, bishop, in possession of the episcopate of the city of Reims...' (*Ego remigius episcopus ciuitatis remorum sacerdotii compos*, CChr.SL 117).[15] After a benediction upon the church of Arles (*Pax ecclesiae Arelatensi*, CS 1), Caesarius, following epistolary guidelines, introduces himself in the third person as 'Bishop Caesarius...' (*Caesarius episcopus,*

unknown man who is not a bishop, AD 335-6), in the edition by Livia Migliardi Zingale, *I Testamenti Romani nei Papiri e nelle Tavolette d'Egitto: Silloge di Documenti dal 1. al 4. secolo d.C*., 3rd ed. (Torino, 1997). For a more recent translation and discussion of Egyptian testamentary texts in general, see Willy Clarysse, 'Deeds of Last Will: Demotic, Greek and Latin', in J. Keenan, J.G. Manning and U. Yiftach-Firanko (eds), *Law and Legal Practice in Egypt from Alexander to the Arab Conquest* (2014), 202-25. For bibliography and editions of testamentary texts on Egyptian papyri, see G. Bastinini, 'Versione' (2012), 31-5 and Francisca A.J. Hoogendijk, 'Maternal Division of Housed Property near the Temples of Memphis', also in Rodney Ast *et al*. (eds), *Papyrological Texts in Honor of Roger S. Bagnall* (2012), 149-58. In addition to excluding contemporary wills not by bishops, I also exclude references to bishops' testaments that are not actually wills, *i.e*., references by jurists. In addition, I also exclude a will purporting to be by Domnolus of Le Man (PL 72, 649-52), because of its suspect authenticity and, even if authentic, is rather late, close to Domnolus' death on 1 December 583 (*contra* R. Mathisen, *People* [2003], 242 n. 1). Finally, because of its late date – c. AD 600 – I exclude the will of Apa Abraamios of Hermonthis, dated by James G. Keenan *et al*., 'The Languages of Law', in James G. Keenan, J.G. Manning and Uri Yiftach-Firanko (eds), *Law and Legal Practice in Egypt from Alexander to the Arab Conquest* (2014), 139.

The paucity of comparable testaments extends to the Syriac tradition. The records of various synods (*Synodicon Orientale*) imply that, like their Greek-speaking counterparts, Syriac Christians regularly drew up wills. In fact, according to one reference (Synod of Joseph, canon 11), Syriac-speaking Christians seem to have sometimes entrusted their wills to the keeping of bishops or priests, and testators were directed to draw up their wills publicly. For the period of late antiquity through the early Islamic conquest, however, no extant Syriac will exists. For references to the Syriac documents and bibliography, I thank Dr. L. Weitz of the Catholic University of America.

[14] Unless otherwise noted, I follow the testamentary terminology of U. Nonn, 'Merowingische Testamente' (1972). For *intitulatio*, see *ibid*. 58, 62. For an example, see P.Dryton 3 (= P.Lond. III 640), dated to 29 June 126 BC, which was drawn up by a 'Dryton, son of Pamphilos, Cretan...'

[15] Unless otherwise noted, I follow the translation of the will of Remigius by R. Mathisen, *People* (2003).

ibid. 2).[16] Like his fellow bishops, therefore, Gregory emphasizes his ecclesiastical status in charge of a particular see. Gregory's use of the toponym 'Constantinople' reveals that – even if the estates Gregory will bequeath are located in Cappadocia, not Constantinople – nevertheless, Gregory wants the audience of his will to see him speaking authoritatively *ex cathedra* at Constantinople.

That Gregory is speaking as *the* orthodox ecclesiastical authority of Constantinople gives greater moral authority to the rest of his will. Shortly after his *intitulatio*, Gregory explains his 'clear intention' in writing his will (τὴν ἐμαυτοῦ γνώμην ... φανεράν, l. 10). Contrary to many other testators' rationale(s) for drawing up a will, Gregory does not express a desire to win remembrance for himself or to ensure that his possessions pass on to his immediate family.[17] Instead, Gregory tells his audience that he wants to dedicate 'the entirety' of his possessions 'to the catholic church in Nazianzos for the service of the poor dependent upon the said church' – at his parents' request (πᾶσάν μου τὴν οὐσίαν καθιέρωσα τῇ καθολικῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ τῇ κατὰ Ναζιανζὸν εἰς τὴν τῶν πτωχῶν διακονίαν τῶν ὑπὸ τὴν εἰρημένην ἐκκλησίαν, ll. 10-2).[18] The Christian, moralizing tone of this prefatory 'clear intention' is very clear and important, because after he drew up this version of his will, Gregory served as bishop of Nazianzos for several years until his death. Unless he dedicated his goods to the poor at his parents' church, he would have been simply dedicating the goods to himself *qua* bishop of Nazianzos for his own usufruct.

But according to the eminent second-century jurist Gaius, in the translation of L.M. Zingale, 'Prima dell' istituzione di eredi, inutilmente si fanno legati, perché i testamenti prendono forza dall' istituzione di erede e, perciò, essa è considerata come il principio e il fondamento dell' intero testamento'.[19] Because Gregory's Christianizing statement of intent precedes the formal appointment of his heir, the *heredis institutio* or *Erbeneinsetzung*,[20] his verbalized decision to establish a patrimony to the poor with all of his possessions is not only unique among the other wills studied here, but, more significantly, has no legal force at all.[21] Yet we should be wary of dismissing this statement of intent as a legal error or as a

[16] Unless otherwise noted, I follow the translation of the will of Caesarius by W. Klingshirn, *Caesarius* (1994).

[17] In fact, most of Gregory's nuclear family had passed away prior to his drawing up this will.

[18] Gregory's attribution of this intention to his parents occurs later in the will (... πάντα προεπαγγειλάμενος τοῖς πτωχοῖς, μᾶλλον δὲ τοῖς μακαριωτάτοις γονεῦσιν ὑποσχομένοις ἀκολουθήσας, ὧν ἀθετῆσαι τὴν γνώμην οὔτε ὅσιον οὔτε ἀσφαλὲς ἡγοῦμαι, ll. 66-8).

[19] *Ante heredis institutionem, inutiliter legatur, scilicet quia testamenta vim ex institutione heredis accipiunt, et ob id velut caput et fundamentum intelligitur totius testamenti heredis institutio* (Gaius, *Institutiones*, 2, 229). Text and translation from L.M. Zingale, *I Testamenti* (1997), 136-7.

[20] U. Nonn, 'Merowingische Testamente' (1972), 68-70.

[21] The section characteristic of early Merovingian wills that U. Nonn terms the 'Innere Begründung', *e.g*., *metuens casus humanae fragilitatis* differs from the 'clear intention' of Gregory's will. For 'Innere Begründung' ('Internal reasons/justification') see U. Nonn, 'Merowingische Testamente' (1972), 58, 64.

nugatory rhetorical flourish on the bishop's part. Instead, as we shall see, this statement by Gregory sets forth the conditions, *i.e*., the Christian stipulations, under which Gregory intends that his heir and legatees use his goods. His beneficiaries should use his bequests insofar as they accord with, or at least, do not undermine, the bishop's master plan for establishing a patrimony to the poor.

Shortly after the *intitulatio* is the *heredis institutio* and accompanying *Enterbungsklausel* (disinheritance clause), where Gregory the bishop appoints as his sole heir an eponymous Gregory, one of his freedmen and a deacon. 'Whenever I happen to meet the end of my life, the aforementioned deacon and monk Gregory, who was [a slave] of my household and whom I manumitted long ago, is to be heir of the entirety of all my possessions, both moveable and fixed, wherever my possessions are. All the others are to be disinherited. As a result, Gregory may restore all my possessions, both moveable and fixed, to the holy Catholic church of Nazianzus, exempting nothing at all except 389c whatever I specifically leave someone in this my will as a legacy or a trust. As I have already said, he may instead carefully preserve everything for the church, keeping the fear of God before his eyes and knowing that I have decided to add all my possessions to the provision of the poor of that same church and that I have designated him as heir so that he might completely preserve everything for the church'.[22] Here Gregory the bishop mandates that in case he dies before he can completely execute his 'clear intention' to establish a patrimony for the poor, he has appointed his heir as a *heres fiduciarius* to execute it. That is, Gregory charges his heir with an implicit *fideicommissum* to pass the entirety of his inheritance to the church at Nazianzos.[23] By invoking divine vengeance, should his heir fail to execute Gregory's 'clear intention', the testator emphasizes the solemn importance he gives to the execution of this *fideicommissum*.

By contrast with the general rarity of philanthropic bequests in extant wills not by confessional Christians,[24] Gregory's installation of his heir is similar to his fellow bishops' *Erbeneinsetzungen*. Like Gregory, the bishops Aurelianus, Caesarius, and Remigius appoint fellow ecclesiastics, sometimes freedmen, as

[22] Ἐὰν οὖν συμβῇ με τέλει τοῦ βίου χρήσασθαι, ἔστω μου κληρονόμος ὁ προειρημένος Γρηγόριος ὁ διάκονος καὶ μονάζων, ὁ γενόμενος ἐκ τῆς οἰκίας μου, ὃν πάλαι ἠλευθέρωσα, ἐξ ὁλοκλήρου πάσης μου τῆς οὐσίας, κινητῆς τε καὶ ἀκινήτου, τῆς πανταχοῦ μοι ὑπαρχούσης – οἱ δὲ λοιποὶ πάντες ἔστωσάν μου ἀποκληρόνομοι – οὕτω μέντοι ὥστε αὐτὸν πᾶσάν μου τὴν οὐσίαν, κινητήν τε καὶ ἀκίνητον, ἀποκαταστῆσαι τῇ ἁγίᾳ καθολικῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ τῇ ἐν Ναζιανζῷ, μηδὲν τὸ παράπαν ὑπεξελόμενον πλὴν ὧν ἂν ταύτῃ τῇ διαθήκῃ μού τισιν ἰδικῶς καταλίπω λεγάτου ἢ φιδεικομμίσσου χάριν, ἀλλὰ ὡς προεῖπον, ἀκριβῶς ἀποσῶσαι τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ, ἔχοντα τὸν τοῦ Θεοῦ φόβον πρὸ ὀφθαλμῶν καὶ εἰδότα ὅτι εἰς διακονίαν τῶν πτωχῶν τῆς αὐτῆς ἐκκλησίας προσέταξα πᾶσάν μου τὴν οὐσίαν προσχωρήσαι καὶ ἐπὶ τούτῳ αὐτὸν ἐνεστησάμην κληρονόμον ὥστε δι' αὐτοῦ τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ πάντα ἀπαραλείπτως ἀποσωθῆναι (ll. 19-31).

[23] For *heres fiduciarius*, see E. Champlin, *Last Judgments* (1991), 109.

[24] For a discussion of the general rarity of pre-Christian bequests to large numbers of citizens, see E. Champlin, *ibid*. 155-68.

heirs, but the three later testators also directly appoint as heirs a church or monastery each one was raised in, founded, or ruled.[25] But Gregory differs from the *Erbeneinsetzungen* of the other bishops, because Gregory does not intend that a church *per se* be his beneficiary. Instead, Gregory earmarks his inheritance for the poor and charges his eponymous heir with an implicit *fideicommissum* to ensure the transmission of that inheritance to the appropriate recipients (πτωχοῖ). Thus, Gregory's *heredis institutio* is similar to, but not identical with, the Christianizing testamentary practices of his fellow bishops.

Throughout his will, Gregory praises certain Christian behaviors as implicit encouragement to his beneficiaries to retain these behaviors. Two examples should suffice. First, at ll. 41-3, Gregory the testator gives his heir, the freedman Gregory, a legacy of fifty gold coins. If the participial clause (γνησίως ὑπηρετήσαντά μοι) is causal, then a link between the praise and the legacy becomes clear: 'I wish that Gregory the deacon and my heir, since he has lawfully served me, to legally retain for himself ownership of fifty gold coins' (Γρηγόριον τὸν διάκονον καὶ κληρονόμον μου, γνησίως ὑπηρετήσαντά μοι, βούλομαι κατασχεῖν ἰδίῳ δεσποτείας δικαίῳ χρυσίνους τὸν ἀριθμὸν πεντήκοντα; translation mine).[26] The bishop awards his namesake heir the legacy because of his heir's past behavior. By implication, the bishop stipulates that his heir use this monetary legacy after his own death just as he faithfully served the living bishop. A second example of Gregory's implicit stipulations occur when he bequeaths an estate, *inter alia*, to Russiana, whom he praises as '... the most venerable virgin Russiana, my relative' (Τῇ αἰδεσιμωτάτῃ παρθένῳ Ῥουσιανῇ, τῇ συγγενίδι μου, l. 44). Russiana is to choose the location of the household he leaves her – on the stipulation that the household be set up as one suitable for a virtuous consecrated virgin (νῦν δὲ καὶ τοῦτο βούλομαι ὥστε, ἐν οἵῳ ἂν ἐπιλέξηται χωρίῳ, κατασκευασθῆναι αὐτῇ οἰκίαν ἐλευθερίαν πρέπουσαν εὐσχήμονι διαγωγῇ παρθένου, ll. 48-50). Thus, Gregory's praise and bequest implicitly encourage Russiana to continue her consecrated

[25] Aurelianus: *Te itaque, sanctam ecclesiam catolicam Ravennatem, in cuius servitio crevi, heredem mihi ex axe esse iubeo ac volo* (Fr B V 10). Caesarius: *Ego Caesarius ... cunctum monasterium Arelatense sancti Iohannis, quod ego condidi, ... heredem ... meum esse uolo ac iubeo ... Ceterum autem Arelatensi episcopo coheredi meo monasterium relinquo* (*CS* 5-8). Remigius: *tu mihi heres esto, sancta et uenerabilis aecclesia catholica urbis remorum, et tu, fili fratris mei, lupe episcope, quem precipuo semper amore dilexi, et tu, nepos meus agricola presbyter, qui michi obsequio tuo a puericia placuisti, in omni substantia mea, que mea sorte obuenit, antequam moriar, preter id quod unicuique donauero, legauero dari uel iussero, uel unumquemque uestrum uoluero habere precipuum* (MGM 3:336).

[26] By contrast with the translation of R. van Dam, 'Self-Representation' (1995): 'I furthermore especially wish that the deacon Gregorius, my heir who has faithfully served me, keep for his own lawful ownership 392b fifty gold coins' and J. Beaucamp, 'Le Testament' (1998): 'En outre, par préception, je veux que le diacre Grêgorios, mon héritier, qui m'a véritablement servi, retienne en droit propre de propriété des pièces d'or au nombre de cinquante'.

life, as the wording of his legacy to his eponymous heir encouraged him to execute the bishop's intentions as faithfully as he had acted in the past.

Finally, we turn to Gregory's legacy of clothing, which falls into two categories: the clothes of his brother Kaisarios and those that were, presumably, Gregory's own. To the children of Alypiana, whom Raymond van Dam determined to be Gregory's niece,[27] Gregory offers Kaisarios' luxurious clothing: 'With regard to my very dear daughter Alypiana (the others, Eugenia and Nonna, whose lives are reprehensible, [deserve] little consideration), I wish her to forgive me if I have been unable to leave anything to her, 392d for I have already promised everything to the poor. ... But with regard to whatever has survived from the possessions of my blessed brother Kaisarios among the silk clothes, the linen clothes, the wool clothes, or the carriages, 393a I wish to transfer this to her children. [I wish that] in no way is she or her sisters to give trouble either to my heir or to the church'.[28] Note that Gregory stamps the legacies of even his brother's possessions with his own stipulations: Alypiana should accept the clothing that belonged to Gregory's brother for her children if and only if she – and her sisters – will not 'give trouble either to my heir or to the church'. Gregory's characterization of Alypiana as 'my very dear daughter' (Τὴν γλυκυτάτην μου θυγατέρα) is, therefore, an optimistically proleptic description of a niece who accepts the luxurious garments on the stipulation of not challenging Gregory's will or hindering its execution – and of bringing her sisters into agreement with her.

Gregory's bequest of his brother's luxurious clothes upon his niece's children is quite surprising for two reasons. First, Gregory's possession of any goods from his brother's estate is unexpected. Gregory was supposed to have completely distributed his brother's goods or turned them over to the fisc as part of an onerous probate process after the death of Kaisarios, apparently intestate, in 368/9.[29] Second, by contrast with the other bishops' legacies of clothing, and with the general testamentary practice of Roman testators,[30] not only is any reference to a niece in a Roman will remarkable, but also, in their wills, neither Remigius nor Caesarius specifies any garments made from

[27] R. van Dam, 'Self-Representation' (1995).

[28] Τὴν γλυκυτάτην μου θυγατέρα Ἀλυπιανὴν ... βούλομαι συγγνώμην ἔχειν μοι, εἰ μηδὲν αὐτῇ καταλιπεῖν κύριος ἐγενόμην, πάντα προεπαγγειλάμενος τοῖς πτωχοῖς, μᾶλλον δὲ τοῖς μακαριωτάτοις γονεῦσιν ὑποσχομένοις ἀκολουθήσας, ὧν ἀθετῆσαι τὴν γνώμην οὔτε ὅσιον οὔτε ἀσφαλὲς ἡγοῦμαι. Ὅσα μέντοι ἐκ τῶν τοῦ μακαρίου μου ἀδελφοῦ Καισαρίου πραγμάτων, ἐν ἐσθῆτι σηρικῇ ἢ λινῇ ἢ ἐρεᾷ ἢ βουριχαλίοις περιλέλειπται, ταῦτα διαφέρειν τοῖς τέκνοις αὐτῆς βούλομαι, καὶ ἐν μηδενὶ μήτε ἐκείνην μήτε τὰς ἀδελφὰς αὐτῆς ἐνοχλεῖν μήτε τῷ κληρονόμῳ μου μήτε τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ (ll. 63-72).

[29] See R. van Dam, 'Self-Representation' (1995).

[30] Since, according to Champlin, '[n]ieces ... are never mentioned [as heirs or legatees] ... from the late republic onwards, ... the intestate category of *proximus agnatus* included no female beyond sisters', Gregory's inclusion of Alypiana – and her sisters – diverges from Roman testamentary practice, 'Final Judgments' (1991), 127.

luxurious materials.[31] Yet, in his will, Gregory is patently anxious to demonstrate his 'clear intention' of dedicating his goods to the poor, and, as his other works demonstrate, he is not reluctant to point out others' flaws, *e.g.*, feminine vices in *Adversus mulieres*. Perhaps, therefore, we should not be too surprised at his descriptive wording of these vestimentary bequests, the sex of their indirect beneficiary, and his suborning his brothers' clothes as means of forestalling these female relatives, for whom he does not apparently have the highest esteem, from hindering the achievement of his overarching goal.

The luxurious legacy for the children of his niece Alypiana sharply contrasts with the clothes Gregory bequeaths his fellow ecclesiastics, whom he praises. Gregory does not describe any of these clothes as luxurious, but the exact identity of κάμασον, στιχάριον, πάλλιον, and σιγγιλίων is controversial.[32] Translations of these vestimentary bequests often seem rather general and usually lack any explicit religious meanings.[33] Yet we need to interpret these vestimentary terms in their late antique context. Unless a person of Gregory's time was fabulously wealthy, he probably wore the same garment much more frequently than do most members of first-world countries today. Over time, late antique viewers would tend to associate certain articles of clothing with particular people, especially if individuals wore those garments in highly visible places, such as an altar in front of a congregation. In addition, I believe most scholars would agree that few testators would bequeath legacies of little meaning to themselves, so by κάμασον, στιχάριον, πάλλιον, and σιγγιλίων, the late antique Gregory perhaps means more than simply 'a wool robe', 'a tunic', 'a cloak', and 'un vêtement léger'.[34]

[31] The record of Aurelianus' will is too exiguous to determine if the bishop bequeathed any clothing.

[32] Εὐαγρίῳ τῷ διακόνῳ, πολλά μοι συγκαμόντι καὶ συνεκφροντίσαντι διὰ πλειόνων τε τὴν εὔνοιαν παραστήσαντι, χάριν ὁμολογῶ καὶ ἐπὶ Θεοῦ καὶ ἐπὶ ἀνθρώπων · καὶ τοῖς μείζοσι μὲν αὐτὸν ὁ Θεὸς ἀμείψαιτο · ἵνα δὲ μηδὲ τὰ μικρὰ τῆς φιλίας σύμβολα παρ' ἡμῶν ἐλλίπῃ, βούλομαι αὐτῷ δοθῆναι κάμασον ἕνα, στιχάριον ἕν, πάλλια δύο, χρυσᾶ νομίσματα τὸν ἀριθμὸν τριάκοντα. Ὁμοίως καὶ τῷ γλυκυτάτῳ συνδιακόνῳ ἡμῶν Θεοδούλῳ δοθῆναι βούλομαι κάμασον ἕνα, στιχάρια δύο τῶν ἐν τῇ πατρίδι, χρυσᾶ νομίσματα εἴκοσι ἐκ τοῦ ἐν τῇ πατρίδι λόγου. Ἐλαφίῳ τῷ νοταρίῳ, εὐτρόπῳ τε ὄντι καὶ καλῶς ἡμᾶς ἀναπαύσαντι ὃν ὑπηρετήσατο χρόνον, βούλομαι δοθῆναι κάμασον ἕνα, στιχάρια δύο, πάλλια τρία, σιγγιλίωνα ἐν τῇ πατρίδι, χρυσᾶ νομίσματα εἴκοσι (ll. 86-92).

[33] For instance, in *Les Richesses* (1985), 18, B. Coulie renders κάμασον as 'manteaux d'étoffe épaisse et chaude', while R. van Dam 'Self-Representation' (1995) interprets κάμασον as 'wool robe'. Regarding στιχάριον: 'tunique' (B. Coulie, *ibid.*) or 'tunic' (R. van Dam, *ibid.*); πάλλια: 'manteaux' (B. Coulie, *ibid.*) or 'cloaks' (R. van Dam, *ibid.*). Joëlle Beaucamp translates them similarly. Re: σιγγιλίων, B. Coulie and R. van Dam follow the text of the old edition by J.B. Pitra, 'Testamentum [Gregorii Nazianzi]', *Iuris Ecclesiastici Graecorum Historia et Monumenta* (Rome, 1868), 2:155-9, with a variant reading (πάλλια σιγιλλιῶνα) that Beaucamp does not use in her later edition relying on a wider variety of MSS.

[34] Translations by R. van Dam, 'Self-Representation' (1995) and J. Beaucamp, 'Le Testament' (1998).

By comparison, many vestimentary bequests of both Remigius and Caesarius are associated with solemn or religious occasions.[35] For example, the correspondence and *Vita* of Caesarius reveal that the *pallium* pope Symmachus awarded Caesarius served as a potent symbol of the Gallic bishop's spiritual and ecclesiastical authority.[36] Ultimately, although the comparison of Gregory's vestimentary bequests with those of the later bishops is suggestive, we cannot know if the audience of Gregory's will would cognitively blend the clothes he names with ascetic meanings such as 'hair shirt' for στιχάριον.[37] The ecclesiastical identities of the recipients of Gregory's clothing, namely, two deacons and a *notarius* in the bishop's service, do, however, imply that Gregory the bishop wants his garments to continue to be associated with the church, as Gregory himself was. In order for Gregory's beneficiaries to re-embody him to others, therefore, these legatees under Gregory's mantle should – by implication – wear his vestimentary bequests while exemplifying behaviors that Gregory commends.

As we have seen, the episcopal authority of Gregory and his fellow bishops is integral for understanding their testamentary last judgments. In his will, Gregory speaks forcefully from Constantinople to establish his primary intention of passing on his entire inheritance as a patrimony to the poor of the catholic church at Nazianzos.[38] To encourage his beneficiaries to employ his wealth in ways that he approves, Gregory passes along his bequests, including clothes, with judgments and implicit stipulations that the beneficiaries employ

[35] *E.g.*, Remigius: *Futuro episcopo successori meo amphibalum album paschalem relinquo; stragola columbina duo, uela tria, que sunt ad hostia diebus festis triclinii, cellae et culinae. ... Vrsi archidiaconi familiaribus usus obsequiis, dono ei domitextilis casulam subtilem et aliam pleniorem, ... tunicam quam tempore transitus mei reliquero meliorem* (MGH 337, 339). In addition to religious clothes and cloths, here Remigius bequeaths a *tunica*, which again is not simply a tunic, but one that Remigius hands down on an occasion of great solemnity.

[36] The *Vita Caesarii* (1.42) states that Pope Symmachus bestows upon Caesarius 'the specially granted privilege of the *pallium*' in recognition of Caesarius' piety. In *Ep.* 7b, Pope Symmachus refers to the *pallium* he gave Caesarius and confirms the right of Caesarius to wear it – as a confirmation of his ecclesiastical authority. Translation by W. Klingshirn, *Life, Testament* (1994). In addition, a very ancient *pallium*, historically associated with Caesarius, has survived until today as a relic, and Anastasia Ozoline recently restored it. For her discussion of the restoration process and images of the *pallia*, see Anastasia Ozoline, *Trésors de la Gaule chrétienne: Histoire et restauration des reliques textiles de Saint Césaire d'Arles (470-542)* (Arles, 2008).

[37] The term (στιχάριον) eventually signifies clothing 'worn by monks and hermits', even, possibly, garments 'with a hair lining', *i.e.*, hair-shirts characteristic of monastic asceticism. Definitions from G.W.H. Lampe, 'Στιχάριον', *A Patristic Greek Lexicon* (Oxford, 1961), 1260.

[38] The survival of the will due to its retention in the archives of the church at Nazianzos, if true, would be a quite logical way for later authorities at that church to support their ecclesiastical authority and their claims to lands and privileges that Gregory had passed on to them. Some other early ecclesiastical *testamenta* seem to have been preserved for such a purpose, *e.g.*, the *testamentum* of Caesarius of Arles (W. Klingshirn, *Caesarius: Life, Testament* [1994], 67-8; and G. Morin 'Le Testament' [1899]) and that of Abbo, who died *ante* 793 (see P. Geary, *Aristocracy in Provence* [1985]).

them virtuously. If Gregory, for whatever reason, has not completely distributed his wealth to the poor by the time he died, his heir and legatees should either support, or at least not hinder, the complete dispersal of his wealth to the needy of his parents' church.

Overall, the implicit stipulations in Gregory's will seem to be part of his response to the famous eye of the needle passages (*e.g.*, *Matth.* 19:16-26), where the virtuous and wealthy young man seeks the road to perfection – and Jesus responds that if the interlocutor has already kept all the commandments, he should in addition sell his possessions, give them to the poor (πτωχοῖς), and follow Jesus – and the interlocutor will have treasure in heaven. Gregory, never a man to settle for anything less than perfection, desires to win this heavenly treasure – by obeying his parents' wishes. Through bequeathing his possessions with these implicit stipulations, Gregory seems to hope that his heir and legatees, his own spiritual 'children', will follow his example and use his goods in a like manner.[39]

[39] Therefore, distinguishing Gregory's property into personal and ecclesiastical goods seems somewhat artificial. Gregory seems to have viewed all of his property as dedicated for God, either directly or indirectly.

Eunomius and Gregory of Nyssa on τὸ τῆς εὐσεβείας μυστήριον

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Abstract

The topic of 'mysticism' has long occupied a central place in scholarship on Gregory of Nyssa. Much of the conversation about this topic, however, has hinged on modern disagreements about what constitutes 'mysticism' (or 'mystical theology').[1] Less attention has been paid to the particular ways in which Gregory himself uses μυστήριον and related words (μυστικός, μυσταγωγία, *etc*.). In this article, I will attempt to shed further light on Gregory's understanding of the word μυστήριον by examining a specific passage from Book III of his treatise *Contra Eunomium* – a passage in which Gregory attacks Eunomius for his understanding of 'the mystery of piety' (τὸ τῆς εὐσεβείας μυστήριον), a phrase drawn from 1*Tim*. 3:16.[2]

Μυστήριον and related words

The first instances of μυστήριον and related words in early Christian literature are found in the genuine letters of the Apostle Paul.[3] Similar mystery-terminology is present in the deutero-Pauline letters, the Synoptic Gospels, and

[1] See Brian E. Daley, '"Bright Darkness" and Christian Transformation: Gregory of Nyssa on the Dynamics of Mystical Union', *SPhiloA* 8 (1996), 83-98.

[2] The passage in question is *Eun*. III 9,53b-64 (GNO II 284,6-288,17). The best existing treatment of this passage is in Ekkehard Mühlenberg, 'Gregor von Nyssa, *Contra Eunomium* III, Tomus IX', in Johan Leemans and Matthieu Cassin (eds), *Gregory of Nyssa: Contra Eunomium III: An English Translation with Commentary and Supporting Studies: Proceedings of the 12th International Colloquium on Gregory of Nyssa (Leuven, 14-17 September 2010)*, VCSup 124 (Leiden, 2014), 429-41.

[3] On Paul's use of μυστήριον and related words, see D. Deden, 'Le "mystère" paulinien', *ETL* 13 (1936), 405-42; Karl Prümm, 'Zur Phänomenologie des paulinischen Mysterion und dessen seelischer Aufnahme: Eine Übersicht', *Bib* 37 (1956), 135-61; and Romano Penna, *Il 'mysterion' paolino: Traiettoria e costituzione*, RivBSup 10 (Brescia, 1978). For broader overviews of mystery-terminology in early Christian literature, see Günther Bornkamm, 'μυστήριον, μυέω', *ThWNT* 4 (1942), 809-34; K. Prümm, 'Mystères', *DBS* 6 (1960), 1-225; Raymond E. Brown, *The Semitic Background of the Term 'Mystery' in the New Testament*, Facet Books: Biblical Series 21 (Philadelphia, 1968); Aimé Solignac, 'Mystère', *DSp* 10 (1980), 1861-74; and T.J. Lang, *Mystery and the Making of a Christian Historical Consciousness: From Paul to the Second Century*, BZNW 219 (Berlin, 2015).

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the Book of Revelation.[4] Early in the twentieth century (during the height of the *Religionsgeschichtliche Schule*), many scholars viewed the mystery-terminology of the New Testament as a more or less direct appropriation from the pagan 'mystery religions', such as the Eleusinian Mysteries and the Dionysian Mysteries.[5] Kirsopp Lake even went so far as to claim that 'Christianity has not borrowed from the Mystery Religions, because it was always, at least in Europe, a Mystery Religion itself'.[6] The tides of scholarship, however, have changed, and the mystery-terminology of the New Testament is now predominantly seen as an inheritance from Second Temple Judaism. The following statement by Raymond Brown epitomizes this perspective:

> We believe it no exaggeration to say that, considering the variety and currency of the concept of divine mysteries in Jewish thought, Paul and the NT writers could have written everything they did about *mystērion* whether or not they ever encountered the pagan mystery religions. 'Mystery' was a part of the native theological equipment of the Jews who came to Christ.[7]

According to Brown and others who hold a similar position, the mystery-terminology of the New Testament is derived from the Hebrew סוד and the Aramaic רז, the latter of which the Septuagint translates as μυστήριον (see, *e.g.*, *Dan.* 2). This group of scholars generally views the mystery-terminology of the New Testament as apocalyptic rather than cultic: that is, as referring to the secret plans of God that have been revealed and fulfilled through Jesus Christ, rather than to secret knowledge obtained through esoteric rites of initiation (or to such rites themselves).[8]

In the ensuing centuries, however, the Christian understanding of μυστήριον and related words evolved and developed in new directions.[9] Thus, in his seminal book *Platonisme et théologie mystique* (1st ed., 1944), Jean Daniélou argues that there are four principal senses of the word μυστήριον in the theology of Gregory of Nyssa.[10]

[4] In this article, I use 'mystery-terminology' as a convenient shorthand for the group of Greek words etymologically related to μυστήριον (μυστικός, μυσταγωγία, *etc.*). It is not meant to refer to other associated words (*e.g.*, ἀποκάλυψις or ἐποπτεία).

[5] For a more detailed discussion of the scholarly trends discussed here, see Benjamin L. Gladd, *Revealing the* Mysterion: *The Use of* Mystery *in Daniel and Second Temple Judaism with its Bearing on First Corinthians*, BZNW 160 (Berlin, 2009), 8-16.

[6] Kirsopp Lake, *The Earlier Epistles of St. Paul: Their Motive and Origin* (London, 1911), 215.

[7] R.E. Brown, *Semitic Background* (1968), 69.

[8] For a different perspective, see Jonathan Z. Smith, *Drudgery Divine: On the Comparison of Early Christianities and the Religions of Late Antiquity*, JLCRS 14 (Chicago, 1990).

[9] For a brief survey of this development, see Basil Studer, 'Mystery', *Encyclopedia of Ancient Christianity* 2 (2014), 851-2.

[10] Jean Daniélou, *Platonisme et théologie mystique: Doctrine spirituelle de saint Grégoire de Nysse*, 2nd ed., Théologie 2 (Paris, 1953), 179-82. All citations of this work refer to the 2nd ed.

(1) *The Pauline sense*
When used in this sense, μυστήριον refers to 'the "secret" hidden in God from all eternity, and revealed in Christ, concerning the economy of the salvation of humankind'.[11] Daniélou clarifies that 'the word may also designate one or another aspect of the total "mystery"' (in a sense similar to the medieval *mysteria Christi*).[12] He also distinguishes the Pauline μυστήριον from the pagan mysteries, because the former is meant to be publicized, whereas the latter are not.

(2) *The sacramental sense*
When mystery-terminology is used in this sense, 'it is no longer a matter of "revealing a secret", but of "initiating into protected rites"'.[13] Daniélou thus claims, 'here we are no longer in the Hebraic line, but in Hellenistic vocabulary' (*i.e.*, in the cultic vocabulary of the pagan mystery religions).[14] Mystery-terminology of this kind is used by Gregory to refer to both sacraments in general and particular sacraments (*e.g.*, baptism and the eucharist).[15]

(3) *The scriptural sense*
When used in this sense, mystery-terminology refers to the 'hidden', or 'spiritual', sense of Scripture.[16] It can also refer to a particular figure or symbol from Scripture (*e.g.*, the symbol of the Sabbath).[17]

(4) *The spiritual sense*
When used in this sense, mystery-terminology relates to 'the spiritual life'.[18] According to Daniélou, 'we find ... in this sense τὰ μυστήρια (rather than the singular, which corresponds better to the preceding senses)'.[19] He notes that when Gregory uses mystery-terminology in this sense, he does so 'in relation to the highest degree of the spiritual life: Benjamin's "ecstasy", Paul's "rapture" to Paradise, [and] David's "voyage to heaven"'.[20]

[11] *Ibid.* 179.
[12] *Ibid.*
[13] *Ibid.* Daniélou addresses this sense in greater detail in 'Le mystère du culte dans les sermons de saint Grégoire de Nysse', in Anton Mayer, Johannes Quasten and Burkhard Neunheuser (eds), *Vom christlichen Mysterium: Gesammelte Arbeiten zum Gedächtnis von Odo Casel OSB* (Düsseldorf, 1951), 76-93.
[14] J. Daniélou, *Platonisme et théologie mystique* (1953), 179. He offers a more careful formulation of this point in 'Le mystère du culte' (1951), 92: 'Nous arrivons donc à cette définition du mystère du culte: c'est une imitation rituelle des événements de l'Ancien Testament et des actions historiques du Christ qui opère une participation réelle au contenu caché de ces événements et de ces actions. Cette conception du mystère du culte, qui ne doit rien dans son origine aux mystères païens, présente avec eux des analogies de forme qui ont permis à Grégoire de l'exprimer au moyen d'un vocabulaire emprunté à ces mystères'.
[15] *Id.*, *Platonisme et théologie mystique* (1953), 179-80.
[16] *Ibid.* 180.
[17] *Ibid.*
[18] *Ibid.*
[19] *Ibid.*
[20] *Ibid.* Daniélou focuses on Gregory's use of mystery-terminology to describe the mystical knowledge of Paul and Moses (180-1). Compare Franz Dünzl, *Braut und Bräutigam: Die Auslegung des Canticum durch Gregor von Nyssa*, BGBE 32 (Tübingen, 1993), 336: 'Gregors Rede von den "Mysterien" qualifiziert ... die Gegenstände seiner Theologie in besonderer Weise (nämlich als

Daniélou's fourfold account of Gregory's mystery-terminology is well known and continues to play an important role in Gregorian studies.[21]

There have, however, been other useful contributions to our understanding of this aspect of Gregory's theology. Giulio Maspero, for example, has augmented Daniélou's four senses by arguing that 'all of the indicated senses interact in a unique understanding of μυστήριον' and that 'the term μυστήριον represents a transversal and synthetic concept, which plays a fundamental role of connection and union'.[22] Maspero supports this argument by quoting a rich passage from Homily X of Gregory's *In Canticum canticorum*[23] and explaining it as follows: 'The exegetical reading of the text of the Canticle is made in the light of the Eucharist, considered as the summit of Christian mysticism in that it is full union and participation with God himself in Christ'.[24] The complex and flexible character of Gregory's mystery-terminology has been further explored by Friedhelm Mann in his article on μυστήριον in the *Lexicon Gregorianum*.[25] Mann's breakdown of Gregory's understanding of μυστήριον surpasses Daniélou's in both comprehensiveness and systematization, and it is impossible to do justice here to all of the insights that it evokes. Nevertheless, I do wish to note two especially useful aspects of Mann's article. First, he makes it possible

unergründliche Geheimnisse) und ebenso die eigene Aufgabe (als Versuch, diese Geheimnisse zu verdeutlichen). Das "mystische" Vokabular weist damit nicht auf einen Sonderbereich religiöser Erfahrung, sondern auf die "Tiefendimension" des Glaubens hin, mit der es die Theologie *ständig* zu tun hat'.

[21] See, *e.g.*, Giulio Maspero, 'Mystery = μυστήριον', in Lucas Francisco Mateo-Seco and G. Maspero (eds), *The Brill Dictionary of Gregory of Nyssa*, tr. Seth Cherney, VCSup 99 (Leiden, 2010), 511-4.

[22] G. Maspero, 'Mystery = μυστήριον' (2010), 512, 513. Daniélou himself gestures towards this point in 'Le mystère du culte' (1951), 91-2.

[23] Gregory of Nyssa, *Cant.* X (GNO VI 308,5-309,2): Ταῦτα εἰπὼν πρὸς τὴν νύμφην ὁ λόγος παρατίθεται τοῖς πλησίον τὰ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου μυστήρια λέγων Φάγετε, οἱ πλησίον μου, καὶ πίετε καὶ μεθύσθητε, ἀδελφοί μου· τῷ γὰρ ἐπισταμένῳ τὰς μυστικὰς τοῦ εὐαγγελίου φωνὰς οὐδεμία φανήσεται διαφορὰ τῶν ἐνταῦθα ῥητῶν πρὸς τὴν ἐκεῖ τοῖς μαθηταῖς γινομένην μυσταγωγίαν· ὡσαύτως γὰρ ἐκεῖ τε καὶ ἐνταῦθά φησιν ὁ λόγος τὸ Φάγετε καὶ τὸ Πίετε. ἡ δὲ πρὸς τὴν μέθην προτροπή, ἣν ἐνταῦθα τοῖς ἀδελφοῖς ὁ λόγος πεποίηται, δόξειεν ἂν τοῖς πολλοῖς πλεῖόν τι παρὰ τὸ εὐαγγέλιον ἔχειν. εἰ δέ τις ἀκριβῶς ἐξετάσειεν, καὶ τοῦτο σύμφωνον τοῖς εὐαγγελικοῖς εὑρεθήσεται· ὅπερ γὰρ ἐνταῦθα τῷ λόγῳ τοῖς φίλοις παρεκελεύσατο, τοῦτο ἐκεῖ διὰ τῶν ἔργων ἐποίησεν, διότι πᾶσα μέθη ἔκστασιν εἴωθε ποιεῖν τῆς διανοίας τοῖς κεκρατημένοις ὑπὸ τοῦ οἴνου. οὐκοῦν ὅπερ ἐνταῦθα προτρέπεται, τοῦτο διὰ τῆς θείας ἐκείνης βρώσεώς τε καὶ πόσεως καὶ τότε ἐγένετο καὶ πάντοτε γίνεται συνεισιούσης τῇ βρώσει τε καὶ τῇ πόσει τῆς ἀπὸ τῶν χειρόνων πρὸς τὰ βελτίω μεταβολῆς καὶ ἐκστάσεως.

[24] G. Maspero, 'Mystery = μυστήριον' (2010), 513. Maspero also argues that Gregory uses the term μυστήριον to refer to 'the divine immanence' (*ibid.*).

[25] Friedhelm Mann, *Lexicon Gregorianum: Wörterbuch zu den Schriften Gregors von Nyssa*, vol. 6, with the assistance of Volker Henning Drecoll (Leiden, 2007), 492-502 (*s.v.* μυστήριον). Although my remarks here focus on the article on μυστήριον, there are also useful articles on μυσταγωγέω (491), μυσταγωγία (491-2), μυσταγωγός (492), μυστηριώδης (502), μύστης (502), and μυστικός (502-5).

to see the important role that μυστήριον plays in Gregory's polemical writings (especially against Eunomius and Apolinarius). Second, Mann allows us to perceive Gregory's penchant for deriding his theological opponents with sarcastic praises regarding their mystagogical accomplishments.

In the present article, I hope to make my own small contribution to our understanding of Gregory of Nyssa's use of μυστήριον and related words. I will do so by examining a discussion that is found in *Contra Eunomium* III 9,53b-64 (GNO II 284,6-288,17), in which Gregory takes issue with Eunomius' treatment of τὸ τῆς εὐσεβείας μυστήριον in the *Apologia apologiae*. This phrase comes from 1*Tim*. 3:16, but Eunomius and Gregory both seem to use it in an extended sense in the passage under consideration. Indeed, Gregory uses the phrase frequently throughout his works, and its connection with its original scriptural context is not always apparent. Regardless, the particular application of τὸ τῆς εὐσεβείας μυστήριον in *Contra Eunomium* III 9 is of significant interest because it helps us to better understand the connective and unitive role of Gregory's mystery-terminology that Maspero has already highlighted.

Eunomius on τὸ τῆς εὐσεβείας μυστήριον

Before we turn to Gregory of Nyssa's argument regarding τὸ τῆς εὐσεβείας μυστήριον in *Contra Eunomium* III 9, we must first discuss the argument to which he is responding. Unfortunately, the latter argument must be reconstructed, because Eunomius' *Apologia apologiae* – the work from which it comes – has been lost to history. Fortunately, Gregory's treatise *Contra Eunomium* preserves a large number of quotations and paraphrases of Eunomius' work; however, we cannot accept Gregory's testimony uncritically, for it is everywhere governed by polemical ends. We must therefore supplement our interpretation through comparison with Eunomius' extant writings, as well as with Basil of Caesarea's *Adversus Eunomium* – which is a response to Eunomius' *Apologia* and provided the impetus for the *Apologia apologiae*.[26]

What, then, was Eunomius' argument regarding τὸ τῆς εὐσεβείας μυστήριον? Gregory offers us a number of pieces of evidence on which to build our reconstruction of Eunomius' argument. First, he states that Eunomius 'brings forward Valentinus and Cerinthus and Basilides and Montanus and Marcion in order to slander our dogma'.[27] The relevance of this particular collection of

[26] Eunomius' *Apol*. and *Exp. fid*. are available in Richard Paul Vaggione, ed. and tr., *Eunomius: The Extant Works*, OECT (Oxford, 1987). Vaggione also provides a summary of the *Apol. apol*. based on the evidence from Gregory of Nyssa's *Eun*. (99-127). For the text of Basil's *Eun*., see Bernard Sesboüé, tr., *Basile de Césarée: Contre Eunome; suivi de Eunome: Apologie*, ed. Georges-Matthieu de Durand and Louis Doutreleau, 2 vols., SC 299 and 305 (Paris, 1982-3).

[27] Gregory of Nyssa, *Eun*. III 9,54 (GNO II 284,13-6). All of the following translations are based on R.P. Vaggione, *Extant Works* (1987); and Stuart G. Hall, tr., 'Gregory of Nyssa,

heretics to Basil's theology is revealed by the line immediately following, in which Gregory reports Eunomius' view that 'the appellation of "Christians" does not properly belong to those who proclaim that the divine nature is unknowable (ἄγνωστον) and that the manner of begetting [*i.e.*, the begetting of the Son] is also unknowable (ἄγνωστον)'.[28] The claim that the divine φύσις (or οὐσία) is unknowable is, of course, characteristic of the theology of both Basil and his brother Gregory; and Eunomius seems to have argued that, by teaching the essential incomprehensibility of God, Basil was reviving the radical negative theology associated with the Gnostics.[29]

This opposition to viewing God's nature as incomprehensible provides crucial context for understanding the quotation from Eunomius that Gregory offers next: 'But we, being persuaded by the holy and blessed men, say that the mystery of piety (τὸ τῆς εὐσεβείας μυστήριον) is confirmed neither by the solemnity of names (τῇ σεμνότητι τῶν ὀνομάτων) nor by the particularity of customs and mystical symbols (ἐθῶν καὶ μυστικῶν συμβόλων ἰδιότητι), but by the precision of dogmas (τῇ ... τῶν δογμάτων ἀκριβείᾳ)'.[30] This is a very dense sentence, and a full understanding of its various components is probably impossible given the evidence that survives. Nevertheless, we will attempt to trace out what we can.

Let us first deal with Eunomius' use of the phrase τὸ τῆς εὐσεβείας μυστήριον. It is not immediately apparent what Eunomius means by the phrase. We do not find it anywhere in Eunomius' independently surviving works, so comparison is difficult. Eunomius does use μυστήριον and related terms elsewhere, so we know, for example, that μυστήριον can bear a sacramental meaning.[31] Perhaps the most interesting point of comparison for our purposes is found in Chapter 3 of the *Expositio fidei*, where Eunomius says that the Son 'rose again on the third day and after his resurrection recapitulated the mystery for those who were his own'.[32] Richard Vaggione has plausibly suggested that this is a reference to the baptismal command in *Matth.* 28:19, and this would certainly fit with our passage, which seems to have been written against Book II, Chapter 22 of Basil's *Adversus Eunomium*, in which the use of the names 'Father' and 'Son' in baptism is cited as proof of the special character of these names.[33] It is also possible, however, that Eunomius uses the word mystery here in a Pauline sense: that is, in reference to the eternal divine plan of salvation, which has been revealed and fulfilled through the incarnation of Jesus Christ.

Against Eunomius Book Three', in J. Leemans and M. Cassin (eds), *Contra Eunomium III* (2014), 42-233.

[28] *Ibid.* (GNO II 284,16-8).

[29] Mühlenberg has plausibly suggested that the basis for Eunomius' association of Basil with the excessive agnosticism of the Gnostics is found in Basil, *Eun.* II 22 (SC 305, 92,42-3).

[30] Gregory of Nyssa, *Eun.* III 9,54 (GNO II 284,20-5).

[31] *E.g.*, Eunomius, *Apol.* 6 (Vaggione 38,15).

[32] *Id.*, *Exp. fid.* 3 (Vaggione 156,44-5).

[33] R.P. Vaggione, *Extant Works* (1987), 156.

Regardless of the particular meaning of τὸ τῆς εὐσεβείας μυστήριον, what is certain from the passage is that Eunomius assumes the need for a human response to the mystery. This comes through especially clearly in the use of the verb κυροῦσθαι, which I have previously translated as 'confirm', but which, given its legal connotations in the ancient world, should perhaps be translated as 'ratify'.[34] And how are we, as human beings, to confirm (or ratify) 'the mystery of piety', according to Eunomius? Through dogmatic precision (ἀκρίβεια). As Vaggione puts it, 'this passage is Eunomius' attempt to apply in a more specific way the general principle that names derive their meaning from the things to which they refer, not the other way around'.[35] But what is this 'more specific way'? It seems to be the hinging of the validity of baptism on proper dogmatic belief. After all, the *form* of baptism practiced by Eunomius and his followers was no different from that of his theological opponents (or at least the words said were no different, even if the number of immersions may have been).[36] What distinguished the different baptisms, according to Eunomius, was the difference in their *dogmas* – in their understanding of what was said and done.

This, it seems, is why Eunomius states that 'the mystery of piety is confirmed [or ratified] neither by the solemnity of names nor by the particularity of customs and mystical symbols, but by the precision of dogmas'. Such an interpretation of these categories fits well with the assumed target of Eunomius' argument: Basil's *Adversus Eunomium* II 22, in which, as I have said already, the special character of the names 'Father' and 'Son' is defended on the basis of their presence in the baptismal formula. However, what Eunomius means when he speaks of 'the solemnity of names' and 'the particularity of customs and mystical symbols' may not be so straightforward. After all, Gregory, as Mühlenberg has noted, takes Eunomius to be fundamentally opposed to *both* baptism *and* the eucharist. Moreover, Gregory's own interpretation of customs and mystical symbols expands quite broadly in the course of his discussion, so that it ends up including not only liturgical customs but a significant number of ethical practices as well. We must be careful, of course, not to assume that Gregory's polemic accurately reflects the concerns of Eunomius in the *Apologia apologiae*; however, Gregory's quick association of Eunomius' argument with both baptism and the eucharist does raise the possibility that Eunomius' point in the passage under consideration was a bit broader than I have proposed. Such a possibility could also be supported by the generality with which Eunomius

[34] See *Gal*. 3:15: Ἀδελφοί, κατὰ ἄνθρωπον λέγω· ὅμως ἀνθρώπου κεκυρωμένην διαθήκην οὐδεὶς ἀθετεῖ ἢ ἐπιδιατάσσεται. Compare this, however, to the more general sense of the word in 2*Cor*. 2:8: Διὸ παρακαλῶ ὑμᾶς κυρῶσαι εἰς αὐτὸν ἀγάπην.

[35] R.P. Vaggione, *Eunomius of Cyzicus and the Nicene Revolution*, OECS (Oxford, 2000), 338

[36] See R.P. Vaggione, *Nicene Revolution* (2000), 332-4.

speaks. After all, 'customs and mystical symbols' is an admittedly elliptical manner of referring to the rite of baptism.

In the end, however, I must return to my original proposal – that is to say, that Eunomius' reference to the solemnity of names and the particularity of customs and mystical symbols was originally meant to denote the various formal elements of the rite of baptism. I thus suggest that Gregory of Nyssa has introduced the eucharist as part of his own theological argument, rather than as a reflection of Eunomius' position. My ultimate decision in favor of a purely baptismal reconstruction of Eunomius' position in the passage under consideration depends on the last piece of evidence with which Gregory provides us: 'For [Eunomius] says, canceling the law of the Lord (and the law is the tradition of divine mystagogy [νόμος γάρ ἐστιν ἡ τῆς θείας μυσταγωγίας παράδοσις]), that baptism should not be in the "Father" and the "Son" and the "Holy Spirit", as he commanded when he handed on the mystery to his disciples (τοῖς μαθηταῖς παραδιδοὺς τὸ μυστήριον), but in the "Craftsman" and the "Creator" and not only the "Father" of the Only-Begotten but also the "God"'.[37] This passage is a mixture of an apparently genuine quotation with an obviously inaccurate interpretation. Indeed, it is absurd to think that Eunomius recommended replacing the baptismal formula with the names 'Craftsman', 'Creator', 'Father', and 'God'; for all of these names refer, in Eunomius' usage, to the Unbegotten God himself. None of them – at least in this context – refer to the Son or the Holy Spirit. The only conclusion to be drawn, then, is that this quotation is not meant as an alternative baptismal formula.

So what did Eunomius actually argue in connection with these names? Although it is impossible to know for sure, I suggest that Gregory's quotation of Eunomius comes from a passage in which the latter was working out the implications of his emphasis on dogmatic precision. For, as we can see in the *Apologia*, one of the consequences of Eunomius' philosophy of language is that 'many [names] that differ according to their sound (κατὰ τὴν ἐκφώνησιν) have the same meaning (σημασίαν), like "the One Who Is" (*Exod.* 3:14) and "the only true God" (*John* 17:3)'.[38] The reason for the semantic equivalence of the many divine names is, according to Eunomius, the fact that they have one and the same referent: God himself, who is perfectly simple and without composition. In light of this line of logic, I suggest that the aforementioned names of God were most likely presented by Eunomius as part of an argument to the effect that, for one who possesses dogmatic precision, baptism in the name of the 'Father' is equivalent to baptism in the name of the 'Craftsman', or the 'Creator', or 'God'. From Eunomius' perspective, all of these names have one and the same meaning, because they all refer to one and the same God.

[37] Gregory of Nyssa, *Eun.* III 9,61 (GNO II 287,12-7).
[38] Eunomius, *Apol.* 17 (Vaggione 54,1-3).

We have thus sketched a tentative reconstruction of the argument of Eunomius to which Gregory is responding in *Contra Eunomium* III 9,53b-64 (GNO II 284,6-288,17). Eunomius seems to have begun his argument by attacking Basil for his excessive agnosticism regarding God, and then moved into a defense of the crucial role of dogmatic precision for Christian baptism. Finally, he seems to have argued that, because of the semantic equivalence of divine names, it makes no difference that the name 'Father' happens to be used in the baptismal formula for the Unbegotten God, because it cannot imply any more of an essential relation between the Unbegotten God and the Only-Begotten than any of the other divine names.

Gregory of Nyssa on τὸ τῆς εὐσεβείας μυστήριον

We are now in a position to discuss Gregory's own treatment of τὸ τῆς εὐσεβείας μυστήριον. What is most interesting about this treatment is that Gregory uses Eunomius' reference to the 'mystery of piety' as an occasion not only to refute Eunomius, but also to affirm the multifaceted character of Christian life. This, for example, is his initial response to Eunomius' position:

> But having learned from the holy voice that *unless one is born anew* [or *from above*] *through water and the Spirit, he shall not enter the kingdom of God* (see *John* 3:3, 5) and that *he who eats my flesh and drinks my blood shall live forever* (*John* 6:54), we are persuaded that the mystery of piety (τὸ τῆς εὐσεβείας μυστήριον) is confirmed [or ratified] by the confession of the divine names (τῇ ὁμολογία τῶν θείων ὀνομάτων) – that is, 'Father' and 'Son' and 'Holy Spirit' – and that salvation is obtained by fellowship in the mystical customs and symbols (τῇ τῶν μυστικῶν ἐθῶν τε καὶ συμβόλων).[39]

As was mentioned already, Gregory views Eunomius' isolation of the importance of dogmatic precision as tantamount to a rejection of both baptism and the eucharist, even though – as I have argued – Eunomius himself seems to have dealt only with baptism, as did Basil in the relevant section of his *Adversus Eunomium*.[40]

In addition, Gregory criticizes Eunomius for holding what he considers to be a Greek (*i.e.*, pagan) position. As he puts it: 'Dogmas are often diligently examined by those outside the mystery (ἔξω τοῦ μυστηρίου), and it is possible to hear many setting forth our dogma among themselves as the subject (ὑπόθεσιν) for a contest of words – some of whom hit upon the truth often but are nonetheless estranged from the faith'.[41] According to Gregory, mere ideas are

[39] Gregory of Nyssa, *Eun.* III 9,56 (GNO II 285,4-12).

[40] See also *id.*, *Eun.* III 9,54 (GNO II 284,9-12): Εὑρεθήσεται γὰρ μάταιον μὲν ἀποδεικνὺς τὸ τῆς παλιγγενεσίας μυστήριον, ἀνόνητον δὲ τὴν μυστικὴν δωροφορίαν, τήν τε μετουσίαν τούτων εἰς οὐδὲν πλέον τοῖς μετέχουσι γινομένην.

[41] *Id.*, *Eun.* III 9,56 (GNO II 285,12-7).

not enough; mere dogmas do not confirm (or ratify) the mystery of piety. For one can have a precise understanding of Christian dogma and yet remain 'outside the mystery'. Dogmatic precision must thus be combined with proper *practice*, so that one's teachings do not become a mere exercise in rhetoric ('the subject for a contest of words'). Gregory returns to this theme a bit later in the passage under consideration. He claims that Eunomius goes astray because 'to do something wicked in deed (ἔργῳ) is much more dangerous than to sin in word (ῥήματος) alone'.[42] Indeed, he argues that Eunomius' elevation of the words of doctrine over the deeds of the faith is ultimately against even doctrine itself:

> Those therefore who deny the faith in deed (ἔργῳ) and despise the customs (τὰ ἔθη) and disregard the confession of the names (τὴν τῶν ὀνομάτων ὁμολογίαν) and judge the sanctification from mystical symbols (τὸν ἐκ τῶν μυστικῶν συμβόλων ἁγιασμόν) to be nothing, but are persuaded to look towards sophistical words (τὰ σεσοφισμένα ῥήματα) and think that salvation is [found] in the technical vocabulary (τεχνολογίᾳ) of 'Begotten' and 'Unbegotten', what else are they but transgressors of the dogmas of salvation (τῶν τῆς σωτηρίας δογμάτων)?[43]

This is a radical critique of Eunomius' elevation of dogmatic precision at the expense of proper practice. According to Gregory, dogmas themselves are linked to our salvation; and as he said in the passage quoted above, 'salvation is obtained by fellowship in the mystical customs and symbols'.

Now, in marshalling the language and categories of the mystery religions to give an account of Christianity, Gregory follows in the footsteps of his brother Basil. Indeed, an especially illuminating comparison may be drawn between Basil's famous defense of unwritten customs and traditions in *De Spiritu Sancto* 27 and Gregory's defense of 'the solemnity of names' and 'the particularity of customs and mystical symbols' in the passage that we have been discussing. Of special interest, however, is the *difference* in how the brothers refer to living out the mystery of piety in these two texts. Basil, for example, offers a list of unwritten customs that goes from the sign of the cross, to turning east during prayer, to words of invocation over the eucharist, and so on. Gregory, for his part, offers a list that begins similarly, but concludes rather differently because it shifts from *liturgical* customs to *ethical* customs:

> For if the confession of the solemn and honorable names of the Holy Trinity (ἡ τῶν σεμνῶν τε καὶ τιμίων τῆς ἁγίας Τριάδος ὀνομάτων ὁμολογία) is useless, and the customs of the Church (τὰ ἔθη τῆς Ἐκκλησίας) are unprofitable, and among these customs (ἔθεσι) are sealing, prayer, baptism, confession of sins, eagerness concerning the commandments, uprightness of character, living according to temperance, looking towards the just, and not being aroused by desires nor being overcome by pleasure nor

[42] *Id*., *Eun*. III 9,60 (GNO II 286,29-30).
[43] *Ibid*. (GNO II 286,30-287,7).

letting go of virtue – if he says that no such customs (ἐθῶν) accomplish good, and that the mystical symbols are not, as we have believed, safeguards of the goods concerning the soul and defenses against those things that set upon believers in accordance with the plot of the Evil One, what else is he doing but shouting out clearly to human beings that he regards the mystery of Christians (τῶν Χριστιανῶν τὸ μυστήριον) as trash, and that he mocks the solemnity of the divine names (τῆς σεμνότητος τῶν θείων ὀνομάτων), and that he thinks that the customs of the Church (τὰ τῆς ἐκκλησίας ἔθη) are a game and that all of the things done in accordance with the mystery (τὰ κατὰ τὸ μυστήριον ἐνεργούμενα πάντα) are nonsense and folly?[44]

Gregory approaches 'the mystery of piety' very broadly here. It is confirmed by both the confession of the Trinity and the customs of the Church – and among the latter Gregory includes everything from prayer and baptism to a temperate way of life and the avoidance of passion and pleasure. In short, the mystery of piety is confirmed by the totality of Christian religion. Gregory refuses to elevate any one aspect of Christian life over the others. Instead, he assumes a fundamental coherence between the dogmatic, the liturgical, and the ethical; and he presents the human response to the mystery of piety as dependent on all three.

Gregory thus uses mystery-terminology to explain the totality of the proper human response to God – what he calls elsewhere in this passage 'Christianity':

Since therefore he disdains the solemn names (τῶν σεμνῶν ὀνομάτων), through which the power of the more divine birth (see *John* 3:3, 5) dispenses grace to those who have a claim through faith, and he disregards fellowship in the mystical symbols and customs (τὴν τῶν μυστικῶν συμβόλων τε καὶ ἐθῶν κοινωνίαν), in which Christianity (ὁ Χριστιανισμός) has its strength, let us say to those who listen to the deceit what the prophet says (with slight alteration): *How long [will you be] slow of heart? Why do you love destruction*[45] *and seek falsehood* (*Ps.* 4:3 [LXX])? How do you not see the persecutor of the faith calling those who are persuaded by him to the transgression of Christianity (τοῦ Χριστιανισμοῦ)?[46]

This is where we find the contribution of the present article to our understanding of Gregory's use of mystery-terminology. It shows that mystery-terminology allows him to address the very nature of Christianity. Indeed, just as Gregory can speak of both the single mystery that is revealed and fulfilled by God and the particular mysteries that make up this mystery, so the human response to the divine mystery can be spoken of not only in particulars (*e.g.*, in relation to baptism or the eucharist, or even the sacraments in general or the highest reaches of the spiritual life), but also as a unified whole.

[44] Gregory Nyssa, *Eun.* III 9,58 (GNO II 285,26-286,13).
[45] Gregory replaces ματαιότητα with ἀπώλειαν.
[46] Gregory of Nyssa, *Eun.* III 9,57 (GNO II 285,17-26).

The Function of Miracles in Gregory of Nyssa's Hagiographical Works

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ABSTRACT

This article discusses the role of miracle accounts in the context of the three hagiographical writings of Gregory of Nyssa. *The Life of Saint Gregory the Wonderworker*, *The Life of Saint Macrina*, and *The Life of Moses* were composed after significant moments in Gregory's life and pastoral activity (his exile, the second Ecumenical Council of Constantinople, the deaths of his siblings). The most prominent miracles of which they report are physical healings and metamorphoses, mostly events taking place during the saints' lifetime and always accompanied by visions. Throughout the narratives, these episodes have complex particularities and functions. Gregory supported the work of his brother, Basil, archbishop of Caesarea, to structure the ascetic life-style and the theological disarray which were challenging the late fourth-century Church in Cappadocia. On the one hand, Gregory's writings reflected topics which Basil had initiated and developed new arguments for Trinitarian, Christological, and Mariological theories. In addition, miracles were also a tool for transmitting the teachings of Origen, in a new and respectfully revised form. On the other hand, Macrina, the elder sister of Basil and Gregory and the nuns' leader in the monastery of Annisa, legitimized a type of asceticism which had become the model of Basil's work as monastic reformer. At the same time, these hagiographical texts founded and consolidated the cult of Gregory's celebrated relatives.

Introduction

Gregory of Nyssa, 'the founder of mystical theology' as modern scholars termed him,[1] was the youngest of the three Cappadocian Fathers. His elder brother, Basil, combined his pastoral activity as bishop of Caesarea with the endeavor to reform the flourishing monastic movement of the second half of the fourth century. He composed various writings in support for monasticism looking back to the monastery of Annisa, a familiar community where he spent a crucial period of his life. This monastery emerged on his own family's estate

[1] Jean Daniélou, *Platonisme et théologie mystique. Essai sur la doctrine spirituelle de saint Grégoire de Nysse*, Théologie 2 (Paris, 1944), 6. Anthony Meredith, *Gregory of Nyssa*, The Early Church Fathers (London, 1999), 100.

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and, by the time of Basil's death, hosted a group of nuns under the leadership of his prominent sister, Macrina ('the fourth Cappadocian'), as well as a group of monks, whose superior was Peter, his younger brother. After Basil's death in mid-September 378, Gregory of Nyssa strove to continue his brother's theological mission and agenda of monastic reformation by means of a voluminous corpus of writings belonging to various genres.

This article discusses the context in which Gregory composed his only three hagiographical texts, *The Life of Saint Gregory the Wonderworker*, *The Life of Saint Macrina*, and *The Life of Moses*, and attempts to decipher the *telos* of the miracle accounts. The most prominent wonders, healings and metamorphoses (all preceded or followed by visions), are not only *topoi* to confirm a saint's holiness and set him or her as an example worthy to be followed.

Hagiographies at the turning points in Gregory of Nyssa's life

Although it seems to be difficult to establish a certain chronology of these *vitae*, one can suppose that they were composed in connection to relevant events in Gregory's life. *The Life of Gregory Thaumaturgus* followed Gregory's exile (376-378) and the deaths of his brother, Basil of Caesarea (September 378), and of his sister, Macrina (July 19, 379).[2] Gregory the Wonderworker, who was a direct disciple of Origen and founder of the Cappadocian Church, appears as a forefather of Nyssenus' own Christian family. His paternal grandmother, Macrina the Elder, who suffered the persecutions of Decius, inherited her Christian belief from the teachings of the Wonderworker.[3] Gregory wrote another hagiography, *The Life of Macrina*[4] in the winter of 381-382, in the aftermath of the Council of Constantinople, which ended in July 381. After the Council, Gregory changed the aim of his endeavors as a bishop. He was sent to the Churches of Arabia and Jerusalem, where he struggled with the 'Antidicomarianite' heresy, according to which Mary was not ceaselessly virgin. Gregory also wrote a treatise *Against Apollinaris*, where he turned his attention

[2] *The Brill Dictionary of Gregory of Nyssa*, ed. Lucas Francisco Mateo-Seco, Giulio Maspero, Supplements to Vigiliae Christianae 99 (Leiden, 2010), 164. Scholars' opinions vary: Bernardi and the authors of the *Brill Dictionary of Gregory of Nyssa* suggest the year 380, during which he traveled much; Mitchell dates it to 17th November 379, on the feast day of the saint.

[3] *Macrina the Younger, Philosopher of God*, ed. Anna M. Silvas (Turnhout, 2008), 12,

[4] In her introduction to the new English translation of the *Life of Saint Macrina*, Anna Silvas argues for an inappropriateness of the term 'hagiography': 'If the present author were to recommend one interpretive key to the reader of *VSM* it is that it be understood as mystagogy. By this is meant an exposition of the 'mysteries' in the life in Christ as communicated in the liturgical rites, and realized above all by the virgin mystic in the liturgy of the heart'. See *ibid.* 104-5. Although I agree with her argument, I would argue that one cannot exclude Gregory's aim of presenting Macrina, ultimately, as a saint.

to Christological problems.[5] *The Life of Moses* was written in 391-392,[6] in a period when Gregory developed an intense literary and pastoral activity.

Miracles and visions as premises for Gregory's Trinitarianism and Christology

Gregory's hagiographical writings provide a variety of miracle accounts loaded with remarkable and complex functions. When reading beyond the lines, one can understand that the insertion of such miracles encompasses Gregory's efforts as a theologian, supporting at the same time his Christology and Mariology. Gregory's theories owe much to Origen's legacy. However, what did Gregory preserve from Origen in his miracle accounts and what did he revise?

In the *vita* of Gregory Thaumaturgus, the hero starts casting out demons even before his ordination as a priest.[7] According to Gregory of Nyssa, his ability to perform an impressive number of miracles, comparable with Moses', depends on his retirement from society, in search for the true philosophy.[8] His contemplative existence culminates with a visionary experience. The Virgin Mary orders John the Evangelist to appear to a young man – the Wonderworker himself – in order to teach him that she had been chosen to be the Lord's Mother (μήτηρ τοῦ Κυρίου). In Gregory of Nyssa's account, Saint John's request to preach this teaching is an occasion for the Wonderworker to confess his creed in the Holy Trinity. This *credo*, whether or not authentic,[9] reflects Gregory of Nyssa's theories, proclaimed through the mouth of Gregory Thaumaturgus. A preliminary declaration of faith in the three Persons of the Trinity is worth noticing and its significance also lies in the fact that Gregory wrote the *vita* before the Synod of Constantinople. The Trinity is defined as τριὰς τελεία ('perfect Trinity') and the creed provides remarkable room to substantiate this connotation:

> One God: Father of the living Word, who is subsistent Wisdom, power and eternal Imprint; Perfect and Begetter of One Who is perfect, Father of the only-begotten Son. One Lord, Unique from the Unique; God from God, Imprint and Image of the Godhead; active Word; Wisdom comprehending the structure of the universe, and Power which makes the entire creation; true Son of true Father; invisible [Son] of invisible

[5] Gregory of Nyssa, *The Letters*, trans. and ed. Anna Silvas, Supplements to Vigiliae Christianae 83 (Leiden, 2007), 48.

[6] *Ibid*. 55.

[7] Gregorius Nyssenus, *Sermones. Pars II. De vita Gregorii Thaumaturgi*, ed. G. Heil, GNO 10,1 (Leiden, 1990), 12.

[8] *Ibid*. 14-5.

[9] Scholars debate its authenticity, although Gregory of Nyssa testifies for the existence of a manuscript written by Thaumaturgus in the church of Neo-Caesarea. See *The Brill Dictionary of Gregory of Nyssa* (2010), 384 for a summary of the debate.

[Father], incorruptible [Son] of incorruptible [Father], immortal [Son] of immortal [Father], and eternal [Son] of eternal [Father].
One Holy Spirit: holding His existence from God, and manifested through the Son (namely to human beings); perfect image of the perfect Son; Life, which is the cause of the living; holy Spring; Holiness bestower of sanctity; in Whom is manifested God the Father, Who is over all and in all, and God the Son Who is through all.
Perfect Trinity: neither divided nor estranged in glory, eternity and sovereignty.[10]

Throughout the *vita*, Gregory the Wonderworker appears as a disciple and disseminator of Origen. A closer comparison between Origen's concept of the Trinity and Gregory's creed, however, makes it clear that the life reveals Gregory of Nyssa's own assessment of Origen's ideas. First, Origen explains that the word 'God' (θεός), associated with the Son, appears in the Gospels without article, unlike the passages in which it refers to the Father, where the Greek term is connoted by the definite article. Origen also remarks that 'the God' is a proper name of the Father, while 'God' is only an attribute of the Son.[11] In the Creed of Gregory Thaumaturgus, this difference is subtly eliminated.

The Creed states further that the Son is, like the Father, true and eternal God. He is also χαρακτὴρ καὶ εἰκὼν τῆς θεότητος ('Imprint and Image of the Godhead'), a formula which quotes fragments from several Pauline epistles (2*Cor*. 4:4, *Col*. 1:15, and *Heb*. 1:3). By trying to answer polemics of his time, Origen insists that the Son is begotten from the Father from eternity and that His incarnation is real. Indeed, he describes around one hundred attributes (*epinoiai*) of the Son. The first one is Wisdom, which can be shared by rational

[10] GNO 17-9: Εἷς Θεὸς Πατὴρ Λόγου ζῶντος, σοφίας ὑφεστώσης καὶ δυνάμεως, καὶ χαρακτῆρος ἀϊδίου, τέλειος, τελείου γεννήτωρ· Πατὴρ Υἱοῦ μονογενοῦς. Εἷς Κύριος, μόνος ἐκ μόνου, Θεὸς ἐκ Θεοῦ, χαρακτὴρ καὶ εἰκὼν τῆς θεότητος, Λόγος ἐνεργός, σοφία τῆς τῶν ὅλων συστάσεως περιεκτικὴ, καὶ δύναμις τῆς ὅλης κτίσεως ποιητική, Υἱὸς ἀληθινὸς ἀληθινοῦ Πατρός, ἀόρατος ἀοράτου, καὶ ἄφθαρτος ἀφθάρτου, καὶ ἀθάνατος ἀθανάτου, καὶ ἀΐδιος ἀϊδίου. Καὶ ἓν Πνεῦμα ἅγιον, ἐκ Θεοῦ τὴν ὕπαρξιν ἔχον· καὶ δι' Υἱοῦ πεφηνός, δηλαδὴ τοῖς ἀνθρώποις, εἰκὼν τοῦ Υἱοῦ τελείου τελεία, ζωὴ ζώντων αἰτία, πηγὴ ἁγία, ἁγιότης ἁγιασμοῦ χορηγός· ἐν ᾧ φανεροῦται Θεὸς ὁ Πατήρ, ὁ ἐπὶ πάντων καὶ ἐν πᾶσι· καὶ Θεὸς ὁ Υἱός, ὁ διὰ πάντων· Τριὰς τελεία, δόξῃ καὶ ἀϊδιότητι καὶ βασιλείᾳ μὴ μεριζομένη, μηδὲ ἀπαλλοτριουμένη. A study on the origin and structure of the Creed was made by Antonio Aranda, 'El Espíritu Santo en la "Exposición de fe" de S. Gregorio Taumaturgo', *Scripta Theologica* 10 (1978), 373-407.

[11] Origène, *Commentaire sur S. Jean (Livres I-V)*, 2, 2, vol. 1, ed. and trans. Cécile Blanc, SC 120 (Paris, 1966): Πάνυ δὲ παρατετηρημένως καὶ οὐχ ὡς ἑλληνικὴν ἀκριβολογίαν οὐκ ἐπιστάμενος ὁ Ἰωάννης ὅπου μὲν τοῖς ἄρθροις ἐχρήσατο ὅπου δὲ ταῦτα ἀπεσιώπησεν, ἐπὶ μὲν τοῦ λόγου προστιθεὶς τὸ «ὁ», ἐπὶ δὲ τῆς θεὸς προσηγορίας ὅπου μὲν τιθεὶς ὅπου δὲ ἄϊρων. Τίθησιν μὲν γὰρ τὸ ἄρθρον, ὅτε ἡ «θεὸς» ὀνομασία ἐπὶ τοῦ ἀγενήτου τάσσεται τῶν ὅλων αἰτίου, σιωπᾷ δὲ αὐτό, ὅτε ὁ λόγος «θεὸς» ὀνομάζεται. We next notice John's use of the article in these sentences. He does not write without care in this respect, nor is he unfamiliar with the niceties of the Greek tongue. In some cases he uses the article, and in some he omits it. He adds the article to the Logos, but to the name of God he adds it sometimes only. He uses the article, when the name of God refers to the uncreated cause of all things, and omits it when the Logos is named God.

creatures;[12] the second one is Logos, conceived of its double meanings of Word and Reason.[13] Gregory follows Origen, but he adopts the *epinoia* of Power in a slightly different context. In Origen, the 'Power of the Most High', the Son, is the One who overshadowed Mary in the moment of the Incarnation.[14] In Gregory, instead, the Son is the 'Power which made all the creation'.

The Holy Spirit originates *from* the Father *through* the Son and He is the one in Whom both the Father and the Son are revealed. At the same time, the Spirit is also εἰκὼν τοῦ Υἱοῦ τελείου τελεία and source of life. This characterization of the Holy Spirit is a development of the Nicene Creed, which does not broaden His attributes (Καὶ εἰς τὸ ἅγιον πνεῦμα). In contrast, the Constantinopolitan Creed states that the Holy Spirit is the source of life, adding that He proceeds from the Father and stressing that He is worshipped and glorified together with the Father and the Son. Gregory Thaumaturgus' Creed suggests the equality of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit through the symmetrical usage of the numeral εἷς / ἕν, a symmetry significantly not present in the Constantinopolitan Creed, where the numeral ἕν is missing.[15]

Gregory of Nyssa underlines the participation of all the three Persons of the Trinity in the creation in a different way than Origen does. According to Origen, the Son possesses two different roles in the process of Creation: He is the model and the agent. Gregory of Nyssa states that the Son is both pattern and image of the Divinity, and also power which made the creation. The Holy Spirit is 'image of the Son' – an attribute which does not appear in Origen –, the source of life, and the provider of sanctity. He is also the 'divine Finger', who 'carved' the tables of the Law, that is 'the flesh which contains God'.[16]

Explaining Christology and Mariology through miracles, emphasized by visions

In the *Life of Moses*, Gregory reads the episodes of Moses' visions, which prepare his miraculous metamorphoses, as allegorical exemplifications of Christ's true incarnation. In his exegesis, the metamorphosis of Moses' rod into a serpent,[17] the alteration of his right hand,[18] the manna,[19] the celestial

[12] Origène, *Traité des principes (Livres I et II)*, vol. 1, ed. and trans. Henri Crouzel, Manlio Simonetti, SC 252 (Paris, 1978), 1,2, 1; 1,210.

[13] *Ibid.* 1,2,3-4.

[14] *Id.*, *Homélies sur le Cantique des Cantiques*, ed. and trans. Dom Olivier Rousseau, SC 37 (Paris, 1953), 3.

[15] See *Bibliothek der Symbole und Glaubensregeln der Alten Kirche*, ed. August Hahn (Breslau, 1897), 160-1 for the Nicene Creed and page 162 for the Constantinopolitan Creed.

[16] Gregorius Nyssenus, *De vita Moysis*, ed. Herbert Musurillo, GNO 7.1 (Leiden, 1964), 2, 216.

[17] *Ibid.* 2, 21.

[18] *Ibid.* 2, 26-7.

[19] *Ibid.* 2, 138-9.

tabernacle,[20] and the tablets of stone[21] reveal both the mystery of the Incarnation and the divinity of Christ,[22] Who is both eternal and begotten, but without a human origin. Christ became sin for the sake of humanity, aiming to restore human nature to its original state before the original sin.[23]

Gregory's Christology is closely connected to his Mariological thought. Moses' miracles follow his first theophany, when he experiences the vision of God through the burning bush. 'From this we learn also the mystery of the Virgin: The light of divinity which through birth shone from her into human life did not consume the burning bush, even as the flower of her virginity was not withered by giving birth'.[24]

Why does Gregory of Nyssa underline that the virginity of Mary was not altered when Christ was born, even though He possessed a real human body? I would suggest that Moses' vision is Gregory's instrument for revising Origen's theories. Origen did not deny Mary's virginity before (*virginitas ante partum*) and after the birth of Christ (*virginitas post partum*). However, in response to the controversies of his era, he resisted the idea of her *virginitas in partu*. In his *Homilies to the Gospel of Luke*, Origen states that the body of Jesus is real and similar to any human body. The difference concerns only Christ's origin from the Virgin Mary and the Holy Spirit. Thus, Origen takes a side in a polemic with the Docetists, a sectarian group who, by considering matter ontologically impure and evil, attributed to Christ a matter-less body. Some theories emerged in the same debate proposed that the body of Christ was made of an astral, ethereal substance or had only a spiritual nature.[25] In addition, Marcion went further, by affirming that Christ did not really incarnate from Virgin Mary. Since He had only a divine nature, His body was exclusively apparent.[26] Origen contradicted these arguments by discussing the problem of Mary's virginity in several homilies and treatises. The *Homilies to the Gospel of Luke*, one of his mature works,[27] have been preserved in the Latin translation of Jerome, dated to 388-389. Origen explains that, after the birth of Christ, both Mary and Jesus needed to pass the rituals of purification regulated in the book of *Leviticus* because of their fleshly condition. The act of giving birth made Mary's body impure. By voluntarily taking the human body for the salvation of humankind, Christ assumed its impurity, without receiving the human sin.

[20] *Ibid*. 2, 174.
[21] *Ibid*. 2, 216-7.
[22] *Ibid*. 2, 24.
[23] *Ibid*. 2, 33.
[24] *Ibid*. 2, 21.
[25] Origène, *Homélies sur S. Luc*, 14, ed. and trans. Henri Crouzel, J. François Fournier, Pierre Périchon, SC 87 (Paris, 1962).
[26] *Ibid*. 17.
[27] See the arguments of F. Fournier in the 'Introduction', Origène, *Homélies sur S. Luc* (1962), 79.

This act proves that He had a real body, and not one made of heavenly or spiritual elements:

You must know that Jesus also was impure by His own will, because He had taken a human body for our salvation; be attentive to the prophet Zachary saying: Jesus 'was dressed with impure garments', which [verse] in fact renders against those who deny that our Lord had had a human body, but [who claim instead] that [His body] had been composed of celestial and spiritual [elements].[28]

Further, Origen directly denies Mary's *virginitas in partu*. He states that her womb was actually opened at the moment of Christ's birth, since Christ's body was real:

The verse saying 'every male who opens the womb [of his mother]' has a spiritual meaning. But you could say 'whoever male brought forth from the womb', and not 'opens the womb of his mother', just as Lord Jesus did, since it is not the birth of a child which opens the womb of every woman, but the union with a man. However, the womb of the Lord's Mother was opened at the time when her Child was brought forth, because before the birth of Christ a male did not even touch her womb, holy and worthy of being venerated with all respect.[29]

Miracles in support for monastic life – continuing the work of Basil

In the *vita* of Macrina,[30] Gregory develops a portrait which not only propels her among the saints, but also assigns to her the merit of leading an exemplary monastic community. Macrina is a disciplined ascetic, who prays regularly, keeps untouched her purity, and performs miracles. Anticipating a later development of the community in Annisa, Gregory evokes Macrina the child devoting herself daily to a regular cycle of prayers. I would imply that Gregory voluntarily places these regular prayers in Macrina's first years in order to legitimize the ascetic model of community in Annisa, already evolved at the moment of this composition. In her childhood, Macrina and her family lived in Neocaesarea, where they benefited from the teachings of Macrina the Elder,

[28] Origène, *Homélies sur S. Luc*, 14: *Autem scias Iesum quoque sordidatum propria voluntate, quia pro salute nostra humanum corpus assumpserat, Zachariam prophetam ausculta dicentem: Iesus erat indutus vestibus sordidis. Quod quidem aduersus eos facit, qui negant Dominum nostrum humanum habuisse corpus, sed de caelestibus et spiritalibus fuisse contextum.*

[29] David Hunter, *Marriage, Celibacy, and Heresy in Ancient Christianity: The Jovinianist Controversy* (Oxford, 2007), 186. Origène, *Homélies sur S. Luc*, 14, 7-8, 226. *'omne ... masculinum, quod aperit vulvam [matris]', sacratum quippiam sonat. Quemcumque enim de utero effusum marem dixeris, non sic aperit vulvam matris suae, ut Dominus Iesus, quia omnium mulierum non partus infantis, sed viri coitus vulvam reserat. Matris vero Domini eo tempore vulva reserata est, quo et partus editus, quia sanctum uterum et omni dignatione venerandum ante nativitatem Christi masculus omnino non tetigit.*

[30] Gregorius Nyssenus, *Vita S. Macrinae*, ed. V. Woods Callahan, GNO 8.1 (Leiden, 1952), 4.

remembered as a direct heir of Gregory Thaumaturgus. Thus, Gregory makes it clear to his audience that the moments of prayers, which the ascetics in Annisa were respecting in the 380s, when the *Life of Macrina* was written, went back to a long tradition. This is the tradition that the other monastic communities in Cappadocia should follow.

Gregory evokes only two miracles performed by Macrina, because, according to him, they are enough to confirm her holiness. Both happened during Macrina's lifetime, but both are revealed to Gregory after her death. The first miracle is the story of Macrina's self-healing. Touched by a malignous breast cancer and unwilling to be seen by any physician, Macrina spent the night prostrated in the church of the monastery in Annisa, weeping and anointing the mud resulted from her tears on the ill place. She then asked her mother to apply 'the seal' of the cross, thus accomplishing the miraculous healing. On the night of Macrina's death, the nun Lampadion showed to Gregory the remaining scar, which testified for the miracle.[31]

Gregory reports to his audience Macrina's second miracle, quoting a soldier whose daughter Macrina discretely cured.[32] Gregory starts the soldier's story with a strong statement: he, his wife, and his ill daughter wanted to visit Annisa, whom they perceived as τὸ τῆς ἀρετῆς φροντιστήριον. In the fourth century, the term φροντιστήριον acquired the meaning of 'place for meditation, especially monastery' (s. v. Lampe). In Aristophanes' *Clouds*, it designates (ironically) a place for meditation in Socrates' school and later writers (Philo, Flavius Philostratus, Philostratus the Great, Alciphron, and Themistius) employed it with the same meaning of 'place for meditation'. Indeed, in the Christian literature, authors such as Palladius, Gregory of Nazianzus, and Basil of Caesarea took it over when referring to monasteries.

Gregory's soldier perceives the monastery as a place 'of the philosophers', τῶν … φιλοσοφούντων. After he, his wife, and his daughter separated to the monks' and to the nuns' quarters, Peter, the monks' abbot, and Macrina, the nuns' leader, urged them to partake of their meal. Macrina insisted to welcome them 'with the treasure of philosophy', τῷ τῆς φιλοσοφίας ... πλούτῳ, and kissed the child to her eye. Then, she promised the mother a medicine suitable for eye diseases, in reward for her favor of sharing the table with the community. On their way back from Annisa, the soldier and his wife remembered that at their departure they had not taken the promised medicine. However, they realized that Macrina had miraculously and discretely cured their daughter with her prayers. The soldier interprets the miracle as no less worthy than God's healings described in the Gospels. Macrina becomes God's instrument, through which the daughter's cure is accomplished: 'My mind then took in the great miracles of the Gospel, which until then I had not believed. 'It is too great',

[31] *Ibid*. 33.
[32] *Ibid*. 40-2.

I said, 'that sight is restored to the blind by the hand of God when through faith in him his handmaid now accomplishes the same healings and has worked something not much short of those miracles?'[33]

The miracle account gives significant details about the organization of the community in Annisa. In no other part of the *vita* does Gregory describe clearer the segregation of the monks and nuns. At their arrival to the monastery, the soldier retreated to the monks' quarter, ἀνδρών, while his wife and daughter went to the nuns' quarter παρθενών, or γυναικωνῖτις. Gregory mentions several times the separation of the ascetics and of the visitors. I would suggest that he insists on this aspect in this miracle story in order to distinguish and to legitimize the type of organization practiced in Annisa. When he wrote the *vita*, Gregory had not only actively participated in the second ecumenical council of Constantinople and dealt with heresies in the Churches in Arabia and Jerusalem, but he had begun a laborious endeavor to continue the activity of theological and monastic reformer which his brother, Basil, had begun. Basil's death, few months before Macrina, left a strong imprint on Gregory. In 379 he composed a series of four treatises – *Homily Against Usurers*, *On the Making of Man*, *Apologetic Defense on the Hexaemeron*, and *Homily on the Forty Martyrs of Sebasteia* – in which he declared himself the successor of Basil's work and stressed his aim to take up some concepts initiated by Basil.

All these treatises dealt with Basil's theological purposes, but they did not approach any problem related to monastic life. The *Life of Saint Macrina* provided Gregory with the opportunity of legitimizing the type of monasticism practiced in Annisa, which stood as a model for Basil's major work: the *Asketikon*. Some of the rules included in it are a direct answer to an ascetic way of life which Basil perceived as dangerous: the one promoted by Eustathius of Sebasteia, with whom his family had had a close connection, until Basil decided to take distance from him.[34] Eustathius was a supporter of a semi-Arian trend and leader of an enthusiastic form of asceticism which Basil labeled as 'unruled'. The type of community described by Basil in the *Asketikon* shares the ascetic life practiced in Annisa under the supervision of his sister, Macrina, and his brother, Peter of Sebasteia. Basil constructed a well-ordered 'brotherhood' (ἀδελφότης) of monks and nuns who lived in *ordered* separate houses. This structure was the same as the one of Annisa, described by Gregory in the second miracle of Macrina's *vita*. In his rules, Basil demanded segregation within the 'brotherhood',[35] instead of those chaotic associations of men and women practiced by the followers of Eustathius. Gregory underlines this segregation most clearly in this miracle account, stressing three times that the soldier and his family were secluded during their entire visit to Annisa. In addition, the

[33] *Ibid*. 41.
[34] Anna M. Silvas, *The Asketikon of Saint Basil the Great* (Oxford, 2005), 51-101.
[35] *Ibid*. SR 220.

Asketikon emphasized the importance of communion in contrast to individualism, another characteristic related to the enthusiast followers of Eustathius.[36] Gregory also points out the invitations of Peter and of Macrina as heads of the monks and of the nuns, addressed to the soldier, his wife, daughter, and the nurse of the child, to partake of the table of the monks and nuns.[37]

Why does Gregory place these two accounts after the episodes of Macrina's death? I would argue that in such a way Gregory gives the final argument for Macrina's sanctity. The *vita* compares her to Thecla, presents her as a new martyr, and characterizes her as 'the great one', 'the virgin', 'the teacher', 'the mother'. Thus, the account of the two miracles are precisely the missing part in a *life of a holy man*, or better, of a *holy woman*. In such a way, Gregory's message becomes complete: Macrina deserves to be venerated as a saint.

Conclusions

The miracles reported by Gregory of Nyssa in his hagiographical writings have four major aims. First and foremost, these accounts are tools for communicating his theological doctrine. Through the *Life of Gregory Thaumaturgus*, he highlights the perfection of the Trinity, in Whom the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are equal and consubstantial. His Christology, which demonstrates that Christ, the Son of God, is eternal and the un-originated God, Who became true man for the redemption of humanity, is the kernel of his Trinitarianism. In *The Life of Gregory the Wonderworker* and in *The Life of Moses*, Gregory intrinsically intertwined Christology with Mariology. The Virgin Mary is the Lord's Mother, and, most importantly, ever-virgin, not only before and after the incarnation of Christ, but also during His supra-natural birth. It is by means of extra-ordinary episodes in the lives of charismatic saints that Gregory defines or refines theological concepts inherited from Origen. However, he transmits Origen's legacy by a thorough and, at the same time, respectful revision of his teachings.

Another aspect of Gregory's activity concerns the legitimation of his kindred saints. Through the entire *vita*, Gregory of Nyssa introduces Gregory Thaumaturgus as his saintly family's exclusive forefather, even though no biological kinship existed between them. He suggests that the Wonderworker directly transmitted his teachings to Macrina the Elder, his paternal grandmother (even though she might not have been born when Thaumaturgus proclaimed his creed), who directly instructed her grandchildren (Macrina, Basil, and Gregory

[36] *Ibid.* SR 187, LR 7.
[37] *Macrina the Younger, Philosopher of God*, 41-3.

himself). Indeed, through her outstanding lifestyle Macrina only needed two unusual miracle accounts to uphold her sanctity. In addition, her *vita* confirms perfectly her position as true philosopher, that is, leader of the authentic monastic life. The community in Annisa, destined to be the source for Basil's *Asketikon*, subtly appears as to be a valuable model for the other monastic communities in Cappadocia.

Gregory of Nyssa's Framework for the Resurrected Life in *The Life of St. Macrina*

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Abstract

In *The Life of St. Macrina* Gregory of Nyssa shows Macrina's life of asceticism to be based in a right understanding of what it is to be created human and to be motivated by an increasingly pure 'hope in the resurrection' – a hope which is tested by the death of Macrina's loved ones, strengthened by her personal and communal ascetical life and culminates in her death and funeral. Whereas Gregory tends to spiritualize his subjects, in *The Life* his stated intention is to convey for the reader the holy life which his sister Macrina lived by telling a simple narrative (ἱστορῆσαι), a programme which has often seemed contradictory to modern scholars. In view of the tension between Gregory's self-described ἱστορία and the spiritual content contained therein, this article considers the literary means which Gregory employs in his attempt to unite the historical and spiritual in his depiction of Macrina. It looks first at how he frames the story so that *The Life* is more easily seen in its eschatological context, while still remaining grounded in the moral life on earth. It then looks at how he arranges the contents of the narrative, showing the events of Macrina's life in terms of an ascent in holiness resonant with his idea of *epektasis* and providing a means for his readers to understand Macrina's earthly life in its eschatological context.

In *The Life of St. Macrina* Gregory of Nyssa shows Macrina's initial, and all subsequent, steps into asceticism, to be based in a right understanding of what it is to be created human and to be motivated by an increasingly pure 'hope in the resurrection' – a hope which is tested by the death of Macrina's loved ones, strengthened by her personal and communal ascetical life and culminates in her death and funeral. This theme of hope in the resurrection is not unusual for Gregory; it is found in different forms throughout his ascetical texts and homilies.[1] However, whereas Gregory generally tends to spiritualize his subjects, in *The Life of St. Macrina*, his stated intention is to convey for the reader the holy life which his sister Macrina lived by telling a simple narrative (ἱστορῆσαι) so that 'She who had raised herself by

[1] *On Virginity*, *Homilies on the Beatitudes*, *On the Making of Man*, *On The Soul and Resurrection*, 'On Death', 'The Easter Homilies', just to mention a few.

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philosophy to the highest summit of human virtue would not … be veiled (συγκαλυφθεῖσα) in silence'.[2]

Gregory's emphasis on the resurrection in *The Life* has at times been recognized, especially in studies considering the relationship between *The Life* and *On the Soul and Resurrection*.[3] Likewise, Macrina's role as mediator of salvation and hope has been studied in some depth by J. Warren Smith in his 2004 article 'A Just and Reasonable Grief'.[4] Gregory's anagogical approach – his tendency to spiritualize his subjects – in his theology at large, has likewise been considered by Hans Boersma in his book, *Embodiment and Virtue in Gregory of Nyssa*.[5] However, Gregory's attempt to tell a 'simple narrative' and, at the same time, to 'unveil' Macrina's holy life has often seemed contradictory to modern scholars.[6] Consequently, even while *The Life* has received substantial scholarly attention in recent years, many works have tended to focus on Macrina's gender and social standing or to point out what are perceived as Gregory's shortcomings in portraying the 'historical' Macrina.[7] In view of this oft-acknowledged tension between Gregory's self-described ἱστορία and the spiritual content contained therein, this article considers the literary means which Gregory employs in his attempt to unite the historical and spiritual in his depiction of Macrina. It looks first at how he frames the story so that *The Life* is more easily seen in its eschatological context, while still remaining grounded in the moral life on earth. It then looks at how he arranges the contents of the narrative, showing the events of Macrina's life in terms of an ascent in holiness

[2] τὰ κατ' αὐτὴν ἱστορῆσαι ἐν ἀκατασκεύῳ τε καὶ ἁπλῷ διηγήματι. Silvas, 110 Maraval 142. All translations of *The Life of St. Macrina* are taken from Anna Silvas, *Macrina the Younger* (Turnhout, 2008) except where otherwise noted. Greek passages are taken from Pierre Maraval, *Grégoire de Nysse Vie de Sainte Macrine* (Paris, 1971).

[3] See, for instance, Susan Wessel, 'Memory and Individuality in Gregory of Nyssa's Dialogus *De Anima et Resurrectione*', *JECS* 18 (2010), 369-92; Henriette Meissner, *Rhetorik und Theologie: Der Dialog Gregory von Nyssa 'De Anima et Resurrectione'* (Frankfurt, 1991), especially 37-40, J. Warren Smith, *Passion and Paradise: Human and Divine Emotion in the Thought of Gregory of Nyssa* (New York, 2004), 82-99.

[4] 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.

[5] Hans Boersma, *Embodiment and Virtue in Gregory of Nyssa: An Anagogical Approach* (Oxford, 2013).

[6] See for instance, Raymond Van Dam, *Families and Friends in late Roman Cappadocia* (Philadelphia, 2003), 102-4 and Philip Rousseau, *Basil of Caesarea* (Berkeley, 1994), 3-15. For a consideration of the more general challenge of reading Gregory of Nyssa in a holistic way, see Morwenna Ludlow, *Gregory of Nyssa, Ancient and Post-Modern* (Oxford, 2007).

[7] See Ph. Rousseau, *Basil* (1994), especially 3-11; R. Van Dam, *Families* (2003), especially 104; Francine Cardman, 'Whose life is it? *The Vita Macrinae* of Gregory of Nyssa', *SP* 37 (2001), 33-50; Elizabeth Clark, 'Holy Women, Holy Words: Early Christian Women, Social History and the Linguistic Turn', *JECS* 6 (1998), 424-6; *ead*., 'The Lady Vanishes: Dilemmas of a Feminist Historian after the Linguistic Turn', *Church History* (1998), 25-30; Virginia Burrus, 'Is Macrina a Woman? Gregory of Nyssa's Dialogue on the Soul and Resurrection', in Graham Ward (ed.), *The Blackwell Companion to Postmodern Theology* (Oxford, 2005), 249-64.

resonant with his idea of *epektasis*[8] and providing a means for his readers to understand Macrina's earthly life in its eschatological context. This article does not consider Macrina's final prayer, the miracle stories or the way in which her funeral was arranged, all of which offer rich demonstration of the points considered here but which cannot be explored in this short essay.

Unveiling the holy life

Gregory begins *The Life* by showing Macrina's exemplary life as one that is veiled (συγκαλυφθεῖσα) and in need of being unveiled for the sake of those determined to live the virtuous life. It goes on to show that due to the intensity of her attractiveness on both the physical and spiritual levels, her beauty could not but be noticed, despite attempts to hide it. At the beginning of the narrative proper Gregory depicts how suitors flocked to Macrina on account of her reputation. 'Though the girl's beauty (κάλλους) was concealed (κεκρυμμένον)' he says, 'it did not escape notice'. He notes further that painters who were capable of duplicating the beauty (κάλλους) of the heavens were not able to convey adequately Macrina's splendour. As he puts it:

> There was not in all her native country, it seems, any marvel to compare with her beauty and charm, so that not even the hands of painters could capture her radiance. No, that art which shows its versatility in many ways and attempts the greatest themes, even to crafting by imitation images of the cosmic elements themselves, was unable to imitate accurately the comeliness (εὐκληρίαν) of her form.[9]

Although Gregory begins on the worldly level, at the end of the narrative, when he depicts her death and the scene in which he prepared her body for the funeral, he exchanges his focus on Macrina's physical beauty for a higher form. The fine gown in which Gregory has clothed her is veiled by a dark cloak so that her sacred beauty might not shine 'with an alien splendour of clothing (ἐπεισάκτῳ ... κόσμῳ τὸ ἱερὸν τοῦτο κάλλος λαμπρύνοιτο)'. Even when she is covered with the cloak, however, he maintains that 'a radiance seemed to shine forth from her beauty'.[10] It is clear that this radiance does not come from the elegant gown in which she is dressed. It is the radiance which painters' hands could not capture in their portraits; that same radiance of the holy

[8] *Epektasis*, the idea that the soul is drawn ever forward and upward into God, was pointed out first by Jean Daniélou in his *Platonisme et Théologie Mystique: Doctrine spirituelle de Saint Grégoire de Nysse* (Paris, 1944) and has been central to studies of Gregory of Nyssa ever since. The idea is especially prevalent in *The Life of Moses*, *Homilies on Song of Songs* and *Homilies on the Beatitudes*, but can be found in many others of Gregory's works as well.

[9] Silvas 114, Maraval 152.

[10] Silvas 142, Maraval 246.

life which rests beneath the cloak of Gregory's 'simple narrative' and which he hopes readers might glimpse.[11]

Even so, not only in the funeral scene but throughout the narrative, Gregory is careful not to overwhelm the reader by his portrayal of Macrina or to attempt to uncover her holiness completely. Instead, he creates fluid boundaries between this life and the life to come, simultaneously showing Macrina to be grounded on earth and focused on, even participating in, heaven by means of her virtuous life.[12] Gregory describes Macrina's monastic life as angelic or, rather, 'resurrected', maintaining that 'just as souls freed by death from their bodies are freed at the same time from the cares of this life, so too was [her] life far removed from these things, divorced from all earthly vanities and attuned to the imitation of the angelic life'. He maintains further: '[Her] life was lived on the border between human and the incorporeal nature' and he maintains that the difference between her and incorporeals 'was not to [her] disadvantage'.[13] Yet Gregory's description of what her life entailed is practical and moral. Gregory writes that what conveys Macrina's holiness is her simple lifestyle which is devoid not only of superfluous material goods but also of vanity, jealousy and misplaced ambition; a lifestyle which is lived on the same level as the servants and is open to children who were abandoned on the roadside.[14] Notably it is not only in keeping her mind focussed on heaven but also in sharing her life with these people and thinking of herself as being 'on the same level with the many'[15] that Macrina is shown to be elevated above the normal human condition – to be living as humans were intended to live, and even to be participating in the resurrected life.

Gregory depicts the balance Macrina found between elevated and grounded living in his description of her on her deathbed. Gregory maintains that Macrina's calm demeanour in the face of her imminent death is 'no longer of

[11] Gregory's programmatic explication of 'beauty' in *On Virginity* suggests that his insistence on Macrina's beauty in *The Life* is not simply part of his biographical description of his sister but that it has a theological underpinning. In that text, after considering at length the dangers of being smitten with physical beauty at the expense of not striving to know spiritual beauty, Gregory insists: 'Whereas if the soul … looks up to the divine and blessed pleasures, it will never turn itself back to any of the earthly things … but it will transfer its power to love from the body to the intelligible and immaterial contemplation of the beautiful'. Translation, V. Woods Callahan, 28.

[12] Hans Boersma maintains that this is a feature of Gregory's theology at large, arguing that, for Gregory every step in virtue is an advance in one's participation in Christ, since 'virtue' is a synonym for 'Christ' and that participation in the divine life, *i.e*. virtue is equivalent to anagogical or spiritual progress. H. Boersma, *Embodiment and Virtue in Gregory of Nyssa* (2013), 4.

[13] Καθάπερ γὰρ αἱ διὰ θανάτου τῶν σωμάτων ἐκλυθεῖσαι ψυχαὶ καὶ τῶν κατὰ τὸν βίον τοῦτον μεριμνῶν συνεκλύονται, οὕτως κεχώπιστο αὐτῶν ἡ ζωὴ καὶ ἀπώκιστο πάσης βιωτικῆς ματαιότητος καὶ πρὸς μίμησιν τῆς τῶν ἀγγέλων διαγωγῆς ἐρρυθμίζετο. Silvas 121-2, Maraval 176

[14] Gregory notes that after Macrina's death, the women who had called her 'mother' and 'nurse' grieved even more than the others: 'Those were the ones whom she had rescued when they had been exposed by the roadside at the time of the famine'. Silvas 137, Maraval 232.

[15] Silvas 118, Maraval 164.

the human order … as if by some dispensation an angel had assumed a human form'.[16] He describes the scene of her death in elevated and, at times, liturgical terms, referring to Macrina as the holy one and the house where she lived as a 'sacred abode'. Her final hours are spent with her bed facing towards the east,[17] the direction of prayers, and her final words take the form of a high priestly prayer which ends with the request that God receive her soul into His hands in the same way as the Vesper thanksgiving is received: 'Blameless and undefiled as an incense offering' in God's sight.[18] Yet interspersed between these elevated descriptions, Gregory also notes Macrina's lack of strength and the presence of a doctor. This movement between elevated and common descriptions which connect the spiritual with the moral life, is one of the primary means by which Gregory attempts to span the bridge between life lived in the here and now and the life hoped for in the resurrection.

Beginnings and ends

Although Gregory is careful not to be too explicitly spiritual in his presentation of Macrina's holy life in this 'simple narrative', he attempts to guide the reader toward a deeper understanding of the text and the philosophy conveyed therein by providing several different frameworks in which the story can be read and through which different meanings can be discovered. The broadest scope in which he sets Macrina's life is that of creation and resurrection. Towards the end of *The Life* Gregory tells of the conversation which he had with Macrina on her deathbed, saying that they discussed 'the nature of what it is to be human', 'the divine economy hidden in disasters' and 'the life that is to come'.[19] This complex of themes is familiar to Gregory. In several other works he assesses the here and now in the context of the beginning and the end,[20] maintaining the necessity of knowing the goal before attempting to

[16] Silvas 132, Maraval 214.

[17] As Silvas, notes, the practice of turning towards the east 'was a gesture signifying nostalgia for a lost paradise in the east and a hope of the world that is to come'. Silvas 107.

[18] *Psalm* 140 is, as Anna Silvas refers to it, the 'Psalm par excellence' of evening prayer. See Silvas 135 footnote 103. Silvas 135, Maraval 224.

[19] ἡ δὲ τοσοῦτον ἀπέσχε τῷ ἡμετέρῳ συνταπεινωθῆναι πάθει, ὥστε ἀφορμὴν ποιησαμένη τῆς ὑψηλοτέρας φιλοσοφίας τὴν περὶ τοῦ ἁγίου μνήμην τοιούτους διεξῆθε λόγους φυσιολογοῦσά τε τὸ ἀνθρώπινον καὶ τὴν θείαν οἰκονομίαν τὴν διὰ τῶν σκυθρωπῶν κεκρυμμένην τῷ λόγῳ διακαλύπτουσα τά τε περὶ τῆς μελλούσης ζωῆς καθάπερ θεοφορουμένη τῷ ἁγίῳ πνεύματι διεζιοῦσα. Silvas 128, Maraval 198.

[20] Notably, in *On Virginity*, Gregory explicitly links the ascetical pursuit not only with the movement towards a final goal but also with a return to the original state in paradise: 'This concern, then, for the finding of what is lost is the restoration to the original state of the divine image which is now covered by the filth of the flesh. Let us become what the first being was during the first period of his existence'. Translation in Virginia Woods Callahan, *The Fathers of the Church, St. Gregory*

understand the meaning of an event or text.[21] In *The Life* he explicitly notes that he intends to write further about the first and last of these themes at a later stage, saying: 'And if my narrative were not to expand to an unconscionable length I would recount everything in order, how exalted was her discourse as she philosophized to us on the soul and explained the cause of our life in the flesh, and why man was made, and how he became mortal, and whence came death, and what is the release from death back to life again'.[22] Gregory does, in fact, go on to explore these themes in nearly all of his texts, most notably the anthropological works which are most closely associated with Macrina and her monastery, *On the Origin of Man* and *On the Soul and Resurrection*. Although there is not space in this short essay to expand on Gregory's understanding of these grand themes, it is nevertheless important to recognize that the subject matter which Gregory explores by means of his portrait of Macrina in *The Life* – what he calls here 'the divine economy which is hidden in disasters' – is rightly located between, and understood in, the context of both humankind's origin in paradise and its ultimate end in the resurrected life.

This broad framework in which Gregory sets *The Life* cannot be seen all at once. However, it is supported by smaller frameworks within the body of the text, which progressively prepare the reader to be able to read the text in this eschatological light. On the most historical and earthly level, Gregory frames Macrina's life story with accounts of her family. Both at the beginning and at the end of the narrative he speaks of the family's devotion to God and demonstrates how, through their willingness to forego earthly goods and even to undergo persecution for their faith, they understood how to maintain a proper relationship to this-worldly pleasures by 'storing up their treasures in heaven'.[23]

Ascetical Works (Washington, D.C., 1967), 45. Likewise, in *On the Soul and Resurrection*, Macrina and Gregory discuss the relationship between belief in the resurrection and the value of the virtuous life. Macrina insists on the connection between the virtuous life on the one hand and a right disposition concerning the resurrection on the other, claiming that having doubt regarding the resurrection is nothing else than alienating oneself from virtue since, in her understanding, it is 'hope which gives virtue its superiority'. *On The Soul and Resurrection*, Chapter 1. Translation mine.

[21] Although in his *Treatise on the Inscription of Psalms*, Gregory discusses only his approach to reading the text at hand, what he says is typical of his approach to reading any subject: 'First, one must understand the aim to which this writing looks. Next, one must pay attention to the progressive arrangements of the concept … under discussion … If we have a modest prior understanding of these matters, our benefit… will be remarkably greater'. Preface to Part One of Gregory of Nyssa's *Treatise on the Inscriptions of the Psalms*, Translation by Ronald Heine (Oxford, 1995).

[22] Silvas 128, Maraval 200.

[23] This is a phrase which Gregory uses to show Macrina's disposition to worldly goods. After her death, Gregory discovers that Macrina had no clothes apart from those she had on. As Macrina's fellow nuns explain: 'You have all that she stored up before you. There is her cloak, there her head covering, there the worn sandals for her feet. This is her wealth, these are her riches. There is nothing stored up in secret places apart from what you see, or put away safely in chests or bedrooms. She knew of only one place for storing up wealth, the treasure in heaven (τὸν θησαυρὸν τὸν οὐράνιον)' (*Matth*. 6:19-20). Silvas 138, Maraval 238.

This prepares the reader to understand Macrina as the inheritor of this Christian legacy and to read her life accordingly. At the end of *The Life*, Macrina and Gregory discuss their ancestors who lived with their hopes set in heaven. This time, however, they are presented not only as role models whose godly deeds of ages past are worth remembering and emulating. They are considered active assistants for the holy life which the family members on earth are attempting to live on this side of the resurrection. When Gregory complains about the troubles he is facing, Macrina chastises him for not acknowledging this assistance, saying: 'Do you not recognize the cause of such great blessings, that the prayers of your parents are lifting you on high?'[24] In saying this, Macrina not only calls her brother to remember the legacy which he has inherited, but also to consider the present relationship with his ancestors now in heaven, who, in the form of active prayer, sustain him on earth.

Another framework in which Gregory sets *The Life of St. Macrina* is that of the martyrs and virgins outside of their family. This is an intensification of the framework already considered. Gregory develops this theme by means of two visions, at the beginning and at end of *The Life* respectively. The first tells of how Macrina's mother is instructed to name the child Thecla, after the great virgin and would-be martyr who accompanied Paul.[25] At the end of *The Life*, Gregory introduces the second vision in which he himself sees the pure relics of a martyr, which turn out to be the glorified body of Macrina. In introducing the vision he says: 'I seemed to be carrying the relics of martyrs in my hands. A radiance shone out from them like that which comes from a pure mirror when it is turned to face the sun, so that my eyes were dazzled by the brilliance of the rays'.[26] This glorification of her very bones is a bold means of drawing

[24] Silvas 131, Maraval 210-2.

[25] Notably, this decision to connect Macrina with Thecla is another means of crossing boundaries between the spiritual and the historical realm. Gregory does not indicate which portrayal of Thecla he is referring to, the one presented in narrative form in *The Acts of Paul and Thecla* or the philosopher in Methodius' *Symposium*. Although several scholars have weighed in on this question, Gregory's lack of specificity is surely because to him the two portraits reveal complementary dimensions of the same person. By simply naming her 'Thecla', he offers the reader both sets of lenses through which to read and interpret the ascetical and philosophical life of his sister; one practical, one theoretical. See Patricia Wilson-Kastner, 'Macrina: Virgin and Teacher', *Andrews University Seminary Studies* (1979), 105-17 and Ruth Albrecht, *Das Leben der heiligen Makrina auf dem Hintergrund der Thekla-Tradition* (Göttingen, 1986).

[26] Silvas 126, Maraval 192. The imagery of the pure soul as a mirror is also a prominent motif in *On Virginity*. When the mind of man 'is purified through the power of the Spirit [it] becomes light-like, and it is mixed with the true and lofty purity and it glows and is filled with rays and becomes light in accordance with the promise of the Lord … We see this happen also on earth in the case of a mirror or water … for when these receive the beam of the sun, they create another beam from themselves, but this would not occur if their clean and shiny surface became dirty.' The pure soul, however, 'reflecting as the mirror does, when it submits itself to the purity of God' will be formed 'according to its participation in and reflection of the prototypal beauty'. Translation in Woods Callahan 41.

together the physical and the spiritual, which shows her to have lived up to her secret name, 'Thecla'. At the same time it sets Macrina on par with the martyrs whose hope in the resurrected life is undoubted.

A third framework which Gregory establishes for *The Life of St. Macrina* is that of Pauline theology on the resurrection, especially his emphasis on hope (ἐλπίς). Here, too, he moves from the physical realm to the spiritual. At the beginning of the narrative Gregory shows Macrina to stand in a line of women who would have preferred to live as virgins, a life which, for Gregory, is necessarily connected with the eschatological perspective.[27] As he conveys it, her grandmother had this desire, and her mother, too, was drawn to the virginal life but, being an orphan, her earthly circumstances did not permit her to pursue this course. Macrina, in her turn, is given the opportunity to live the virginal life when her earthly marriage does not prove possible. Gregory records that when Macrina's prospective fiancé dies, the 'hope' (ἐλπίς) surrounding Macrina's future with the young man is destroyed. Just as Macrina's mother accepted the reality of her circumstances – as a vulnerable woman she was in danger of being taken by force had she not consented to marriage willingly – so Macrina, too, responds to her 'reality' by refusing all further marriage proposals. As Gregory presents the scene, Macrina claims that 'it would be out of order … not to be loyal to the marriage that had been authorized once and for all for her … since by nature marriage is but only once, as there is one birth and one death'. Moreover, Macrina insists that the man had not died but that he is 'alive to God' through the 'hope (ἐλπίς) of the resurrection'.[28]

Gregory only returns to the theme of hope in a concrete way when, at the end of the text, he reveals that the bridegroom whom Macrina hopes to see is, in fact, Christ. He develops the theme carefully, explaining that, after Gregory has seen her so sick, Macrina encourages him to be of better hope (ὑπὲρ αὐτῆς ἔχειν ἐλπίδας). Although on the surface level this is certainly a reference to his attitude concerning her physical well-being, it is also, more subtly but equally certainly, an exhortation for him to maintain hope in the resurrection. It seems to have had its effect, for directly following this passage Gregory writes that Macrina, in turn as an athlete running towards the prize and as a bride running towards her bridegroom, progresses from hope to hope. As he puts it: 'She was already looking to the prize of the upward calling (*Phil*. 3:14), and all but uttering the apostle's words for herself: Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness (2*Tim*. 4:8) … for I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith (2*Tim*. 4:7)'.[29]

[27] This is the subject of Gregory's treatise *On Virginity*.

[28] Silvas 115, Maraval 156. The idea of 'hope in the resurrection' is found in many of Paul's letters, but the phrase ἐλπίδα τῆς ἀναστάσεως seems to be taken from *Acts* 23:6.

[29] ἀπὸ τοιαύτης ἡμῖν διαθέσεως κἀκείνη τὰ πρηστότερα περὶ ἑαυτῆς ἐλπίζειν ἐδίδου, ἤδη πρός, "τὸ βραβεῖον τῆς ἄνω κλήσεως…" Silvas 129, Maraval 204.

Macrina's spiritual ascent

These different frames all locate Macrina's life in a context which is based in but stretches beyond earthly life and which ultimately sets her departure from earth in the context of *Phil*. 3:14, the verse which Gregory often uses when discussing spiritual ascent.[30] The story which unfolds in between these parameters is presented in narrative form and demonstrates this ascent as Macrina comes to see more clearly 'the divine economy hidden in disaster' of which she speaks on her deathbed.

The first of these 'disasters' occurs when Macrina's brother, Naucratius, dies. In this instance, Gregory describes Macrina in language that is generally reserved for martyrs, observing that she is a true athlete who helps her mother to overcome grief. He does not say which words Macrina used to help her mother through the trial, but we can be sure that she encouraged her to be of better hope concerning the resurrection, just as she did for Gregory in both *The Life* and *On the Soul and Resurrection*. What he does convey is that Macrina herself served as the very embodiment of hope for her mother, noting that Macrina's life, 'maintained always at a high level through virtue, allowed her mother no opportunity to despond over the one who was missing, but to rejoice instead at the blessings she saw before her'.[31]

After successfully surviving this first blow, Gregory tells of Macrina's spiritual and moral advances and then also of a further trial, the death of her mother. Here, again, Gregory places heaven and earth next to one another, noting that her mother bid Macrina and her brother, Peter, to place her body in their father's tomb, and that upon fulfilling her charge they 'gave themselves to philosophy with still loftier resolve, always striving (διαμιλλώμενοι) with their own life and eclipsing their earlier achievements with others that followed'.[32] This juxtaposition between burying the dead and being raised up to greater spiritual heights is yet another subtle means by which Gregory conveys Macrina's experience of the resurrection here and now.

The final trial for Macrina is Basil's death. Gregory explicitly states that the death of their brother affected her, 'for how could she not be affected by the disaster?' Yet he notes that, as with the proving of gold in several crucibles, so too was she refined so that any impurities were purged. 'She continued' so Gregory says, 'firm, like an unconquerable athlete, not buckling at any stage before the assaults of misfortune'.[33]

This three-stage progression through which Macrina is shown to have the mindset of a martyr (*i.e*., one who lives in definite hope of the resurrection) is

[30] Gregory sites this verse in *The Life of Moses*.
[31] Silvas 120, Maraval 174.
[32] Silvas 124, Maraval 186.
[33] Silvas 125, Maraval 188-90.

not identical with but most certainly resonates with the idea of *epektasis* as Gregory later develops it in *The Life of Moses* and *Homilies on Song of Songs*. Macrina faces and overcomes various hurdles, and each victory is followed by further steps in virtue which keep leading up and up. Yet what happens in *The Life* is a very different sort of upward movement from Gregory's other texts. In *The Homilies on Song of Songs* and *The Life of Moses* there is always a progression towards some theophany and the central characters are never brought back down to earth. In *The Life of St. Macrina*, however, it is the successful confrontation of grief by means of hope in the resurrection that propels the soul forward through very earthly disasters. Still, for all their external differences, Macrina is revealed to be on a journey comparable to that of the bride in 'Song of Songs'. She, like the bride, is racing towards the heavenly bridegroom and seems, so Gregory thinks, not only to have glimpsed him but to have been united with him for a long time and with increasing intensity. His description of Macrina on her deathbed makes this plain: 'It seemed to me', says Gregory, 'that she was then making manifest to those present that divine and pure love of the unseen Bridegroom which she had nourished secretly in the inmost recesses of her soul and was proclaiming the disposition of heart by which she hastened towards him for whom she longed … For in truth, her race was towards her Beloved'.[34] He continues by noting that: 'The nearer she approached her exodus, the more clearly she discerned the beauty (τὸ κάλλος) of the Bridegroom and the more eagerly she hastened to the one for whom she longed'.[35] With this, the 'simple narrative' reaches its peak, and the higher reality of Macrina's own hidden beauty is revealed.

Conclusion

By setting Macrina's life in the framework described above, Gregory of Nyssa creates a space in which to show, through Macrina, how one can live both in hope of the resurrection and, to some extent, with the reality of the resurrection already in force. By setting *The Life of St. Macrina* on the boundary between this world and the next and literarily crossing the lines between a historical and a spiritual portrayal, Gregory attempts to create a bridge which is based in the creation of humankind, goes through earthly life with all its post-lapsarian dangers and tragedies and extends into the eschaton and the pure life which is experienced more fully in the life hereafter but which, as Macrina's life is supposed to gives witness to, can be attained in part, on this side of death.

[34] Silvas 132, Maraval 214-6.
[35] Silvas 133, Maraval 216.

Three States after Death according to Gregory of Nyssa

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Abstract

The eschatology of Gregory of Nyssa is almost automatically associated with *apokatastasis*. But there is another very interesting aspect of his teaching about man's fate after death. He distinguishes three possible states after death: 'The first state applies to the meritorious and just, the second one to those who merited neither praise nor punishment, the third one to those, who are being punished for their misdeeds'. In my article, I am trying to answer the question whether those states are temporary or eternal.

According to the common opinion *apokatastasis* understood as the salvation of all human beings[1] is Gregory of Nyssa's sole idea as regards life after death. Nothing more erroneous. Gregory recognized three states after death. He admitted that straightforwardly in his writing *On those who delay baptism*:

I think that generally without additional divisions men will experience a triple fate. The first state concerns praiseworthy and just people, the second one those who deserve neither praise nor punishment, and the third one those who are punished for their misdeeds.[2]

The most important question we should try to answer is whether those states are eternal or temporary.

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[1] The most influential studies of such a current are books by Morwenna Ludlow, *Universal Salvation. Eschatology in the Thought of Gregory of Nyssa and Karl Rahner* (Oxford, 2000) and Ilaria Ramelli, *The Christian Doctrine of Apokatastasis* (Leiden and Boston, 2013). I conceive Gregory's *apokatastasis* differently: as restoration of human nature understood as an indivisible monad to the original state. Individual human beings can exclude themselves from the nature due to their sins. As far as I know the first who suggested that way of interpreting Gregory's concept of *apokatastasis* was Jean Daniélou himself. He thought that Gregory focused on the salvation of the entire humanity understood as one reality, one being, and left the problem of individual salvation in the shade, see 'L'apocatastase chez saint Grégoire de Nysse', *Recherches de Science Religieuse* 30 (1940), 328-47, 345. I do not agree with his second statement: Gregory speaks a lot about individual fate after death and this is a subject of my present article. Actually, Giulio Maspero has presented a similar approach to mine in his book *Trinity and Man. Gregory of Nyssa's 'Ad Ablabium'*, Supplements to Vigiliae Christianae 86 (Leiden and Boston, 2007).

[2] *Adversus eos qui baptismum differunt*, GNO X/2 367.7-13.

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1. Neither saved nor punished

I will start with the most mysterious state mentioned by Gregory, *i.e*. the second one. That fate will fall on people who did neither anything wrong (or their misdeeds have been absolved by baptism) nor good. Gregory points out two groups of such people: those who died just after baptism and early deceased children. The former group was mentioned in the dialog *On the soul and the resurrection*[3] and in the writing *On those who delay baptism*.[4] The second group of people who will be neither saved nor damned was pointed out in the work *On infants' early deaths*:

> The premature deaths of infants have nothing in them to suggest the thought that one who so terminates his life is subject to some grievous misfortune, any more than they are to be put on a level with the deaths of those who have purified themselves in this life by every kind of virtue.[5]

It is easy to answer the question whether the state between salvation and damnation is going to last forever. In both cases Gregory claims that after some time of development those people will achieve union with God. Regarding people who died just after baptism Gregory only suggests a change after death by claiming that they are wrong if they think that they will get the salvation at the very moment of death:

> Even if God, full of patience and goodness, deems the lover of sin worthy of the mysteries last day, He is not such a big profit for them as they think: because they think that the kingdom will be opened for them immediately (εὐθύς).[6]

In the writing about early deceased children it is directly stated that children will become capable of receiving more because they will develop after death.

> The soul that has never felt the taste of virtue, while it may indeed remain perfectly free from the sufferings which flow from wickedness having never caught the disease of evil at all, does nevertheless in the first instance partake only so far in that life beyond (which consists, according to our previous definition, in the knowing and being in God) as this nursling can receive; until the time comes that it has thriven on the contemplation of the truly Existent as on a congenial diet, and, becoming capable of receiving more (χωρητικὴ τοῦ πλείονος γένηται), takes (μετέχουσα) at will more from that abundant supply of the truly Existent which is offered.[7]

The concept of development after death is logical and clear as it is a part and a consequence of the idea of *epektasis* – perpetual progress. There are several

[3] *De anima et resurrectione* GNO III/3 115.14-5.
[4] *Adversus eos qui baptismum differunt*, GNO X/2 367.14-6.
[5] *De infantibus praemature abreptis*, GNO III/2 96, trans. NPNF II 5, 381.
[6] *Adversus eos qui baptismum differunt*, GNO X/2 366.28-367.4.
[7] *De infantibus praemature abreptis*, GNO X/2 84.22-85.6, trans. NPNF II 5, 377.

places where Gregory directly states that that progress will continue also in eternity (ἐν πάσῃ τῇ τῶν αἰώνων ἀϊδιότητι).[8] So there is no doubt that the state *in between* is the temporary one and it inevitably leads to salvation. As Daniélou pointed out, the progress in good is the only way for a created being to take part in the divine infinity.[9]

2. Purifying fire

What about people in two other states? Do they also change? The saved develop for sure as it is the part of the *epektasis* process. What about the punished? Do they also develop towards good? There are several fragments where Gregory speaks about purifying fire.[10] The natural desire for good drags human nature towards God.[11] People contaminated with sins have to be cleansed before they unite with God. Or rather God is the fire that shines for good people and cleanses the bad who move closer to Him.[12] Purification by fire after death seems to be an alternative to the virtuous life that cleans men already during their lifetime.[13] Gregory even says that the main difference between a good life and an evil one lies in achieving happiness sooner or later.[14]

Does it really mean that ALL men will be saved due to the natural necessity and attraction of good? Gregory answers: no. He really believed in eternal damnation.[15] We do have several texts stating that purification can be ineffective. There are people for whom 'on account of the depth of the ingrained evil, the chastisement in the way of purgation will be extended into infinity (εἰς

[8] See *In Canticum canticorum* 8, GNO VI 245.22-246.8; 246.16-247.1; 370.3-11; *In inscriptiones Psalmorum* II 13, GNO V 136.25-137.1.

[9] J. Daniélou, *Platonisme et théologie mystique* (Paris, 1944), 318: 'L'epectase est la ratification même par la volonté libre de sa condition réelle, la reconnaissance de ce qu'elle est. Si c'est donc l'expression de sa nature la plus profonde, nous ne nous étonnerons pas de voir Grégoire affirmer qu'il s'agit là d'une attitude permanente qui se retrouve tout au long de la vie spirituelle et qui persistera dans la vie éternelle'.

[10] See *De anima et resurrectione* GNO III/3 73.1-5; 115.22; 122.1-8; 123.11-2; *De mortuis* GNO IX 30.17; *In diem luminum (In baptismum Christi)*, GNO IX 235.2.

[11] See *De anima et resurrectione* GNO III/3 71.11-5.

[12] See *Adversus Arium et Sabellium*, GNO III/1 84.11-26.

[13] See *De anima et resurrectione*, GNO III/3 115.19-116.2.

[14] See *De anima et resurrectione*, GNO III/3 116.5-7.

[15] See *Adversus eos qui baptismum differunt*, GNO X/2 363.14-20; *In inscriptiones Psalmorum* II 11, GNO V 121.6-12 and excerpts referred below. G. Maspero points out also the expression ἄληκτος ὀδυρμός (*Adversus eos qui castigationes aegre ferunt*, GNO X/2 328.16) – lamentation without end. He argues that the adjective ἄληκτος is considered by Gregory as the equivalent of ἀίδιος and ἀτέλεστος, which can signify nothing other than the most absolute eternity; see G. Maspero, *Trinity and Man* (2007), 90. Scholars who insist that *apokatastasis* means universal salvation say that those fragments are irrelevant 'set against the vast majority of Gregory's other writings which suggest otherwise', see M. Ludlow, *Universal Salvation* (2000), 85.

ἄπειρον)';[16] 'men who were inhuman and evil get the fire punishment that remains forever (διαιωνίζουσα)'.[17]

One text is especially interesting. Gregory claims that the sinner will desire good after death (we remember his concept of the natural attraction of good), but that desire will not be able to attract him to God. It will just make him aware of the difference between virtue and vice:

If the man inclined to the irrational gravity of passions and used the irrationals' skins as a helper for passions, anyway/in vain (ἄλλως) afterwards he will fall into desire of good after his departure out of the body, because he will get to know the difference between virtue and vice through the fact that he will not be able to partake of divinity as the purifying fire had not purged the filthy contagion mixed with the soul.[18]

The above-quoted fragment has been spread over the web as proof that Gregory believed in the purgatory, but it has been differently translated: 'When he has quitted his body and the difference between virtue and vice is known he cannot approach God till the purging fire shall have cleansed the stains with which his soul was infested'.[19]

A mistake in the translation is evident. The original text reads as follows:

εἰ δὲ πρὸς τὴν ἄλογον τῶν παθημάτων ῥοπὴν ἐπικλιθείη τῷ τῶν ἀλόγων δέρματι συνεργῷ χρησάμενος πρὸς τὰ πάθη, ἄλλως μετὰ ταῦτα βουλεύσεται πρὸς τὸ κρεῖττον μετὰ τὴν ἐκ τοῦ σώματος ἔξοδον γνοὺς τῆς ἀρετῆς τὸ πρὸς τὴν κακίαν διάφορον ἐν τῷ μὴ δύνασθαι μετασχεῖν τῆς θειότητος μὴ τοῦ καθαρσίου πυρὸς τὸν ἐμμιχθέντα τῇ ψυχῇ ῥύπον ἀποκαθάραντος.

First of all, ἄλλως can mean *anyhow* or *in vain* (Liddel & Scott), but both make sense. Second and most important, the translation of the phrase μὴ τοῦ καθαρσίου πυρὸς τὸν ἐμμιχθέντα τῇ ψυχῇ ῥύπον ἀποκαθάραντος is obviously

[16] *De infantibus praemature abreptis*, GNO III/2 87.10-2; trans. NPNF II 5, 378. That fragment makes the biggest difficulties for those who interpret *apokatastasis* as the salvation of all people. M. Ludlow, *Universal Salvation* (2000), 83 argues that εἰς ἄπειρον cannot mean 'into infinity' as the purgation must stop somewhere, given that evil is finite. That expression 'is an exaggeration intending merely to stress that the lengthiness of punishment will reflect the severity of sin', see *Universal Salvation* (2000), 85. I. Ramelli also states that 'indefinite' does not mean eternal as that kind of punishment cannot last forever, see *The Christian Doctrine of Apokatastasis* (2013), 411. But as I will show below even the purgation of human nature never stops as it happens beyond time. Besides, the Liddel & Scott Dictionary does not refer 'indefinite' as a meaning of ἄπειρος. We can ascribe such meaning to the adjective ἀόριστος, but – although those two adjectives are usually synonyms in Gregory – they are synonyms in their meaning 'infinite', *e.g.* regarding substance of God.

[17] *De beneficientia* (*De pauperibus amandis* I), GNO IX 100.2-5; the verb διαιωνίζω in Gregory never means anything temporary, just the opposite: it means eternal duration, see *In inscriptiones Psalmorum* II 16, GNO V 146.1-2 (διαιωνιζούσης τῆς μνήμης); *In Pulcheriam*, GNO IX 472.6-7 (μὴ διαιωνίζοι ἡμῖν ἡ ἐμφυεῖσα κακία); *In Canticum canticorum*, GNO VI 66.18-67.1 (εἴ σοι μέλει τοῦ διαιωνίζειν σοι τῆς εὐμορφίας τὴν χάριν).

[18] *De mortuis*, GNO IX 55.23-56.7.

[19] <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/12575a.htm> (accessed 27.10.2015).

wrong – *genetivus absolutus* never means *until*. Besides, *participium aoristi* in that syntax always means previous not consequent action. That is why I translated that part as follows 'as the purifying fire had not purged the filthy contagion mixed with the soul'; though we have to remember that *genetivus absolutus* is never unequivocal – it can be translated as well with other conjunctions such as *if*, *when*, *although*, but – as I mentioned – never *until*/*till*.

3. Time (?) of purgation

Gregory says that after the Final Judgement no change will be possible. He claims that when we talk about the eighth day it means the end of time and the beginning of eternity:

There will come, as the Apostle says, the things that are no longer tossed about, for they suffer neither change nor alteration (μεταβολὴ καὶ ἀλλοίωσις): this creation will always remain like itself in succeeding ages.[20]

So it seems obvious that after the Final Judgment no purgation is possible if no change is possible. If it is really so, why Gregory calls blessed those who get the perfect good *immediately* (εὐθύς) through the resurrection?[21] Does it mean that some people will receive it *later on*? The context of that statement is significant. Gregory used the evangelical image of the harvest, but he interpreted it in his own way. He claims that *in* the resurrection all men will rise, but sinners will be purified and will blossom *after* the harvest, which is obviously the Last Judgement. And only after they have been purged from corruption the image of God which is the entire human nature will gain its perfection.[22]

After he has pulled out every bastard and alien growth and burned it, then, the plants will be well nourished and come to fruition as the result of much care. After a long period of time (μακραῖς ποτε περιόδοις), they will assume again the form which they received from God in the beginning. Blessed are those who come immediately to a complete perfection of growth.[23]

In the next excerpt Gregory makes it clear that the purification goes beyond the resurrection:

Blessed are they, indeed, in whom the full beauty of those ears shall be developed directly they are born in the Resurrection. Yet we say this without implying that any

[20] *In sextum Psalmum*, GNO V 189.6-9; trans. C. McCambley, 'On the Sixth Psalm, Concerning the Octave', *Greek Orthodox Theological Review* 32 (1987), 39-51, 48.

[21] *De anima et resurrection*, GNO III/3 122.6-8: Μακάριοι δέ εἰσιν οἷς εὐθὺς τὸ τέλειον κάλλος τῶν ἀσταχύων συνανατελεῖ τοῖς φυομένοις διὰ τῆς ἀναστάσεως.

[22] See *De anima et resurrection*, GNO III/3 123.11-6.

[23] *De anima et resurrection*, GNO III/3 122.1-8; trans. V.W. Callahan, in Gregory of Nyssa, *Ascetical Works* (Washington, 1999), 271.

merely bodily distinctions will be manifest between those who have lived virtuously and those who have lived viciously in this life, as if we ought to think that one will be imperfect as regards his material frame, while another will win perfection as regards it. The prisoner and the free, here in this present world, are just alike as regards the constitutions of their two bodies; though as regards enjoyment and suffering the gulf is wide between them. In this way, I take it, should we reckon the difference between the good and the bad in that intervening time (ἐν τῷ μεταξὺ ταῦτα χρόνῳ). For the perfection of bodies that rise from that sowing of death is, as the Apostle tells us, to consist in incorruption and glory and honour and power; but any diminution in such excellences does not denote a corresponding bodily mutilation of him who has risen again, but a withdrawal and estrangement from each one of those things which are conceived of as belonging to the good.[24]

P. Schaff claims that in the above quoted text by *that intervening time* (ἐν τῷ μεταξὺ ταῦτα χρόνῳ) Gregory means the interval between the resurrection and ἀποκατάστασις.[25] He thinks that according to Gregory the Judgment comes *after* the resurrection and after the purifying and chastising. The latter is represented by Gregory as a necessary process of nature: but not till the Judgment will the moral value of each life be revealed.[26] But the above quoted expression *i.e.* ἐν τῷ μεταξὺ ταῦτα χρόνῳ has been corrected in GNO into ἐν τῷ μετὰ ταῦτα χρόνῳ.[27] Besides, it is important to notice that even the version of PG could mean *in the future*[28] and was translated as such by Virginia Woods Callahan (*in the time to come*),[29] Claudio Moreschini (*nel tempo futuro*),[30] Christian Bouchet (*dans le temps après*)[31] and Jean Terrieux (*dans le temps à venir après cette vie*).[32]

Schaff's concept seems to me very tempting as it could solve the problem of change after the Final Judgment. We could just say that afterwards only the progress toward good will remain and no essential alteration is possible. But Gregory claims that the resurrection is *stricte* the *apokatastasis* which is nothing else but the return to the primordial state.[33] Gregory repeatedly claims

[24] *De anima et resurrection*, GNO III/3 122.6-123.2, trans. NPNF II 5, 467.
[25] NPNF II 5, 467, footnote 1933.
[26] NPNF II 5, 461, footnote 1906.
[27] GNO III/3 122.14-5.
[28] *A Greek-English Lexicon* by Liddel & Scott (Oxford, 1996) notes that μεταξύ in late writers was used like μετά and meant *after*, *afterwards*.
[29] *Ascetical Works* (1999), 271.
[30] Gregorio di Nissa, *Opere dogmatiche* (Milano, 2014), 485.
[31] *L'âme et la résurrection* (Paris, 1998), 120.
[32] *Sur l'âme et la résurrection* (Paris, 1995), 210.
[33] *In Ecclesiasten*, GNO V 296.16-8: οὐδὲ γὰρ ἄλλο τι ἐστιν ἡ ἀνάστασις, εἰ μὴ πάντως ἡ εἰς τὸ ἀρχαῖον ἀποκατάστασις; *De anima et resurrection*, GNO III/3 112.18-9: ἀνάστασίς ἐστιν ἡ εἰς τὸ ἀρχαῖον τῆς φύσεως ἡμῶν ἀποκατάστασις; *De anima et resurrection*, GNO III/3 119.21-2: Μηδὲν ἕτερον εἶναι ἀνάστασιν, ἢ τὴν εἰς τὸ ἀρχαῖον τῆς φύσεως ἡμῶν ἀποκατάστασιν; *De opificio hominis* 17, PG 44, 188: Ἡ δὲ τῆς ἀναστάσεως χάρις οὐδὲν ἕτερον ἡμῖν ἐπαγγέλλεται, ἢ τὴν εἰς τὸ ἀρχαῖον τῶν πεπτωκότων ἀποκατάστασιν.

that the resurrection is the moment of the true and efficient restoration of human nature:

Since all the further barriers by which our sin has fenced us off from the things within the veil are in the end to be taken down, whenever the time comes that the tabernacle of our nature is as it were to be fixed up again in the Resurrection (διὰ τῆς ἀναστάσεως), and all the inveterate corruption of sin has vanished from the world, then a universal feast will be kept around the Deity by those who have decorated themselves in the Resurrection (διὰ τῆς ἀναστάσεως); and one and the same banquet will be spread for all, with no differences cutting off any rational creature from an equal participation in it.[34]

If we admitted the existence of the interval between the resurrection and the Last Judgement we would have to say that *apokatastasis* will take place *before* the Final Judgment, which is illogical. I think we have to treat the resurrection and the Last Judgement as one soteriological event. Indeed, Gregory does not separate the resurrection from the Last Judgement. They will be just two stages of one final event of human history. Gregory directly says that the definition of the resurrection *contains* the judgment:

Since the word of resurrection tells of a future judgment (ὁ τῆς ἀναστάσεως λόγος προκειμένην ἔχει τὴν κρίσιν), and they hear the sacred books explicitly saying that our life is not without an account to render, but that when we are renewed for the second life we shall all stand before the tribunal of Christ to receive under his judgment the appropriate reward for the way we have lived, because they have shameful things on their conscience which deserve many punishments, for hatred of judgment they remove also the resurrection.[35]

So, Gregory seems to contradict himself as he states on one hand that no change is possible after the resurrection and the Final Judgment, and on the other that human nature will be purified after those events. But the contradiction is only apparent. Gregory evidently connected both ideas. Even in the same text, when he states that on the eighth day there will be no alteration, he adds that *in that creation* the true purification will take place:

No other time existed except that which was determined with creation, for the nature of time is circumscribed in the week of days. When we measure time with days, beginning from the first and closing with the seventh again, we return to the first day. We always measure the totality of time through the circle of seven days until things endowed with motion pass away and the flux of the world's movement ceases. There will come, as the Apostle says, the things that are no longer tossed about, for they suffer neither change nor alteration: this creation will always remain like itself in succeeding ages (ὡσαύτως ἀεὶ πρὸς τοὺς ἐφεξῆς αἰῶνας διαμενούσης ἐκείνης τῆς κτίσεως).

[34] *De anima et resurrection*, GNO III/3 102.11-21; trans. NPNF II 5, 460; see *De anima et resurrection*, GNO III/3 115.15-8; *Oratio catechetica magna* 8, GNO III/4 29.18-22.

[35] *In sanctum Pascha*, GNO IX 264.12-22, trans. S.G. Hall, in *The Easter Sermons of Gregory of Nyssa. Translation and Commentary*, ed. Andreas Spira, Christoph Klock (Cambridge, 1981), 19.

It contains the true circumcision of human nature and true purification which will strip away this earthly life.[36]

The last sentence is crucial, but regretfully it has not been translated accurately. The original reads as follows: ἐν ᾗ (*i.e.* in that creation) γίνεται ἡ ἀληθινὴ περιτομὴ τῆς ἀνθρωπίνης φύσεως ἐν τῇ τῆς σωματικῆς ζωῆς περιαιρέσει καὶ τὸ ἀληθινὸν καθάρσιον τοῦ ἀληθινοῦ ῥύπου. The most important thing is that Gregory used here the present tense and I think it was not accidental. He is talking now about the reality that is beyond any time. That eternal state of creation is similar to God's independence from time and space, although the distinction and the difference between the Creator and the creation remains intact; that problem has been carefully analysed by Hans Boersma.[37]

It is not true that according to Gregory the creation is always connected to time (διάστημα). T. Paul Verghese[38] misunderstood Gregory's statement about the διάστημα from the *Homilies about Ecclesiastes*. He claimed that Gregory identified the entire creation with diastema, but the meaning of the sentence τὸ δὲ διάστημα οὐδὲν ἄλλο ἢ κτίσις ἐστίν[39] is completely different. The subject in Greek is always with an article and the predicative without one, so it is τὸ διάστημα that is the subject here, not κτίσις.[40] That changes the sense radically. Gregory states here that τὸ διάστημα is something created. So it does not mean – as Verghese and others wanted – that time is strictly connected to the creation.

4. Plenitude of human nature vs merits

We have to take seriously Gregory's statements that time will end with the resurrection, that is at the moment of *apokatastasis*. Indeed, Gregory connected the existence of time with the process of realization of the plenitude of human nature: in the resurrection and the Final Judgement (as I have already mentioned, they are one soteriological event) human nature will achieve its plenitude (πλήρωμα):

[36] *In sextum Psalmum*, GNO V 188.26-189.12; trans. C. McCambley (1987), 48.

[37] See *Embodiment and Virtue in Gregory of Nyssa: An Anagogical Approach* (Oxford, 2013), 44.

[38] See 'διάστημα and διάστασις in Gregory of Nyssa. Introduction to a concept and the posing of the problem', in Heinrich Dörrie, Margarete Altenburger, Uta Schramm (eds), *Gregor von Nyssa und die Philosophie: Zweites Internationales Kolloquium über Gregor von Nyssa (Freckenhorst bei Münster 18-23 September 1972)* (Leiden, 1976), 243-60, 255; that mistake has been repeated by Brooks Otis, 'Gregory of Nyssa and the Cappadocian Concept of Time', *SP* 14 (1976), 327-57, 344 n. 2 and Alden Mosshammer, 'Historical time and the Apokatastasis', *SP* 27 (1993), 70-93, 83 and rightly pointed out by H. Boersma, *Embodiment and Virtue in Gregory of Nyssa* (2013), 20 n. 6.

[39] *In Ecclesiasten*, GNO V 412.14.

[40] ἢ that stays before κτίσις is not an article as it has a smooth not rough breathing.

Now seeing that the full number of men pre-conceived by the operation of foreknowledge will come into life by means of this animal generation, God, who governs all things in a certain order and sequence, [...] therefore also foreknew the time coextensive with the creation of men (τὸν σύμμετρον τῇ ἀτασκευῇ τῶν ἀνθρώπων χρόνον προκατενόησεν), so that the extent of time should be adapted for the entrances of the pre-determined souls, and that the flux and motion of time should halt at the moment when human nature (τὸ ἀνθρώπινον) is no longer grow by means of it (δι' αὐτοῦ); and that when the generation of men is completed, time should cease together with its completion, and then should take place the restitution of all things, and with the World-Reformation human nature (τὸ ἀνθρώπινον) also should be changed from the corruptible and earthly to the impassible and eternal (ἐπὶ τὸ ἀπαθὲς καὶ ἀΐδιον).[41]

Gregory indicates here that time is necessary for human nature to achieve the number of individuals pre-conceived by God. Time will end at the moment when human nature realizes its plenitude planned by God at the very moment of its creation. If I am right and *apokatastasis* concerns human nature as an indivisible monad, it is the Last Judgment when the real plenitude of human nature will become apparent. All men who separated themselves from human nature by sins will be damned forever.

Then he again repeats the same word about those who return at evening, and who are hungry as a dog, and who go around the city in a circle showing, I think, through the repetition of the word, that men, insofar as they are now in either wickedness or in that which is better, will also be in the same afterwards. For the person who now goes about in a circle in disregard for God, and does not live in the city, nor guard the human imprint on his own life, but is changed into a beast by his choice and has become a dog, will also be punished at that time by being cast out of the city above in a famine of good things.[42]

Here we are in the central point of Gregory's anthropology. That central point is human freedom.[43] He was convinced that human free choice is the most

[41] *De opificio hominis* 22, PG 44, 205; trans. NPNF II 5, 411 with my own alterations. We find similar statement about the end of time in *In inscriptiones Psalmorum* II 5; GNO V 83.27-84.5, trans. R.E. Heine, *Treatise on the Inscriptions of the Psalms* (Oxford, 1995), 136: 'For whenever this transitory and fleeting time ceases (ὅταν γὰρ ὁ ῥοώδης οὗτος καὶ παροδικὸς παύσηται χρόνος), in which one thing comes to be and another is dissolved, and the necessity of coming to be has passed away, and that which is dissolved no longer exists, and the anticipated resurrection transforms our nature into another condition of life, and the fleeting nature of time ceases, and the activity related to generation and corruption no longer exists, the hebdomad too, which measures time, will by all means halt'.

[42] *In inscriptiones Psalmorum* II 16; GNO V 175.9-19; trans. R.E. Heine (1995), 212-3.

[43] This is the point that consists the biggest obstacle for scholars who believe that *apokatastasis* means universal salvation. If we assume that all people will be saved, there is no place for human free will. Jerome Gaith, *La conception de la liberté chez Grégoire de Nysse*, Etudes de Philosophie Médiévale 43 (Paris, 1953), 193-4 says that individual free choice is only temporary one, he stresses the fact that Gregory focused on the salvation of entire human nature understood as the ontic unity, so thanks to *apokatastasis* the freedom of this unity will be restored and

important part of God's image in human nature.[44] A human being is capable of obedience but is not forced to it by any external obligation or natural necessity (ἀνάγκῃ φύσεως).[45] Thanks to free will a human person is able to lead a virtuous life and to receive a reward for such a life. If virtue was an effect of any necessity, it could not be a merit:

For He who made man for the participation of His own peculiar good, and incorporated in him the instincts for all that was excellent, in order that his desire might be carried forward by a corresponding movement in each case to its like, would never have deprived him of that most excellent and precious of all goods; I mean the gift implied in being his own master, and having a free will. For if necessity in any way was the master of the life of man, the 'image' would have been falsified in that particular part, by being estranged owing to this unlikeness to its archetype. How can that nature which is under a yoke and bondage to any kind of necessity be called an image of a Master Being? Was it not, then, most right that that which is in every detail made like the Divine should possess in its nature a self-ruling and independent principle, such as to enable the participation of good to be the reward of its virtue?[46]

The crucial importance of human free will makes clear all places where Gregory speaks about the Final Judgement, the reward for merits and punishment for misdeeds.

For he who has made the inheritance known has also himself mentioned the octave which becomes both the boundary of the present time and the beginning of the age to come. Now the characteristic feature of the *octave* is that it no longer affords those who are in it opportunity to procure things good or bad, but one hands over instead the sheaves from whatever seeds he has sown for himself through his works. For this reason he prescribes here that the one who is exercised in the same victories effect repentance, as such zeal is idle in Hades (ὡς ἐν τῷ ᾅδῃ τῆς τοιαύτης σπουδῆς ἀπρακτούσης).[47]

The idea of development after death and passing from the state of non-salvation to salvation stands somehow in contradiction to Gregory's conviction that God will judge according to human acts: He will reward merits/good deeds and punish misdeeds. So, good acts are necessary to be saved.[48] We may ask

improved. M. Ludlow, *Universal Salvation* (2000), 94 noticed the tension between individual freedom and universal salvation, but she left the problem unsolved. G. Maspero, *Trinity and Man* (2007), 94-5 solves it with the distinction of universal salvation and universal resurrection. So, *apokatastasis* concerns the entire human nature, but the individual free will remains valid and some people will be damned forever due to their own free choice.

[44] See *De mortuis*, GNO IX 54.1-5; *De virginitate* 12, GNO VIII/1 298.10-6; *Refutatio confessionis Eunomii* 139, GNO II 372.12-8.

[45] See *Refutatio confessionis Eunomii* 139, GNO II 372.15-6.

[46] *Oratio catechetica magna* 5, GNO III/4 19.15-20.5; NPNF II 5, 479.

[47] *In inscriptiones Psalmorum* II 11, GNO V 121.3-12, trans. R.E. Heine (1995), 167-8, we find a similar statement in the writing *In sextum Psalmum* GNO V 191.20-6.

[48] It is one of the main Gregory's ideas, it is possible that we can find it in every work of him. Some examples: *Adversus eos qui baptismum differunt*, GNO X/2 370.1-7; *Contra Eunomium*

what merits have the children and people who died just after baptism, who developed after death according to the natural attraction of good and are saved due to that development. Can natural development be called a merit? Gregory answered that question himself:

> We have shown that alienation from God, Who is the Life, is an evil; the cure, then, of this infirmity is, again to be made friends with God, and so to be in life once more. When such a life, then, is always held up in hope before humanity, it cannot be said that the winning of this life is absolutely a reward of a good life, and that the contrary is a punishment (of a bad one); but what we insist on resembles the case of the eyes. We do not say that one who has clear eyesight is rewarded as with a prize by being able to perceive the objects of sight; nor on the other hand that he who has diseased eyes experiences a failure of optic activity as the result of some penal sentence. With the eye in a natural state sight follows necessarily; with it vitiated by disease failure of sight as necessarily follows. In the same way the life of blessedness is as a familiar second nature to those who have kept clear the senses of the soul; but when the blinding stream of ignorance prevents our partaking in the real light, then it necessarily follows that we miss that, the enjoyment of which we declare to be the life of the partaker.[49]

5. Progress beyond time

There still remains the question how is it possible that there will be no alteration as the creation will remain unchangeable (ὡσαύτως ἀεί), but at the same time in that creation the true circumcision and true purification occur (γίνεται) so something does change.[50] It is important to remember that Gregory distinguishes two types of alteration:

> Alteration is a kind of movement ever advancing from the present state to another; and there are two forms of this movement; the one being ever towards what is good, and in this the advance has no check, because no goal of the course to be traversed can be reached, while the other is in the direction of the contrary.[51]

It seems obvious that the second kind of change is temporary and ends together with the end of time. Gregory does not mention here the change from evil to good because in my opinion it has the same character as the second one:

> *And you have said. Be converted, sons of men.* An utterance such as this is a precept, for the command takes our nature into account and proposes the cure for our evils. For,

III 9.58, GNO II 286.1-9; *De tridui inter mortem et resurrectionem Domini nostri Iesu Christi spatio*, GNO IX 278.7-8; *De instituto christiano*, GNO VIII/1 44-5.47. J. Daniélou, 'La typologie de la semaine au IV^{e} siècle', *Recherches de Science Religieuse* 35 (1948), 382-411, 394 claims that it is an influence of the thought of Gregory of Nazianzus who – against Origen – stressed the opposition between the time of meriting and the time of compensation.

[49] *De infantibus praemature abreptis*, GNO III/2 81.7-22; trans. NPNF II 5, 376.

[50] See the above quoted excerpt *In sextum Psalmum*, GNO V 188.26-189.12.

[51] *Oratio catechetica magna* 21, GNO III/4 55.21-56.2; trans. NPNF II 5, 490.

he says, since you fell away from the good because you are changeable, submit yourselves to the good again by means of change. Return again to the same thing from which you have fallen away, since the power of freely allotting to themselves whatever they wish, whether the good or the bad lies in the power of human choice.[52]

After the resurrection the desire for good will last and grow, but in the damned it will cause only ineffective pain, while it will make the saved capable of receiving more and more – they will develop in good for ever.[53] Daniélou called that development the *progressive participation* (μετουσία).[54] That participation which is never static is the true purgation of human nature – the purgation that has no end as it happens in eternity beyond any time.[55]

[52] *In inscriptiones Psalmorum* I 7, GNO V 46.20-47.1; trans. R.E. Heine (1995), 104.

[53] See *In Canticum canticorum* 1, GNO VI 31.6-8; *De anima et resurrectione*, GNO III/3 78.11-79.3.

[54] See J. Daniélou, *Platonisme et théologie mystique* (1944), 310.

[55] H.U. von Balthasar, *Présence et Pensée. Essai sur la philosophie religieuse de Grégoire de Nysse* (Paris, 1988), 3-4 and many scholars after him distinguished two kinds of time and claimed that also the future life will be defined by some sort of distemic interval. I do agree with Ilaria Ramelli followed by H. Boersma, *Embodiment and Virtue in Gregory of Nyssa* (2013), 40-1 that Gregory believed in the eternity of future life.

An Ambiguous Type: The Figure of Aaron Interpreted by Gregory of Nyssa and Ephrem the Syrian

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Abstract

The biblical Aaron is an ambiguous figure. Brother and spokesperson of Moses, he becomes Israel's first high priest; but plays a key role in the construction of the golden calf. The fourth century exegetes Gregory of Nyssa and Ephrem the Syrian, despite writing in different languages, are both fascinated by the typological possibilities of Old Testament imagery. Their interpretations of Aaron, however, differ markedly. Gregory sees him as a type of humanity's older brother: the intellectual, incorporeal angelic nature. Angels, like brothers, can be good or bad, and Aaron encapsulates both possibilities. Gregory's only interest in Aaron's priesthood is as a rebuke to contemporary priests with luxurious lifestyles. Ephrem is most reluctant to acknowledge Aaron's shadow side. Rather than splitting him into polar opposites, Ephrem places him halfway up Mount Sinai. In *Commentary on Exodus*, he strenuously dissociates him from the people, presenting a long list of excuses for his behaviour. In the poetic imagery of his hymns, he associates Aaron with Christ: his snake-eating staff and his censor are symbols of the cross, his blossoming rod represents the virgin birth, or the final resurrection of the dead. But Aaron is more than a type: his priesthood is inherited by John the Baptist through Elizabeth, daughter of Aaron, and then passed to Jesus at his baptism. Only once does Ephrem capture Aaron's ambiguity, thereby revealing his own troubled relationship with Judaism: the tradition which passed on the atoning and death-defeating priesthood, but which Ephrem condemns as in thrall to Satan.

The biblical Aaron is an ambiguous figure. He is Moses' older brother and spokesperson,[1] Israel's first high priest. But when left in charge, together with Hur, as Moses ascends Mount Sinai,[2] he plays a key role in the construction of the golden calf: he gives instructions for the collection of jewellery, fashions the gold, builds an altar and proclaims a feast.[3] When challenged by Moses, he blames the people, saying that they were 'set on evil'.[4] He says that he

[1] *Ex.* 4:14-6; 7:1,7. Ephrem, however, seems to think that Moses is older: see *CNis.* 18.3.
[2] *Ex.* 24:14.
[3] *Ex.* 32:1-6.
[4] *Ex.* 32:22.

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threw the gold into the fire, 'and there came out this calf'.[5] Three thousand men are then put to the sword by the sons of Levi, but Aaron is spared.[6] According to Deuteronomy, this is because Moses prays for him.[7] Later, he and Miriam speak out against their brother, for which only Miriam is punished.[8] However, during the plague in the aftermath of the rebellion of Korah and company, Aaron stands in the middle of the assembly with his censer, and makes atonement for the people. He stands between the dead and the living; and the plague is stopped.[9] His status is confirmed when twelve rods, representing the twelve tribes of Israel, are placed in the tent of meeting, and only Aaron's rod, for the house of Levi, sprouts, not only producing blossoms, but bearing ripe almonds.[10] This article will examine how two fourth century Christian exegetes, Gregory of Nyssa and Ephrem the Syrian, dealt with this ambiguous type.

Gregory and Ephrem were more or less contemporaries; and lived not that far apart, although one wrote in Greek and the other in Syriac. The story of a meeting between Ephrem and Gregory's older brother, Basil of Caesarea, is thought to be apocryphal;[11] but scholars nevertheless identify similarities between Ephrem and the Cappadocians, Gregory in particular. Sebastian Brock lists a number of shared concerns, including an emphasis on the unknowability of God, maintained in the face of Arian opponents whom Gregory and Ephrem both castigate as prying and rationalising, and an interest in divine names.[12] David Taylor has even suggested considering the possibility of direct influence.[13] When it comes to exegesis, Gregory and Ephrem are both fascinated by the typological possibilities of Old Testament imagery. They scour the scriptures for hidden symbolic meanings which reveal the Christian message. In *Life of Moses*, Gregory works through relevant passages in *Exodus*, *Numbers* and *Deuteronomy*, first giving the 'historical narrative' (*historia*), and then its interpretation (*theōria*). He is seeking out 'the spiritual understanding (*dianoia*) which corresponds to the history in order to obtain suggestions of virtue'.[14]

[5] *Ex.* 32:24.
[6] *Ex.* 32:26-9.
[7] *Deut.* 9:20.
[8] *Num.* 12.
[9] *Num.* 16:41-50 (MT *Num.* 17:6-15).
[10] *Num.* 17:1-11 (MT *Num.* 17:16-26).
[11] The story is told in the Syriac *Life of Ephrem the Syrian*, chapter 25. The text and translation are in Joseph P. Amar, *The Syriac Vita Tradition of Ephrem the Syrian*, 2 vols, CSCO 629, 630 (Leuven, 2011).
[12] Sebastian Brock, *The Luminous Eye: The Spiritual World Vision of Saint Ephrem*, Cistercian Studies Series 124 (Kalamazoo, 1992), 145-8.
[13] David G.K. Tayor, 'St. Ephraim's Influence on the Greeks', *Hugoye: Journal of Syriac Studies* 1 (1998), 185-96, 195.
[14] *Vit. Moys.* 1.15; trans. Abraham J. Malherbe and Everett Ferguson, *Gregory of Nyssa: The Life of Moses*, Classics of Western Spirituality (New York, 1978), 33.

Colin Macleod suggests that allegory, as practised by Gregory, 'might be positively valued as a kind of artistic form':

> The biblical life of Moses offers a framework and a collection of symbols within it. It stands to the allegorist as a myth to a poet or dramatist...[15]

Ephrem has bequeathed to us both a commentary on *Exodus* and numerous references to Moses and Aaron scattered throughout his liturgical hymns (*madrashe*). In these hymns he works not by systematic exposition, but by creating intricate patterns of imagery. He is particularly fond of paradox. Brock contrasts his symbolic and synthetic approach to the philosophical and analytical approach of much Greek theological writing.[16] However, when Brock describes Ephrem as 'primarily interested in penetrating to the interior meaning of Scripture, a realm only explorable by means of discernment (*purshana*) and (the) inner eye of faith', the similarity with Gregory's aim is apparent.[17] Despite their very different styles, Gregory and Ephrem both assume the Old Testament to be a repository of divinely endowed symbols. As Ephrem writes,

> Wherever you turn your eyes, there is God's symbol
> whatever you read, there you will find His types.[18]

However, as we shall discover, they decipher the typology encoded in the figure of Aaron very differently.

It is only in *Life of Moses* that Gregory makes any substantial comments about Aaron.[19] The three key episodes for him are the meeting between Aaron and Moses engineered by God on Moses' return to Egypt;[20] Aaron's part in the Israelite worship of an idolatrous image;[21] and the sprouting of Aaron's rod.[22] He also mentions Aaron and Miriam railing against Moses.[23] When it comes to the 'more figurative spiritual sense',[24] Gregory suggests that Moses' elder brother, 'an ally and helper who cooperated in the signs against the Egyptians', but 'who became the Israelites' servant in making an idol',[25] can be seen both

[15] Colin W. Macleod, 'Allegory and Mysticism in Origen and Gregory of Nyssa', *Journal of Theological Studies* 22 (1971), 362-79, 376.
[16] S. Brock, *The Luminous Eye* (1992), 143.
[17] *Ibid*. 47.
[18] *Virg*. 20.12; trans. *ibid*. 42.
[19] In *On the Titles of the Psalms* 1.4 (GNO 5.37) and 2.10 (GNO 5.106) he mentions *Psalm* 99:6 (LXX 98:6), where Moses, Aaron and Samuel are commended. And in *On Virginity* 19 (GNO 8,1.322-3) he argues that Miriam cannot have been married, since she is referred to as the sister of Aaron.
[20] *Ex*. 4:14,27-8; *Vit Moys*. 1.22; 2.42-53.
[21] *Vit Moys*. 1.58; 2.202-13.
[22] *Vit Moys*. 1.70-1; 2.283-6; 2.316.
[23] *Vit Moys*. 1.62; 2.260.
[24] *Vit. Moys*. 2.43; trans. A.J. Malherbe and E. Ferguson, *The Life of Moses* (1978), 64.
[25] *Vit. Moys*. 2.209-10; trans. *ibid*. 109.

as a good brother – the angel appointed by God 'to help in the life of each person', and as a bad brother – the evil and maleficent demon through whom Satan afflicts human lives.[26] The competition for influence over the human soul between good and evil angels/spirits is a commonplace motif in both Jewish and Christian traditions;[27] but making use of the idea in a figurative interpretation of Aaron is peculiar to Gregory. It seems to be the thought of the older brother which triggers off the association: An angel 'is clearly a brother by virtue of the kinship of his intellectual nature to ours', and is 'rightly perceived as being older, since the angelic and incorporeal nature was created before our nature'.[28] It proves a neat way of coping with the extremes of Aaron's behaviour, as the 'words, "brother" and "angel", are alike applicable in the meaning they might have to opposite things'.[29] Gregory interprets the earrings of the Israelites, which Aaron commands them to remove, as the Law. He can then equate Aaron with the serpent of *Genesis* 3, 'regarded as a friend and neighbour', who advised the first mortals to disobey the divine commandment.[30] And there is more than one evil brother who needs destroying: According to *Exodus*, after pulverising the golden calf, Moses commands the Levites 'to use the sword against their brother, friend, and neighbor'.[31] For, as Gregory says,

> Not everyone is named brother or friend or neighbor in a good sense by the Scripture. It is possible for one to be both brother and foreigner, both friend and enemy, both neighbor and opponent. These we perceive as our innermost thoughts, whose life brings about our death and whose death brings about our life.[32]

When it comes to the sprouting of Aaron's rod, Gregory takes a different tack. Aaron is now a human priest, rather than an angel. Unlike Korah and company, who make it through the plague of snakes (lustful desires, according to Gregory) but then succumb to the disease of arrogance and 'thrust themselves into the honor of the priesthood',[33] Aaron has his priesthood confirmed by a divine miracle. And the nut produced by his fruiting rod symbolises the ideal priestly life:[34]

> Namely, a life self-controlled, tough and dried in appearance, but containing on the inside (hidden and invisible) what can be eaten.[35]

[26] *Vit. Moys.* 2.44; trans. *ibid.* 64.

[27] See *The Community Rule* 1QS iv 2-14; Philo, *QE* 1.23; *Barnabas* 18.1; *Shepherd of Hermas* 36: *Mand.* 6.2.1-5; Origen, *Princ.* 3.2.4, *Hom. Luc.* 12.4, 35.3; Athanasius, *Vit. Ant.* 35-6.

[28] *Vit. Moys.* 2.209; trans. A.J. Malherbe and E. Ferguson, *The Life of Moses* (1978), 109.

[29] *Vit. Moys.* 2.44; trans. *ibid.* 64.

[30] *Vit. Moys.* 2.212-3; trans. *ibid.* 109-10.

[31] *Vit. Moys.* 2.207; trans. *ibid.* 108.

[32] *Vit. Moys.* 2.208; trans. *ibid.* 108.

[33] *Vit. Moys.* 2.280; trans. *ibid.* 126.

[34] Gregory follows the LXX in referring to a generic nut (κάρυον), rather than specifically to an almond.

[35] *Vit. Moys.* 2.285; trans. A.J. Malherbe and E. Ferguson, *The Life of Moses* (1978), 127.

Gregory gives the same interpretation to the pomegranates on the hem of the priestly robe.[36] He seems to be taking a swipe at one or more contemporary priests whose lives 'are adorned with linen and purple and who fatten themselves at rich tables and who drink pure wine and anoint themselves with the best myrrh and who make use of whatever seems pleasant to those who have a taste for a life of luxury'.[37] Heine suggests that Gregory's target is Eunomius, his Arian opponent, a social upstart who disdained asceticism.[38] Aaron was not above reproach, however, and together with Miriam was, in Gregory's words, 'wounded by the passion of (envy's) evil influence'. He became like a bow, 'shooting words against (Moses) rather than darts'.[39] Moses was so well fortified with the shield of virtue that the darts were deflected. He even interceded with God for his siblings.[40] Here Heine suggests that Gregory is thinking primarily of Eunomius' attacks on the great Basil.[41] Gregory uses the same image of hurling missiles in his treatise *Against Eunomius* 1:

> That a man like that dares to call great Basil evil and wicked and lying ... The sun is not so lowly that anyone throwing stones or other things can hit it. The missiles fall back on the thrower, while the target stays up out of range.[42]

Once again we see Aaron symbolising polar opposites: the ideal priest chosen by God (contra Eunomius' inappropriate ambition and behaviour), and the envious brother (possibly representing Eunomius) attacking Moses.

In his *Commentary on Exodus*, Ephrem takes his cue from *Ex.* 32:21-4 and does everything he can to shift the blame for the golden calf incident from Aaron to the people: it is they who pressed him to make them gods.[43] Ephrem is helped by the Syriac translation of *Ex.* 32:5, which renders the Hebrew 'and Aaron saw' as 'and Aaron was afraid'.[44] He explains that Aaron was afraid of being stoned to

[36] *Vit. Moys.* 2.193.

[37] *Vit. Moys.* 2.286 ; trans. A.J. Malherbe and E. Ferguson, *The Life of Moses* (1978), 127.

[38] 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), 180-1, 185-6.

[39] *Vit. Moys.* 2.260; trans. A.J. Malherbe and E. Ferguson, *The Life of Moses* (1978), 121.

[40] *Vit. Moys.* 2.261-3.

[41] R.E. Heine, *Perfection in the Virtuous Life* (1975), 189.

[42] *Eun.* 1.74-75 (GNO 1.47-8), trans. Stuart George Hall, '"Contra Eunomium I". Introducción y traducción', in Lucas F. Mateo-Seco and Juan L. Bastero (eds), *El "Contra Eunomium I" en la producción literaria de Gregorio de Nisa. VI Coloquio Internacional sobre Gregorio de Nisa* (Pamplona, 1988), 21-135, 46.

[43] *Comm. Exod.* 32.1. Ephrem's *Commentary on Exodus* is translated in Alison Salvesen, *The Exodus Commentary of St Ephrem: A Fourth Century Syriac Commentary on the Book of Exodus*, Moran Etho 8 (Piscataway, 2011); and in Edward G. Mathews and Joseph P. Amar, *St Ephrem the Syrian: Selected Prose Works*, FC 91 (Washington, D.C., 1994), 215-65.

[44] *Comm. Exod.* 32.4, see Peshitta *Ex.* 32:5. The Hebrew 'and he saw' (וַיַּרְא) has the same consonants as 'and he was afraid' (וַיִּרָא).

death, as had already happened to Hur.[45] Not only would he die, but the people would incur blood guilt; they would make several calves, rather than just one; and might even return to Egypt. Aaron turned to the women, hoping that they might dissuade their husbands; and when that did not work, employed delaying tactics.[46] Moses was aware of the situation, since he asked: 'What did this people do to you, that you brought this great sin upon them?', rather than accusing Aaron of leading them astray.[47] Ephrem needs to mitigate Aaron's involvement, because he considers him to be one of the righteous in Israel, alongside such figures as Samuel, David, Moses and Joshua.[48] In particular, he takes Aaron's priesthood very seriously. In one hymn he contrasts Aaron's priesthood with Christ's:

> As for the anointing of Aaron my brethren, it was the vile blood of beasts, that it sprinkled in the horns of the altar. The anointing of truth is this; wherein the living and all-lifegiving Blood, is sprinkled inwardly in your bodies, is mingled in your understandings, is infused through your inmost chambers.[49]

But more often he sees it as the positive precursor to something yet more glorious. Just as Christ was in the staff of Moses and the diadem of David, so he was in the hyssops of Aaron.[50] And

> If Aaron's priesthood
> is so full of awe,
> how much more so is the Lord of priests
> who officiated with His own blood?[51]

Moreover, Christ received his priesthood in direct continuity with Aaron:

> The Most High descended on Mount Sinai
> and stretched forth his hand over Moses.
> Moses laid it on Aaron,
> and so it continued till John.[52]

[45] *Comm. Exod.* 32.2, 4. Hur disappears from the *Exodus* narrative after 24:14. The idea that he was killed whilst trying to resist the people's demand for an idol also occurs in Jewish sources, *e.g. Targum Pseudo-Jonathan* on *Ex.* 32:5; *b. Sanhedrin* 7a; *Leviticus Rabbah* 10.3.

[46] *Comm. Exod.* 32.2, 5.

[47] *Comm. Exod.* 32.8, see *Ex.* 32:21.

[48] See *Eccl.* 11:3 or *CNis.* 71.1.

[49] *Epiph.* 3.11; trans. A. Edward Johnston, in John Gwynn (ed.), NPNF[2] 13, 269. Some doubt hangs over the authorship of the *Hymns on the Epiphany*. However, Rouwhorst includes Hymn 3.1-22,29 in his list of the most ancient hymns in the collection, those he is happy to ascribe to Ephrem. See Gerard Rouwhorst, 'Le noyau le plus ancien des hymnes de la collection "Sur l'Epiphanie" et la question de leur authenticité', *Vigiliae Christianae* 66 (2012), 139-59, 158.

[50] See *Virg.* 8.4; trans. Kathleen E. McVey, *Ephrem the Syrian: Hymns*, Classics of Western Spirituality (New York, 1989), 298. For the priestly use of hyssop see *Lev.* 14:1-9, *Ps.* 51:7; and Ephrem, *HdP* 4.3-4.

[51] *HdF* 8.8; trans. Sebastian Brock, *Treasure-house of Mysteries: Explorations of the Sacred Text through Poetry in the Syriac Tradition*, Popular Patristics (Yonkers, N.Y., 2012), 113-4.

[52] *CH* 22.19; trans. Robert Murray, *Symbols of Church and Kingdom: A Study in Early Syriac Tradition* (Cambridge, 1975), 179.

In *Commentary on the Diatessaron*, Ephrem explains that 'the daughter of Aaron (*i.e.* Elizabeth) gave birth to the voice in the desert, and the daughter of king David (*i.e.* Mary) to the Word of the heavenly king'.[53] Jesus then 'received the priesthood of the house of Levi through a second birth, by the baptism of the son of Aaron'.[54] Robert Murray remarks that this doctrine of Christ's Aaronic priesthood 'contrasts strangely with ... immense pride in the fact that the Gentiles have been called *instead* of the "former People"'.[55] It does explain, however, why Ephrem is so keen to get Aaron off the hook as regards the golden calf.

In Ephrem's spiritual exegesis, as Brock makes clear, 'symbols are multi-faceted: they have no one single meaning'.[56] This is certainly true of Aaron, and of the ways in which Ephrem uses him as a type of Christ. His censer alarmed death, just as the cross would do.[57] In *Exodus* 7:8-13, Aaron's staff turns into a reptile,[58] which then swallows the staffs/reptiles of Pharaoh's sorcerers. Ephrem comments:

> Aaron anticipated Him – he who saw that if his staff swallowed reptiles,
> His cross would swallow the Reptile that swallowed Adam and Eve.[59]

Elsewhere, however, he sees the staff which suddenly acquired eyes as a symbol of the resurrection: if a staff can come to life, the body can be resurrected.[60] In *Numbers* 17, out of the twelve rods representing the twelve tribes of Israel, only Aaron's rod sprouts.[61] Ephrem gives this blossoming two different

[53] *Comm. Diat.* 1.31 (in Armenian only); trans. Carmel McCarthy, *Saint Ephrem's Commentary on Tatian's Diatessaron*, Journal of Semitic Studies Supplement 2 (Oxford, 1993), 58. Elizabeth is described as a daughter of Aaron in *Luke* 1:5. It seems that in Ephrem's translation of *Luke* 2:4, as in the Old Syriac (Sinaiticus), both Mary and Joseph were said to be of the house of David. The Old Syriac (S) can be found on the CAL website <http://cal1.cn.huc.edu/>. *Luke* 2:4 includes ܒܝܬ ܕܘܝܕ ܗܘ ܡܢ ܕܗܘ ܠܗ – 'because the two of them were from the house of David'.

[54] *Comm. Diat.* 4.3 (in Armenian only); trans. *ibid.* 85.

[55] R. Murray, *Symbols of Church and Kingdom* (1975), 180.

[56] S. Brock, *The Luminous Eye* (1992), 56.

[57] *CNis.* 39.6. The hymn is translated in A.S. Rodrigues Pereira, *Studies in Aramaic Poetry (c. 100 B.C.E. - c. 600 C.E.): Selected Jewish, Christian and Samaritan Poems*, Studia semitica neerlandica 34 (Assen, 1997), 419-25.

[58] Compare *Ex.* 4:1-4, where Moses' staff turns into a snake (נָחָשׁ, ܚܝܐ). The word used in *Ex.* 7:8-13 (תַּנִּין, ܬܢܝܢܐ) is a more general designation for a large reptile.

[59] *Nat.* 1.27; trans. K.E. McVey, *Ephrem the Syrian* (1989), 67. See also *Comm. Exod.* 7.4.

[60] *CNis.* 48:4. There is no published English translation of this hymn, but there is a French translation in Dominique Cerbelaud, *Éphrem le syrien: La descente aux enfers: Carmina Nisibena*, Spiritualité orientale 89 (Godewaersvelde, 2009), 247-50; and a German translation in Edmund Beck, CSCO 241, Scr. Syri 103, 51-4.

[61] The MT, the LXX and Gregory designate the rod/staff which turns into a serpent (*Ex.* 7:8-13) and the rod/staff which sprouts (*Num.* 17:1-11, MT *Num.* 17:16-26) by the same word (מַטֶּה, ῥάβδος). Ephrem, however, following the Peshitta, consistently distinguishes between them, using ܚܠܐ for the first (*e.g. Nat.* 1.27, *CNis.* 48:4), and ܫܒܛܐ for the second (*e.g. Nat.* 1.17, *CNis.* 48:1-3). In connection with Aaron, McVey translates both these Syriac words by 'staff' (*Nat.* 1.17, *Nat.* 1.27), although she refers to Moses' 'rod' (ܡܫܒܛܐ) in *Virg.* 8.4. (Malherbe and Ferguson translate ῥάβδος by 'rod' in *Life of Moses* 2.285, and 'staff' in 2.316.)

interpretations. In *Hymns on Nisibis*, God quietly whispers a symbol of the resurrection – of the end time, of paradise, when the bodies of the depraved will remain in ignominy, but the bodies of the saints will shine in glory.[62] In *Hymns on Virginity*, the blossoming represents the virgin birth:

> The staff of Aaron sprouted, and the dry wood brought forth;
> his symbol has been explained today – it is the virgin womb that gave birth.[63]

Ephrem is nothing like as forthright as Gregory about Aaron's shadow side. There are numerous references in his hymns to the story of the golden calf. François Cassingena-Trévedy calls it 'un motif littéraire et théologique privilégié de la polémique anti-judaïque d'Éphrem'.[64] Ephrem sees the idolatry not as a momentary lapse, but as a glimpse into the Jewish people, who 'changed from a state of purity to one of impurity':[65]

> When Moses delayed, he exposed the circumcised
> since they showed by the calf the uncircumcision of [their] heart.[66]

However, in the two hymns which Christine Shepardson identifies as his most explicit discussions of the episode, Aaron does not feature.[67] His connection with the calf is mentioned only three times in Ephrem's hymns.[68] In one of these instances, he is said to be less blameworthy than Jeroboam, who should have learnt from what happened to the first calf, and not repeated the mistake by making more.[69] The only other slightly negative references to Aaron are the contrast between the sacrificial blood of beasts and the life-giving blood of Christ, already mentioned;[70] and an allusion in the *Hymns on Virginity* to the fact that Aaron, along with Moses, was not permitted to cross the Jordan into the promised land.[71] In *Hymns on Paradise*, Ephrem places Aaron halfway up Mount Sinai, thereby acknowledging that Aaron does not reach the same heights as Moses. But he still places him above the people.[72] Only once does

[62] *CNis.* 48:1-3. The sprouting rod is also referred to in *Eccl.* 1.ult in terms of what is inside being revealed on the day of the Lord's coming.

[63] *Nat.* 1.17; trans. K.E. McVey, *Ephrem the Syrian* (1989), 65.

[64] François Cassingena-Trévedy, *Éphrem de Nisibe: Hymnes pascales*, SC 502 (Paris, 2006), 191 n. 1.

[65] Christine Shepardson, *Anti-Judaism and Christian Orthodoxy: Ephrem's Hymns in Fourth-Century Syria*, Patristic Monograph Series 20 (Washington, D.C., 2008), 82.

[66] *Virg.* 49.4; trans. K.E. McVey, *Ephrem the Syrian* (1989), 456.

[67] *Cruc.* 1, *Res.* 3. Nor is Aaron mentioned when Ephrem refers to the episode of the golden calf in the *Sermon on our Lord* 6.2-3, 17.3-19.1.

[68] *CH* 43.10-3; *CNis.* 14.5, 53.13.

[69] 1*Kings* 12:28-33; *CH* 43.10-3.

[70] *Epiph.* 3.11.

[71] *Virg.* 17.5. This was because of the incident at the waters of Meribah (see *Num.* 20:12,22-9).

[72] *HdP* 2.12; trans. Sebastian Brock, *St Ephrem the Syrian: Hymns on Paradise*, Popular Patristics (Crestwood, N.Y., 1990), 89.

Ephrem capture Aaron's ambiguity: in a dialogue between death and Satan. Satan says:

> Take Aaron, who held you back, Death, by means of the fragrant incense:
> I gave him the earrings of gold and he forged the Calf.[73]

Aaron defeats death, but not Satan.

Neither Gregory nor Ephrem see Aaron in terms of psychological complexities. He is a symbol, a type. Gregory faces up to the ambiguity in his behaviour, and exaggerates it into polar opposites: he represents either one's guardian angel or Satan's demonic helper. Aaron, for him, encapsulates the universal human dilemma: to do right or to do wrong. Gregory is not interested in him as high priest. He gives an elaborate commentary on the vestments of *Exodus* 28, but calls them priestly, rather than high priestly, garments, and never associates them with Aaron. His only interest in Aaron's priesthood is as a rebuke to those contemporary priests with whom he is in dispute. The sprouting of Aaron's rod provides a reminder that the priesthood is a divine calling, not something to be grasped at, and that it entails an ascetic lifestyle. In his final paragraphs, Gregory instructs his readers that

> ... (when) the staff of the priesthood blossoms in you, drawing no moisture at all from the earth but having its own unique power for producing fruit (that is the nut whose first taste is bitter and tough but whose inside is sweet and edible) ... then you will draw near to the goal.[74]

The dualistic framework within which Ephrem works is not so much the universal dualism of good versus evil as the Christian framework of the Gentile 'peoples' who have inherited the divine promises forfeited by the Jewish 'people'. The episode of the golden calf features heavily in the imagery of his hymns, but he almost never mentions Aaron in this connection. He keeps him among the righteous Jewish leaders, such as Samuel, David and Moses. In his *Commentary on Exodus*, where he is forced to retell the story, he strenuously dissociates Aaron from 'the people'. It is they who are evil. For Gregory, the multitude waiting at the bottom of Mount Sinai represents ordinary Christians: those members of the church who should patiently wait for their leaders to tell them what to believe.[75] 'Like a little child who escapes the attention of his pedagogue, (the people) were carried along into disorderliness by uncontrolled impulses'.[76] Although in the *historia* Gregory, like *Exodus* and Ephrem, excuses Aaron by saying that the people banded together to force him to lead them in

[73] *CNis*. 53.13; trans. Sebastian P. Brock and George A. Kiraz, *Ephrem the Syrian: Select Poems*, Eastern Christian Texts 2 (Provo, Utah, 2006), 161.

[74] *Vit. Moys*. 2.316; trans. A.J. Malherbe and E. Ferguson, *The Life of Moses* (1978), 135-6.

[75] *Vit. Moys*. 2.160.

[76] *Vit. Moys*. 1.58.

idolatry,[77] in the *theōria* he compares Aaron, in his evil avatar, to the serpent in the garden of Eden.[78] Ephrem is most reluctant to acknowledge Aaron's shadow side, which for him is Aaron's complicity with the Jewish people. In his poetic imagery, he associates him with Christ: his snake-eating staff and his censor are symbols of the cross, his blossoming rod represents the virgin birth, or the final resurrection of the dead. For Aaron is more than a type: he is the source of the priesthood inherited by Christ. By placing him halfway up Mount Sinai, Ephrem acknowledges that he does not reach Moses' greatness, but he still separates him from the people below. The only time he does capture Aaron's ambiguity, he unconsciously reveals his own troubled relationship with Judaism: the tradition which passed on the death-defeating priesthood, but which Ephrem condemns as in thrall to Satan.

[77] *Vit. Moys.* 1.58.
[78] *Vit. Moys.* 2.212-3.

The Place of the Eucharist in Gregory of Nyssa's Soteriology

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Abstract

Gregory's only systematic discussion of the eucharist is in his *Oratio catechetica*. It clearly reflects the idea of the solidarity between Christ's humanity, in particular his body, and ours which lies at the core of Gregory's soteriology. Our bodies need an antidote to the poison received in Eden, which only the body of Christ can provide. The unconsecrated elements are already 'in some way' the body of Christ, because bread and wine are necessary for the formation of human bodies, including Christ's. What happens at the consecration is that they are 'transelemented' by 'the word of God and prayer'. This is not a *transformation* of the bread and the wine *into* the body and blood of Christ, as in later Roman Catholic doctrine. It is rather a *divinization* of the flesh and blood of Christ which the bread and wine 'in some way' *already are*; as Antony Meredith has pointed out, the eucharist mirrors the incarnation as much as it does Jesus' last supper. The divinized body of Christ is then absorbed into the communicants' solid flesh (the bread) and blood (the wine) through ordinary physiological processes. By conferring incorruptibility on the body, Christ's and then our own, the eucharist looks forward to the body's ultimate resurrection and divinization. As Rowan Williams has pointed out, Gregory is here making 'a very important affirmation [...] about the Christian destiny of the body, an implicitly strong valuation of the life of the flesh'.

In an earlier article, I wrote:

When Gregory of Nyssa writes about soteriology, 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 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.[1]

I tried to show in my earlier article that in developing this so-called 'physical' soteriological model – I prefer to call it 'solidarist' – Gregory made use not only

[1] Robin Orton, '"Physical" Soteriology in Gregory of Nyssa: A Response to Reinhard M. Hübner', *SP* 67 (2013), 69-75, 69-70.

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of the notion of an organic unity of humankind, but also that of δύναμις or potentiality, equivalent to the working out of a seminal principle (ἀρχή)[2] by a process of development (ἀκολουθία) to its end or perfection (πέρας).[3] The ἀρχή of the defeat of death is the body of Christ which shares its nature with ours. Christ's humanity is the *point of contact* between that divine δύναμις which brought about the resurrection and our humanity; our common humanity is then the medium through which that power is transmitted to us as Christ's fellow human beings.

In this article I examine Gregory's only systematic discussion of the eucharist, in the *Oratio catechetica*, and suggest that it too reflects the idea of the saving solidarity between Christ's humanity, in particular his body, and ours. I have not sought to place that idea in the context of any more general assessment of Gregory's wider sacramental theology.

Gregory surprises the modern reader at the outset of his account by suggesting, in a very dualistic fashion, that it is in fact only the body which needs the eucharist, not the soul; the latter, he says, can be saved by faith alone. Our twofold nature, body and soul, means that

> it is through both that those who are being saved should follow him who is leading them to life. The soul, being blended with him by faith, derives the means of its salvation from that faith, for the union with life involves fellowship with life. But it is in a different way that the body gets participation and blending with him who saves it.[4]

What our body needs, Gregory explains, is an antidote to the poison received in Eden. That appears to have been a wholly material poison, needing a material remedy. So it is the body of Christ that provides the antidote; it translates and transmutes our whole body into itself, to make it immortal and incorruptible. As the poison was directed into human innards, so the antidote needs to be as well.

[2] Equivalent to the λόγος σπερματικός of Stoic cosmology.

[3] Reinhold M. Hübner, *Die Einheit des Leibes Christi bei Gregor von Nyssa: Untersuchungen zum Ursprung des 'physischen' Erlösungslehre* (Leiden, 1974), 53, 157-58 suggests that Gregory may have taken over the Aristotelian use of δύναμις to mean 'potentiality' from the pseudo-Athanasian *De incarnatione et contra Arianos*; for a recent summary of the arguments about its possible authorship, see Andrew Radde-Galwitz, '*Contra Eunomium* III 3', in Johan Leemans and Matthieu Cassin (eds), *Gregory of Nyssa* Contra Eunomium *III: An English Translation with Commentary and Supporting Studies, Proceedings of the 12th International Colloquium on Gregory of Nyssa (Leuven, 14-17 September 2010)*, Supplements to Vigiliae Christianae 124 (Leiden, 2014), 293-312, 298 n. 18. Hübner suggests however that Gregory was the first Christian theologian to apply it in a Stoic way to the concept of organic growth from ἀρχή to πέρας.

[4] *Oratio catechetica* (henceforth *or cat*) 93, 93A. References in this paper to *or cat* give the page number in Gregory of Nyssa, *Oratio catechetica*, ed. E. Mühlenburg, Gregorii Nyssenis Opera (henceforth GNO) III.IV (Leiden, 1996), followed by the column number in PG 45. References to other works by Gregory are given in the same format – GNO volume and page number followed by PG volume and column number.

For this view of how the body and the soul are saved, see also Gregory of Nyssa, *Antirrheticus adversus Apolinarium*, GNO III.I (Leiden, 1958), 226; PG 45, 1257D.

But the only access to our innards is through eating and drinking – hence the need for the eucharistic meal.[5] Here is solidarity between our body and that of Christ, expressed in the most graphic terms. As Rowan Williams says,

> The Eucharist is [for Gregory] […] a bodily medicine in a fairly straightforward sense. Crude as this may seem to some modern taste, there is a very important affirmation here about the Christian destiny of the body, an implicitly strong valuation of the life of the flesh […][6]

Gregory goes on to explain in a bit more technical detail how he envisages the prayer of the eucharist causing the bread and wine actually to become the body of Christ, a process which he calls 'transelementing'.[7]

He starts from the assumption that bread is already in some way (τρόπον τινά) or potentially (τῇ δυνάμει) body. This is because bread and wine are necessary for the formation of human bodies if they are to be held together and continue in existence. Now this applies to Jesus' body as much as to ours. So the bread which Jesus ate, and the wine that he drank, became part of his body. So 'in some way' – Gregory does not elaborate, but he is presumably thinking in terms of potentiality – bread already *is* his body, that is, the purely human flesh and blood body he inherited from Mary.[8]

Where Jesus' body is unique is that the divine Logos had been mingled with it and, by the indwelling of the Logos, it had been changed into the dignity of Godhead.[9] Christ's flesh was divinised by the divine Word (capital W) at the incarnation; and so in the same way the eucharistic bread is 'sanctified by the word (small w) of God and prayer,' (a quotation from 1*Tim.* 4:5). It is already body, but by transelementation it becomes the Body of the Word (capital W). This happens through the word (small w) of consecration, 'even as the Word (capital W) itself has said, 'This is my body'.[10]

This allocation of initial capitals is not universally accepted by modern translators of the *Oratio catechetica* into English. In my view Gregory is saying that the 'word' which transelements the eucharistic elements is the celebrant's word of consecration (small w); but some modern translations give an initial capital to 'Word' here, suggesting that the Logos is directly

[5] *or cat* 93-4, 93A-C.

[6] Rowan Williams, *The Wound of Knowledge: Christian Spirituality from the New Testament to St John of the Cross* (London, 1979), 63-4.

[7] *or cat* 98, 97B: 'He gives these gifts by virtue of the benediction through which he transelements (μεταστοιχειώσας) the natural quality of these visible things to that immortal thing', English translation in William Moore and Henry Austin Wilson, 'Select Writings and Letters of Gregory, Bishop of Nyssa, translated, with Prolegomena, Notes and Indices', in *Gregory of Nyssa: Dogmatic Treatises, etc*., ed. by Philip Schaff and Henry Wace, Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Second Series, Volume 5 (Peabody, Massachusetts, 1995) – henceforth NPNF – 506.

[8] *or cat* 96, 96C-D.

[9] *or cat* 96, 96D.

[10] *or cat* 97, 96D-97A.

responsible for the change. I do not think that can be right, particularly given the reference to the text of 1 Timothy, in which 'the word of God' cannot mean the divine Logos.[11]

It has been suggested, for example by N.P. Williams, that the 'transelementing' effected by 'the word of God and prayer' is a *transformation* of the bread and wine *into* the body and blood of Christ, as in other eucharistic doctrines such as that of transubstantiation.[12] I do not believe this is the case. I think that for Gregory what happens at the eucharist is rather a *divinization* of the flesh and blood body of Christ, which, as noted above, the bread and wine 'in some way' *already are*.

So there is a very clear relationship between Gregory's theory of 'transelementation' and his Christology.[13] As Anthony Meredith has pointed out, for Gregory the eucharist mirrors the incarnation[14] as much as it does Jesus's last supper. As his flesh and blood body was transformed and divinized by the divine Word at the incarnation, so the bread, already 'in some way' his body, is transformed and divinized by the liturgical word of the celebrant.

All this so far may suggest that the eucharistic doctrine expressed here is reflecting a purely 'incarnational' soteriology. Some have indeed argued that it was, in Gregory's view, simply the incarnation, the taking of our flesh by the

[11] Both J.R. Srawley, *The Catechetical Oration of St Gregory of Nyssa: translated with an introduction and notes* (London, 1917), 111, and *NPNF* 506 have 'Word' – but NPNF 505-6 n. 9, nevertheless suggests that the direct reference here must be to the words of consecration. I have similarly decapitalised 'Word' in the quotation from 1*Timothy* three lines earlier, where again there is no reason to believe that Gregory is making an other than paronomastic reference to the Second Person of the Trinity.

[12] N.P. Williams, *The Idea of the Fall and Original Sin*, The Bampton Lectures for 1924 (London, 1927), 278, offers no justification for his view that 'transelementation' is hardly, if at all, distinguishable from the later 'transubstantiation'. J.N.D. Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines*, fifth, revised, edition (London, 1993), 443, is, at best, muddled about 'transelementation'. He says that what Gregory thinks happens in the eucharist is 'analogous' to the incarnate Word's assimilation of bread and wine to his flesh and blood, 'although with a characteristic difference. Whereas in the days of Christ's earthly sojourning bread and wine were transformed by the digestive process, now they are metamorphosed instantaneously into the body of the Word'. But this is comparing two quite different processes.

On the other hand, there is a passage in Gregory's *In diem luminum* (called *In baptismum Christi* by PG), GNO IX (Leiden, 1967), 225; PG 46, 581C, which reads: 'The bread, again, was for a while common bread, but when the mystery has consecrated it (ὅταν αὐτὸν τὸ μυστήριον ἱερουργήσῃ) it is both called and in fact becomes, the body of Christ' (See also NPNF 505-6 n. 9). This suggests at first sight the modern Orthodox or Roman Catholic view, but is not inconsistent with the doctrine in *or cat* if the emphasis is placed on the words 'of Christ' (*i.e.* of the incarnate Logos) rather than on the whole phrase. In any case, too much weight should not be placed on this isolated sentence, designed primarily to provide an illustrative parallel with the sacramental use of water in baptism.

[13] See Walther Völker, *Gregor von Nyssa als Mystiker* (Wiesbaden, 1955), 275-6.

[14] See Anthony Meredith, *The Cappadocians* (Crestwood, NY, 1995), 96-7.

Logos, which constituted God's decisive saving act;[15] if that were the case, one might expect to find this reflected in his eucharistic teaching.

But in fact the incarnation is not, for Gregory, a sufficient condition for the salvation of humankind. There is also a clear eschatological element in the eucharistic doctrine of the *Oratio catechetica*.

Gregory goes on to explain how the divinized body of Christ is consumed by the communicants under the form of bread and wine and is absorbed into their solid flesh (in the case of the bread) and blood (in the case of the wine) through ordinary physiological processes. But this is only the first step in the soteriological process. The reason why the divine Christ 'mingles himself with the bodies of believers' is 'in order that, by union with that which is immortal, man might also participate in incorruption'.[16] The eucharist confers incorruptibility on the body, Christ's and then ours. That incorruptibility does not however become manifest immediately, but only when our bodies are resurrected and divinised at the End.

Caroline Walker Bynum has suggested[17] that early Christians had a horror at the idea that bodies decay (and can be eaten, by animals or by other people) and consequently attached importance to establishing that the resurrection body is incorruptible. The idea of acquiring the divine incorruptibility for our bodies by physically assimilating the body of Christ in the eucharist is found in Gregory's predecessors. In her discussion of St Cyril of Jerusalem's eucharistic doctrine, Bynum says:

> For Cyril as for Tertullian and Irenaeus […] eating God causes us to bear within our members, while still on earth, the incorruptible body we will be after the trumpet sounds. Through digesting God, we become indigestible to death.[18]

I would like to conclude by suggesting that the underlying concept here is one which, as I noted at the beginning, can be seen elsewhere in Gregory's soteriology.[19] It relies on the notion of the commonality, the solidarity, between

[15] For this view of Gregory's soteriology, see Stuart G. Hall, *Doctrine and Practice in the Early Church* (London, 1995), 160: '[...] godhead unites itself in Jesus Christ, and so the whole of humanity is infused with the characteristics of the divine life, including immortality. This is heady medicine […]. The death of Christ crucified is not rejected, not entirely neglected: but somehow a different perspective prevails, and incarnation (in this sense) is the decisive act of salvation, rather than the death and rising of the Messiah'. This is based on a reading of Gregory's *Contra Eunomium* III/3, GNO II (Leiden, 1960), 132-3; PG 45, 703A-C – the celebrated passage in which the human nature of Christ is said to be 'overwhelmed' by the Godhead as a drop of vinegar mixed with the ocean is 'overwhelmed' by the sea water – which overlooks the fact that Gregory is here referring to Christ's human nature after his death and glorification. For a recent discussion, see A. Radde-Galwitz, '*Contra Eunomium* III 3' (2014), 304-11.

[16] *or cat* 97-8, 97B; English translation in J.R. Srawley, *Catechetical Oration* (1917), 112.

[17] Caroline Walker Bynum, *The Resurrection of the Body in Western Christianity, 200-1336* (New York, 1995), 27-47, 69-80.

[18] *Ibid*. 80.

[19] See particularly *or cat* 48-49, 52A, and 78, 80B-C.

Christ's human nature and ours. Christ's human nature is here again the 'first fruits' which sanctifies the 'lump' of humanity. The human body of Christ is the 'change agent', the ἀρχή for the resurrection and glorification of the human bodies of the communicants.

But it needs, finally, to be noted that in the passage discussed here, there is no mention of the Church, no explicit link between the eucharistic body and the ecclesial body. So the eucharist does not seem to be incorporating communicants into Christ's still-forming ecclesial body; rather, it transmits the divine power of the God-Man to them through an already existing 'body of human nature', represented by τρόπον τινά by the bread, which they share with him.

Cyclic Shapes and Divine Activity. A Cappadocian Inquiry into Byzantine Aesthetics

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ABSTRACT

Byzantine aesthetics breaks with the expected to acknowledge a holy drama that serves for contemplation of a reality of religious perceptions considered to pave the way for salvation. Characteristics of earthly change are replaced by sacred *logoi*, to acknowledge divine presence and activity. In a religious sense, Byzantine narratology recognizes ἡ θεολογία, 'teaching, naming, praise, and mystical knowledge of God'; in order to celebrate that divine nature is transcendent, yet present and real in birth and death. A fair amount of everyday realism distinguishes Byzantine images of the epic narrative of the holy drama, its cast of characters, props, and locations. Yet, the narrative and its unique aesthetics always break with the expected, in a mundane sense. Enigmatic artistic devices such as multifaceted cyclic shapes, light phenomena, brilliance, and exquisitely patterned borders of gems, geometry, flora, fauna, or less ornate with plain strokes of white and red colors, dissolved laws of gravity, dematerialized corporeality, but also compressed props of architecture and distorted nature mold an ambience of a cosmos outside the temporal system. These artistic devices, I suggest, decode and convert negative theology into apophatic metonymies. As metonymies for divine activity but also nature, they constitute 'by proxy' from the created, diastematic order, to use a line of thought, concerning language, by Gregory of Nyssa, necessary media through which confession of the transcendent unknowable God is acknowledged. In this way, the transcendent God becomes accessible to human contemplation.

Based on the three Cappadocian fathers' lines of reasoning on divine nature and activity, what is said (*heuresis*), how it is said (*lexis*), but also how it is structured and disposed (*taxis*), this article explores the significance of cyclic shapes in Byzantine sacred art and architecture. The image material analyzed in this article derives primarily from Byzantine churches in Ravenna, Cappadocia (Göreme), Demre (Myra), and Istanbul. My hypothesis is that Byzantine holy images and its unique aesthetics acknowledge, in line with faith, apophatic theology as well as cataphatic theology. The cyclic shape, particularly when incandescent, functions as apophatic signifier for divine activity, in order to extricate the narrative from mundane time and space. The cyclic shape is not identical, but analogous in an apophatic sense, since divine nature, as Gregory of Nyssa emphasizes, is unnameable and indicated properly only by saying that it is above every name.

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Point of departure

Based on how the three Cappadocian fathers discuss divine activity and nature, this article explores Patristics and the significance of cyclic shapes in Byzantine sacred art and architecture to verify, in an apophatic sense, divine activity and presence. It will focus on how halo, tondo,[1] and medallion, but also mandorla and dome acknowledge faith in the transcendent and unknowable God, thus making the activity of divine presence accessible to human contemplation. The image material analyzed in this article derives primarily from Byzantine churches in Ravenna, Cappadocia (Göreme), Demre (former Myra), and Istanbul.

My hypothesis is that cyclic shapes in Byzantine sacred art and architecture, hereinafter referred to as *holy images*, verify, in an apophatic sense, divine presence, activity, and order. Moreover, in context of the epic narrative of the holy drama of Christ, the Theotokos, and the saints, cyclic shapes identify the inter-are of economy and theology; thus acknowledging that salvation depends on incarnation and divine grace, in addition to human activity. In this way, a holy image recognizes not only Christology and Soteriology, but also Trinitarian theology and Pneumatology.

Activity, dynamism, and change

Gregory of Nyssa accentuates that for creatures who cannot statically comprehend the infinite, progress in the good is the most beautiful work of change, and an inability to change would be a penalty.[2] Clearly, Gregory has the process of the perpetual movement of human nature or *nous* (ὁ νοῦς ὁ ἀνθρώπινος) in mind, when he stresses that whoever can muster this ceaseless progress of change, through the practice of virtue, can turn it into a movement that is entirely upward and reach ever-greater acquisition of the good.[3] In a sublime sense, Gregory refers to the infinite being of God, but also the infinite process of knowing God that does not end with physical death.[4] In this way, the changeable puts on changeless beauty. The virtuous soul of Moses is the paragon.

According to Gregory of Nyssa, as Ari Ojell has observed, the fundamental ontological difference between humankind and God is that,

> created order is bound in separation, difference, intervals, limitations and discontinuity in respect of time and space, that is, is in *diastema* – or is *diastema* itself[5] – and always in a state of becoming, whereas there is no *diastema* or becoming in God; neither space

[1] Tondo, circular painting.
[2] *De perf.* (GNO VIII 1.212-4).
[3] *De virg.* 4.1-2 (SC 119, 280C-281C).
[4] Cf. Gregory of Nyssa, *Eun.* II; *v. Mos.* 2.235.
[5] *In eccl.* (GNO V 412.14).

nor time apply to the Creator of space and time. Man is *ktiston* and *diastematikon*, created and diastematic being, a mixed nature of intelligible and sensible, of spirit and corporeality, living according to his finite limits; God is *aktiston* and *adiastaton*, uncreated and undiastematic Being, and wholly spiritual, intelligible nature to which there is no limit. Human reason that operates according to its own diastematic constitution and conceives only things that are like itself cannot comprehend divine being and nature … which is … *apeiron*, infinite.[6]

In order to verify God's essential unknowability and to ground Trinitarian argumentation 'scientifically', Gregory of Nyssa, Ojell concludes, produces an apophatic system,

The argumentative system arranged according to the apophatic axiom, has *to on* – including both *being* (*ousia*) and '*is-ness*' (*einai*) – as its inescapable category, since God, according his self-revelation is, for Gregory, Real Being – *He* who is[7]. God, as conceived by Gregory, is not *beyond being*, but beyond all *created* being – he *is* the ultimate reality of being. To discuss the being of God, then, is to discuss the reality and existence of a transcendent dynamic nature.[8]

Of crucial interest for Byzantine aesthetics and its religious agenda is the mode of thought that God is not beyond being but beyond all created being. This line of thinking offers, I suggest, a didactic theory and method of dealing with the reality and existence of divine nature, provided artistic devices are apophatic, in order to face up to divine nature as transcendent and unknowable.

In *Contra Eunomium* I 373-5, Gregory treats (divine) *physis* and (uncreated) *dynamis* as two equivalent terms in connection with the question of God's incomprehensibility as an 'unspoken principle' (*aphraston logon*) or 'first principle' (*arche*). As Ojell has observed, in Gregory's apophatic system God's *physis*, or *ousia* is intimately related to, but distinguishable from his *dynamis*.[9] According to Gregory, the *ousia* and *energeia* of God coexist;[10] from the operation that we know, we can infer *that* there exists an operative essence. Yet, *what* that essence is, as essence, we cannot infer thereby.[11] In any event, when we speculate about God, it is in the *tension* of these two 'poles' of God's *is-ness* in relation to our life and all created existence.[12] In a similar way, I suggest, holy images acknowledge, in an apophatic sense, the coexistent *dynamis* and *ousia* of the unknowable transcendent God through coexistence of enlivening brilliance and the cyclic shape of halo, tondo, medallion, and mandorla, but

[6] Ari Ojell, *One Word, One Body, One Voice: Studies in Apophatic Theology and Christocentric Anthropology in Gregory of Nyssa* (Helsinki, 2007), 399.
[7] *Eun*. III.vi.3.8.
[8] A. Ojell, *One Word* (2007), 398-9.
[9] *Ibid*. 399. See also, Greg. Nys., *Eun*. II 15.
[10] *Eun*. I 207-11.
[11] *Eun*. II 71; *Eun*. I 207-11.
[12] *Eun*. II 148-54; A. Ojell, *One Word* (2007), 401.

also glittering light perforating a dome through a cyclic sphere of windows. In this way, on the one hand, the metonym of light recognizes divine nature, on the other hand, the sphere, containing order but also tension, acknowledges divine activity, whereas their interaction verify that there exists an operative divine essence, the transcendent unknowable God.

Byzantine aesthetics makes use of cyclic shapes, light, brilliance but also mismatched gravitation, levitating bodies, boundless borders, flattened corporeality and props as well as mysterious kinetic effects and forces, in order to acknowledge divine nature and activity, *i.e.* that the transcendent unknowable God is as real and present as human nature in the epic narrative of the holy drama. The whole gamut of such artistic devices serves to render due praise to the unintelligibility as well as the intelligibility of the holy drama. They are not identical with divine nature and activity, but analogous, in an apophatic sense. The notion I use for them is *meta-image*.[13] The meta-image, in a similar manner as insufficient language, makes confession of divine nature accessible to human contemplation, without naming or giving a 'proper' picture of the divine. In support of my conclusion, compare what Ojell has observed of Gregory of Nyssa, who argues that language belongs to the created, diastematic order, yet is as inescapable a category for all theological discourse as being is to all theological speculation. According to Gregory of Nyssa, language is a necessary medium through which thoughts are expressed and communicated, and Trinitarian confession is as bound to language as any other verbal or textual form of communication. It is necessary however to define the indicative power and limits of language to supply proper conceptions of the divine, which Gregory aims at in his second book of *Contra Eunomium*, by concluding that divine nature *is* utterly unnameable, indicated properly only by saying that it is above every name.[14]

The Cappadocians refer to the changeless condition of the divine, but also its dynamic activity. Gregory of Nazianzus, for example, brings in Christ to recognize how the deity of the Holy Spirit is shown by his activity as the one who deifies,

> Were the Spirit not to be worshipped, how could he deify me through baptism? If he is to be worshipped, why not adored? And if to be adored, how can he fail to be God? One links with the other [*i.e.* Father, Son, and Holy Spirit], a truly golden chain of

[13] On my notion of *meta-image*, see Anne Karahan, 'Image and Meta-Image: Byzantine Aesthetics and Orthodox Faith', in Cecilia Olovsdotter (ed.), *Symbolism and Abstraction in Late Antique and Early Byzantine Art (c. 300-700)* (forthcoming); *ead.*, 'Patristics and Byzantine Meta-Images: Molding Belief in the Divine from Written to Painted Theology', in Carol Harrison, Brouria Bitton-Ashkelony, Théodore De Bruyn (eds), *Patristic Studies in the Twenty-First Century* (Turnhout, 2015), 571-94; *ead.*, *Byzantine Holy Images – Transcendence and Immanence: The Theological Background of the Iconography and Aesthetics of the Chora Church* (Leuven, Paris and Walpole, MA, 2010), 4, 24, 31-4, 36-7, 39-42, 45-8, and General Index 'meta-image'.

[14] *Phil.* 2:13. *Eun.* I 683; see A. Ojell, *One Word* (2007), 400.

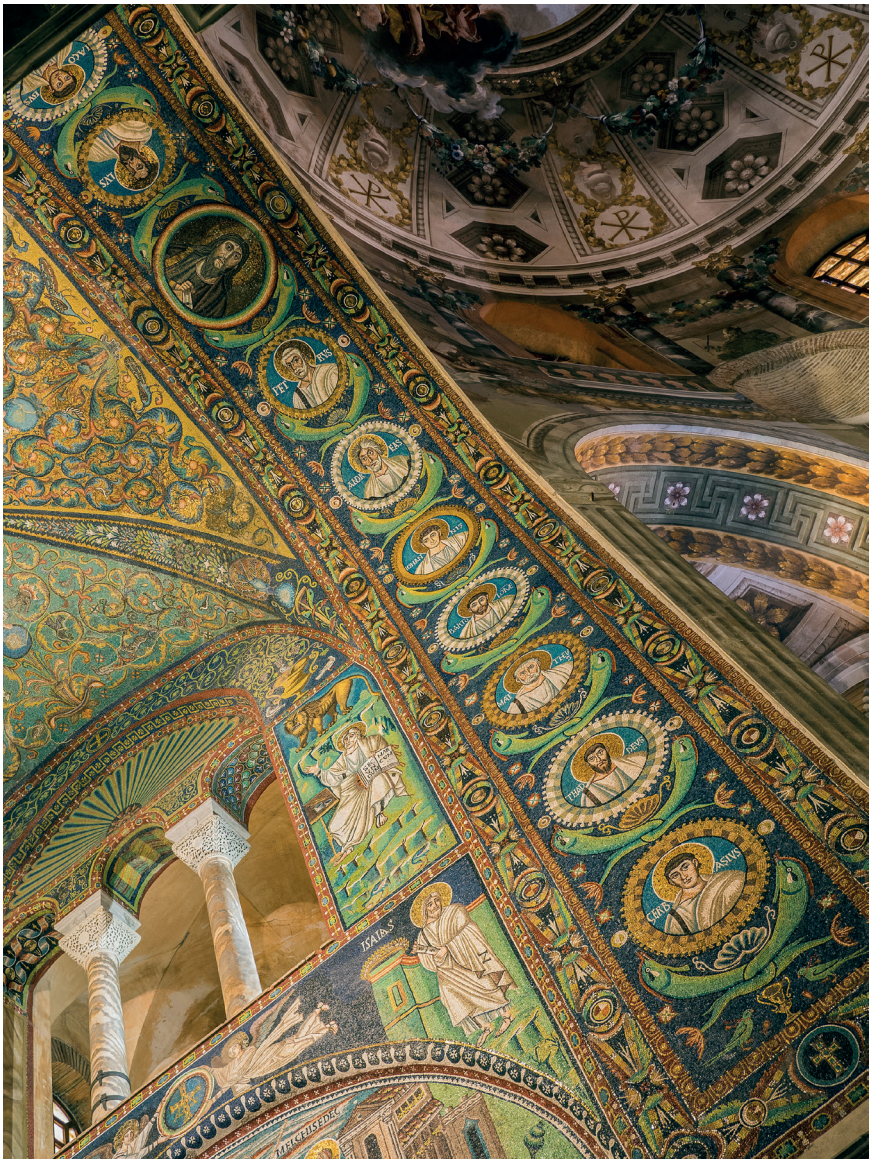

Figure 1. *Border with Christ flanked by holy persons*. Mosaic at the church of San Vitale, consecrated 547, Ravenna, Italy.
Photo credit: 'Basilica of San Vitale - triumphal arch mosaics' by Petar Milošević - Own work. Licensed under CC BY-SA 4.0 via Commons - https://en.wiki2.org/wiki/File:Basilica_of_San_Vitale_-_triumphal_arch_mosaics.jpg#/media/File:Basilica_of_San_Vitale_-_triumphal_arch_mosaics.jpg

salvation. From the Spirit comes our rebirth,[15] from rebirth comes a new creating, from new creating a recognition of the worth of him who effected it.[16]

Gregory uses the metaphor of 'a truly golden chain of salvation' to stress a dynamic but also cyclic inter-are of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,[17] while the synods of Nicaea 325 and Constantinople 381, as well the Bible acknowledges Christ as light of light (φῶς ἐκ φωτός). In a similar sense, the iridescent cyclic effect of halo, tondo, and medallion, drawn in precious metals, gems, pearls, or plain sparkling white or bright colors, or the colors of the rainbow,[18] verifies, in an apophatic sense, salvation and re-birth through incarnation, baptism, and triune divine activity.[19] For religious context and in support of my interpretation, I refer to Gregory of Nazianzus' reflection on the Trinity,

> the One Godhead and Power, found in the Three in Unity, and comprising the Three separately, not unequal, in substances or natures, neither increased nor diminished by superiorities or inferiorities; in every respect equal, in every respect the same; Just as the beauty and the greatness of the heavens is one; the infinite conjunction of Three Infinite Ones, Each God when considered in Himself; as the Father so the Son, as the Son so the Holy Ghost; the Three One God when contemplated together; Each God because Consubstantial; One God because of the Monarchia. No sooner do I conceive of the One than I am illumined by the Splendour of the Three; no sooner do I distinguish Them than I am carried back to the One.[20]

As Christopher Beeley comments of Gregory, he 'speaks euphorically of being already illumined by the Three in his contemplation of the One, and of

[15] *John* 3:3-5; *Matth.* 28:19.

[16] Greg. Naz., *Oratio* 31.28, Eng. trans. Lionel Wickham, *Faith Gives Fullness to Reasoning: The Five Theological Orations of Gregory Nazianzen* (Leiden, 1991), 295.

[17] See also Anne Karahan, 'The Impact of Cappadocian Theology on Byzantine Aesthetics: Gregory of Nazianzus on the Unity and Singularity of Christ', in Nicu Dumitraşcu (ed.), *The Ecumenical Legacy of the Cappadocians* (New York, NY, 2015), Chapter 10, 159-84.

[18] On the Byzantine rainbow, see A. Karahan, *Byzantine Holy Images* (2010), 28, 96, 98, 118.

[19] See also, Anne Karahan, 'The Image of God in Byzantine Cappadocia and the Issue of Supreme Transcendence', *SP* 59 (2013), 97-111; and, Greg. Naz, *Oratio* 29.3, Eng. trans. L. Wickham (1991), 246-7: the Son is begotten, 'in a non-temporal way that transcends explanation. We cannot, though, explain the meaning of "supra-temporal" and deliberately keep clear of any suggestion of time. Expressions like "when," "before x," "after y," and "from the beginning" are not free from temporal implications … we cannot explain it, except possibly by taking the world-era as the period coinciding with eternal things, being a period which is not, as "time" is, measured and fragmented by the Sun's motion. How is it, then that these latter [Son and Spirit] are not like the Father in having no origin, if they are co-eternal with him? Because they are from him, though not after him. "Being unoriginate" necessarily implies "being eternal," but "being eternal" does not entail "being unoriginate", so long as the origin referred to is the Father. So because they have a cause they are not unoriginate. But clearly a cause is not necessary prior to its effects – the Sun is not prior to its light. Because time is not involved, they are to that extent unoriginate – even if you do scare simple souls with the bogey-word; for things which produce Time are beyond time'.

[20] Greg. Naz., *Oratio* 40.41, Eng. trans. in *NPNF* II 7, 375a-b. See also Greg. Nys., *Quod non sint tres dii*, PG 45, 125CD.

Figure 2. *Jesus Christ Pantokrator*. Mural painting, mid-eleventh century, at the church of Karanlık (Göreme 23), Cappadocia, Turkey. Photo: Anne Karahan

Figure 3. *Crux gemmata*. Mosaic, early fourteenth-century, at the church of Theotokos Pammakaristos, Istanbul, Turkey. Photo: Anne Karahan

his vision of a single light (μία λαμπάς) in his contemplation of the Three'.[21] In a similar sense, Byzantine aesthetics acknowledges faith in three-in-one divine activity through inter-are of triune radiance and cyclic luminosity in the motif of the cross-halo as well as in the even more abstract motif of the *crux gemmata*.[22] I would also like to draw attention to Basil of Caesarea and his cosmological perception and cyclic reasoning concerning time as an image of eternity,

> God, having prepared the nature of time, set as measures and limits for it the intervals of the days, and measuring it out for a week, He orders the week, in counting the change of time, always to return again in a circle to itself? Again, He orders that one day by recurring seven times complete a week; and this, beginning from itself and ending on itself, is the form of a circle. In fact, it is also characteristic of eternity to turn back upon itself and never to be brought to an end. Therefore, He called the beginning of time not a 'first day', but 'one day', in order that from the name it might have kinship with eternity. In order … to lead our thoughts to a future life, he called that day 'one', which is an image of eternity (τοῦ αἰῶνος τὴν εἰκόνα).[23]

In addition, Basil concludes concerning 'the true light',

> may the Father of the true light … who has made ready the peace of the future age with a spiritual and never ending light, illumine your hearts in a knowledge of the truth … in order that you may shine forth as the sun in the splendor of the saints for my exultation in the day of Christ.[24]

Based on Basil and Gregory of Nazianzus, I suggest that cyclic luminosity of halos, tondi, medallions, and mandorlas, verify, in an apophatic sense, faith in the splendor and true light of God's ceaseless, ordered activity, in an Christological, but also trinitarian sense.[25] In addition to celebration of salvation in the day of Christ, radiance of cyclic shapes acknowledges faith in the three-in-one dynamics of the Three Infinite Ones that is God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.[26] A significative painted example is the motif of the cross with three shimmering circles, at the Saint Nicholas Church, Demre (former Myra), Turkey. In line with faith, I suggest, this motif of the cross with

[21] Christopher A. Beeley, *Gregory of Nazianzus on the Trinity and the Knowledge of God. In Your Light We Shall See Light* (Oxford and New York, 2008), 107.

[22] On the cross-halo and the crux gemmata, see A. Karahan, 'Patristics and Byzantine Meta-Images' (2015), 571-93; *ead*., *Byzantine Holy Images* (2010), General Index 'cross-nimbus' and 'halo'. On the three cross-halos in the motif of The Old Testament Trinity (*filoxenia*), see *ead*., 'En betraktelse av östkristen treenighetstro och motivet *filoxenia* i den bysantinska klippkyrkan Çarıklı i Kappadokien', in Gunnar Innerdal, Knut-Willy Sæther (eds), *Trinitarisk tro og tenkning – Festskrift til Svein Rise* (Kristiansand, 2015), 85-105.

[23] *Hex*. 2.8 (SC 26bis, 21AD), Eng. tr. Agnes C. Way (FC 46), 34-5.

[24] *Hex*. 2.8, Eng. trans. A.C. Way (FC 46), 35-6.

[25] Compare *John* 8:12, where Christ says, 'I am the light of the world'.

[26] On the names of God mentioned in one-and-the same series, see also, Bas. Caes., *Spir*. 17.43.

Figures 4. *Bishops meeting with the Emperor in Holy Synod*, perhaps the Ecumenical Synod of Nicaea 325, which was attended by Saint Nicholas. Saint Nicholas Church (Myra), modern Demre, Turkey.
Photo: Anne Karahan

three radiant cyclic shapes acknowledges, in an apophatic sense, triune divine activity, presence, and nature as well as incarnation.

The radiant cyclic shape, neither in the motif of the cross at the church of Saint Nicholas, nor elsewhere, is a narrative motor, yet it transforms the epic narrative into a holy drama, in order to serve for contemplation of a shared reality of religious perceptions considered to pave the way for salvation. The cyclic shape functions as a divine signifier that disengages the drama from day by day time and space. The glimmering cyclic shape breaks with the expected, in an earthly sense. In this way, Byzantine narratology constructs an ambience of divine activity that replaces earthly change by sacred *logoi*, thus recognizing ἡ θεολογία, 'teaching, naming, praise, and mystical knowledge of God'; God's unknowable and transcendent nature. For didactic reasons, Byzantine aesthetics also replaces earthly settings by radiant golden or golden-like backgrounds, an apophatic metonomy for divine presence and activity, in order to acknowledge the heavenly sphere. For religious context and in support of my conclusion, I refer to Gregory of Nazianzus, who speaks of the powers within

the Godhead (δυνάμεις Θεοῦ) in terms of sun (ἥλιος), beam (ἀκτίς), and light (φῶς).[27] On the one hand, he notes that neither the beam nor the light is an extra sun, but emanations from the sun, and qualities of its substance (οὔτε γὰρ ἀκτίς, οὔτε φῶς, ἄλλος ἥλιος, ἀλλ' ἡλιακαί τινες ἀπόρροιαι, καὶ ποιότητες οὐσιώδεις), on the other hand, he criticizes such images from the created composite world, since divine nature is incomposite. To attribute to God any illustration has its dangers/lack (κἀνταῦθα δέος), since it suggests that God is both being and nonbeing.[28] In addition, Gregory stresses that the Son is begotten 'in a non-temporal way that transcends explanation', and then concludes that 'we cannot … explain the meaning of 'supra-temporal' and deliberately keep clear of any suggestion of time'.[29] Upheaval of time, I suggest, in writing or in painting, is thus part of the didactics of faith.

As Jean Daniélou comments of Gregory of Nyssa's treatise *On the Beatitudes*, he distinguishes ontologically between change (τροπή) referring to everything created and without change (ἄτρεπτον) reserved for God only. Yet, Gregory recognizes and evaluates different kinds of movements. In his exegetic treatise *On the Hexaemeron,* for example, Gregory refers to the order (τάξις) and the cyclic regularity of the movement of Heaven that imitates God's perfect immobility. The regular change of the Heaven is opposed to the material change of the Earth. To Gregory of Nyssa, good movement does not loose itself in the indefinite, but grows into union with God, strives for God.[30] The goal of 'Christianity is the imitation of God's nature', Gregory stresses, good movements can help a person become the image of God (εἰκὼν τοῦ θεοῦ).[31]

In a similar apophatic sense, the regularity and dynamic tension of the beaming halo of a saint celebrate grace but also human likeness to God through good actions, while only Christ, bestowed with the three-armed cross-halo, is like God by nature. The inter-are of anthropomorphic image and halo verifies a belief system based on interconnection of human and divine – salvation relates to individual actions as well as grace. With a notion from Gregory of Nazianzus, the saints have matured their 'portion of God'.[32] Consider also Basil of Caesarea, to whom, as emphasized by Philip Rousseau,

> human freedom implied an element of command; and that could spring only from the fact that each person was made κατ' εἰκόνα … τοῦ κτίσαντος, in the image of the creator. In a sense, therefore, men and women acquired a power characteristic of God, the power to initiate action within themselves and the world around them.[33] There was,

[27] *Oratio* 31.32 (SC 250, 338-41).
[28] *Ibid*. Eng. trans. L. Wickham (1991), 298.
[29] Greg. Naz., *Oratio* 29.3, Eng. trans. L. Wickham (1991), 246.
[30] Jean Daniélou, *L'être et le temps chez Grégoire de Nysse* (Leiden, 1970), 80-1, 109-15.
[31] *De professione Christiana* (PG 46, 244C).
[32] Greg. Naz., *Homily* 14.7 (PG 35, 865C); see also, John Damascene, *De sacris imaginibus orations* 3.37.
[33] See also, *Hex*. 9.5.

however, danger in such a theory: one might suppose that they acquired thereby a degree of perfection or fulfillment akin to that of God. Basil solved the difficulty by introducing the notion that, while each person possessed the status of one made in the *image* (εἰκών) of God, that was not the same as *likeness* (ὁμοίωσις) to God, which had yet to be striven for. Only the Son was like God by nature. For a human being, made in the image of God, likeness came only through grace. Freedom, in other words, did not possess within itself a guarantee of persistently sound choice or final achievement.[34]

The eldest of the Cappadocia fathers, Basil of Caesarea calls attention to the weakness of human perception (διάνοια).[35] Basil acknowledges, as Rousseau has observed, human understanding capable of recognizing the intended structure and momentum of the created universe, yet the human mind is inadequate. When discussing holy images, it is also vital how Basil, as Rousseau has noted, links God's 'voice' (φωνή) with his λόγος or word, and therefore the Word, his Son, thus making the Son his essential partner in the creative act, 'The first act of God in Genesis was speech: 'And God said, "Let there be light"'. What does it mean, Basil asks rhetorically, to say that God "spoke"?'[36] In a series of passages, Basil then proceeds to present pictures of powerful movements or impulses within the mind and will of God. God's thought itself is power.[37] The way Basil discusses God's thought, mind, and will in terms of power and powerful movements or impulses, and links God's creative voice to the Word, his Son, in the creation of light, acknowledges the unified dynamism of God and Word. What Basil signals is co-inherence (περιχώρησις) in a Trinitarian as well as an Christological sense – the unintelligible light of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and the immanent light of the world, Jesus Christ, is indivisible.[38] Christ is within as well as beyond historicity.

Cyclic shapes and sacred narratology

A fair amount of everyday realism distinguishes Byzantine images of the epic narrative of the holy drama, its cast of characters, props, and locations. Yet, the narrative and its unique aesthetics always break with the expected, in a mundane sense. Enigmatic artistic devices such as multifaceted cyclic shapes, light phenomena, brilliance, and exquisitely patterned borders of gems, geometry, flora, fauna, or less ornate with plain strokes of white and red colors, dissolved laws of gravity, dematerialized corporeality, but also compressed props of

[34] Philip Rousseau, *Basil of Caesarea* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and Oxford, 1994), 340.
[35] See also *Hex.* 6.9.
[36] *Hex.* 2.7, 3.2, 7.1; P. Rousseau, *Basil of Caesarea* (1994), 322, 337-8.
[37] *Hex.* 2.2, 3.2, 6.2.
[38] On Byzantine aesthetics and the notions of ὁμοούσιος and περιχώρησις, see Anne Karahan, 'The Issue of περιχώρησις in Byzantine Holy Images', *SP* 44 (2010), 27-34.

architecture and distorted nature mold an ambience of a cosmos outside the temporal system. These artistic devices, I suggest, decode and convert negative theology into apophatic metonymies. As metonymies for divine activity and presence, they constitute 'by proxy' from the created, diastematic order, to use a line of thought, concerning language, by Gregory of Nyssa, a necessary medium through which confession of the transcendent and unknowable God is articulated and acknowledged. In this way, the transcendent God becomes accessible to human contemplation. These devices are not identical, but analogous in an apophatic sense, since divine nature, as Gregory of Nyssa stresses in his second book of *Contra Eunomium*, is utterly unnameable, and indicated properly only by saying that it is above every name. Byzantine sacred narratology, what is said (*heuresis*), how it is said (*lexis*), but also how it is structured and disposed (*taxis*), thus acknowledge, in line with faith, apophatic as well as cataphatic theology. In this way, Byzantine aesthetics defines, in an apophatic sense, the indicative power and limits of imagery to supply proper conceptions of the divine.

Sparkling halos, mandorlas, and tondi, but also outsized dazzling rainbow-patterned medallions[39] integrated in monumental Byzantine picture programs, constitute apophatic metonymies for divine activity, order, light, but also spiritual knowledge. Notable examples of outsized rainbow-patterned medallions exist, for example, in the picture program of the Chora Church at Istanbul. The cyclic light effect of the halo of a saint celebrates, in an apophatic sense, that holiness, or sainthood is a gift (χάρισμα) given by God, through the Holy Spirit, *i.e.* sanctification relates to triune divine activity. For religious context, I refer to Gregory of Nazianzus, who stresses that the Son Jesus is not a slave who falls prostrate before the Father on our behalf but that Christ, himself human, mediates between God and humankind, in the way that the Spirit too makes petition on our behalf.[40] Moreover, several churches have domes circularly pierced by windowpanes. The cyclic light effect and its reflecting flares dissolve tectonics and space, and enliven the narratives of the holy drama, in an apophatic sense, recognizing divine activity as non-temporal. The cyclic shape but also light thus function on the cataphatic narrative level as well as the apophatic non-narrative level, in order to place the narratives both within and beyond the created exposed to corruption. In support of my conclusion, I refer to Gregory of Nazianzus, who associates the sun with God's 'ordered movement',[41] but also refers to the Son as begotten,

[39] The rainbow signifies also the covenant between God and humankind. Cf. Léonid Ouspensky, in Ernst Hammerschmidt *et al.* (eds), *Symbolik des orthodoxen und orientalischen Christentums* (Stuttgart, 1962), 77. On Byzantine art, brilliance and relative lightness and darkness of colors, see Liz James, 'Colour and the Byzantine rainbow', *BMGS* 15 (1991), 66-94, and *ead.*, *Light and Colour in Byzantine Art* (Oxford, 1996).

[40] Greg. Naz., *Oratio* 30.14, Eng. trans. L. Wickham (1991), 272. 1*Tim.* 2:5; *Rom.* 8:26.

[41] *Oratio* 28.29, Eng. trans. L. Wickham (1991), 242.

in a non-temporal way that transcends explanation. We cannot … explain the meaning of 'supra-temporal' and deliberately keep clear of any suggestion of time … we cannot explain it, except possibly by taking the world-era as the period coinciding with eternal things, being a period which is not, as 'time' is.[42]

For further image context, I refer to the Pantokrator motif in the rock-cut chapel of Karanlık at Göreme, Cappadocia.[43] [Figure 2] In the dome, in Byzantium signifying Heaven, encircled by two white-colored borders and one red-colored border, Jesus Christ Pantokrator comes into sight in a blue-colored setting.[44] He imparts the Bible text of *John* 8:12, 'I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness' (Ἐγώ εἰμι τὸ φῶς τοῦ κόσμου· ὁ ἀκολουθῶν μοι οὐ μὴ περιπατήσῃ ἐν τῇ σκοτίᾳ). Below him, in the cylindrical drum, as well encircled by two white-colored borders and one red-colored border, emerges Archangels Gabriel, Uriel, and Michael, but also John the Baptist flanked by Anne and Joachim, the Virgin's parents. Moreover, the four pendentives that create transition from square to dome are devoted to stylized foliage, each decorated with two shimmering white circles. With a setting in blue color, this iconography as well reveal red- and white-colored borders, in an apophatic sense relating to human and divine respectively. Combination of dome and square, cyclic borders of white and red, Christ as the light of the world but also the Pantokrator with cross-halo,[45] synecdoche of incarnation, cross-death as well as the inter-are of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, radiant cyclic shapes in paradisiacal milieu, synecdoche for salvation and eternal life, acknowledge inter-dependence of Christology, Trinitarian theology, and Soteriology. Meta-images of cyclic shape, light, white and red color, lack of worldly props, and individuals with halos embodied within radiant tondi, but above all the Pantokrator help to replace temporal historicity with sacred causality, to acknowledge that eternal life relates to faith in incarnation and cross death, but also the unknowable transcendent God. In a religious sense, it is possible to perform an act of reading, while Christ is the Word/Logos itself.[46] An even more subtle apophatic acknowledgement of the inter-are of transcendent triune activity and incarnation is the earlier mentioned motif of the cross with each of

[42] *Oratio* 29.3, Eng. trans. L. Wickham (1991), 246.

[43] On the Pantokrator motif, circular form, gold, light, and brilliance in the Chora Church, see A. Karahan, *Byzantine Holy Images* (2010), 179, 207, 222-3, 306, 308.

[44] On the Byzantine border as interacting meta-image, in the epic narrative of the holy drama, see A. Karahan, 'Patristics and Byzantine Meta-Images' (2015), 571-94.

[45] On the cross-halo, see A. Karahan, 'Patristics and Byzantine Meta-Images' (2015), 571-94; *ead*., *Byzantine Holy Images* (2010), 123, 127-8, 179, 215, 232, 246. On trinitarian theology and Byzantine aesthetics, see *ead*., 'The Issue of περιχώρησις' (2010), 27-34; *ead*., 'En betraktelse' (2015), 85-105.

[46] See also, Bas. Caes., *Homilia*. 19, 'In sanctos quadraginta martyres' §2 (PG 31, 509A), 'what the word (λόγος) communicates by sound, the art of painting (γραφική) communicates silently by imitation (διὰ μιμήσεως)'.

its three arms ending with a sparkling medallion, at the church of Saint Nicholas, Demre. [Figure 4]

The Byzantine cross-in-square church with centered dome[47] is a geometrical combination of square, cross, and cyclic shape loaded with ritual significance. In support of my statement, I refer to the *prothesis* (or *proskomedia*), the service of preparing the holy gifts for the liturgy. The priest cuts out a square known as the lamb (or *amnon*) from the *prosphora*[48] (the main loaf of bread in the liturgy) and removes small particles and places them on a *diskos* (or paten) of precious metals, in commemoration of the Theotokos, the saints, and the living and departed faithful. In an Orthodox sense, the consecrated bread and wine of the Eucharist is through the power of the Holy Spirit the blood and body of Christ, prepared for and consumed by Orthodox Christians. In the liturgical rituals, within the uncircumscribed icon of air that expands from church floor to the Pantokrator in Heaven, celebration of the Eucharist sublimate the incarnation from Earth to Heaven and vise versa; the Lamb of God takes away the sin of the world (*John* 1:29) through its cross death. Yet, salvation depends on the incarnation, the unity of divinity with humanity in Jesus Christ, cross death, but also grace, a triune divine activity. The cross has two names, as Gregory of Nyssa puts it.[49] In context of holy images, sublimely acknowledged in tectonic transition from cross-in-square to cyclic shape, amplified further in sacramental bread and wine in celebration of the liturgy, its flames of flickering candlelight, burning of incense, holy words spoken and chanted,[50] in an apophatic but also cataphatic sense, the path from cross death to eternal life becomes accessible for human contemplation. In a religious sense, the dome hovers like a halo above the Christian community and the mystical action of the church and its resurrectional spirit. The cyclic shapes of dome, glimmering halo, and *diskos* acknowledge, in an apophatic sense, that those who commemorate the incarnation and celebrate Jesus Christ as Pantokrator and light of light (φῶς ἐκ φωτός) will be granted eternal life. For religious context, I refer to the sixth century monk Dorotheus of Gaza,

> Imagine that the world is a circle, that God is the center, and that the radii are the different ways human beings live. When those who wish to come closer to God walk towards the center of the circle, they come closer to one another at the same time as to God. The closer they come to God, the closer they come to one another. And the closer they come to one another, the closer they come to God.[51]

[47] Cf. Bas. Caes., *Hex*. 2.8, who speaks of the Heaven with its stars in terms of a hemisphere.

[48] The *prosphora* is consecrated during the liturgy to be the Eucharist, while the rest (*antidoron*) is blessed, cut up and distributed to parishioners and visitors at the end of the liturgy.

[49] *Apoll*. 21 (GNO III/1, 161.13).

[50] See also Carol Harrison, *The Art of Listening in the Early Church* (Oxford, 2013).

[51] *Didaskaliai* VI 4, 'Letter from Calcutta', Eng. trans. http://www.taize.fr/en_article5234.html); Dorothée de Gaza: *Œuvres spirituelles*, SC 92, L. Regnault, J. de Préville (2001: réimpr. de

In a religious sense, as Basil of Caesarea emphasizes, the lives of the saints 'lie before us like living images of God's government, for our imitation of their good works.'[52]

Concluding remarks

In Byzantine sacred art, architecture, and liturgy, the cyclic shape celebrates the supremacy of divine activity, return, and revolution.[53] The cyclic shape starts from itself and ends in itself,[54] thus its paradigm matches Orthodox axioms of divine activity. Compare John Damascene, who, in his first chapter of *On the Orthodox Faith*, draws on the two Cappadocian Gregories, and interprets the name 'God' (θεός) as God's activity, not his being. In order to verify causality between economy and theology,[55] the cyclic shape recognizes the economy of salvation as an ongoing course of events linked to divine activity.

The cyclic shape is no proper image, since that of course would be heretical, but an apophatic proxy or sign to recognize divine activity. The serenity of the halo and its disembodied, yet, dynamic brilliance, celebrate sanctity and recurrence of events exempt from new events. Compare Basil, who stresses that each person possesses the status of one made in the *image* (εἰκών) of God, which is not however the same as *likeness* (ὁμοίωσις) to God, which has to be striven for. Saints, Basil emphasizes, have acquired 'a power characteristic of God, the power to initiate action within themselves and the world around them.'[56]

In a religious sense, the relish is not for temporal realism or perfected corporeality, since corruption signifies the created within intervals of time.[57] Perfected temporal beauty has no rationale, because to imitate corruption equals death, not life.[58] In a narratological sense, the holy image breaks with time-related boundaries, in order to acknowledge divine exemption from time and space.

la 1re éd. rev. et corr., 1963); *Doctrinae etc*., MS. Barocci 11, paper, fols. 7-10 (15th c., middle) and fols. 11-202 (13th c., last third), Bodleian Library, Univ. of Oxford.

[52] Bas. Caes., *Epistula* 2, in Roy J. Deferrari (ed. and Eng. trans.), *The Letters* (London, 1926), vol. 1, 14-5.

[53] See also, Bas. Caes., 'through the revolution of the sun evening and morning traverse the world, the circle is completed, not in longer period of time, but in the space of one day' (*Hex*. 2.8, Eng. trans. Way, 34)

[54] See also Bas. Caes., *Hex*. 2.8 49C (SC 26bis, 180-3).

[55] See also, Anne Karahan, 'Byzantine Iconoclasm: Ideology and Quest for Power', in Kristine Kolrud, Marina Prusac (eds), *Iconoclasm from Antiquity to Modernity* (Surrey, England, 2014), 75-94.

[56] *Hex*. 9.4; P. Rousseau, *Basil of Caesarea* (1994), 340.

[57] On 'intervals of time' (χρονικοῖς διαστήμασι), see Bas. Caes., *Spir*. 59 (SC 17, 223). On the Trinity 'outside time', see Greg. Naz., *Oratio* 29, 2-3 (SC 250, 178-81).

[58] See also, Anne Karahan, 'Beauty in the Eyes of God. Byzantine Aesthetics and Basil of Caesarea', *Byzantion. Revue Internationale des Études Byzantines* 82 (2012), 165-212.

True-to-life drawing that is treatment of forms, colors, space, gravity, kinetics, proportions, corporeality, settings, etcetera, as they appear or might appear in nature and not in miraculous or supernatural revelation, a denial of divine presence and miraculous activity, has no role to play in this orthodox belief system. A holy image, however, is not an image of the soul (εἰκὼν τῆς ψυχῆς), but of an image of God (εἰκὼν τοῦ θεοῦ) in an apophatic as well as cataphatic sense.

Eschatological Themes in the Writings of Gregory of Nyssa and John Scottus Eriugena

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ABSTRACT

This article investigates selected facets of the eschatology of the ninth century thinker John Scottus Eriugena and compares these findings with ideas in his fourth century Cappadocian source, Gregory of Nyssa. The central hermeneutic distinction which structures Eriugena's eschatological vision, namely the distinction between a general return and a special return of all reality to the Creator, is outlined. The concepts of unification and encounter are used to analyse the special return of the elect. Hereby Eriugena's spiritual theology of the human outreach to the Divine and his theological use of the notion of the infinity of God (both heavily indebted to Gregory's writings) are considered. The theological legacy of Gregory and its development in the hands of Eriugena are identified, whereby the patristic author's initial theological insights become more lucid. By these means, the abiding relevance of the legacy of Gregory and Eriugena for a contemporary eschatology is highlighted.

The structure of the eschatology of John Scottus Eriugena

Scholarship has devoted much attention to the various ways in which Johannes Scottus Eriugena analyses the final perfecting of all reality. It's quite difficult to delineate the eschatologically relevant passages in Eriugena's oeuvre. Since an *exitus-reditus* scheme characterizes his thought as a whole, every passage on the return of nature to its source is technically, even if in some cases remotely, relevant. The greatest concentration of eschatologically relevant material is to be found in that section of his principal work *Periphyseon*, which deals with the return of all reality to its source, namely, in book five. Here he offers several analyses of the return.[1]

[1] Eriungena's work *Periphyseon*, Book V is quoted according to: *Iohannis Scotti Eriugenae Periphyseon, Liber Quintus, Editionem nouam a suppositiciis quidem additamentis purgatam, ditatam uero apppendice in qua uicissitudines operis synoptice exhibentur*, ed. Edouard Jeauneau, CChr.CM 165 (Turnhout, 2003). Analyses of return are found in: *Periphyseon* V 685-94, p. 24; *Periphyseon* V, 1507-48, p. 48-9; *Periphyseon* V 1625-38, p. 52 (quotation of five steps in return according to Maximus); *Periphyseon* V 7276-302, p. 224; *Periphyseon* V 7302-18, p. 224-5. See Hilary Anne-Marie Mooney, *Theophany. The Appearing of God According to the Writings of Johannes Scottus Eriugena*, Beiträge zur historischen Theologie 146 (Tübingen, 2009), 158-72;

Studia Patristica XCV, 421-429.
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According to Eriugena all things return to their beginning (*principium*), even sensible things. All humans whether perfect or imperfect, whether renewed in Christ through knowledge or still in the darkness of ignorance, desire the one and the same threefold fulfilment: 'being' and 'well-being' and 'being forever'.[2] No creature seeks non-being. That creature which is created in the image of God, even if it has strayed from this likeness, nonetheless always tries to return to its beginning, in order to attain the likeness again. 'Being' and 'living' and 'immortality' will be common to all humans, but 'well-being' and 'blessed being' will be, according to Eriugena, the special destiny of those who are perfect in action and knowledge.[3]

Accordingly, Eriugena claims that the return must be examined under two aspects: the first perspective considers the restoration of the *whole* of created reality; the second perspective considers the beatification and deification of those who ascend into God.[4] In the first so called 'general return' all things are brought back to the principle of their creation. In the second so called 'special return' he speaks of those who 'shall not only be restored to the Primordial Causes of their nature, but shall achieve the consummation of their Return, beyond every rank in the hierarchy of nature, in the Cause of all things, which is God'.[5]

Stephen Gersh, 'The Structure of the Return in Eriugena's Periphyseon', in Werner Beierwaltes (ed.), *Begriff und Metapher. Sprachform des Denkens bei Eriugena. Vorträge des VII. Internationalen Eriugena-Colloquiums, 26. - 29. Juli 1989* (Heidelberg, 1990), 108-25.

[2] *Periphyseon* V 307-8, p. 12 (PL 122, 867C).

[3] *Esse enim et uiuere et aeternaliter esse commune erit omnibus, et bonis et malis; bene autem et beate esse solis actione et scientia perfectis proprium et speciale erit*, *Periphyseon* V 335-8, p. 13 (PL 122, 868 B).

[4] For a detailed account of the reditus *specialis*/*reditus generalis* distinction see Edouard Jeauneau, 'Le thème du retour', in the same author's *Études Erigéniennes* (Paris, 1987), 367-94. On p. 371 Jeauneau presents the distinction as an attempt to reconcile the position which reason suggests, namely that all humans return to God and the scriptural description of a last judgement in which the sheep are separated from the goats (*Matth*. 25:31-46); Jeauneau finds a similar distinction in Maximus Confessor. In his footnote number 49 on p. 375, Jeauneau gives references to *Quaestiones ad Thalassium*, LIV, scholion 18(22). See Carl Laga (ed.), *Quaestiones ad Thalassium*, CChr.SG 7 (Turnhout, 1980), 474-5 (PG 90, 532C11-5); Gustavo A. Piemonte sees a similar distinction between kinds of grace occurring in the so called 'C1-C2' homilies in the *Opus Imperfectum in Matthaeum*, PG 56, 756-98; 897-946, see 'Some distinctive theses of Eriugena's Eschatology in his Exegesis of the Gospel according to St. Matthew', in Michael Dunne and James McEvoy (eds), *History and Eschatology in John Scottus Eriugena and His Time. Proceedings of the Tenth International Conference of the Society for the Promotion of Eriugenian Studies - Maynooth and Dublin*, Ancient and Medieval Philosophy 1 (Leuven, 2002), 227-42, 228.

[5] English from John J. O'Meara and Inglis Patrick Sheldon-Williams, *Eriugena. Periphyseon. The Division of Nature* (Montreal and Paris, 1987), 689: *specialis uero in his qui non solum ad primordia naturae reuocabuntur, sed etiam ultra omnem naturalem dignitatem in causam omnium (quae deus est) reditus sui finem constituent*, *Periphyseon* V 6392-5, p. 197 (PL 122, 1001B). Under the second aspect, the return of the blessed, return is more than a restoration of the previously possessed position. As Stephen Gersh has pointed out the notion of return is really transcended in this case, see Stephen Gersh, 'The Structure of the Return in Eriugena's *Periphyseon*', in W. Beierwaltes, *Begriff und Metapher* (1990), 108-25, 110.

Eriugena argues for the existence of these two returns on the basis of the *Genesis* account of paradise and says that it is one thing to return into Paradise, it is another to eat of the Tree of Life.[6] The tree of life is Christ and its fruit is the blessed life and eternal peace in the contemplation of the truth, which according to Eriugena, is properly called deification.[7] He offers the text: 'For we shall all rise again, but we shall not all be changed' from the *First Letter to the Corinthians* as further scriptural support for his theory.[8]

The general return is a return whose main outlines Eriugena could have chosen to present in philosophical terms. However, Eriugena chooses to interpret it from a biblical-theological perspective. He illustrates it by the biblical Exodus story. Indeed, both perspectives on the return, general and special, are repeatedly illustrated by means of biblical stories.

Eriugena himself would not of course make a distinction between theology and philosophy. He was a thinker who operated with a sapiential understanding of truth which embraces all the wisdom at its disposal, even that truth accessible to non-Christian thinkers. He is thus at pains to explain what he views as an ultimately Christological eschatological event as fully as he can, and in so doing draws on the terminology of creatural reality and on all passages of Scripture which serve his purposes of argument and illustration.[9]

[6] *Periphyseon* V 5400-1, pp. 165-6 (PL 122, 979A).

[7] *Periphyseon* V 5413-6, p. 166 (PL 122, 979B).

[8] *Periphyseon* V 5418-9, p. 166 (PL 122, 979B). Eriugena writes: *Omnes quidem resurgemus, sed non omnes immutabimur*, relying on the Vulgata translation of 1*Cor*. 15:51.

[9] Edouard Jeauneau writes that the general return 'satisfait non seulement aux exigences dialectiques du schéma néoplatonicien *processio - reditus*, mais aussi au dogme de l'universalité de l'œuvre salvatrice accomplié par le Christ', Edouard Jeauneau, 'Le thème du retour' (1987), 375; S. Gersh's paper 'The Structure of the Return in Eriugena's *Periphyseon*' bears testimony to the various schemes of analysis within which the return is presented. His article first concentrates on the metaphysical assumptions which underlie the doctrine of return in *Periphyseon*. Here he deals with such topics as: unity, multiplicity and the Return; space, time and the Return. He then outlines what he calls two horizontal schemes and two vertical schemes. He comments 'the horizontal articulation has connotations of temporality or quasi-temporality (cf. p. 118ff.), the vertical articulation connotations of spatiality or quasi-spatiality (cf. p. 119ff.)', footnote 71, pp. 117/8. Gersh's analysis of the schemes of return builds then on the metaphysical categories which he investigates in the first part of his paper, see p. 117: 'These metaphysical ideas regarding levels of being, unity and multiplicity, and spatiotemporality are not the subjects of special excursus in the text of *Periphyseon* but rather assumptions underlying the discussion on the return in general'. Gersh's excellent paper investigates these schemes of return according to the philosophical ideas which he sees associated with Eriugena's expositions. He is aware that there are certain ambiguities in Eriugena's writings on return and does not claim that his own analysis has eliminated all these ambiguities (see p. 124). It is significant that Gersh barely mentions Eriugena's distinction between the general/special aspects of return (see his p. 120). This axis is, however, in my opinion, of intense interest to scholars concerned with Eriugena's use of Scripture and his attempts to adequately account for the details of eschatology with which the Judaeo-Christian scriptures present us.

The return of the elect as 'unification' and 'encounter'

Of special interest in this article is the theme of the special return of the elect in Eriugena's *Periphyseon*. This return is interpreted by Eriugena as a unification. Not, however, as a unification which results in a merging of creation and God and which thereby destroys the identity of the human creation. Rather, the return is interpreted as a unification which maintains an 'inter-'personal aspect; return is interpreted as a unification in knowledge and love between the chosen Christian and the Lord. Gregory of Nyssa is not the only patristic writer who influenced Eriugena on the return of the elect to Christ. One might alternatively have traced yet again Maximus' influence as have others. Gregory has, however, contributed ideas which are central to an interpretation of the special return as *encounter*. And such a reading of Eriugena and Gregory is, as I argue, of interest to contemporary discussions of eschatology. To this contemporary relevance I shall return in the closing passage of this article.

The presentation of the return in *Periphyseon* Book V 7302-18 may serve as an illustration.[10] Here Eriugena speaks of seven stages in the return of humans to God. Eriugena introduces seven grades which according to him represent stages in the path to deification: The earthly body (*corpus terrenum*) is said to be transformed into vital motion (*motus uitalis*). This vital motion in turn is said to be transformed into sensation (*sensus*). Sensation is turned into reason (*ratio*), and reason into mind (*animus*) or intellect (*intellectus*).[11] In the context of these first four grades of transformation Eriugena speaks of the unification of the parts of our nature. However, this unification is described as one which does not endanger the existence of the lower nature. In the case of each stage the lower part is absorbed into the higher in such a way as not to lose its existence but to become one with the higher nature: *Inferioribus semper a superioribus consummatis, non ut non sint sed ut unum sint*.[12]

He then relates the transformation of mind into the knowledge of all things (*scientia omnium*), the knowledge of all things into wisdom (*sapientia*), and finally the transformation of the highest, most purified into God *purgatissimorum animorum in ipsum deum:* here too the resulting unification is a cognitive

[10] See *Periphyseon* V 7302-18, pp. 224-5 (PL 122, 1020C-1021A) and S. Gersh, 'The Structure of the Return in Eriugena's Periphyseon' (1990), 119: 'A second horizontal articulation of the return is inserted towards the end of *Periphyseon* at V. 1020 C-D. This consists of a 'recursion' (*recursio*) through seven 'stages' (*gradus*) corresponding to a more detailed analysis of the third to fifth phases in the previous horizontal scheme'. In my opinion the significant lines run to 1021A.

[11] *Periphyseon* V 7303-10, pp. 224-5 (PL 122, 1020C).

[12] *Periphyseon* V 7310-1, p. 225 (PL 122, 1020D), here the fuller passage: *... hanc quinque ueluti partium nostrae naturae adunationem (corporis uidelicet et uitalis motus sensusque rationisque intellectusque) ita ut non quinque sed unum sint. Inferioribus semper a superioribus consummatis, non ut non sint sed ut unum sint*, *Periphyseon* V 7307-11, p. 225 (PL 122, 1020C-D).

one: *secretissima diuina mysteria beatis et illuminatis intellectibus ineffabili quodam modo aperientur*.[13]

In this account of return too, the identity of the human creature and the distinct identity of God are preserved. The cognitive unification with God does not obliterate the human as a creature distinct from its Creator. This is an important observation if we are to maintain that the ultimate fulfilment of the human person lies in encounter with God.

Speaking of the various schemes of division of the return Bernard McGinn has stated that '[p]erhaps the mechanics of the divisions are less important than the inner significance of the whole system...'[14] In my opinion too, certain recurring parametres are of the utmost importance – for example, that the lower reality absorbed into the higher reality does not lose its existence. In all the schemes for analysing return, the final unification with God is to be understood primarily in cognitive (or as will be established, volitional) terms and hereby human autonomy and individuality are always preserved.

What further texts support this interpretation of the human's final perfection with an encounter with God/ or with Christ?

In a passage in his commentary on *John's Gospel* Eriugena describes the scene where God reveals God's very Self in theophanies to those who love and seek God. Through these theophanies they are carried up to meet Christ (*rapiuntur ... obuiam Christo*).[15] Theophany is presented as encounter with Christ. This encounter is said to be granted to those who not only seek God (which could be a purely intellectual enterprise devoid of all attempts to live a moral life) but who in addition love God (*quaerentibus et diligentibus*).

One may also draw attention to Eriugena's prayer in *Periphyseon* V 6828-41 (pp. 210-1) :

> And what is your passing over, O Lord, but an ascent through the infinite steps of Your contemplation? And ever do You open that way in the understandings of those who seek and find You. Ever are You sought by them and ever are You found, – and yet You are not found. … You grant unto Your own (*Ministras igitur tuis*) Your Presence (*praesentiam tuam*) by a mysterious manifestation of Yourself: You elude them by the infinite and incomprehensible transcendence of Your essence.[16]

[13] Emphasis H.M. These three transformations are related in *Periphyseon* V 7312-20, p. 225 (PL 122, 1020D-1021A).

[14] Bernard McGinn, 'Eriugena Mysticus', in Claudio Leonardi and Enrico Menestò (eds), *Giovanni Scoto nel suo tempo. L'organizzazione del sapere in età carolingia. Atti del XXIV Convegno internazionale (Todi, 11-14 ottobre 1987)* (Spoleto, 1983), 235-60, 256.

[15] *Item uirtutes purgatissimarum animarum ¦ et intellectuum theophaniae sunt, et in eis quaerentibus et diligentibus se deus <seipsum> manifestat, in quibus, ueluti quibusdam nubibus, rapiuntur sancti obuiam christo…* Edouard Jeauneau (ed.), *Jean Scot. Commentaire sur l'Evangile de Jean*, SC 180 (Paris, 1972), I, XXV, 88-91, p. 124 (PL 122, 302B).

[16] The fuller passage reads: 'And what is your passing over, O Lord, but an ascent through the infinite steps of Your contemplation? And ever do You open that way in the understandings of those who seek and find You. Ever are You sought by them and ever are You found, – and yet You are

The text is significant: It deals with the special return, it deals with it in terms of an 'interpersonal' encounter. Moreover, thematically, the passage links Eriugena to the theology and philosophy of the incomprehensibility of God as found in the writings of Gregory of Nyssa. Much scholarship has spoken of Gregory of Nyssa's influence on Eriugena. His extensive quotation from, and paraphrases of sections of the work *De hominis opificio* within *Periphyseon* are well known. The prayer quoted reflects the theology of the incomprehensibility of God to be found in *De hominis opificio* and in Gregory's other writings.

The infinity of God in the eschatology of Eriugena and Gregory of Nyssa

The metaphysical presupposition which underpins Eriungena's eschatology is that an infinite object makes possible an infinite number of perceptions of this object, and thus an infinite number of ways of returning to it. Eriugena implements the notion of theophanies to accommodate this diversity. The contemplation of the truth is permitted to different degrees. 'For it shall appear to all, though not in the same measure but in an infinite number of ascents and descents of Theophany both to the righteous and to the unrighteous, but it shall appear to all...'[17] In his commentary on *John's Gospel* one finds texts which place the infinite number of ascents within the context of an ultimate arriving (*perueniant*) at the knowledge of him (Christ).[18] In *Periphyseon* book V there

not found. You are ever found in Your theophanies in which You appear in the minds of those who understand You after a manifold mode, as in a number of mirrors, in the way in which You permit to be known not what You are, but what You are not; not what You are, but that You are; You are not found in Your superessential nature in which You pass beyond and exceed every understanding that desires to comprehend You and to ascend unto You. You grant unto Your own (*Ministras igitur tuis*) Your Presence by a mysterious manifestation of Yourself: You elude them by the infinite and incomprehensible transcendence of Your essence', *Periphyseon* V 6828-41, pp. 210-1 (PL 122, 1010C-D). Here the English translation of I.P. Sheldon-Williams and John J. O'Meara, p. 700-1 has been modified by myself taking account of Jeauneau's new critical edition of book five in CChr.CM 165. *Et quis est, domine, transitus tuus, nisi per infinitos contemplationis tuae gradus ascensus? Semper enim in intellectibus quaerentium et inuenientium te transitum facis. Quaereris enim ab eis semper, et semper inueniris, et non inueniris. Semper inueniris quidem in tuis theophaniis, in quibus multipliciter, ueluti in quibusdam speculis, occurris mentibus intelligentium te eo modo quo te sinis intelligi, non quid es, sed quid non es et quia es. Non inueniris autem in tua superessentialitate qua transis et exsuperas omnem intellectum uolentem et ascendentem comprehendere te. Ministras igitur tuis praesentiam tuam ineffabili quodam modo apparitionis tuae, transis ab eis incomprehensibili excelsitudine et infinitate essentiae tuae.*

[17] *... non eodem modo, sed multiplicibus in infinitum diuinarum uisionum ascensionibus et descensionibus et iustis et iniustis apparebit, omnibus tamen apparebit...*', *Periphyseon* V 4704-7, p. 145 (PL 122, 964A), English from J. O'Meara and I.P. Sheldon-Williams, *Periphyseon* (1987), 645. This text was also of importance in the consideration of the hierarchic appropriation of the appearing of God in Jesus Christ.

[18] *... semper in altum ascendentes, donec ad ueram eius notitiam perueniant; infinitus enim infinite, etiam in purgatissimis mentibus, formatur.* Edouard Jeauneau (ed.), *Jean Scot. Commentaire sur l'Evangile de Jean* (1972), I, XXXII, 41-3, p. 182 (PL 122, 312B).

exists at least one passage which seems to speak of an infinite search for God even in heaven.[19] It is interesting that Dominic O'Meara indeed ascribes such a position to Eriugena:

In the beatific vision, furthermore, the absolute incomprehensibility of God according to Eriugena and the consequent necessity of attaining the vision of God in theophanies give to this vision a dialectical, progressive quality: even in this vision we will continue to search as we are led further and further in the theophanic contemplation of the hiddenness of God.[20]

The question remains how completely Eriugena adopted this position. If one is to argue that he did adopt this notion from Gregory then I see the strongest indication of this in *Periphyseon* V 2690-1: *[n]am et uirtutes caelestes deum suum quaerunt, in quem semper prospicere concupiscent...* It is important to add that the text just quoted refers to the longing of the heavenly powers and reinforces the case of the human creature.[21] In the face of these texts there seem to be strong arguments for the opinion that Eriugena envisaged an infinite search for increased knowledge and appreciation of the depths of God on the part of all humans (and celestial powers) in heaven.

Eschatology as interpersonal encounter

There are further texts which present deification in terms of encounter between the infinite God and God's own. For example, *Periphyseon* V 2686-90:

'This is the meaning of the Psalmist's words: "Seek the Lord and be confirmed in Him: ever seek his face". This is that spiritual way which leads to the infinite, and which is trodden by all purged and perfected souls who seek their God'.[22]

[19] *Periphyseon* V 2677-9, p. 84 (PL 122, 919D): *necesssario semper quaritur ac semper mouetur per hoc quod quaerit, mirabilique modo quodammodo quod quaerit unuenit, et non inuenit, quia inueniri non potest*.

[20] Dominic O'Meara, 'Eriugena and Aquinas on the Beatific Vision', in Werner Beierwaltes (ed.), *Eriugena Redivivus. Zur Wirkungsgeschichte seines Denkens im Mittelalter und im Übergang zur Neuzeit. Vorträge des V. Internationalen Eriugena-Colloquiums Werner-Reimers-Stiftung Bad Homburg, 26.-30. August 1985* (Heidelberg, 1987), 224-36, 234. O'Meara refers to *Periphyseon* V, PL 122 1010C-D and 919C. In the first text (corresponding in my opinion to *Periphyseon* V 6825-41, p. 210-1 in the edition of Jeauneau) I am not entirely convinced that a search for God *in heaven* is being affirmed. The context is understanding Jesus' words in the Scriptures, an activity usually assigned to our earthly life. The second text (I deem *Periphyseon* V 2675-91, p. 83-4 in the edition of Jeauneau to be relevant) relies heavily on Gregory of Nyssa, who certainly held that our search is infinite even in heaven.

[21] *Periphyseon* V 2690-1, p. 84 (PL 122, 919D).

[22] *Et hoc est quod psalmista dicit:* 'Quaerite Dominum et confirmamine; quaerite faciem ejus semper'. *Et haec est spiritualis illa uia, quae in infinitum tendit, quam purae perfectaeque animae ingrediuntur, deum suum quaerentes*, *Periphyseon* V 2686-90, p. 84 (PL 122, 919D).

Here, once again, the theology of infinitude of God (Gregory's legacy) is combined with an interpersonal search for her or his God (the expression 'their God' accentuates the intimacy of the search and resulting encounter).

In *Periphyseon* one also finds an interesting interpretation of the biblical story of the ten bridesmaids awaiting the bridegroom.[23] According to Eriugena's interpretation this scene represents the encounter between Christ, his church and the holy souls longing for happiness.[24] The virgins take up their lamps (these are said to represent the ability to know the eternal light) and go out to meet Christ and the church: *accipientes lampades suas ... exierunt obuiam … Christo*.[25] In Eriugena's text there follows the question *quare obuiam*? The repetition of *obviam* emphasizes the moment of meeting or encounter.[26] Furthermore the divine side of the encounter is also highlighted. The driving force behind the encounter is subsequently mentioned: the redeemer moved by concern condescends and, viewed from a human perspective, is perceived as continually approaching us in a spiritual manner *redemptor … semper ad recipiendos nos spiritualiter uenit*. [27]

I would like to draw attention to the motive of 'eager and ready anticipation' which is common to both authors even if a dependence on Gregory on Eriugena's part with respect to this matter cannot be proven. The motif is to be found in the two authors in eschatologically relevant bible interpretations. Gregory of Nyssa and Eriugena use the image of a human's fighting back the temptation to

[23] *Matth.* 25:1-13.

[24] Eriugena's interpretation of the delay of the bridegroom, his sleep and the virgin's sleep reveal interesting Christological details. The delay in the coming of the bridegroom is the interval between the beginning and the end of the world. Throughout this period the virgins, that is those whose humanity is defiled but not destroyed, seek to ascend to meet the bridegroom. Some (those who have died) are said to be sleepers, others (those who are alive when this world comes to an end) are called dozers. The middle of the night stands for the end of the world. One interpretation of the cry of the foolish virgins 'Lord, Lord, open unto us' is that it entails a reference to two supposed substances of Christ (as opposed to the correct position of two natures) to which the uninstructed Christians call out. Eriugena makes clear that he does not agree with this widely held opinion, see *Periphyseon* V 7190-6, p. 221-2 (PL 122, 1018B). His Christology is loyally Chacedonian: *Verbum itaque adunatum carni et caro adunata uerbo in unitatem inseparabilem unius eiusdemque substantiae ex duabus naturis (diuina uidelict et humana) non alios recipit, nisi eos qui simplici perfectae contemplationis oculo unitatem substantiae suae intuentur, ita ut et homo in uerbo uere filius dei, et uerbum in homine uere filius hominis, absque ulla naturarum transmutatione, unus idemque filius dei et hominis, dominus noster Iesus Christus intelligatur*, *Periphyseon* V 7209-17, p. 222 (PL 122, 1018C-D).

[25] *Quae accipientes lampades suas (hoc est capacitatem aeternae lucis cognoscendae) exierunt obuiam sponso et sponsae, Christo uidelicet et ecclesiae...*, *Periphyseon* V 6852-5, p. 211 (PL 122, 1011 A).

[26] *Periphyseon* V 6859, p. 211 (PL 122, 1011B).

[27] *Quia uidelicet redemptor et sponsus rationalis naturae ineffabili clementiae suae condescensione et sollertia semper ad recipiendos nos spiritualiter uenit, caelestibus uirtutibus et animabus sanctis ei commeantibus affectione salutis nostra commotis*, *Periphyseon* V 6859-63, p. 211 (PL 122, 1011B).

sleep as an image for steadfast perseverance, motivated by eschatological hope. This image plays a role in Eriugena's narrative of the wise and foolish bridesmaids in *Matthew* 25. In Gregory's eleventh homily on the *Song of Songs* the Cappadocian writes: 'Our Lord has given us precepts to make the disciples desire the transcendent … One of these precepts is the necessity to overcome sleep in searching for the life on high. They must always keep their minds awake…'[28] Here the inspiring biblical text is either *Matthew* 25 or *Mark* 13. The habitus which is expected of Christians is according to both authors one of eager anticipation of the fulfillment of hope which is to come. In the same homily this time with reference to *Lk.* 12:37 Gregory writes: 'By watching at the gates of our dwellings, we prepare ourselves for the bridegroom's summons when he arrives and knocks at the door. "Blessed are those servants whom the master finds so doing when he comes"'.[29] The hermeneutic of eschatological fulfilment as encounter which is central to this article is further strengthened by such emphasis on a waiting for the revered person's calling.

Conclusion

In this article on Eriugena's eschatology several themes common to Eriugena and Gregory of Nyssa have emerged. This common ground – the notion of the infinity of God, the position that ultimate human perfection is attained in encounter with the infinite Divine, and a grasp of the significance of a fervent anticipation of the Lord's coming – underpins their respective eschatologies. Their insights are not obsolete. Increased interest in theological analyses of the fate of the individual human is causing a surge in publications. One witnesses the tendency to translate all spatial and temporal metaphors which scripture and the theological tradition suggest for the afterlife into aspects of an encounter of the individual human with their God. In the historical writings of Eriugena and Gregory an appreciation of the hermeneutic category of encounter which is central to contemporary debates on eschatology were already inchoately present. The theological insights of Eriugena and Gregory thus make valuable contributions to this ongoing theological enterprise. The most innovative aspect of their mutual eschatological vision – the proposition that progress in the knowledge of God in heaven is part of the final fulfilment of human persons – represents a speculative challenge which contemporary academic theology must also accept. Not least, an interreligious theology of the state of the blessed in heaven demands this.

[28] Gregory of Nyssa, *In canticum canticorum*, ed. Hermann Langerbeck, GNO VI (Leiden, 1960), 315. Translation Casimir McCambley, *Gregory of Nyssa, Commentary on the Song of Songs* (Brookline, Massachusetts, 1987), 199.

[29] Gregory of Nyssa, *In canticum canticorum*, ed. H. Langerbeck (1960), 319. Translation C. McCambley, *Gregory of Nyssa. Song of Songs* (1987), 200.

‘Natural Contemplation’ in Evagrius Ponticus’ *Scholia on Proverbs*

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Abstract

Evagrius assigns to natural contemplation, *phusikē theōria*, a central place in his account of the monastic spiritual life. Despite this there is still a great deal lacking in our understanding of the theoretical framework and practice of this contemplation. Evagrius is still riddled with a one-sided reputation of being a ‘mental iconoclast’. In this article I claim that this approach needs to be replaced with a more careful attention to the styles of thought, the genres, literary habits and philosophical framework in which he frames *phusikē theōria*. Through an analysis of the first five scholia on *Proverbs* I suggest that the work of exegesis of scriptural language is a practice which contributes to contemplation of nature and that it should be understood against the philosophical background of the attainment of reliable ‘scientific’ knowledge, *epistēmē*, as mediated to Evagrius by Clement of Alexandria.

1. Natural contemplation as possibility and problem

‘Christianity is the doctrine of Christ the Saviour. It is comprised of the practical, the natural, and the theological. [Χριστιανισμός ἐστι δόγμα τοῦ Σωτῆρος ἡμῶν Χριστοῦ ἐκ πρακτικῆς καὶ φυσικῆς καὶ θεολογικῆς συνεστός.]’[1] In this first chapter of Evagrius Ponticus’ work *Praktikos* he presents the tripartite structure which is a major feature and organising principle in his literary production. In what follows I will try to flesh out some aspects of what Evagrius might have meant with this compressed statement, specifically what he thought was involved in the second item of the definition of the *dogma* of Christ: *phusikē*. We will look at his exegetical scholia on *Proverbs* in order to try to further our understanding of the conceptual framework and practices Evagrius associated with *phusikē theōria*, natural contemplation.

In the writings of Evagrius the area of monastic praxis which he refers to as *phusikē theōria*, is divided in several different types of contemplations of the created order. These are often ordered in a spiritualising ascending order from

[1] Evagrius, *Praktikos* 1, SC 171 (Paris, 1971). English translation from Robert E. Sinkewicz, *Evagrius of Pontus: The Greek Ascetic Corpus* (Oxford, 2003), 97.

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contemplation of bodies and worlds, on to contemplation of incorporeal beings, which in the end leads the mind to the wholly spiritual and ineffable knowledge of the Trinity. Contemplation of nature also includes the contemplation of providence and judgment, which deal with cosmic history and God's action to save his creation from sin and ignorance. The lower and more preliminary forms of *phusikē* are referred to as 'second' natural contemplation, and those that deal with the incorporeal world are 'first' natural contemplation.[2]

The problem with understanding the *mechanics* or method of practicing *phusikē theōria* and the role it played in Evagrius' monastic programme is that we often hear him speaking about when it should *not* be engaged in, about the potential dangers it entailed. Evagrius claims that *phusikē* is a central intellectual-spiritual practice which leads the mind to God, but it also seems to occupy a space which is fraught with potential dangers: in *Gnostikos*, we are told that beginners should not be allowed to discuss or even hear about some of the doctrines connected to contemplation of beings, lest they get confused, embrace false knowledge, or develop habits of excessive argumentation and questioning before making progress in virtue.[3] Similarly it is the cognitive habits of *phusikē theōria* which can become a distraction, and it seems, a source of demonic delusions, when the monk who seeks to engage in pure prayer imagines the shape and form of God instead of leaving all such creaturely categories behind.[4] It is precisely because of the precarious nature of knowledge mediated by nature that the *gnostikos*-teacher plays such a crucial role in the spiritual life of the monk as Evagrius imagines it. To prevent 'shipwreck' (a favourite metaphor with Evagrius[5]) the quest for reliable knowledge must be embedded in an educational relationship with a *gnostikos* through which intellectual and moral virtues can be formed. These virtues are thought to enable and support a style of thinking and reading wherein contemplations of various kinds and value can occur.

The fact that 'natural contemplation' as it was understood, taught and practiced by Evagrius is a somewhat elusive phenomenon to his modern day readers should not come as a surprise. In *Kephalaia Gnostica* Evagrius addresses the undefined nature of *phusikē theōria* and tells us that 'Divine Scripture has not made known what the contemplation of beings is, but it has taught quite openly *how* one should approach it by practising the commandments and by true teachings'.[6] This last expression 'commandments and true teaching' expresses the commonly stated goal of Evagrian monastic life, namely that of being transferred from 'evil and ignorance to virtue and knowledge' (ἀπὸ κακίας καὶ

[2] See Evagrius, *Kephalaia Gnostica* 1.27; 1.74; *Sententiae ad monachos* 131-6.
[3] Evagrius, *Gnostikos* 25-6.
[4] Evagrius, *De oratione* 55-7, 66-7; *De malignis cogitationibus* 40.
[5] See *e.g.* Evagrius, *De malignis cogitationibus* 23; *Scholia in Proverbia* 266.
[6] Evagrius, *Kephalaia Gnostica* 6.1; unpublished translation by Rowan Greer.

ἀγνωσίας ἐπ' ἀρετὴν καὶ γνῶσιν).[7] *Praktikē* and knowledge together lead the soul to God. Evagrius repeatedly reminds his readers that the mind must be continually guarded from 'false knowledge' by a properly carried out *phusikē theōria* wedded to practice of the virtues.[8] The realm of *gnōsis* is not just concerned with speculation or a passive reception of elevated mysteries, there are intellectual virtues that need to be developed, and we should understand Evagrius' teaching on *phusikē theōria* as concerned also with the means of securing this reliable and true knowledge.

2. Scholia on *Proverbs* 1-5

Let's turn now to the scholia on *Proverbs* and look at a few examples where we can get an idea of how the process of *phusikē theōria* functioned, and the conceptual framework which Evagrius embeds it in. The collections of scholia on biblical books comprise a large part of Evagrius' literary output and they are a body of evidence which must be integrated into our account of *phusikē theōria*, in order that this account be grounded in the types of texts Evagrius actually produced, and in the habits of mind which they presuppose or claim to lead the reader to. Evagrius consistently associates the act of reading with contemplation of nature, be this in a literal sense such as through psalmody[9] or listening to biblical texts during vigils,[10] or in other instances where reading is the controlling metaphor shedding light on his understanding of *phusikē*, such as when he compares it to teaching the letters of the alphabet to children,[11] or the act of reading a love letter from God inscribed in nature.[12] When trying to delineate the space occupied by *phusikē theōria* in Evagrius' thought we should not just investigate the *subject matter* associated with cosmology and knowledge of created beings, but also take into account the style of his thinking when it comes to *carrying out phusikē*: and this he does through providing his readers with allusive gnomic sayings, through the genres of the exegetical scholia, syllogisms, definitions, and analysis of language and created being using concepts inspired by *e.g.* Aristotle's *Categoriae*.[13]

[7] Evagrius, *Scholia in Proverbia* 12; *Gnostikos* 48; *Scholia in Psalmos* 76:11; 112:7.

[8] See *e.g. Scholia in Proverbia* 44: γνῶσιν ψευδῆ; *Scholia in Proverbia* 46: ψευδώνυμος γνῶσις.

[9] Evagrius, *De oratione* 85.

[10] Evagrius, *De octo spiritibus malitiae* 4.21; *Tractatus ad Eulogium* 20.

[11] Evagrius, *Kephalaia Gnostica* 3.57.

[12] Evagrius, *The Great Letter* 5-6.

[13] Wolfgang Lackner calls attention to the allusions to Aristotle's *Categoriae* in the *Kephalaia Gnostica* in his article 'Zur profanen Bildung des Euagrios Pontikos', in *Hans Gerstinger: Festgabe zum 80. Geburtstag* (Graz, 1966), 17-29. See also examples of Evagrius' use of Aristotle's *Organon* in Paul Géhin, 'La place de la *Lettre sur la foi* dans l'œuvre d'Evagre', in Paolo Bettiolo

The origins of Evagrius' scholia are obscure. Paul Géhin has suggested that perhaps they were culled from the margins of Evagrius' own copy of the Bible by his disciples after his death.[14] But as literary witnesses to Evagrius' life as an author and monastic teacher they fit very well with the theory he describes in works such as *Gnostikos*, where he says that the *gnostikos*, the experienced monk who has progressed in virtue and knowledge, must be able to give definitions of virtues and vices to those he is in charge of teaching,[15] he should provide them with proofs that define the customary terminology of the Bible,[16] and be able to interpret it spiritually to show how different passages can be understood as revealing truths regarding *praktikē*, *phusikē* and *theologikē*.[17] The scholia also give witness to the type of literary re-use of the Bible Evagrius engaged in, they give us access to his way of reading, which he later put to creative use through unexplained allusions and quotations in composing his own gnomic sayings and proverbs.[18] The scholia thus give us a glimpse of the intellectual activity of Evagrius, as a teacher and thinker, in the business of gaining and transmitting access to reliable knowledge.

As for the scholia on *Proverbs* in particular, scholion 247 gives us one crucial hint about the general scope of the book of *Proverbs* as Evagrius understood it. Evagrius says that the inner principles or reasons, the *logoi*, of *praktikē*, *phusikē* and theology will be understood by 'the one who widens his heart through purity'.[19] He then adapts the theory found in Origen's *Commentary on Song of Songs* (and in many later authors) where the books of Solomon should be understood as a progressive 'curriculum' of true philosophy: *Proverbs* is about ethics, *Ecclesiastes* about physics, and finally the *Song of Songs* deals with theology proper.[20] Knowing this we might suspect that Evagrius' scholia on *Proverbs* should focus primarily on matters of ethics. But, as we will see,

(ed.), *L'epistula fidei di Evagrio Pontico: Temi, contesti, sviluppi*, Studia Ephemeridis Augustinianum 72 (Rome, 2000), 30-6.

[14] P. Géhin, 'La place de la *Lettre sur la foi*' (2000), 53.

[15] Evagrius, *Gnostikos* 17.

[16] Evagrius, *Gnostikos* 19.

[17] Evagrius, *Gnostikos* 18; 20. For an introduction to Evagrius' exegetical pedagogy, and a brief analysis of the relationship between *Gnostikos* and the scholia see Columba Stewart, 'Evagrius Ponticus on Monastic Pedagogy', in John Behr, Andrew Louth and Dimitri Conomos (eds), *Abba: The Tradition of Orthodoxy in the West* (Crestwood, 2003), 241-71.

[18] On the usefulness of consulting the biblical scholia for interpreting Evagrius' gnomic sayings see Augustine Casiday, 'Gabriel Bunge and the Study of Evagrius Ponticus: A Review Article', *St Vladimir's Theological Quarterly* 48 (2004), 249-97, 263.

[19] Evagrius, *Scholia in Proverbia* 247, SC 340 (Paris, 1987): Ὁ πλατύνας διὰ τῆς καθαρότητος τὴν καρδίαν αὐτοῦ νοήσει τοὺς τοῦ θεοῦ λόγους τούς τε πρακτικοὺς καὶ τοὺς φυσικοὺς καὶ τοὺς θεολογικούς. Πᾶσα γὰρ ἡ κατὰ τὴν γραφὴν πραγματεία τέμνεται τριχῶς εἰς ἠθικὴν καὶ φυσικὴν καὶ θεολογικήν. Καὶ ἀκολουθεῖ τῇ μὲν πρώτῃ αἱ Παροιμίαι, τῇ δὲ δευτέρᾳ ὁ Ἐκκλησιαστής, τῇ δὲ τρίτῃ τὰ Ἄισματα τῶν ᾀσμάτων.

[20] Origen, *Commentarius in Canticum* praef. 3; Gregory of Nyssa, *In Canticum canticorum* 1. On this tradition and its relation to ideas concerning the parts of philosophy see Pierre Hadot,

the ethical teachings of *Proverbs* are from the start oriented by Evagrius to questions of knowledge. Columba Stewart has pointed out that the first five scholia on *Proverbs* provide an 'epistemological orienting of the work'.[21] These first chapters make clear that even though following Origen in seeing the main topic of *Proverbs* as associated with the practical life of virtue, the goal of *praktikē* is engaging in various forms of contemplation, of created beings and of God. We will now take a brief look at these initial 'epistemological' scholia to see in what way they give us an idea about the intellectual context of Evagrius' natural contemplation, which might indicate the manner in which this *theoria* was practiced.

The first two scholia on *Proverbs* are written as glosses on the very first words of the book, namely, 'proverbs of Salomon son of David, who was king in Israel' (*Prov*. 1:1 NETS). The words that Evagrius focuses on and seeks to define are 'proverb' and 'kingdom of Israel'. Regarding the first we are told that: 'A "proverb" is a word [λόγος] which signifies intelligible objects through sensory objects'.[22] Here Evagrius establishes at the very beginning what we are dealing with in reading *Proverbs*: these literary constructions, these proverbs, are instances of a meaningful and a dynamic relationship of signification between the sensory and the intelligible *in language*. It is this process of gaining access to the intelligible through the sensory which makes reading a fitting metaphor and medium for that same movement when it is carried out through *phusikē theōria*. A proverb is essentially an expression of language which becomes an opportunity for the mind to engage in the contemplative activity of going below the surface of created things.[23]

In the two following scholia it becomes clear that for Evagrius the subject matter of many of these proverbs is knowledge regarding *phusikē*. In scholion 2 Evagrius comments on the description in the first verse of *Proverbs* of Solomon as 'king of Israel', explaining that: 'The "kingdom of Israel" is spiritual knowledge of the *reasons* [λόγους] concerning God and the incorporeal and bodily beings and judgment and providence; or, which reveals the contemplation concerning *ethics* and *physics* and *theology*'.[24] That this knowledge of the *logoi* of nature, as found in bodies, incorporeals, providence and judgment is the proper topic also of the 'ethical' book of *Proverbs* become clear

'Les divisions des parties de la philosophie dans l'antiquité', *Museum helveticum* 36 (1979), 201-23.

[21] C. Stewart, 'Evagrius Ponticus on Monastic Pedagogy' (2003), 266.

[22] Evagrius, *Scholia in Proverbia* 1, SC 340 (Paris, 1987): Παροιμία ἐστὶν λόγος δι' αἰσθητῶν πραγμάτων σημαίνων πράγματα νοητά. Compare the distinction between sensible and intelligible knowledge in *Gnostikos* 4 and *Kephalaia Gnostica* 2.45.

[23] See also *e.g*. *Kephalaia Gnostica* 6.54.

[24] Evagrius, *Scholia in Proverbia* 2, SC 340 (Paris, 1987): Βασιλεία Ἰσραήλ ἐστιν γνῶσις πνευματικὴ τοὺς περὶ θεοῦ καὶ ἀσωμάτων καὶ σωμάτων καὶ κρίσεως καὶ προνοίας περιέχουσα λόγους ἢ τὴν περὶ ἠθικῆς καὶ φυσικῆς καὶ θεολογικῆς ἀποκαλύπτουσα θεωρίαν.

in scholion 3 where Evagrius comments on the words 'to learn wisdom and discipline [γνῶναι σοφίαν καὶ παιδείαν]' (*Prov.* 1:1 NETS). Evagrius claims that the 'wisdom' learned by Solomon and transmitted through the proverbs is knowledge of bodily and incorporeal beings and of judgment and providence, two preliminary forms of *phusikē theōria*. But fittingly for the book's ethical *skopos* this wisdom is coupled with *paideia* understood with its disciplinary connotations as involving 'moderation [μετριοπάθεια]' of the passions in the irrational part of the soul.[25] This same connection between *paideia* and *metriopatheia* of the passions is made by Clement of Alexandria in *Stromateis*.[26] It is likely that Evagrius' comment is inspired by Clement because as we shall see in scholion 4 he quotes a passage from this same book of the *Stromateis* there.

The next verse of the book which Evagrius glosses says that these proverbs are meant to help the reader 'to understand words of prudence and to grasp subtlety of words and to understand true righteousness and *to direct judgment*' (*Prov.* 1:2 NETS). Evagrius' comment seeks to clarify the meaning of the last two words of this sentence, namely 'to direct judgment'. Clement of Alexandria had connected these words from *Proverbs* to the philosophical discussion concerning the criteria by which the faculty of judgment involved in human knowledge could be kept from error.[27] In scholion 4 Evagrius quotes these words from Clement's discussion in the *Stromateis*: 'There are three sources of judgement [κριτήρια] in us: perception, reason, and intellect [αἴσθησις, λόγος, νοῦς]: perception for sensible objects; reason, for nouns, verbs and sentences; and the intellect, for intelligible objects'.[28] We recognise the vocabulary of αἴσθησις-λόγος-νοῦς from Evagrius first scholion which gave a definition of a proverb. But here we can see that his understanding of these concepts is indebted to a well established philosophical investigation of preliminary logic and epistemology regarding the reliability and interrelation of these sources of judgment.[29] In the context from which the quotation is taken Clement is drawing on Aristotelian notions concerning the nature of scientific knowledge, *epistēmē*,

[25] Evagrius, *Scholia in Proverbia* 3, SC 340 (Paris, 1987): Τούτου χάριν, φησίν, 'ἐβασίλευσεν ἐν Ἰσραὴλ τοῦ γνῶναι παιδείαν καὶ σοφίαν'. Καὶ σοφία μέν ἐστιν γνῶσις σωμάτων καὶ ἀσωμάτων καὶ τῆς ἐν τούτοις θεωρουμένης κρίσεως καὶ προνοίας· παιδεία δέ ἐστιν μετριοπάθεια παθῶν περὶ τὸ παθητικὸν ἢ ἄλογον τῆς ψυχῆς μέρος θεωρουμένη. Another example of Evagrius use of the Aristotelian ideal of virtue as moderation, and a mean between two vices see *Scholia in Proverbia* 53.

[26] As noted by P. Géhin, 'La place de la *Lettre sur la foi*' (2000); See Clement of Alexandria, *Stromateis* 2.8.39

[27] Clement of Alexandria, *Stromateis* 2.2.7

[28] Evagrius, *Scholia in Proverbia* 4, SC 340 (Paris, 1987): Τὸ κρίμα κατευθύνειν ὀρθὸν καὶ ἀδιάστροφον εἶναι τὸ κριτήριον δηλοῖ. Τρία δὲ κριτήρια ἐν ἡμῖν, αἴσθησις, λόγος, νοῦς· καὶ αἴσθησις μὲν τῶν αἰσθητῶν, λόγος δὲ ὀνομάτων καὶ ῥημάτων καὶ τῶν λεγομένων, νοῦς δὲ τῶν νοητῶν. See Clement of Alexandria, *Stromateis* 2.11.50

[29] See Alcinous, *Didaskalikos* 4.

which is a secure knowledge based on demonstrative proofs argued fundamentally from indemonstrable first principles accepted on faith. The starting point for this process of gaining secure knowledge is, according to Clement always sensory perception, which based on faith can gain the force of demonstrative proof.[30] As Matyáš Havrda has pointed out, when speaking of 'sensory perception as the starting point of proof, Clement specifically means the experience of hearing or reading the Scriptures'.[31] This intersection between attention to scriptural language and philosophical epistemology is something which we also saw in Evagrius' scholion 1 on *Proverbs*.

The status and nature of sensory perception is the focus also of the last of the five 'epistemological' scholia introducing the scholia on *Proverbs*. Here Evagrius comments on the words 'piety unto God is the beginning of perception' (*Prov*. 1:7 NETS), by writing: 'Just as the mind attends to sensory things through the senses, so it contemplates the intelligible things through the virtues'.[32] In this scholion we see once again, as in scholion 3, how Evagrius interrelates questions of ethics with those of securing reliable knowledge. The analogy between sensory perception and knowledge shows us that to Evagrius' mind there can be no talk of attaining a 'level' of monastic life where the practice of virtue is irrelevant to the life of *gnōsis*. Just as sensory things disappear from view when the senses stop functioning, so intelligible things cannot be perceived without the virtues. It is wrong to conceive of the struggle against the passions as merely an 'active' preamble to the 'contemplative' life: both of these aspects of monastic life share the common end of securing reliable knowledge. Kathleen Gibbons has argued that Evagrius is influenced by an Aristotelian-Platonic tradition according to which the passions are bound up with the false perception of objects as sources of fear or pleasure, and it is this false perception which the ascetic struggle is meant to correct in order to enable contemplation of created nature.[33] Through progress in virtue the monk gains the means by which *phusikē* can be practiced.

[30] Clement cites the Peripatetic Theophrastus on the question of the relationship between sensory experience, faith and demonstrative proof in *Strom*. 2.2.9. For Aristotle's understanding of first principles, demonstrative proof, and *epistēmē* see *e.g*. *Analytica Posteriora* 100b.

[31] Matyáš Havrda, 'Demonstrative Method in Stromateis VII: Context, Principles, and Purpose', in M. Havrda, V. Hušek, J. Plátová (eds), *The Seventh Book of the Stromateis* (Leiden, 2012), 259-75, 272.

[32] Evagrius, *Scholia in Proverbia* 3, SC 340 (Paris, 1987): Ὥσπερ διὰ τῶν αἰσθήσεων ὁ νοῦς ἐπιβάλλει τοῖς αἰσθητοῖς, οὕτω καὶ διὰ τῶν ἀρετῶν ἐποπτεύει τὰ νοητά· διόπερ καὶ αἰσθήσεως αὐτὰς λόγον ἐπέχειν ὁ σοφὸς Σολομὼν ἡμᾶς διδάσκει.

[33] Kathleen Gibbons, 'Passions, Pleasures, and Perceptions: Rethinking Evagrius Ponticus on Mental Representation', *ZAC* 19 (2015), 297-330, 319. Important in this regard is also Evagrius' reception of the ideas concerning spiritual senses, see *e.g*. *Kephalaia Gnostica*, 2.35.

3. Conclusion

In these brief observations on the initial scholia on *Proverbs* we have seen that Evagrius situates his ideas concerning *phusikē theōria* within the context of an account of the relationship between language, sensation and intellection, and the criteria by which scientific knowledge, *epistēmē*, can be attained. It is against this background that many elements of Evagrius' practise of *phusikē theōria* begin to make sense, such as his tendency to compose exegetical scholia in the form of definitions or syllogistic proofs.[34] The scholia in turn fits well with the pedagogical context described in *Gnostikos*, where Evagrius speaks about the upper realms of monastic education and exegesis as an 'investigation [ζήτησις]' which the immature should not engage in due to the risk that the dialogue devolve into contentious debate.[35] Evagrius' description of various kinds of contemplation of nature begins to take on a more definite form and inner coherence when we understand the preliminary contemplations of the material world as part of a process of gathering raw-material for a monastic contemplative 'science'. We have seen in the scholia on *Proverbs* that for Evagrius there is a close relationship between reading and the epistemological status of sensory perception. For him it is in the systematic construction of meaningful textual interpretations that the building-blocks for a deeper understanding of the world begins to be revealed.

Perhaps a way forward in understanding more clearly what intellectual practices were involved in carrying out secondary *phusikē theōria* we should place it more firmly within patristic receptions of philosophies of science, especially as it is encountered in the Aristotelian-Platonic commentary tradition. A lamentably understudied influence on Evagrius in this regard is Clement of Alexandria whose ideal portrait of the Christian gnostic as a reader of Scripture is integral to his account of true *epistēmē* and demonstrative proof.[36] In this short presentation we have seen some ways in which this Clementine influence can be seen in Evagrius' scholia. An analysis of Evagrius' theory and practice of *phusikē theōria* within this context could help us avoid seeing Evagrian 'spirituality' as

[34] Julia Konstantinovsky makes a brief reference to the Aristotelian background of certain terms involved in evagrian *phusikē theōria* but does not develop this line of thought in *Evagrius Ponticus: The Making of a Gnostic* (Farnham, 2009), 41-2. Kevin Corrigan has fruitfully explored some instances of Evagrius' use of the language of demonstrative proof in *Evagrius and Gregory: Mind, Soul and Body in the 4th Century* (Farnham, 2009), 116ff.

[35] Evagrius, *Gnostikos* 34-5. See commentary in *Le Gnostique*, SC 356 (Paris, 2008), 39-40.

[36] For a brief reflection on this topic see Antoine Guillaumont, 'Le gnostique chez Clément d'Alexandrie et chez Évagre le Pontique', in J. Pouilloux (ed.), *Alexandrina: Hellénisme, judaïsme et christianisme à Alexandrie*, Spiritualité Orientale 66 (Paris, 1987), 151-60. For an analysis of Origen's exegetical and theological method with reference to Aristotelian philosophy of science see Brian Daley, 'Origen's *De Principiis* – A Guide to the Principles of Christian Scriptural Interpretation', in John Petruccione (ed.), *Nova et Vetera: Patristic Studies in Honor of Thomas Patrick Halton* (Washington, D.C., 1998), 3-21.

merely one of a relentless mental iconoclasm[37] and rather understand *phusikē theōria* as a complex intellectual process and investigative exercise engaged in by a mind trained in constant ascetic observation of thoughts and emotions, where evil thoughts are argued against, and analysed empirically.[38] The mind's training in ascetic analysis makes it ready for a fruitful extended exposure to Scriptural language, which becomes the sensory means to gain access to intelligible truths. This 'craft of thought'[39] or 'lived physics'[40] is meant to preserve the mind – so easily swayed – from going astray, deluded by 'false knowledge', and gives it access to the 'manifold wisdom of God'[41] found in nature.

[37] Elizabeth Clark, *The Origenist Controversy: The Cultural Construction of an Early Christian Debate* (Princeton, 1992), 75.

[38] See *e.g.* Evagrius, *De malignis cogitationibus* 9; 25.

[39] See Mary Carruthers, *The Craft of Thought* (Cambridge, 2000).

[40] Pierre Hadot, *The Inner Citadel: The Meditations of Marcus Aurelius* (Harvard, 1998), 96.

[41] *Eph.* 3:10, see for instance Evagrius, *De oratione* 85.

The Golden and Saving Chain and its (De)construction: Soteriological Conversations between Jacques Derrida, Jean-Luc Marion and the Cappadocian Fathers

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ABSTRACT

This short communication considers whether the links between the divinity of the Spirit and soteriology (the Nazianzen's 'golden and saving chain'), as explored and endorsed by the Cappadocian Fathers and their theological allies, retain any relevance or potency when placed in rapprochement with the 'new Enlightenment' posited by, for example, Jacques Derrida, which looks towards a 'delimiting' of dogmatism, authoritarianism and religions of the book, and offers instead a structure of hospitality and of a 'messianic' faith in a justice to come? I will be suggesting that this is, indeed, the case, and will begin by revisiting the debate which took place between Derrida and Jean-Luc Marion during the 'Religion and Postmodernism' conference at Villanova University in September 1997, since one of the notable features of their discussion was the extent to which both protagonists cited the work of the Cappadocians. I shall be focusing especially on the dialogue between Derrida and Marion on 'Saving the Name', with a view to establishing whether their readings of the Cappadocians shed light on, or obfuscate, the latters' soteriologies. I shall conclude with a critical appraisal of the extent to which the Cappadocian metaphor of the golden and saving chain should be understood as irrevocably 'deconstructed' by the discrete conceptual schemata of Derrida and Marion or whether, on the contrary, it might be construed as offering hospitality to, or even to some degree be the saving of, twentieth- and twenty-first-century understandings of salvation.

Introduction

For if He (*i.e*. the Spirit) is not to be worshipped, how can he deify me by Baptism? But if He is to be worshipped, surely He is an object of adoration, and if an Object of adoration He must be God; the one is linked to the other, a truly golden and saving chain.[1]

In deconstruction the repetition of religion is developed '*without* reference to religion as institutional dogma', *without* getting involved in some 'article of faith', *without* 'theologems', while 'proposing a non-dogmatic doublet of dogma ... a thinking that "repeats" the possibility of religion without religion'.[2]

[1] Gregory of Nazianzus, *Oration* 31.27, NPNF 7, 327. PG 36, 166A.

[2] John D. Caputo and Michael J. Scanlon (eds), *God, The Gift and Postmodernism* (Bloomington and Indianapolis, 1994), 4, citing Jacques Derrida, *The Gift of Death* (Chicago, 1995), 49.

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At first sight these two quotations might be considered to represent two opposing ends of a soteriological spectrum: at one extremity Gregory of Nazianzen's image of the 'golden and saving chain' connecting the divinity of the Holy Spirit to the process of deification which is initiated within the life of the Christian believer at baptism; at the other, John Caputo's description of deconstruction as holding out the possibility of 'religion without religion', 'liberated' from institutional dogma, articles of faith and theologems.

The Nazianzen's statement is a crystallisation of understandings concerning the inextricable links between salvation and the divinising action of the Holy Spirit which were forged during fourth-century Christendom – links which were to be articulated within the symbol of faith which was accepted by 'orthodox' bishops at the Council of Constantinople in 381. Those who set their hand to this symbol would scarcely have acceded to doubts concerning the importance of 'institutional dogma' or 'articles of faith', since, in their view, the Church's understanding of salvation itself was at stake. The road from Nicaea to Constantinople had been long and arduous since the *homoousion* of the Spirit had not been accepted without question, even by those of the 'pro-Nicene' party, and the final forging of the golden and saving chain had not always seemed an inevitable outcome. The question which this communication addresses is whether the links between the Spirit and soteriology so carefully constructed by the Cappadocians and their theological allies should be regarded as 'deconstructed' by deconstruction itself. Does the golden and saving chain retain any relevance or potency when placed in rapprochement with the 'new Enlightenment' posited by, for example, Jacques Derrida, which looks towards a 'delimiting' of dogmatism, authoritarianism and religions of the book and offers instead a structure of hospitality and of a 'messianic' faith in a justice to come?

I will be suggesting that this is indeed the case. I will begin by revisiting the debate which took place between Derrida and Marion during the 'Religion and Postmodernism' conference at Villanova University in September 1997, since one of the notable features of their discussions was the extent to which both protagonists cited the work of the Cappadocians.

I shall be focusing especially on the dialogue between Derrida and Marion on 'Saving the Name' with a view to establishing whether their readings of the Cappadocians shed light on, or obfuscate, the latters' soteriologies. I shall then review, under 'Saving the Gift', their discussions on theological donation. A third section will examine the metaphor of the 'arrow of desire' as applied within the discrete conceptual schemata of Derrida, Marion and Gregory of Nyssa, in an attempt to assess whether the Cappadocians' golden and saving chain should be understood as irrevocably 'deconstructed' by Derrida and Marion or whether, on the contrary, it might be construed as offering hospitality to, and even to some degree be the 'saving' of, postmodern 'soteriologies'.

Saving the Name(s)

At key points within his paper 'In the Name: How to Avoid Speaking of "Negative Theology"',[3] Jean-Luc Marion adduces evidence from the Cappadocians in order to support his argument concerning the need to find a 'third way' between a 'metaphysics of presence' and 'negative theology'. On the first occasion the Cappadocians are listed alongside the Alexandrian Fathers, Irenaeus, Augustine, Bernard, Bonaventure and Thomas Aquinas as being among those who, whilst resorting to negations when naming God, nevertheless do not use the term 'negative theology':

> For neither the Alexandrian nor Cappadocian Fathers, nor Irenaeus nor Augustine, nor Bernard, Bonaventure, nor Thomas Aquinas – all of whom resort to negations when naming God and build a theory of this apophasis – none of them use the formula 'negative theology'. As a result it can reasonably be supposed that this formula is nothing but modern.[4]

Next, Marion cites texts from Basil and Gregory of Nyssa among a catena of references from the Greek and Latin Fathers in relation to the requirement to neither know nor name God which 'traverses the entirety of Christian theology'.[5] Thus, a citation from Basil's *Letter* 234 points to the paradox that 'knowledge of the divine essence involves sensing his incomprehensibility',[6] and this paradox is reiterated by the Nyssen within *The Life of Moses*:

> This is the true knowledge of what is sought (*i.e.* 'seeing' the invisible and incomprehensible God); this is the seeing which consists in not seeing, because that which is sought transcends all knowledge, being separated on all sides by incomprehensibility as by a kind of darkness.[7]

Marion pursues his theme by positing that, as a 'quasi-deconstructionist' Basil 'saves the name' of God, paradoxically by 'not saving' it – that is, by vigorously rebutting the correlation posited by the semi-Arian Eunomius and his followers between a word, or a name, and the concept of the essence. The following text is taken from *Against Eunomius* by Basil:

> He is a liar who affirms with his sophism that an essential distinction follows from a nominal one. For it is not the nature of things which follows that of names, but the names which follow after the things.[8]

[3] Jean-Luc Marion, 'In the Name. How to Avoid Speaking of "Negative Theology"', in J.D. Caputo and M.J. Scanlon (eds), *God, The Gift and Postmodernism* (1994), 20-53.

[4] *Ibid*. 21.

[5] *Ibid*. 34.

[6] Basil of Caesarea, *Letter* 234, PG 32, 869. Cited in J.-L. Marion, 'In the Name' (1994), 34.

[7] Gregory of Nyssa, *De Vita Moysis*, PG 44, 377. Cited in J.-L. Marion, 'In the Name' (1994), 34.

[8] Basil of Caesarea, *Contra Eunomium*, PG 29, 580B. Cited in J.-L. Marion, 'In the Name' (1994), 36.

The Cappadocians are, therefore, viewed by Marion as pre-eminent examples of Christian theologians who practise 'de-nomination', since the desire, and even more the claim, to 'know' God in essence is not merely inappropriate but to be condemned as vain curiosity into matters which are beyond the ken of the finitude of humankind. As Marion puts it:

> Here deconstruction and theology can be in agreement, for the sake of contesting the same adversary – not the orthodox theologian, but the Arian, the sole metaphysician of presence.[9]

In his penultimate reference to the Cappadocians in this paper, Marion offers a lengthy citation from *Against Eunomius* by the Nyssen to support his hypothesis that de-nomination issues not, as some had been claiming, in a 'metaphysics of presence' but rather in a 'theology of absence', by which is meant not the non-presence of God but that the name which gives God and which is given as God serves, precisely, to 'shield' God from presence. The Nyssen had, similarly, explored this theme in his own version of *Against Eunomius* as follows:

> What is the significance of the unnameable name of which the Father speaks (when He says), 'Baptize them in my name', without adding the signification uttered by this name? On this matter, here is our opinion: we grasp all the beings in creation through the signification of their names ... In contrast, only the uncreated nature, which we believe (to be) the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, surpasses all signification that a name can convey.[10]

For Marion, 'saving the name' of God is, paradoxically, never about fixing a name to God, nor opposing a 'non' (or 'nom') to Him[11] but, rather, entails the incorporation of humankind into the Name which is unpronounceable but which is, nevertheless a saving Name:

> For the Name no longer functions by inscribing God within the theoretical horizon of predication, but by inscribing us, according to a radically new praxis, in the very horizon of God. This is exactly what baptism accomplishes when, far from our attributing to God a name that is intelligible to us, we enter into his incomprehensible Name, with the additional result that we receive our own.[12]

In his response to Marion's paper, Jacques Derrida – despite some reservations concerning the ascription to himself of any understanding of 'negative theology' as a single concept – acknowledges that there can be a large measure of agreement between them, on a structural level, concerning the name, and the

[9] J.-L. Marion, 'In the Name' (1994), 36.

[10] Gregory of Nyssa, *Contra Eunomium*, PG 45, 472D-473C. Cited in J.-L. Marion, 'In the Name' (1994), 37-8.

[11] Marion points out that, in French, 'non' and 'nom' are homophones; the play on words, and its implications, cannot be satisfactorily rendered in English.

[12] J.-L. Marion, 'In the Name' (1994), 38.

non-propriety of the 'proper name' of God. He raises doubts, however, as to the appropriateness of Christian baptism as a paradigm for this structure since, in his view, the structure in question is more universal in scope. In his defence of the reference to baptism, Marion concedes that this had been introduced through associations arising from the previous citation of the Nyssen's work on signification; it was not intended to represent a final position and he is, in fact, prepared to agree with Derrida that the structure of de-nomination may, indeed, be universal:

> ... if God is unknowable, then man is unknowable, too. So that structure can be applied perhaps to the case of every man.[13]

The rapprochement effected between Derrida the Jew who would 'rightly be called an atheist'[14] and Marion the Catholic theologian and phenomenologist on this topic of 'saving the name' is illuminating, not only on its own terms, but also for the extent to which it adverts to the witness of the Cappadocians and incorporates them within the constructs of postmodern thought as 'de-nominationalists' and, in Basil's case, as a 'quasi-deconstructionist'. I would suggest, however, that cogent as the arguments are in many respects, there are questions to be raised in relation to the mooted adherence of the Cappadocians to a 'theology of absence', and that these are illustrated most clearly in relation to baptism, which Marion puts forward, but then appears to abjure, or at least qualify, as an example of de-nomination. For the Cappadocians, it is, precisely, the 'invocation of the divine Names' which enables the candidate to enter, through the 'laver of regeneration' into the mystery of Christian salvation. If there is, as Marion claims, a 'theology of absence' here in that the three divine Names must be understood as pointing to, rather than comprehending, the mystery of the divine, it is, nevertheless, balanced by a sacramental 'theology of presence' in which the candidate is truly and effectively cleansed and prepared for the spiritual journey which lies ahead. As the Nazianzen had insisted, the 'golden and saving chain' is manifest most particularly in the process of deification which is begun at baptism, and the gift which is bestowed not only 'saves the Name(s) of God' from nominalist distortions but also bestows a name, and thereby a new identity, upon the candidate. The latter name may well be, as Marion contends, 'without essence' and its 'property' not be unique to the candidate,[15] but it nevertheless points towards, and to a certain degree mirrors, the mystery of the divine life into which he or she is to be incorporated.

[13] J.-L. Marion, 'In the Name' (1994), 47.

[14] Derrida designates himself thus in 'Circonfession: Cinquante-neuf périodes et périphrases', in G. Bennington and J. Derrida (eds), *Jacques Derrida* (Paris, 1991), 146. Cited also in J.D. Caputo, 'Apostles of the Impossible. On God and the Gift', in J.D. Caputo and M.J. Scanlon (eds), *God, The Gift and Postmodernism* (1994), 197.

[15] J.-L. Marion, 'In the Name' (1994), 47.

I would suggest, therefore, that there is a delicate balance between *apophasis* and *kataphasis* in the witness of the Cappadocians which tends to be disregarded by those who seek to align their work too closely to that of deconstruction – and that their soteriologies 'save the divine Names' in more ways than is suggested by either Marion or Derrida in this particular discussion. The Cappadocians' insistence, against Eunomius and his followers, that nominal distinctions follow, rather than precede, essential ones must be weighed against their equal insistence upon the 'givenness' of the names of God as revealed in Scripture and through the tradition of the Church. Salvation for the believer is made available through the deifying action of the three divine Persons, effected through reception of the sacraments, of which baptism is the prime exemplar. Derrida's demurral concerning baptism as a paradigm for de-nomination is therefore cogent, and it could be mooted that Marion's equivalence on this issue may in part be due to tensions between his roles as phenomenologist and Catholic theologian. However, the point of agreement between them concerning the potentially universal scope of the structure of de-nomination is noteworthy and one to which the Cappadocians might have been prepared to subscribe: that acceptance of the unknowability of God (in essence) entails also the acceptance of the unknowability of persons – a structure which 'can be applied perhaps to the case of every man'. This is a point to which I shall return in the conclusion, but first it is germane to consider the question of donation, and specifically theological donation, within the thought of Derrida, Marion and the Cappadocians.

Saving the gift

The highest gift of God, that we call our salvation, is nothing less than God.[16] With this succinct exposition of Augustine's dictum, *Deus est qui Deum dat*, Michael Scanlon opened the debate between Derrida and Marion at Villanova on donation. By the time of the conference Derrida had already published widely on the themes of hospitality and the gift[17] and Marion had also offered distinctive contributions in this area.[18] The dialogue, as recorded in *God, the Gift and Postmodernism*, affords plentiful material for those in search of the

[16] Richard Kearney (moderator), 'On the Gift. A Discussion between Jacques Derrida and Jean-Luc Marion', in J.D. Caputo and M.J. Scanlon (eds), *God, The Gift and Postmodernism* (1994), 54.

[17] See D. Wills (trans.), J. Derrida, *The Gift of Death* (Chicago and London, 1995); also J. Derrida, 'Donner le Temps', in *La fausse monnaie* (Paris, 1991), and J. Derrida and A. Duformantelle, *De L'Hospitalité* (Paris, 1997).

[18] See J.-L. Marion, *Étant Donné. Essai d'une phénoménologie de la donation* (Paris, 1997); also J.-L. Marion, *Réduction et donation: recherché sur Husserl, Heidegger et la phénoménologie* (Paris, 1989).

commonalities and divergences between these two thinkers on this topic, but I intend here to highlight just two aspects which are of particular relevance to the soteriological schemata of the Cappadocians. The first is the issue of the relationship between 'gift' and 'givenness'; the second concerns the 'problematization' of the divine gift. I shall consider these in turn before reviewing the outcomes in rapprochement with the Cappadocians' approaches, as evinced especially by the image of the 'golden and saving chain'.

Gift and givenness

I have to emphasize that I am not interested in the gift and I am not interested in the religious meaning of the gift.[19]

This, Marion's opening statement of the Villanova debate on donation, does not seem to augur well for future discussions. However, he qualifies it subsequently by explaining that his interest in the gift had been to the fore in his theological writings of approximately ten years previously. With the publication of *Réduction et Donation*[20] his focus had turned, rather, to phenomenological givenness (*Gegebenheit*), particularly as this had been explored by Husserl in *Logical Investigations*,[21] and according to which:

Everything, not only the intuition is gegeben, or can be gegeben, or at least you can ask about every signification whether it is gegeben or not.[22]

Marion argues that this re-reading of phenomenology permits an 'opening' to 'degrees' of phenomena, of which some may be described as 'excessive' or maximally intensive, saturating intuition and triggering an experience of bedazzlement, astonishment or *Bewunderung*. Such 'counter-experiences' cannot be objectivised or described and appear absolute. In other words, they cannot be seen against the customary horizon of 'lesser' phenomena and must either be understood as their own horizon, and therefore dazzling, or seen against not only one horizon but several – thus paving the way for an infinite hermeneutic. Derrida concurs with Marion at Villanova concerning the suspension of the single horizon – but indicates that this entails the suspension, also, of phenomenological adherence:

When I agree on the necessity of suspending the horizon then I am no longer a phenomenologist.[23]

[19] J.-L. Marion, 'On the Gift' (1994), 56.
[20] J.-L. Marion, *Réduction et donation: recherché sur Husserl, Heidegger et la phénoménologie* (Paris, 1989).
[21] J.N. Findlay (trans.), E. Heidegger, *Logical Investigations* (London, 1970).
[22] J.-L. Marion, 'On the Gift' (1994), 56.
[23] J. Derrida, 'On the Gift' (1994), 66.

Derrida contends, additionally, that Marion's hypothesis involves an 'extraordinary extension' of *Gegebenheit* such that it subsumes, or is understood as homogeneous with, the concept of gift. He suggests to Marion that this arises from the 'deepest ambition' of Marion's thought, which is to effect a correlation between phenomenology and theology whereby all donation may be understood as theological:

> My hypothesis concerns the fact that you use or credit the word *Gegebenheit* with gift and this has to do with ... the deepest ambition of your thought. For you, everything that is given in the phenomenological sense ... is finally a gift to a finite creature, and it is finally a gift of God.[24]

Marion vigorously rebuts any suggestion that he is attempting to reduce every phenomenon to a gift and then to argue that, because this is a gift bestowed upon a finite mind, there must therefore be a divine Giver. Rather more subtly, he is attempting to show that phenomenology has a preliminary, or indicative, relevance for theology, particularly in relation to saturated phenomena (categorised in *De Surcroît*[25] as the event, the idol, the flesh, the icon and r/Revelation) in which the intuitive content cannot be contained as a single concept, or even a combination of concepts, but demands an infinite hermeneutic.

Of these five exemplars of conceptual saturation it is, perhaps, that of r/Revelation which offers most resonance with the soteriological thought of the Cappadocians. Marion himself insists[26] on maintaining a scrupulous distinction between the use of the lower-case 'r' in 'revelation' to denote this concept as generically understood and the upper-case 'R' in 'Revelation' to signify particular revelation (for example as in the Christian Revelation). Critics of this scheme[27] have pointed out that to identify any phenomenon as revelatory demands a commitment in advance to the potential for, and actuality of, Revelation. Marion's argument is thus 'problematized' not only by the way in which 'revelation' and 'Revelation' are interwoven within his phenomenological texts but by their inherent undecideability which is due, precisely, to their saturated status. As Marion himself puts it at Villanova:

> If there is a real revelation, no concept could achieve to say and to make intelligible in its own way the excess of intuition … I would say that no heart, no mind and no word would be wide enough to host that revelation.[28]

[24] J. Derrida, 'On the Gift' (1994), 66.

[25] J.-L. Marion, *De Surcroît: études sur les phénomènes saturés* (Paris, 2001).

[26] J.-L. Marion, *Étant Donné. Essai d'une phénoménologie de la donation* (1997), 337. Cited also in Robyn Horner, *Jean-Luc Marion. A Theo-logical Investigation* (Aldershot, 2005), 132.

[27] See R. Horner, *Jean-Luc Marion* (2005), 132.

[28] J.-L. Marion, 'On the Gift' (1994), 69.

It seems, therefore, that revelation, and especially historically particularized Revelation as the Cappadocians would have understood it, occurs not only at the limits of phenomenology – and, indeed of philosophy – but almost of language itself. As Marion was subsequently to concede in *De Surcroît*, 'philosophy has neither the authority nor the competence to say more in this regard'.[29] For Marion, therefore, there is a point beyond which Revelation can be spoken of only by theology, since it is accessible to right interpretation only within the community of faith which accepts both its premise and possibility. The Cappadocians, too, wrestled with the 'gift' of Revelation as received through the Scriptures and the tradition of the Church – and with the need to articulate its message to those within and beyond the Church. Their 'Christian philosophy' both acknowledged the necessity for, but also the limits of, a philosophical framework which was inextricably linked to Platonism and its successors.[30] They might therefore, perhaps, have concurred with Marion that the fullness of this 'gift' exceeded available conceptual boundaries, but doubtless they would have demurred in relation to the inability of hearts and mind to receive it, since it was, precisely, the burden of their witness that the capacity for reception lay not within the finitude of the individual believer alone but was made available through the deifying powers of the Spirit received at baptism. For both Derrida and Marion, however, the difficulties associated with reception of the gift are inextricably linked to its conceptual 'impossibility', which is considered briefly next.

The im/possibility of the (Divine) gift

> As soon as a gift – not a *Gegebenheit*, but a gift – as soon as a gift is identified as a gift … then it is cancelled as gift. It is reintroduced into the circle of an exchange and destroyed as a gift … it is impossible for the gift to exist and appear as such.[31]

At Villanova Derrida acknowledges that Marion had correctly summarized, within *Étant Donné*, the main points of his thinking on the gift and its 'impossibility' – impossible because as soon as the donee knows of the gift he or she would thank the donor and thereby 'cancel' the gift; similarly, as soon as the donor is conscious of giving, he 'thanks himself' and thus cancels the gift by reinscribing it into the economic circle of exchange. It is therefore impossible for the gift *qua* gift to be 'present'. The point at issue between Marion and Derrida is whether this 'problematizes' the gift within the horizon of economy and ontology. Against Marion, Derrida insists that this was not his intention

[29] J.-L. Marion, *De Surcroît* (2001), 62-3.

[30] See Gregory of Nyssa, *De anima et resurrectione*, in which philosophy is both rejected and then called in to support the debates between Gregory and Macrina. PG 46, 12-160.

[31] J. Derrida, 'On the Gift' (1994), 59.

since the event called gift is totally heterogenous to either theoretical or phenomenological identification. The gift may be exemplar of 'the impossible' but Derrida had never concluded that there is no gift. On the contrary, the gift can be thought of, even though it cannot be 'known':

> The gift as such cannot be known, but it can be thought of. We can think what we cannot know. Perhaps thinking is not the right word. But there is something in excess of knowledge.[32]

Is Derrida intending in this statement to point towards Marion's concept of saturated phenomena? In other words, could the gift which is 'in excess of knowledge' be liberated from the circle of exchange precisely by its excessiveness, that is, by its capacity to signify more than one horizon and to be susceptible to an infinite hermeneutic? The point is not immediately pursued within the Villanova debate, although Derrida does offer the following thought on the correlation between the desire for the impossible and the gift:

> What I am interested in is the experience of the desire for the impossible. That is, the impossible or the condition of desire ... I mean this quest in which we want to give, even when we realize, when we agree, if we agree, that the gift, that giving, is impossible, that it is a process of re-appropriation and self-destruction.[33]

On this understanding there is within the giving and receiving a process which also exceeds that of giving and receiving; the gift escapes the circle of exchange by signifying a desire for the impossible which cannot be satisfied and which remains for ever elusive, and yet which must be pursued. Clearly, there are echoes here of the Nyssen's infinite quest for the divine, and these resonances are exemplified particularly in the metaphor of the 'arrow of desire', which is reviewed in the following section.

The arrow of desire

John Caputo, in his reading of the Villanova debates on the gift, designates both Derrida and Marion as 'apostles of the impossible', whilst noting the following key differences between them:

> Jean-Luc Marion proposes to stretch phenomenology to the limits of its highest possibility, to the limits of an impossibility, to the possibility of something 'impossible', something declared off-limits by the 'conditions of possibility' imposed by modernity and onto-theology.[34]

[32] J. Derrida, 'On the Gift' (1994), 60.
[33] *Ibid*.
[34] J. Caputo, 'Apostles of the Impossible' (1994), 185.

Derrida, on the other hand, is:

... no less in love with the impossible than Marion, no less its zealous apostle, (but) is wary of such saturating givenness. For Derrida, *the* impossible is something that is *never given*, that is always deferred.[35]

Nevertheless, although for Derrida the impossible is 'never given', it is, at the same time, perpetually sought, and Caputo notes the agreement between Marion and Derrida with regard to the 'arrow' of intentionality or desire, which is aimed at the heart of God:

We have contended that Marion and Derrida are agreed in regarding the 'intention' or 'concept' as an 'arrow' which is aimed at the heart of God from which God must be shielded or kept 'safe'. For Marion, who is thinking in terms of … Christian Neoplatonism, … this is because the arrow of intentionality is too weak or narrow to penetrate or comprehend the infinite givenness of God: it would compromise the infinite incomprehensibility of God who has utterly saturated the intention 'God' in a plenitude of givenness. But for Derrida, who is thinking in Jewish and *messianic* terms ... the arrow takes aim at God and never reaches God precisely because the name of God is the name of what we love and desire … something *tout autre* which is not 'present', not only in the narrow sense of conceptual presentation … but also not *given*. For Marion the signifier 'God' is flooded by givenness; for Derrida it is a dry and desert aspiration for I know not what.[36]

The theme, if not the image itself, of the 'arrow of desire' is one which was taken up more fully after Villanova by Marion, with the publication, in 2003, of *Le Phénomène Érotique*,[37] in which he addresses what he perceives as the failure of philosophy to 'think love'. One of the most cogent points which Marion makes in that work is the connection between the 'arrow of desire' and the will to love – that the continuation of, and fidelity to, particular commitments of love depends on decision and choice rather than emotion. Marion's exposition of the 'arrow of desire' therefore has soteriological aspects; it is a courageous attempt to demonstrate the incapacity of metaphysics to 'think what matters' which, for him, is loving and being loved. It does, however, perhaps tend to reinforce, rather than negate, doubts concerning the capacity of phenomenology alone to offer 'salvation', even when it is founded upon a concept as universal as love itself.

Clearly, the 'arrow of desire' is *a topos* not only of deconstruction and phenomenology but also of spiritual theology, and it is interesting to compare Marion's approach with that of the Nyssen, who used this image extensively in his *Commentary on the Song of Songs*. Typically, the Nyssen subverts or develops the image in unexpected ways. Thus, within *Homily* 4,[38] the soul as

[35] *Ibid.*

[36] *Ibid.* 198-9. Cited also in R. Horner, *Jean-Luc Marion* (2005), 134.

[37] J.-L. Marion, *Le Phénomène Érotique: Six Méditations* (Paris, 2003).

[38] Gregory of Nyssa, *In Cantica Canticorum Homiliae*, GNO VI 127.7-10. Cited also in Martin Laird, *Gregory of Nyssa and the Grasp of Faith. Union, Knowledge and Divine Presence* (Oxford, 2004), 91.

bride is herself the 'target' for the divine archer who sends his Son as the arrow which pierces the bride's heart. Her 'wounding' represents a culminating moment in the bride's spiritual journey of identification and union with her beloved, the divine bridegroom. The Nyssen provides further symbolic details: the tip of the arrow is faith, and it has been moistened by the 'spirit of life'. Thus, although the divine bridegroom is himself the arrow, the point of entry for his indwelling must be through faith alone. Towards the end of this homily, however, the symbolism is altered: the bride herself has become the arrow, her head has become the tip of the arrow and her body its shaft. This shift of imagery enables Gregory to effect a transition between his expositions of *Song* 2:5b and *Song* 2:6, since the latter contains the statement concerning the bridegroom's left hand being under the bride's head, with his right hand embracing her.[39] In other words, the bridegroom is now depicted as holding his bride's head in the bow with his left hand, while her body is held at the notched end by his right hand. It is, perhaps, a strange image, but it illustrates a typically Nyssenian coincidence of opposites, since the bride is both in movement and at rest: 'I am at once shot forth like an arrow and am at rest in the hands of the archer'.[40]

Cognate examples of the use of this metaphor are to be found in *Homily* 12 and *Homily* 13, and these, too, make it clear that, for Gregory, the 'arrow of desire' is a multivalent image which expresses not only the desire of the soul for the divine beloved but also the desire of the divine bridegroom for the soul as bride. It is a love which is reciprocated, although never in equal measure since the finitude of the soul is both fulfilled and yet never sated by the infinity of the divine Word.

If, therefore, for Derrida, the arrow of desire takes aim at God but can never reach God 'precisely because the name of God is what we love and desire', whereas, for Marion, the arrow is 'too weak and narrow to penetrate the infinite greatness of God', within the Gregorian scheme these 'impossibilities' are transformed into the possibilities afforded by grace. The believing soul as bride becomes not only recipient of, but also, in *Homily* 4, instrument for, the love of the divine archer. The 'wound of love' represents a culminating – and yet not final, since the journey is infinite – moment within the spiritual life which can only be prepared for through faith and through acceptance of, precisely, the 'saving gift' offered through baptism, as depicted in the Nazianzen's image of the 'golden and saving chain'.

[39] 'His left hand is under my head, his right embraces me'. *Song of Songs* 2:6, *New Jerusalem Bible*.

[40] Gregory of Nyssa, *In Cantica Canticorum Homiliae*, GNO VI 129.15-6. Cited also in M. Laird, *Gregory of Nyssa and the Grasp of Faith* (Oxford, 2004), 94.

Conclusion

It might be averred that it is scarcely legitimate to compare the image of the 'arrow of desire' as used by the Nyssen with the 'arrows of desire' of Derrida and Marion as referred to by John Caputo, since they are all operating within such divergent paradigms. Moreover, it could be contested that neither Derrida nor Marion were setting out to construct 'soteriologies' as such within their respective schemata. Nevertheless, I hope that sufficient evidence has been adduced to support the claim that soteriological concerns are implicit within the work of both Derrida and Marion, and that these resonate at important points with those of the Cappadocians, although the outcomes may differ. On this basis, I would posit that the 'construction' of the metaphorical golden and saving chain is strengthened, rather than weakened, by rapprochement with the hypotheses of both deconstruction and phenomenology – offering a way, for example, by which not only the Name but the Names of God may be saved, and thereby also the names of those who are to be incorporated within them – with the caveat that such 'nomination' is circumscribed by the ultimate unknowability of both God and human persons. Similarly, the Cappadocians' approaches to theological donation, whilst more diffuse and less explicit than those, for example, of Augustine, offer a useful point of comparison and, at times, a corrective to some of the more circular arguments on the gift put forward by Derrida and Marion. Finally, with regard to the 'arrow of desire', the importance of faith, symbolized by the arrow tip within the Gregorian presentation, should not be underestimated as a point of resonance between the Nyssen and his (post)modern interlocutors. For Gregory, faith and love are the necessary preconditions and corollary of mystical union with the divine, but faith and love are exercised also by those who, perhaps, wield the 'weaker' arrows of desire and intentionality described by Derrida and Marion. In this respect the universal aspects of the structure of de-nomination, which might be applied 'to the case of every man'[41] could be regarded either as challenging, or as unfolding the soteriological implications of, the Nazianzen's statement concerning the 'golden and saving chain'.

I would suggest, therefore, in conclusion, that, whatever the differences of their philosophical or theological premises, the discrete approaches of the Cappadocians and these two (post)modern interlocutors might be understood as 'saving' each other in certain respects through mutual rapprochement – or, to express matters a little more provocatively, that the golden and saving chain evinces a potential capacity to extend 'hospitality' to the conceptual schemata of both Derrida and Marion (and thereby, it could be suggested, to resist deconstruction, even by deconstruction itself).

[41] J.-L. Marion, 'In the Name' (1994), 47.

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