



PART I: THE PATRISTIC UNDERSTANDING OF THE TRINITY

2 THE BEGINNING OF THE CONTROVERSY

In the controversy surrounding the Trinity, Arius, who was an elder of the Baucalis church in Alexandria, attacked Alexander the bishop of Alexandria. Arius, whose dominant idea was the monotheistic principle of the Monarchians (Berkhof 1991[1937]: 84)¹¹, thought that Alexander taught Sabellianism. The historian Socrates who succeeded Eusebius wrote:

A certain one of the presbyters under his jurisdiction, whose name was Arius, possessed of no inconsiderable logical acumen, imagining that the bishop was subtly teaching the same view of this subject as Sabellius the Libyan, from love of controversy took the opposite opinion to that of the Libyan, and as he thought vigorously responded to what was said by the bishop (Socrates, Ecclesiastical History, I. 5).

At the council of Nicea (AD 325), the ecumenical Church condemned Arius (Kelly 1975[1958]: 231-232) for his denial both of the Son as real God, and that the Son is 'homoousios' with the Father.

2.1 Arius' doctrine of the Trinity.

¹¹See Koehler (1951[1937]: 153), 'Arius became a student of Lucian of Antioch...Arius learnt Aristotelian Philosophy from Lucian and from him on strictly held to the idea of aseity 'avge,nnhton ei=nai' very sharply. From the Origen Arius learnt to restrict the idea of aseity 'avge,nnhton ei=nai' to the Father only. Because of that, the Son did not emanate from the Father, but was independent. But the Son 'became' at the top of the creature.



Arius was influenced by Origen (Koehler 1951: 153). He changed and developed Origen's theology (Lohse 1978: 55). According to González (1984: 269), he was 'a disciple of Lucian in Antioch and who, like his teacher, presented the left wing of Origenism'.

Arius's thought originated from absolute monotheism (González 1984[1970]: 270). He just focused on the fact that God is the 'one and only' as *monad* (Pelikan¹² 1971: 194). He propagated 'the form of extreme Christology, which denies that the Son of God (Christ) is real God' (Pelikan 1971: 196). Because 'the fundamental premise of Arius' system is the affirmation of the absolute uniqueness and transcendence of God' (Kelly 1975[1958]: 227), the being or essence of the Godhead could not be shared or communicated. Therefore Arius confesses that He (the Son) is a creature of God (*kti,sma tou/ qeou/*) and has a beginning (Seeberg 1936: 41; Loofs 1959: 184). As Philip Schaff points out, his thinking can be regarded as 'deism' and 'rationalism' (Schaff 1970: 643). Kelly summarizes Arius' theology, as follows:

1) The Son must be a creature, a *kti,sma* or *poi,hma*, whom the Father has formed out of nothing by His mere fiat. 2) As creature the Son must have had a beginning. 3) The Son can have no communion with, and indeed no direct knowledge of, his Father. 4) The Son must be liable to change and even sin (Kelly 1975[1958]: 227-229)

Arius sought scriptural support in order to protect his own ideas (Berkhof 1991[1937]: 84-85). His scriptural proofs for the Son as inferior to the Father were Prov 8:22(*septuaginta*); Mt 28: 18; Mk 13: 32; Lk 18: 19; Jn 5: 19; 14: 28; 1 Cor 15:28(Berkhof 1991: 85). Especially, 'Col 1:15' '*ὅς ἐστιν εἰκὼν τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ ἀοράτου, πρωτότοκος πάσης κτίσεως*' played a decisive role. Arius confirmed that the phrase '*πρωτότοκος πάσης κτίσεως*'¹³ indicates that the Logos is one of the creatures.

¹² Moreover, according to Pelikan (1971: 200), 'Arianism was accused of being polytheistic, despite its rigid monotheism, by Athanasius and Hilary through Marcellus of Ancyra and Boethius.'

¹³ See, Oberdorfer (2002: 65).



This understanding stems from a part of Origen's understanding (Lohse 1978: 36). Hodge (1982: 452) points out that in spite of his acceptance of the 'distinct personality of the Son, his eternal generation, and calling freely him God', Origen 'would not admit his equality with God' in the sense that 'the Father, alone, according to him was $\omega\tilde{\nu}\tilde{\nu}\tilde{\nu}$, the Son was simply $\omega\tilde{\nu}\tilde{\nu}$, the Son was $\omega\tilde{\nu}\tilde{\nu}$ evk $\omega\tilde{\nu}\tilde{\nu}$ / and not avuto $\omega\tilde{\nu}\tilde{\nu}$.'

However, Bavinck (1997[1951]: 280) explains Origen's view by quoting his *Contra Celsus* (VIII, 12, 13) 'the Father and the son have all the divine attributes in common: It is not true that besides God we also worship the Son, but in God we worship the Son.' In this sense, Origen affirms the unity and equality. Widdicombe (1994: 69) explains 'God as Father must have a Son in order to be what he is, and the Son as Son must have a father in order to be what he is'. The fatherhood of God and the generation of the son must be closely connected with each other (Widdicombe 1994: 70). This implies that 'the concepts of the eternal fatherhood of God and the eternal generation of Son also play an essential role in Origen's understanding of God's nature in another way' (Widdicombe 1994: 71).

Widdicombe (1994:78) argues that Origen proceeds step by step towards 'the idea that the Father and the Son share the nature of divinity equally, and are differentiated only by the fact that one is Father and the other Son, and that it is the nature of the relationship that defines their difference.' There would be little doubt that Origen's notion of eternal generation has had an influence on the Eastern Church. In the Eastern Church, Origen was the first theologian to have used the term *homoousia* (Crouzel, 1989:187)¹⁴ to describe the relation between the Father and the Son. His basic assumption is that the Father and the Son are correlative terms (Widdicombe 1994: 69).

Crouzel (1989: 188) states that for Origen the Son is both subordinate and equal to the Father. McEnhill & Newlands (2004: 26) says 'that it seems that the philosophical and theological terminology employed by Origen was not yet sufficiently technically clarified for him to give a precise and distinct meaning to his understanding of the

¹⁴ See. Fortman (1972: 56); Kelly (1975[1958]: 130).



divine nature.’ However, Arius confirms an extremely negative understanding of Origen’s thought (Ohlig 1999: 64). Therefore, he claims that the Son is Vallo, trij kai. ano, moioj kata. pa, nta th/j tou/ patro.j ouvsi, aj kai. ivdio, thtoj (CA¹⁵ I, 6). This implies that ‘although he was called God, he is not true God, he is just God by name by participating in grace’ (Kelly 1975[1958]: 229).

Bobrinskoy (1999: 221) says that ‘at the time of Athanasius, *ousia* and *hypostasis* were still synonyms’. It is true that the two words often are regarded as having the same meaning (Prestige 1981 [1936]: 184). Kelly (1975[1958]: 229) contends, ‘Arius could speak of the holy Triad, in speciously Origenistic language, as consisting of three Persons’. However, the Cappadocians’ battle was ‘against the extreme Arian, who insisted on the triplicity of hypostaseis, in order to prove their contention that the *hypostaseis* were unequal’ (Prestige 1981 [1936]: 242). Therefore, Ohlig (1999: 65; Adam¹⁶ 1977[1966]: 221) argues that the concept ‘Trias’ holds a monarchianistic sense, but does not mean a trinitarian structure of God himself in Arius.

2.2 The Excommunication of Arius

Alexander attacked the doctrine of Arius with all the means at hand (González 1984[1970]: 272), and convoked a synod in which almost a hundred Egyptian bishops were present, and which condemned and deposed Arius in AD 320 (Walker 1985[1919]: 132). Arius went to stay with Eusebius in Nicomedia. Eusebius received Arius in his diocese and granted him his protection in spite of the protests of the bishop of Alexandria. Thus, the dispute became a schism that could affect the whole church (González 1984[1970]: 272). Arius wrote to Eusebius:

That the Son is not begotten, nor a part of the unbegotten in any way, nor

¹⁵ Contra Arianos

¹⁶ ‘Wohl hielt Arius an dem Begriff der heiligen Trias fest, aber eine Trinitas konnte er nicht anerkennen; er lehrte eine Dreifaltigkeit, aber keine Dreieinigkeit. Innerhalb der Dreifaltigkeit bestanden für sein Auffassung Wesensunterschiede’ (Adam 1977[1966]: 221)



[formed out] of any substratum, but that he was constituted by [God's] will and counsel, before times and before ages, full (of grace and truth), divine, unique, unchangeable. And before he was begotten or created or ordained or founded, he was not. For he was not unbegotten. We are persecuted because we say, "The Son has a beginning, but God is without beginning." But this is what we say, since he is neither a part of God nor [formed] out of any substratum. For this we are persecuted, and you know the rest (Hall 2002: 36).

As mentioned in Arius' letter, the son was 'constituted by [God's] will and counsel, before times and before ages, divine, unique, unchangeable.' For Arius, the Son is begotten, however, for him, the meaning of begetting does not differ from creating (Bobrinskoy 1999: 221).

Constantine, the emperor of Rome, 'gathered the bishops by the same method he had applied with the Donatist issue in the West to solve the problem of Arius. He proceeded, therefore, to summon all the bishops of the empire to the city of Nicaea in Asia Minor' (Walker 1985[1919]: 134). This was 'the Nicene council' (AD 325), the first universal council of the church (Walker 1985[1919]: 134). The main idea of 'the Nicene council' demonstrates that the Son is real God and that the Son is 'homoousios' with the Father (Berkhof 1991[1937]: 86.). In this council, Arius was anathematized.

3 ATHANASIUS' THEOLOGY

Athanasius (AD 295-373) was born in Alexandria. As young man, Athanasius grew up within the order of the Imperial Church (Von Campenhausen 1998[1960]: 69). Von Campenhausen (1998[1960]: 69-83) depicts Athanasius as one of the ecclesiastical politicians of the fourth century. He was placed in the middle of the fourth century controversy. 'His repeated exiles and returns serve as a weather vane to show which way the doctrinal and political winds were blowing' (González 1984[1970]: 299). He

was a ‘Church man’ and a pastor rather than a systematic or speculative thinker (González 1984[1970]: 300).

Athanasius was not fighting on behalf of a philosophical problem but on behalf of the Christian religion itself, on behalf of the revelation of God (Bavinck 1997[1951]: 281-282; Schaff 1970: 643). He based his theology on the ‘revelation’, and he defended a ‘supernatural and theistic Christian faith’ (Schaff 1970: 643).

3.1 The doctrine of the Trinity as a response to Arius

Athanasius followed Origen’s ‘logos-Son’ (eternal generation of the Son) as Alexanderian (Loofs 1906: 238). But he did not compress the Christian faith in an exclusive and philosophical system characterized exclusively and philosophically like the other Alexandrian theologians (Clemens, Alexander) (Hägglund 1990[1983]: 60).

3.1.1 The incarnation of the Word for sinners

In ‘*De Incarnatione Verbi*’, Athanasius addresses the concept of ‘the deity of Christ’ and the salvation through the Son (Olson 1999:167). Meijering (1974[1968]: 40) points out that Athanasius’ aim was to defend the incarnation of the *Logos* against the objection of the Jews and the Greeks. Athanasius defended the incarnation of the Word and the divinity of the Word in terms of the wrong concepts of Jews and Greeks (Meijering1974: 41).

Athanasius ‘has to deal with creation in order that the reader may know the reason of the incarnation’ (Meijering 1974: 41). For Athanasius (DIV 1), the Father created the world as the Creator through the *Logos* who created it in the beginning. However, the *Logos* is none other than the Creator, God himself, because, if the possibility of creation is from ‘things’ that belong to creature, He could not be the creator and maker of heaven and earth. If so, God is just a technician (DIV 2). For Athanasius, therefore, this *dhmiourgo.j* must be the creator who is the essential Godhead, since the creation



belongs to the Creator (DIV 2). Kelly (1975: 243) says that for Athanasius ‘the Word could never have divinized us if He were merely divine by participation and were not Himself the essential Godhead, the Father’s veritable image’.

Athanasius (CA II, 70)¹⁷ connects the Son’s deity to the deification of human beings. For him, if the Son of God is a creature, he cannot deify human beings, and human beings cannot stand before God. His starting point stems from the question ‘why God became a human being?’ Athanasius’s main object was the salvation of human beings (dia. th.n h`mete,ran swthri,an¹⁸). For Athanasius

The term incarnation demonstrates not only that his main interest is salvation of humanity, but also that he is accepting points of the received ecclesiastical tradition. Although Athanasius was fighting against ‘homoiousianer’, the reason of this was because he concentrated on the salvation of human beings through his whole theology as pastor (Alvyn Pettersen 1995:109).

3.1.2 The reason for the Incarnation

Athanasius was convinced that the reason why the Son of God had to come to this world was the sin of human beings (Rudolf 1986: 78). Athanasius (DIV 4)¹⁹ confirms that transgressions [sins] of men caused the *Logos*’ love of (toward) human beings, so that he came to us to make the Lord known among human beings. According to Kelly’s translation (1975: 284), ‘we ourselves were the motive of His incarnation; it was for our

¹⁷ Ouk a;n de. pa,lin Veqeopoih,qh kti,smati sunafqei.j o` a;nqrwpoj(evi mh. qeo.j h=n Valhqino.j o` ui`o.j(kai. ouvk a;n pare,sth tw| patri. o` a;nqrwpoj(evi mh. fu,sei kai. avlhqino.j h=n autou/ lo,goj o` evndusa,menoj to. sw/ma (CA .II. 70).

¹⁸ This statement is a phrase of the ‘Nicene Creed’

¹⁹ ... h` h`mw//n para,basij tou// Lo,,gou th..n filanqrwpi,,an evxekale,,sato(w[ste kai,, eivj h`ma//j fqa,,sai kai.. fanh//nai to..n Ku,,rion evn avnqrw,poij(.) Th//j ga..r evkei,nou evnswmatw,sewj h`mei//j gego,namen u`po,qesij(kai. dia. Th.n h`mw/n swthri,an evfilanqrwpeu,sato kai. evn avnqrwpi,nw| gene,sqai kai. fanh/nai sw,mati) (DIV, 4)



salvation that He loved man to the point of being born and of appearing in a human body'. For Athanasius, human sin has provoked the incarnation (Meijering 1974: 42). Therefore, his Christology begins with discussion of the sin of human beings.

With the regard to the concept of incarnation, the word 'restoration' plays an important role for Athanasius (Ritschl 1964: 40-44). The purpose of the Son's incarnation and restoration is to protect the Father's work from being destroyed. Athanasius (DIV 8) declares that He (the Son) took on a body, which is not different from ours, so that the work of the Father, by which He made mankind, would not be destroyed²⁰. Although He is the power who is *demiourgos* of the universe (this implies creator here), in the virgin He prepared for himself a temple (DIV 8²¹).

Athanasius 'distinguishes carefully between what belonged to the Word in his eternal being and what belonged to Him as incarnation' (Kelly 1975[1958]: 286). He says

[I]t is necessary for us to pre-examine, so that if we see Him working or speaking divinely through the instrument of his own body, we know that He is God who did this. And again if we see him speaking and suffering as a human, we may not fail to understand that he became a man with flesh (CA III, 35; NPNF², vol 4)²³.

²⁰ ... i`na mh.. to. geno,,menon Vapo,,lhtai(kai.. eivj avrgo.n tou// Patro..j to.. eivj avnqrw,,pouj e;rgon auctou// ge,,nhtai(lamba,,nei e`autw//| sw//ma(kai.. tou//to ouvk avllo,,trion tou// h`mete,,rou)

²¹ ... aucto.j ga.r dunato.j w;n kai. dhmiourgo.j tw/n o[lwn(evn th// Parqe,nw| kataskeua,zei e`autw| nao.n to. sw//ma,(

²² A select library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church, *Second series*.

²³ Tau/ta avnagkai,wj proexhta,samen, i`na, evan i;dwmen aucto.n div ovrga,nou tou/ ivdi,ou sw,matoj qeikw/j pra,ttonta, ti h; le,gonta, ginw,skwmen o;ti Qeo.j w;n, tau/ta evrgavzetai\ kai. pa,lin, eva.n i;dwmen aucto.n avqrwpi,nwj lalou/nta h; pa,sconta, mh. avgnow/men o;ti sa,rka forw/n ge,gonen a;nqropoj



For Athanasius (DIV 10)²⁴, the primary cause of the incarnation of the Saviour is that believers do not die ‘like the condemned [‘ouvke,ti ga..r nu//n w`j katakrino,menoi avpoqnh,skomen’] but as risen ones we await the general resurrection of all [‘w`j evgeiro,menoi perime,,nomen th.n koinh..n pa,ntwn avna,,stasin’]. Therefore human beings can be saved, and look forward to the resurrection. Bobrinskoy (1999: 223) points out that ‘the first period of Athanasius’ doctrinal labor is placed in its entirety under the aegis of the defense of the divinity of the Logos, and of the affirmation of the fullness of the salvation granted in the incarnation of the divine Word.’ Athanasius (DIV 16) persuades that the Word himself is not only man, but also God, the Word and wisdom of the true God²⁵. Insofar as the doctrine of salvation is concerned, Athanasius struggles with the Christology of Arius since salvation through a creature is not possible (Rudolf 1986: 85).

3.1.3 The renewal and the recreation of man’s knowledge of God

In Meijering’s paraphrase of chapter 11-13 of ‘DIV’ (Meijering 1974[1968]: 46), Athanasius treats the understanding of both ‘the destruction of death’ and ‘the restoration of eternal life’. After this ‘Athanasius goes on to elaborate on the renewal of the lost knowledge of God’ (Meijering 1974[1968]: 46). For Athanasius, man as *imago dei* (creation after God’s image) could know God, but ‘forsook this knowledge of God and turned to idolatry’ (Meijering 1974[1968]: 46). Therefore God provided man with a new way to know Him, viz., through the harmony of the universe (Meijering 1974[1968]: 46).

²⁴ ouvke,ti ga..r nu//n w`j katakrino,menoi avpoqnh,skomen(avllV w`j evgeiro,menoi perime,,nomen th.n koinh..n pa,ntwn avna,,stasin(h;n kairoi/j ivdi,oij dei,xci o` kai. tau,thn evrgasa,menoj kai. carisa,menoj Qeo,j. Aivti,a me.n dh. prw,th th/j evnanqrwph,sewj tou/ Swth/roj au[th)

²⁵ ... u`pe,balen e`auto.n dia. sw,matoj fanh/nai o` Lo,goj(i[na metene,gkh| eivj e`auto.n w`j a;nqrwpoj tou.j avnqrw,pouj(kai. ta.j aivsqh,seij avtw/n eivj e`auto.n avpokli,nh| (kai. loipo.n evkei,nouj w`j a;nqrwpon avto.n o`rw//ntaj(diV w-n evrga,zetai e;rgwn (pei,sh| mh. ei=nai e`auto.n a;nqrwpon mo,non(avlla. kai. Qeo.n kai. Qeou/ avlhqinou/ Lo,gon kai. sofi,an)



Athanasius uses the words ‘to renew’ and ‘to recreate’ for ‘a new way of knowing Him.’ Van Haarlem, according to Meijering (1974[1968]: 49), distinguishes between both words: ‘to renew’ implies ‘an apologetic and philosophical idea,’ and ‘to recreate’ means Scriptural one (Meijering 1974[1968]: 49). According to Meijering (1974[1968]: 49), for Van Haarlem, ‘the philosophical idea predominates in the *Contra Gentes* and the scriptural one in the *De Incarnatione Verbi*.’ According to Meijering (1974[1968]: 49), it is impossible ‘to agree with this distinction and the suggestion that in the *De Incarnatione Verbi* the influence of Scripture is stronger than in the *Contra Gentes*.’ Anatolios (1998: 75) says that ‘in the context of the narrative of human sin and corruption, the incarnation is conceived as a renewal of the knowledge of God, which implies restoration of a relationship of full participation by the created *nous* in the divine *Logos*.’

T. F. Torrance (1988: 303) says that ‘Athanasius’s approach to the knowledge of God was strictly through the Son and not otherwise.’ According to Kelly (1975[1958]: 245), Athanasius says that ‘the Son is the image of the Father; [The Son] is the brightness and the Father the light. Hence anyone who sees Christ sees the Father, “because of the Son’s belonging to the Father’s substance and because of His complete likeness to the Father”’. Kelly’s description differs from that of Torrance as the image of the Father implies the same nature as the Father

In Meijering’s (1989) exegesis of the Athanasius’ *De Incarnatione Verbi*, on the [second] reason of the incarnation of Christ (chapter 11-13), he states that the creation after the image and likeness (*nach dem Bilde und Gleichnis*) of God implies that man is the image of the image of God namely (Christ). When man is aware of the particularity of their essence, they have the right understanding of God and because of it they live in happiness. The understanding of God is described, in fact, as a part of the image of God (Meijering 1989: 108). According to Athanasius (DIV 11), God knew that man is insufficient to know a ‘Maker (Creator)’ or have a ‘notion of God’. So God gave them (men) the same image as our Lord Jesus Christ and created them in the likeness of own



image: that by his own grace the image may be understood (DIV 11) ²⁶. So if man, who was created by God, does not know his creator, he is only an animal (DIV 11). But man was too foolish to sustain God's grace, wandered away from God, and defiled his own soul (DIV 11). Through the fall, man lost the possibility to attain to eternal life, and in this regard, changed his own essence (Meijering 1989: 109). According to Frances Young (1983: 70), this part demonstrates man's irrationality. She states that for Athanasius in *Contra Gentes* and *De Incarnatione Verbi* 'men could not be *logokoi*, once they had lost the *Logos* of God; they were reduced to the level of beasts, and worshipped idols in bestial form; indeed idolatry is the proof of man's irrationality.' She argues that 'men could not have regained full knowledge of God without their share in the *Logos*' (Young 1983: 70). There is one solution which is to renew God's image in men. The revelation of God was a prime necessity for salvation (Young 1983: 71).

Meijering (1974[1968]: 49), though, shows that Athanasius uses different sources of man's knowledge of God in *De Incarnatione Verbi* 11-13: 1) by his creation in God's image, 2) through the creation, 3) through Scripture, and 4) through the incarnation. Contrary to Van Haarlem's view, Athanasius refers to the first three sources of knowledge. Having treated the three major arguments of *Contra Gentes*, in his *De Incarnatione Verbi* 1-5, Athanasius discusses the restoration of the eternal life, which man had lost together with his knowledge of God, in *De Incarnatione Verbi* 6-10 (Meijering 1974[1968]: 49). The incarnation of the Word is necessary, for it is impossible for men to restore salvation (renewal and restoration of the knowledge of God) by themselves (Meijering 1974[1968]: 50). Then, Athanasius turns to the restoration of the knowledge of God and discusses the fourth stage of this knowledge. Meijering concludes:

There can be no doubt that in the *Contra Gentes* and in the *De Incarnatione*

²⁶ ... avgaqo,j w;n(th/j ivdi,aj eviko,noj auvtou/j tou/ Kuri,ou h`mw/n VIhsou/ Cristou/ metadi,dwsi, kai. poiei/ tou,touj kata. e`autou/ eivko,na kaq v o`moi,win\ ina dia. th/j toiau,thj ca,ritoj th.n eivko,na noou/ntej(le,gw dh. to.n tou/ Patro.j Lo,gon(dunhqw/sin e;nnoian di v auvtou/ tou/ Patro.j labeli/n(kai. ginw,skontej to.n poi.j th.n zw/si to.n euvdaimona kai. maka,rion o;ntwj bi,on)



Verbi Athanasius is following a well preconceived scheme, and that he develops his arguments with great consistency and harmony. By working with the typically neo-orthodox Protestant separation between Biblical kerygma and philosophy Van Haarlem sees contradiction in Athanasius of which Athanasius himself was not conscious.’(Meijering 1974[1968]: 50)

3.1.4 Homoousia

The term ‘generation’ plays an important role in Athanasius’ theology. He (CA I, 9) says, the Son is ‘natural and genuine Son from the Father, and it is the same with *ousia* [His own ‘*ousia*’] as the Father. The Son is neither ‘*kti, sma*’, nor ‘*poi, hma*’, but a particular ‘*ge, nnhma*’[from Father’s *ousia*]’²⁷. Athanasius sees that ‘Father’s being was never incomplete, needing an essential feature to be added to it; nor is the Son’s generation like a man’s from his parent, involving His coming into existence after the Father. Rather, the Son is God’s offspring’ (Kelly 1975[1958]: 243-244)

For Athanasius, the ‘*ge, nnhsij*’ of God differs from that of humans, since God is neither like a human being, nor is the Father from a father (CA I, 21)²⁸. Athanasius affirms that as the Father is always the Father, (in this sense) the Father would never become the Son at any time, like this, the Son is always the Son (in this meaning) the Son would not become the Father (CA I, 22)²⁹. He also emphasizes that God’s ‘*ge, nnhsij*’ differs from human’s again in another phrase of CA I, 28.

[B]ecause it is not necessary to compare the ‘*ge, nnhsij*’ of God with the nature of human beings, and to consider that His Son is the part of God or

²⁷ Uì oj avlhqino.j fu,sei kai. gnh,sio,j evsti tou/ Patro.j(i;dioj th/j ouvsi,aj aurtou/))) avll v i;dion th/j tou/ Patro.j ouvsi,aj ge,nnhma)

²⁸ VEpi. de, th/j qeo,tthoj ouv k e[stin ou;toj\ ouv ga.r w`j a;nqrwpoj o` Qeo,j\ ou;te gar path.r evk patro,j evsti\].

²⁹ `Wj ga.r o` Path.r avei Path.r, kai, ouv k a;n pote ge,noito Uì oj, ou;te o` Uì oj avei Uì oj evsti, kai. ouv k a;n pote ge,noito Path,r



wholly...God is not like a human being(CA I, 28)³⁰

The Son of God, who is not from nothing (without), but from the Father, has the nature of a '*ge,nnhma*' (CA I, 27). This implies that the Son as '*ge,nnhma*' of God is *o`moousioj tw/ Patri,*, since, as Alvyn Petterson (1995: 156) points out, for Athanasius, the sense of offspring (*ge,nnhma*) and homoousion is one³¹. Although Athanasius emphasizes the idea of '*ge,nnhma*' in opposition to Arius' '*kti,sma*', the word '*ge,nnhma*' illustrates that Athanasius' intention is closely connected with the Son's consubstantiality with the Father³². Athanasius regarded the term '*homoousia*' as 'containing within itself the true and proper solution of that problem also' (Prestige 1981: 213). It is true that the word '*homoousios*' excludes 'any partitions or divisions within the Godhead' (Petterson 1995: 156).

Although Athanasius does not use the term '*homoousia*' in his early work, 'later Athanasius increasingly uses this term, often in terms of the Eusebian formulation of the Son as "like the Father" (*homoiousios*)' (Kelly 1975[1958]: 246). Athanasius uses the term *homoousios* in oppsition to the Arian Logos that was a creature (Petterson 1995: 156). '*Homoousios* seems to be saying that the Son is not a creature' (Petterson 1995: 156). For Athanasius (CA I, 9), the Son is neither '*kti,sma*' nor '*poi,hma*', but a particular '*ge,nnhma*' of the Father's essence. He is true God, being *homoousios* to the

³⁰ [Oti de. ouv dei th,n tou/ Qeou/ ge,nnhsin paraba,llein th/ tw/n avnqrw,pwn fu,sei(kai. nomi,zein th.n me,roj ei=nai tou/ Qeou/ to.n Ui`o.n avtou/(h; o[lw]j ti paqoj shmai,nein th.n ge,nnhsin(fqa,santej me.n ei;pomen evn toi/j e;mprosqen(kai. nu/n de. ta. avta, famen\ ouv k e;stin w`j a;nqropoj o` Qeo,j)

³¹ See De Syn . 42

³² According to Prestige (1981[1936]: 219), 'the employment of homoousia by Athanasius to express substantial identity was a new development in the Greek language.' In fact, the term '*homoousia*' did not originate from Athanasius' invention, but was used for the purpose of excluding Arianism in the Nicene council (Prestige1981 [1936]: 219).



true Father [consubstantial in the essence of the true Father]³³. ‘The idea of Sonship is central to Athanasius’ soteriology’ (Widdicombe³⁴ 1994:223).

3.2 Holy Spirit

Athanasius’ pneumatology appears in the letter to *Serapion* (AS, 529-676)³⁵ in which his primary aim is his defense of the deity of the Holy Spirit. He takes issue with Arians, Sabellians and the Pneumatomachi. Sabellians deny that the Trinity has ‘three hypostaseis’ in one *ousia*, Arians deny the deity of the Son, and the Pneumatomachi deny the deity of the Holy Spirit.

The heresies of the Pneumatomachi and Arians held the view that the Holy Spirit was not only a creature, but also one of the serving spirits (AS 1, 1)³⁶. Athanasius had to prove that the Holy Spirit was not a creature, nor a serving spirit like an angel. Athanasius used Jn 15:26 to defend the deity of the Holy Spirit (AS 1, 6; 3, 1).³⁷

The Holy Spirit is not an angel, nor a creature, but of God’s own deity (AS 1, 12)³⁸. Athanasius also uses the concept of ‘*homoousia*’³⁹ and implies ‘*perichoresis*’⁴⁰ in his

³³ ouvk e;sti kti,sma ou;te poi,hma, (all v i;dion th/j tou/ Patro.j ouvsi,aj ge,nnhma) Dio. Qco,j evstin avlhqino,j(avlhqinou/ Patro.j o`moou,sioj u`poa,rcwn)

³⁴ According to Widdicombe (1994: 147), ‘the Fatherhood of God, the Sonship of the son, and their soteriological significance are the central topics in many of Athanasius’ writing.’

³⁵ Athanasius, Ad Serapionem, Migne 26, 529-676,

³⁶ Athanasius, Ad Serapionem, Migne 26, 1, 1, p. 532. lego,ntwn auvto. mh. mo,non kti,sma, avlla. kai. tw/n leitourgikw/n pneuma,twn e[n auvto. ei=nai kai, baqmw/ mo,non auvto. diafe,rein tw/n avgge,lwn.

³⁷ Athanasius, Ad Serapionem, Migne 26, 1, 6, p. 541; 1,33, p. 608; 3, 1, p. 625. In thoses pages Athanasius defends the deity of the Holy Spirit because Jesus promised to send the the Holy Spirit, as the Paraclete (evgw pe,myw u`min para. tou/ Patroj) and proceeds from the Father(para. tou/ Patro.j evkporeu,etai).

³⁸ Athanasius, Ad Serapionem, Migne 26, 1, 12, p. 516. to. a;ra tou/ Qcou/ Pneu/ma ouvk a;n ei;h a;ggeloj(ouvde. kti,sma(avll v idion th/j qco,thto j auvtou/)



defense of the deity of the Spirit. He advocates the deity of the Holy Spirit against the heresies. It is with the view to 'our salvation' (Young 1983:77; Bienert 1997: 186) that the Holy Spirit deifies⁴¹ human beings through Christ's accomplishment. The Holy Spirit is not separated from the Son, but is also himself in Christ, as the Son is in the Father (AS 1, 14)⁴². In AS 1, 17⁴³, Athanasius confirms that the Holy Trinity is not divided but of the same nature. The Holy Spirit is not a creature but God.

In AS 4,3⁴⁴, Athanasius states that the Spirit is given and sent by the Son (from the Son), as the Son is the only begotten Son. In the Trinity, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, there is one deity; it means that the Holy Spirit is not different from the Son's nature and Father's deity.

According to Anatolios (1998: 118), for Athanasius, God's creative work is not conceived as external to God's being but as internal to God's being. God's creation is eternal creation. In the distinction between 'theology' and 'economy,' the former is

³⁹ Hägglund (1990: 63) displays 'Athanasius lehrt auch die Homousie des Geistes'; See- Torrance (1993: 8-9); Kelly (1975: 257-258).

⁴⁰ He does not use this term but the meaning of Perichoresis appears in his writings. He applies this meaning to the Holy Spirit as Trinity. The origin of the Holy Spirit is included in this terminology. See Meyer (2000: 396; 401); See Longergan (1976: 103-104); See Dragas (1993: 57).

⁴¹ This deification is through the incarnation of the Son. In his book 'contra Arianum II, 70', he says that our deification is from the nature of the Logos of the Father. In 'Ad Serapionem,' he sustains that the Holy Spirit deifies human beings because he is the nature of God.

⁴² Athanasius, Ad Serapionem, Migne, 26, 1, 14, p 565. ο[ti ουv διη|rei/to tou/ Ui`ou/ to.

Pneu/ma(avll v evn Cristw/| h=n kai. αυτο.(w[sper ο` Ui`ou/ evn tw/| Patri,

⁴³ Athanasius, Ad Serapionem, Migne, 26, 1-17 p. 572. ... i[na to. avdiai,reton kai. ο`mofue,j

avlhqw/j th/j a`gi,aj Tria,doj diamei,nh|

⁴⁴ Athanasius, Ad Serapionem, Migne, 26, 4,3 , p. 641. Kai. ga,r ο` Ui`o,j i[dion th/j ouvsi,aj kai. th/j fu,sewj tou/ Patro,j evsti ge,nnhma(kai. tou/to e;cei to. shmaino,menon) Kai. to Pneu/ma de. lego,menon tou/ Qeou/(kai. evn αυtw/| ο[n(ουv xe,non evsti. th/j tou/ Ui`ou/ fu,sewj(ou;te th/j tou/ Patro,j qeo,thtoj) Dia. tou/to ga,r evn Tria.di(evn Patri.(kai. evn Ui`w/|(kai. evn αυtw/| tw/| Pneu,mati(mi,a qeo,thj evsti.(kai. evn αυth/| th/| Tria,di e[n evsti to. ba,ptisma(kai. mi,a h` pi,stij



conceived as internal to God's being and the latter is external to God's being. For Athanasius, 'theology' has priority over 'economy.' 'The priority of "theology" over "economy" is the priority of divine generation over creation' (Anatolios 1998: 122).

Although the dual procession of the Holy Spirit is not clearly stated by Athanasius through his understanding of '*perichoresis* and *homoousia*,' and 'the priority of the "theology" over "economy"' it is possible to deduct his view on the origin of the Holy Spirit. Meyer (2000: 400-401)⁴⁵ points out that according to Athanasius the Holy Spirit 'proceeds from the Father through the Son' and that 'through' means 'from'. Implicitly the dual procession of the Holy Spirit is deducted from these concepts. Athanasius's primary targets, though, are Arianism, the Pneumatomachians, and Sabellianism, heresies that deny the deity of the Holy Spirit. He does not attack the filioquism, nor does he advocate it. However, it does not mean that he does not believe in the idea of the procession⁴⁶ of the Holy Spirit (Petterson1995: 184), since implicitly it is impossible to deny that the deity of Holy Spirit is 'from the Father and the Son', or 'from the Father through the Son' (Fortman 1972:75).⁴⁷ Because the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of the Christ (Bienert 997:186). He therefore affirms the filioque.

4 BASIL'S DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY

⁴⁵ Meyer (2000: 400-401) says that 'He argues that the Spirit must proceed from the Father and the Son, or from the Father through the Son. In short, filioque and per Filium expressions are roughly equivalent.'

⁴⁶ Petterson (1995: 184) argues that 'Athanasius does not use the term "procession" and its cognates in a strict sense, Athanasius, though using these terms of the Spirit in both his essential life and his ministry and not at all of the Son, does not contrast "procession" with "being begotten." He uses the term 'procession' to indicate the deity of the Holy Spirit from the Father as well as from the Son. Because the Holy Spirit is not alien to the Son and he is "homoousion" with the Father as the Son is "homoousios" with the Father.'

⁴⁷ Fortman (1972: 75) states that 'yet if we regard what is implicit, rather than what is explicit, in these letters, we are justified in claiming that the procession of the Spirit through the Son is a necessary corollary of his whole argument.' (Fortman quotes Prestige's writing)



In the early Church, the doctrine of the Trinity was formulated as one ousia in three hypostaseis (Prestige 1981: 169). According to Lienhard (1999: 105) ‘Basil of Caesarea was the first to attempt to distinguish explicitly between ousia and hypostasis’ (Oberdorfer 2002: 75; Prestige: 234; Lohse 1978: 69). The Homousia and hypostatic independence of three divine Persons were clearly taught by Basil (Kraft 1991: 170).

4.1 The terms ‘ousia’ and ‘hypostasis’

As successor to Athanasius, Basil followed the Nicene faith. In fact, as Davis (1987:111) states, ‘in Basil, Athanasius found a worthy successor’. However, Anastos (1981: 69) points out that ‘the major problem for the theologians of the Early Church was to explain how the three Persons of the Trinity could be regarded as one God, not three. The solution of the dilemma was found in the orthodox definition of the divine *ousia* with its three *hypostaseis*’.

Prestige (1981[1936]: 228) says that ‘he(Basil) probably thought, according to the principle of the solidarity of the human race, that the whole of human nature is presented in each individual man, so that his argument from particular men afforded a not entirely inadequate illustration of the unity of God.’ He adds that ‘he(Basil) certainly seems to imply that the only fact which constituted the several hypostases of the godhead was that Fatherhood, Sonship and Sanctification, and that, apart from these ‘idiomata’ of presentation, the ousia of the three Persons was identical’. Prestige says

... while He recognized two distinct hypostaseis[the Father and the Son], he still maintained the unity of God, “as image”, he writes, “the Son reproduces the exact model without variation, and as offspring He preserves the homousion”. The image-metaphor guarantees so to speak, the identity of form between the Persons, and the offspring-metaphor guarantees the identity of matter (Prestige 1981[1936]: 229)

Prestige (1981 [1936]: 229) says that for Basil, the concept ‘one *ousia*’ does not imply “two separated objects” produced out of one, but an identical character of the *ousia* is to be accepted’. For Basil

The identity of the divine *ousia* in the several Persons is therefore not a matter of their belonging to a single species, but of their several expression unimpaired of an identical single *ousia*, which is concrete, incapable of any limiting or qualifying relation and exhaustive of the content of the being of its several presentations (Prestige 1981 [1936]: 229- 230).’

As mentioned in the section on Athanasius, these terms have raised some confusion, because even Athanasius used these terms without distinction in some of his writings. As Prestige (1981: 167) points out, ‘elsewhere Athanasius (Ad Afr, 4) lays it down that hypostasis means “being”(ousia) and has no other significance than simply “ that which exists”; the hypostasis and the being mean existence, for it is, and it exists’. He adds

Both hypostasis and *ousia* describe positive, substantial existence, that which is, that which subsists; το. ο;ν, το. ὺ festhko,j. But *ousia* tends to regard internal characteristics and relations, or metaphysical reality; while hypostasis regularly emphasizes the externally concrete character of the substance, or empirical objectivity. Hence, with regard to the Trinity, it never sounded unnatural to assert three hypostaseis, but it was always unnatural to proclaim three *ousiai*; although some writers, as will appear hereafter, occasionally use *ousia* in a sense approximating to that of hypostasis, definite examples of the reverse process are not often to be found (Prestige 1981: 188).

According to Prestige (1981: 186), for Basil, the word *ousia* implies ‘a single object of which the individuality is disclosed by means of internal analysis, an object abstractly and philosophically a unit’, instead, the word ‘*hypostasis*’ implies that ‘the emphasis lays not on content, but on externally concrete independence; objectivity in relation to other objects’ (Prestige 1981: 169).



However, for Basil, as Alston (1999: 186) points out, ‘the distinction between ousia and hypostasis is the same as that between the general and the particular’⁴⁸. Basil states in letter 214, 4

[I]f it is necessary for us to say in short what we think (decrees), we will say: What the common (generic idea) is to the particular, this ousia (substance) is to the hypostasis (person). Therefore each one of us participates in the common term of ousia (essence)... So even here, on the one hand, the term of ousia is common (generic), like goodness, divinity, or any similar attribute; on the other hand, hypostasis is perceived in the special property of fatherhood, or Sonship, or of holy power (Basil, letter 214, 4; NPNF2, vol 8).⁴⁹

Basil adds

[I]f they describe that the *prosopa* (Persons) are *anhypostata* (without hypostasis), it is *ipso defacto* an absurd doctrine; as they confess, if it is agreed that the *prosopa* exist in real hypostasis, then they must be enumerated, in order that the principle of *homoousion* may be guarded in the oneness of deity (the unity of the godhead), and that full knowledge of the holiness of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, in the complete and whole hypostasis of each of those called, may be proclaimed (Letter 214, 4;

⁴⁸ See Basil’s letter 236.6 (Behr 2004: 298) ‘The distinction between essence and hypostasis is the same as that between the general and the particular; as for instance, between the animal and the particular human...’

⁴⁹ Eiv de. dei/ kai. h`ma/j to. dokou/n h`mi/n evn bracci/ eivpei/n(evkei.noj evrou/men(o[ti o;n e;cei lo.gon to. koino.n pro.j to. i;dion(tou/ton e;cei h` ouvsi,a pro.j th.n u`po,stasin) [Ekastoj ga.r h`mw/n kai. tw/| koinw/| th/j ouvsi,aj lo,gw| tou/ ei=nai mete,cei(kai. toi/j peri. auvto.n ivdiw,masin o` dei/na evsti kai. o` dei/na) Ou;tw kakei/ o` me.n th/j ouvsi,aj lo,goj koino,j oi-on h` avgaqo,thj(h` qeo,thj(h; ei; ti a;llo nooi/to\ ~H de. u`po,stasij evn tw/| ivdiw,mati th/j patro,tthoj(h; th/j ui`o,tthoj(h; th/j a`giastikh/j duna,mewj qewrei/tai.



NPNF2, vol 8; see Prestige 1981: 228).⁵⁰

Against the Sabellians, Basil (Gregory of Nazianus and Chrysostom) says that the Sabellians reduced the godhead to a single *prosopon*, though it appeared under three names (Prestige 1981: 161). So Basil accuses the Sabellians of maintaining three *prosopa*, in the sense of masks or stage characters in the several letters (Prestige1981: 161).

4.2 The Doctrine of the Trinity

The essence of the Cappadocians' doctrine is that the one Godhead exists simultaneously in three modes of being, or *hypostaseis* (Kelly 1975: 264). Basil explains implicitly the doctrine of the co-inherence⁵¹, or '*perichoreisis*', of the divine Persons (Kelly 1975[1958]: 264). It is clear that he does not explicitly use the term '*perichoresis*', but it is possible to deduce it from his statement.

For the Son is in the Father, and the Father in the Son: since such as is the latter, such is the former, and such as is the former, such is the latter; and herein is the unity. So on the one hand, according to the peculiarity of the persons, one and one: on the other hand, according to their common nature, both are also one (DSS 18, 45, 208; NPNF2, vol 8) ⁵².

⁵⁰ Eiv me.n ou=n avnupo,stata le,gousi ta. pro,swpa(auvto,qen e;cei o` lo,goj th.n avtopi,an\ eiv de. evn u`posta,sei ei=nai auvta. avlhqinh/ sugcwrou/sin(o[o`mologou/si(kai. avriqmei,twsan(i[na kai. o` tou/ o`moousi,ou lo,goj diafulacqh/ evn th/ e`no,thti th/j qeo,thtoj kai. h` th/j cuvsebei,aj evpi,gnwsij Patro.j kai. Ui`ou/ kai. avgi,ou Pneu,matoj(evn th/ avphrtisme,nh| kai. o` lotelei/ e`ka,stou tw/n ovnomazo,menwn u`posta,sei khru,sshtai)

⁵¹ Ep. 38. 8. pa,nta ga.r ta. tou/ Patro.j evn tw/ Ui`ow/| kaqora/tai) kai. pa,nta ta. tou/ Ui`ou/ tou/ Patro.j evstin\ evpeideh/ kai. o[loj o` Ui`oj evn tw/ Patri. me,nei(kai. o[lon e;cei pa,lin evn e`autw/| ton Pate,ra\ {Wste h` tou/ Ui`ou/ u`po,stasij oivonei. morf. kai. pro,swpon gi,netai th/j tou/ Patro.j evpiginw,sketai\.

⁵² Ui`o.j ga.r evn tw/ Patri,(kai. Path.r evn tw/ Ui`w/| evpeidh. kai. ou-toj toiou/toj(oi-oj



Davis (1987:114) insists that ‘Basil and Gregory laid stress on the distinction with that unity, the former sharply distinguishing the one *ousia* and the three *hypostaseis* (modes of existence).’

For Basil, it is necessary to confess that the Father is God (or God the Father), the Son is God, and the Holy Spirit is God (PG 32, Letter 8:2, 248)⁵³. It means that the Father is God, the Son is God and the Holy Spirit is God. Basil does not only follow the Nicene term ‘*homoousia*’ for the Father and the Son only, but also applies it to the Holy Spirit following Athanasius.

Basil saw that the Son is consubstantial with the Father as his offspring. As with Athanasius Basil regards the term ‘offspring’ as homoousion with the Father. Basil affirms the Nicene confession

[I]n this, the Son is confessed to be consubstantial [*homoousios*] with the Father, and to be [naturally] of the same nature as the One who begot Him (*o` gennh,saj*). Light, therefore, of light, God of God, Good of Good, and these all things were confessed by those church fathers, and by us now... (PG 32, Letter 159,1; NPNF2, vol 8)⁵⁴.

Like Athanasius, Basil’s ‘*ge,nnhsij*’ is closely connected with term ‘*homoousia*’.

[T]herefore, in confessing the identity of nature, we accepted the consubstantiality [*homoousion*], but we avoid the composition of the Father, [since] the One who was God the Father in substance [*ousia*] has begotten the One who was God the Son in substance [*ousia*]. For thereupon the

evkei/noj(kavkei/noj oi`o,sper ou-toj\ kai. evn tou,tw| e[n. [Wste kata. me.n th.n ivdio,ta tw/n prosw,pwn(ei-j kai. ei-j\ kata. de. to koino.n th/j fu,sewj(e[n oi` avmfo,mteroi

⁵³ de,on o` mologe/n Qeon to. Pate,ra(Qeo.n to.n Ui`o.n (Qeo.n to. Pneu/ma to. a[vion\

⁵⁴ vEn h-| o` moou,sioj ovmologe/i/tai o` Uio,j tw/| Patri.(kai. th/j avth/j u`pa,rcwn fu,sewj h[j o` gennh,taj. Fw/j ga.r evk fwto,j (kai. Qeo.n evk Qeou/(kai avgaqo,n evx avgaqou/(kai. ta. toiau.ta ta,nta(u`po, te tw/n a`gi,wn evkei,nwn w`mologh,qh (kai. u`f v h`mwn nu/n(



homoousion is proved. For God in essence [*ousia*] or substance is *homoousios* (co-essential or consubstantial) with God in essence or substance [*ousia*] (PG 32, Letter 8: 3⁵⁵, NPNF2, vol 8) ⁵⁶

When Basil argues against people who deny the deity of the Son and the Holy Spirit, he says that the baptism has been given us by the savior in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit (PG 32, Letter 159: 1, NPNF2, vol, 8). And we glorify the Holy Spirit together with the Father and the Son in the conviction (it persuades us) that He is not separated from the divine nature (PG 32, Letter 159: 1, NPNF2, vol, 8).

For Basil, the Son is not a creature. If the Son is not a creature, He is consubstantial with the Father (PG 32, Letter 8:9). The Son is generated from the Father in the sense that He is *homoousios* (consubstantial) with the Father (PG 32, Letter 8: 3). This demonstrates, as Prestige (1981: 242) points out, that ‘the doctrine of the Cappadocians was substantially the same as that of Athanasius, from whom they had learned it.’ For Basil, the Holy Spirit works for ‘the Salvation of human beings’ (Luislampe 1981:158) and ‘the holiness of the human beings’ (Luislampe 1981:170). This implies that Basil’s understanding concentrates on the soteriological and ontological point following Athanasius.

For Basil, the baptismal formula illustrates the co-glorifying of the three *hypostaseis* (the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit) (PG 32, Letter 159: 1). As Prestige (1981: 244-245) says, ‘there remains the supplementary particularity with a view to the clear distinction of the hypostaseis.’ For Basil, ‘the fact that these three particularities merely represent modes in which, as has been said, the divine substance is transmitted and presented, was expressed by the phrase *tro,poj u`pa,rxewj*, ‘mode of

⁵⁵ According to Kelly, this letter’s author is probably Evagrius (Kelly, 264)

⁵⁶ Tauto,thta de. th/j fu,sewj o`mologou/ntej(kai. to. o`moou,sion evkdeco,meqa(kai, to. su,qeton feu,gomen(tou/ kat v ouvsi,an Qeou/ kai. Patro.j to.n kat v ouvsi,an Qeo.n kai. Ui`o.n gegennhko,toj) vEk ga.r tou,tou to. o`moou,sion dei,knutai) ~O ga.r kat v ouvsi,an Qeo.j tw/| kat v ouvsi,an Qew/| o`moou,sio,j evstin) (PG 32, Letter 8: 3

existence’ (Prestige 1981: 244-245). The word *hyparxis* means, in the simplest sense, existence (Prestige 1981: 245). Prestige contends

It is therefore possible to argue that when the phrase ‘mode of *hyparxis*’ is applied to the divine Persons, it may, at least in the case of the second and third Person, originally have contained a covert reference not merely to their existence, but to the derivation of their existence from the paternal *arche* (Prestige 1981: 245).

‘The term seems to have been rescued by Basil from the schools of logic, and subsequently adopted generally into the theological tradition’ (Prestige 1981: 245-246).

According to Torrance (1989: 314), ‘he held that, far from being alien to the divine nature, the Holy Spirit has an ineffable mode of existence (*tro,poj u`pa,rxewj*) as *u`po,stasij* in the indivisible *koinwni,a* of divine nature with the Father and the Son.’ For Collins (2001:146), thus *tropos hyparxeos* might equally be translated ‘mode of existence’ or ‘mode of obtaining existence’. However, since the Persons of the Godhead are understood to be coeternal and coequal, the meanings of the two translations effectively coalesce (Collins 2001:147). The Cappadocian used the term ‘mode of *hyparxis*’ to describe the divine hypostases.

The term “mode of *hyparxis*” was applied, from the end of the fourth century, to the particularities that distinguish the divine Persons, in order to express the belief that in those Persons or hypostaseis one and the same divine being is presented in distinct objective and permanent expressions though with no variation in divine content (Prestige 1981: 249).

For Basil, ‘the Spirit is a living *ousia*, the Lord of sanctification, whose relationship to God is disclosed by His procession, but the mode of whose *hyparxis* is preserved ineffable’ (Prestige 1981[1936]: 246).



4.3 The Holy Spirit

The Cappadocians's main contribution is the emphasis on the consubstantiality of the Holy Spirit with the Father. As Kelly (1975[1958]: 258) points out well, 'if Athanasius took the lead in defending the *homoousion* of the Spirit, the task was completed, cautiously and circumspectly, by the Cappadocian fathers. At the council of Constantinople in 381, the consubstantiality of the Spirit was formally endorsed' (Kelly 1975[1958]: 263).

Basil emphasizes the hypostatic independence of the Holy Spirit (Bienert 1997: 186.). In the early days as bishop, Basil refrained from the statement about the divinity of the Holy Spirit (Davis 1987: 113). However, after breaking with his old mentor, the Pneumatomachian Eustathius of Sebaste, he was more explicit to use the concept of divinity of the Holy Spirit (Davis 1987: 113).

Basil uses the term '*homotimon*,' by which the Holy Spirit enjoys the same worship and adoration as the Father and the Son, instead of the term '*homoousia*' (Bienert, 1997:188; Kelly 1975: 260-261). But the Holy Spirit does not stand outside the divine *ousia*, because, according to Basil, the Holy Spirit is not a creature, but 'he is able to set free, live and sanctify' (Studer 1985:184). Therefore the Holy Spirit works for 'the salvation of human beings' (Luislampe 1981:158) and 'the holiness of the human beings' (Luislampe 1981:170). For Basil, in fact, this '*homotimon*' means '*homoousia*' (Luislampe 1981: 181). Basil says

[Y]ou say that the Holy Spirit is a creature. But all creatures are the servants of their creator: for all things are your servants, he says. And if He is a servant, and He has the holiness acquired newly; everything that has the holiness acquired newly is not able to admit (susceptible of) evil. But the Holy Spirit, that is holy according to the *ousia*, has been called 'foundation of holiness'. Therefore, the Holy Spirit is not a creature. And if He is not a creature, He is *homoousios* (consubstantial) with God (PG 32, Letter 8: 10).



As Anastos (1981: 132-133) says, ‘the Holy Spirit was acknowledged to be God, *o`moou, sion* as well as *o`mo, timon* with the Father and the Son’.

As far as the aspect of the procession of the Holy Spirit is concerned, Basil states that ‘the Holy Spirit proceeds from God not as a creature, nor is He generated like the Son, but as breathing from the mouth of God’⁵⁸ (DSS 18, 46). The Spirit’s character is ‘procession.’ That is different from the Son’s generation (Lohse 1978: 69). Basil confirms this procession in the sense that the Spirit has the same deity as God.

For Basil, there is no filioque or dual procession of the Holy Spirit. He does not explicitly state that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son. The procession of the Holy Spirit differs from generation. He does not even say that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father only (he used John 15:26 for the purpose of the protection of the deity of the Holy Spirit), but says that the Holy Spirit is from God (*w`j evk tou/ Qeou/ proelqo, n*)(DSS 18, 46). This implies the procession of the Holy Spirit *from God*. It can mean ‘from the Father and from the Son’ according to his doxology (DSS 1, 3)⁵⁹: ‘to the Father through the Son with the Holy Spirit’. It sounds like the

⁵⁷ Kti, sma le, geij to. Pneu/ma to. a[gion. Pa/n de. kti, sma dou/lo, n evsti tou/ kti, santoj\ Ta. ga.r su, mpanta(fhsi(dou/la sa,) Eiv de. dou/lo, n evsti(kai. evpikthton e;cei th.n a`gio, thta\ pa/n de, o[evpi. kthton e;cei th.n a`gio, thta(ouvk avnepi, dekho. n evsti kaki, aj\ to. de. Pneuma to. a[gion(kat v ouvsi, an o[n a[gion. phgh. a`giasmou/ proshgo, reutai\ ouvk avra kti, sma to. Pneu/ma to. a[gion. Eiv de. mh. kti, sma(o`moou, sion evsti tw/| Qew/|)

⁵⁸ Basil of Caesarea 18, 46, p. 210.

Kai. ou, k evnteu/qen mo, non th/j kata. th.n fu, sin koinwsi, aj ai` avpodei, xeij(avll v o[ti kai. evk tou/ Qeou/ ei=nai le. getai\ ouvc w`j ta. pa, nta evk tou/ Qeou/(avll v w`j evk tou/ Qeou/ proelqo, n\ ouv gennhtw/j w`j o` Ui`o, j(all v w`j Pneu/ma sto, matoj auctou) Pa, ntwj de. ou; te to. sto, ma me, loj(ou; te pnoh. luome, nh to. Pneu/ma\ avlla, kai. to sto, ma qeoprepw/j...

⁵⁹ Basil of Caesarea, 1, 3, p. 78. ‘ avmfot, rwj th.n doxologi, an avpoplhrou/nti tw/| Qew/| kai. Patri, (nu/n me. n meta. tou/ Ui`ou su. n tw/| Pneu, mati tw/| a`gi, w|(nu/n de. dia. tou/ Ui`ou/ evn tw/| a`gi, w| Pneu, mati ...



concepts of ‘homoousia’ and ‘perichoresis.’⁶⁰ Basil’s prepositions (*evk(dia, (evn or eivj)*) can all freely be changed with reference to the *hypostaseis*. The strict application of the prepositions requires that the proposition ‘evk’ is only applied to the Father, ‘*di,a*’ only to the Son, and ‘*evn or eivj*’ only to the Holy Spirit. He says that ‘it is these careful distinctions, derived from unpractical philosophy and vail delusion, which our opponents have first studied and admired, and then transferred to the simple and unsophisticated doctrine of the Spirit, to the belittling of God the Word, and the setting at naught of the Divine Spirit’(NPNF2, vol 8; DSS 3, 5). Basil (DSS 6, 15) mentions that the relation between three Persons of the Trinity in the Bible is not ‘up and down’, but ‘right and left’. According to Prestige (1981[1936]: 259), ‘Basil (CEu 3, 4) maintains that the deity of the Holy Spirit is indicated by the fact, on which he enlarges, that the energy of the Holy Spirit is co-ordinate with that of the Father and the Son.’

5 GREGORY OF NAZIANZUS

Gregory of Nazianzus and Gregory of Nyssa repeat and extend Basil’s theology (Kelly 1975[1958]: 261). Their emphasis lies on the unity of the three Persons in the Trinity (Ritschl 1981: 56).

5.1 The doctrine of the Trinity

For Gregory, when we say that there are three hypostaseis in God, it is impossible to understand that ‘there are three gods, because the distinction is not referring to the divine essence but to the distinct characteristics of the *hypostaseis*’ (Papademetriou 1994: 3). God is a true Trinity, whose Persons are equal in every way. The Trinity has a common principle, a common essence, and a common power (Papademetriou 1994: 3). Studer(1993: 145) says that for Gregory, ‘the three *hypostaseis* are to be distinguished

⁶⁰ It is clear that he does not use the term Perichoresis but it is possible to deduce it from his sentences. See Basil of Caesarea, 18, 45, p. 208 (Uì`o.j ga.r evn tw/| Patri,(kai. Path.r evn tw/| Uì`w/|\ evpeidh. kai. ou-toj toiou/toj(oi-oj evkei/noj(kavkei/noj oi`o,sper ou-toj\ kai. evn tou,tw/| to. e[n. Kata. de. to koino.n th/j fu,sewj(e[n oi` avmfomteroi] .



without separation, indeed it unified in distinction; for the divinity exists in the three and the three are one being, in which the divinity exists'. For Gregory, 'the Trinity is a dynamic and soteriological experience, the beauty of God experienced in the liturgy of prayer and expressed in the Church's confession of praise' (McGukin 1994:18)

Gregory confirms that there is a common essence in each *hypostasis*, this common essence implies the nature of God (Kelly 1975[1958]: 265). In Or 6: 22, Gregory says that 'adorable unity in trinity, and trinity recapitulated in unity; entirely venerable, entirely regal, of the same throne and glory, transcendent and timeless, uncreated, invisible, untouchable, uncircumscribable. It has inner order known to itself alone, but to be venerated and equally adored by us. It alone enters the Holy of Holies while all the creation remains outside' (McGukin 1994: 17).

Although the three *hypostaseis* are different in number, their *ousia* is not divided (Or, 29, 2). Gregory argues

...so that and though numerically distinct there is no severance of essence. Therefore, a unity having from all eternity arrived by motion at duality, found its rest in Trinity: And this is for us the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit (Or 29, 2, See NFPP2, vol 7)⁶¹.

Gregory regards the *homoousia* as the main idea of the Trinity (Schütz 1985: 59).⁶² And in his doctrine of the trinitarian convergence to unity, Gregory even begins to sketch out the shape of the doctrine of *perichoresis* (McGukin 1994: 23). Gregory is the first theologian to use the term *perichoresis* to employ this for the two natures of Christ (letter 101)(Norris 1991: 50)

⁶¹ ..., w[ste ka;n avriqmw/] diafe,rh|(th/| ge ouvsi,a mh. te,mnesqai) Dia. tou/to mona.j avp v avrch/j(civj dua,da kinhqeí/sa(me,cri tria,doj cvsth) Kai. tou/to, cvstin h`mi/n o` Path.r (kai. o` Ui`o,j(kai. to. a[gion Pneu/ma\

⁶² See Studer (1985: 187): „Anders als Basilius scheute sich Gregor von Nazianz nicht, den Heiligen Geist Gott und Homoousios zu nennen.“



Gregory (Or 29, 3) contends that the doctrine of the Trinity is not restricted to the time in which human beings live, but beyond time. It is meaningless to use the term in time, since the Trinity is non-time. Since the three *hypostaseis* work in the non-time, therefore, the three *hypostaseis* are eternal. As McGukin (1994: 27) points out, ‘Gregory emphasizes two key elements in this understanding of the Father as *avrch*, and *aivti,a* of the Godhead. The first of these is that the act is timeless; it has no temporal beginning, duration, or end, although it has an origin of logical order in the eternal Person of the Father.’ According to Fortman (1972: 77), for Gregory, the Son differs from creatures as he declares that the Son is ‘the maker of time and is not subject to time’. Gregory uses the term ‘incarnation’, which he took from Origen (Liébaert 1965:89). It plays an important role in his Christology.

The incarnation is closely connected with the doctrine of the ‘two natures’ of Christ. The controversy about the two natures of Christ started in the Eastern Church. There were two schools of thought: Antioch emphasized the human nature of Christ, while Alexandria focused on the divine Christ (Boer 1976: 167). Actually, the tension between the Alexandrian school and Antioch stems from the relation between humanity and deity, especially, as Grenz (2000: 295) points out, the possibility of the union of two natures in one Person.

The problem of the doctrine of the ‘two natures’ in one Person did not only start with the Arians (Eunomius), but also with Apollinarius of Laodicea who was a defender of the Nicene term *homoousion* (Brown 1984: 160). According to Seeberg (1936:52), Apollinarius accepted the perspective of Lucian and of Arius’ teaching that the Logos is not *evnanqrwph,saj*, but *sarkw,qeij* according to the platonic trichotomy. Apollinarius therefore denied the ‘true and proper humanity of Jesus Christ’ (Berkhof 1991[1937]: 102).

In the trichotomy of Apollinarius, Christ had a human *sa,rx*, and *yuch,*, but not a human ‘*nou/j*’ (Koehler 1951:160). The Logos took the place in the place of human nous (Koehler 1951: 160). Kelly (1975: 291) says that ‘he put forward an extreme



version of the Word-flesh Christology.’ Apollinarius’ doctrine of the incarnation identified ‘one nature’ of Christ, and he never stops to be against the doctrine of ‘two natures’ which [dominates among] the Antiochians (Kelly 1975: 293).

Gregory of Nazianzus supported the doctrine of ‘two natures’, the divinity and humanity explained substantially united in the God-man (Kelly 1975: 298). Gregory of Nyssa emphasised the unity of both natures through the activity of the one and the passivity of the other (Seeberg 1936: 53). Christ’s two natures ‘are distinguished in thought, and can be referred to as “the one”(a;llo) and “the other”(a;llo), but there are not two Persons (a;lloj kai, a;lloj); rather, “They both form a unity[e/n] by their commingling, God having become man and man God”’(Kelly 1975: 297)

Athanasius, St. Basil, Gregory of Nazianzus, and Gregory of Nyssa protected the union of the divinity and the humanity in one Person. They opposed the heresies that deny the divinity of Jesus Christ on the one hand, and deny the real humanity of Christ on the other hand (Berkhof (1991[1937]: 102). The doctrine of ‘two natures’ opposed the heresies, in which Christology was distorted from the biblical understanding (Berkhof (1991[1937]: 101-102). ‘Gregory of Nazianzus followed Athanasius even more explicitly in his focus on the incarnation as the keystone of salvation’ (Norman 1980: 214).

The key to Gregory of Nazianzus’ disputations is the relation between the three Persons, the ‘relationship of the communion of essence which exists between the Father and the Son’ (González 1984[1970]: 321). Gregory’s concept of ‘relation’ does not imply ‘ontological’ status of the innertrinitarian ‘Persons’ as in its later western understanding. For him, it never implies mutual-relationship (*wechselseitige Beziehung*) in which the *hypostaseis* are distinguishable through their mutual-relationship from each other, so that the Son and the Spirit became distinct *hypostaseis* through it (Oberdorfer 2002: 86). For him, it implies that ‘relation’ does not indicate the relational structure as such, but that the concrete relation constitutes an independence of *hypostasis* (Oberdorfer 2002: 86). According to Quasten (1975: 250), ‘there is complete identity among the three divine Persons except for the relations of origin. Gregory uses this



doctrine of relations to prove the coeternity of the divine Persons and their identity of substance against the rationalistic distortions of the heretics. The three Persons have each a property of relation. Their properties are relations of origin'. For Gregory, the relation of the three Persons implies 'one nature'⁶³.

For Nazianzus (Or 31, 8) ⁶⁴, the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father, but it does not mean that the Holy Spirit is from the Father only, but that the Holy Spirit is neither a creature nor the begotten Son. He (Or 31, 8) ⁶⁵ adds that the Holy Spirit's property is *evkpo, reusij*, that of the Father is *avgennhsi, a*, and that of the Son is *ge, nnhsia*, but it is a mystery of God. He argues that the reason why he uses the word *evkpo, reusij* is to keep 'three *hypostaseis*' in one nature and worthy of the deity in contrast to 'the mixture' of the Sabellianism and tri-theism(Or 31, 9)⁶⁶. Therefore 'for neither is the Son the Father, for the Father is one, but He is what the Father is; nor is the Spirit the Son because He is from God, for there is only one Only- begotten, but He is what the Son is'(Or 31, 9; NPNF2, vol 7)⁶⁷.

⁶³ Gregory of Nazianzus, Or, 31, 9. p. 290. i[na to. avsu,gcuton sw/|zhtai tw/n triw/n u` postasewn evn th/| mia/| fu,sei te kai. avxi,a| th/j qeo,tthoj .

⁶⁴ Gregory of Nazianzus Or, 31, 8. p. 288.

To. Pneu/ma to. a[gion(o[para. tou/ Patro.j evkporcu,etai\ o[kaq v o[son mc.n evkci/qen evkporcu,etai(ouv kti,sma\ kaq v o[son de. ouv gennhto,n(ouvc Ui`o,j\ kaq v o[son de. avgennh,tou kai. gennhtou/ mc,son(Qeo,j. it does not mean that this para. tou/ Patro.j evkporcu,etai is from the Father only.

⁶⁵ Gregory of Nazianzus, Or, 31, 8. p. 288. Ti,j ou=n h` evkpo,reusij* eivpe. su. th.n avgennhsi,an tou/ Patro,j(kavgw. th.n ge,nnhsin tou/ Ui`ou/ fusiologh,sw(kai. th.n evkpo,reusin tou/ Pneu,matoj(kai. Paraphkti,somen a;mfw eivj Qeou/ musth,ria paraku,ptontej\ but it is mystery of God.

⁶⁶ Gregory of Nazianzus, Or, 31, 9. p. 290. i[na to. avsu,gcuton sw/|zhtai tw/n triw/n u` postasewn evn th/| mia/| fu,sei te kai. avxi,a| th/j qeo,tthoj.Gregory of Nazianzus, Or, 31, 9. p. 290. En ta. tri,a qeo,thti(kai. to. e[n tri,a tai/j ivdio,thsin\ i[na mh,te to. e[n Sabellion h=|(mh,te ta. tri,a th/j ponhra/j nu/n diaire,sewj)

⁶⁷ Gregory of Nazianzus, Or, 31, 9. p. 290. Ou;te ga.r o` Ui`o,j Path,r(ei-j ga.r Path,r(avll v o[per o` Path,r\ ou;te to. Pneu/ma Ui`o,j(o[ti evk tou/ Qeou/(ei-j ga.r o` Monogenh,j(avll v o[per o`



5.2 The procession of the Holy Spirit

From Gregory's writings, it is possible to detect something of his thinking about the procession of the Holy Spirit. McGukin argues that 'from antiquity, Latin commentators failed to sustain Gregory's explicit distinction between *avrch*, and *ai:tioj* which he so regularly applied, and so denied the validity of the Father being the '*causa*' of the Son, while allowing that he was the "principium"'. He goes on to state that 'Latin tradition obscured Gregory's causal origination as the inalienable proprium of the Father, and as such the Father's unique personal existence as *avrch*, of the Godhead'(McGukin 1994: 11). McGukin (1994, 11) indicates that the reason why some eminent Latin theologians argue that Gregory taught the *filioque* doctrine, is their neglect of this important point. However, according to Oberdorfer (2002: 86), for Gregory, the terms *qeio, thj, prw/th aivti,a* and *monarci,a* are the synonyms for the unity of the deity (*Einheit Gottes*). As with Athanasius and Basil, Gregory sees the source in the Father, the origin (*Ursache*) or cause (*Urgrund*) of the 'Godhead' of the Son and the Holy Spirit respectively (Oberdorfer 2002: 87). Norris (1991: 46) points out that 'the begetter and the begotten have the same nature since an offspring has the same nature as the parents'. Kelly (1965:265) mentions that 'while all subordinationism is excluded, the Father remains in the eyes of the Cappadocians the source, fountain-head or principle of the Godhead.'

Gregory of Nazianzus says that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father (the *para. tou/ Patro.j evkporeu,etai*)(Or 31, 8), but says the phrase '*ou;te to. Pneuma Ui`o.j(ofti evk tou/ Qeou*'(Or 31, 9): 'The Spirit is not the Son because he is from the God'. The phrase '*para. tou/ Patro.j evkporeu,etai*'(John 15: 26) is the biblical statement about the Spirit's nature in the comparison between generation and procession, the phrase '*ofti evk tou/ Qeou*' is the description which Gregory uses to illustrate the procession of the Holy Spirit. This means that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Godhead. This interpretation explains the statement 'the Holy Spirit comes from the deity of the Father and the Son (although as procession He is not the Son)' or 'the Holy Spirit comes from the Father through the Son (according to the traditional formulation). The Son is closely

Ui`o.j. it is very important for him to understand the **distinction**.



connected to the procession of the Holy Spirit, since the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Christ (Or, 31, 29, 328)⁶⁸.

6 GREGORY OF NYSSA

Gregory of Nyssa, Basil's brother was also an important figure in the Eastern Church. His theology is rooted in the notions of *homoousia*⁶⁹ and *Perichoresis* as was the case with the other Cappadocians. He extends Basil's doctrine of the Trinity like Gregory of Nazianzus. Oberdorfer (2002:88) points out that Gregory of Nyssa was regarded as the most speculative and the most philosophically skilful of the Cappadocians. He was in fact the greatest Christian philosopher of the Church Fathers (Studer1985: 177).

6.1 His Doctrine of the Trinity

For Gregory of Nyssa the doctrine of the Trinity begins in the baptism formula of Jesus (Courth 1988: 182). Gregory does not use the concepts '*patroth,j*', '*ui`o,thj*' and '*a`giasmo,j*', but Greogry of Nazianzus' terminological solution '*avgennhsi,a*' '*ge,nnhsij*' and '*evkpo,reusij*' for the distinction of the *hypostaseis*(Oberdorfer 2002: 89;Turcescu 2005: 57).

6.1.1 Three Persons but one God

Gregory of Nyssa's main work was to prove that three *hypostaseis* are not three Gods. This problem arose from the phrase '*mi,a ouvsia, treij u`posta,seij*'. Gregory's opponents attacked him as a tri-theist (AEus, 6⁷⁰) with two kinds of accusations: one is

⁶⁸ Gregory of Nazianzus, Or, 31, 29, 328. Pneu/ma Qeou/ legetai(**Pneu/ma Cristou/**(nou/j Cristou/(Pneu/ma Kuri,ou(auvto. Ku,rioj(Pneu/ma ui`oqesi,aj(avlhqei,aj(evleuqeri,aj\ .

⁶⁹ See, Studer (1985:187); See Schütz (1985: 59).

⁷⁰ du,o ga.r kata. tauvto.n evn th/| kathgori,a| th/| kaq v h`mwn proenh,nektai\ e[n me.n to. diairei/n ta.j u`posta,seij(e[teron de. to. mhde,n ti tw/n qeoprepw/n ovnoma,twn plhquntikw/j



the division into *hypostaseis*, the other is that Gregory does not count the names of God in the plural, but proclaims the one goodness, power, and deity and all these things in the singular (AEus, 6). Gregory cursed people who say there are three Gods, because they are not to be judged to be Christians (AEus, 5)⁷¹. According to Nyssa (AEus, 5)⁷², his opponents accuse him that he says one goodness, one power, and one deity when he confesses three *hypostaseis*.

For Gregory, ‘the person or *hypostasis* is also the concourse of the peculiar characteristics’ (Turcescu 2002: 531; 534), and the ‘enumerations of individuals’⁷³ (Turcescu 2005: 66). According to Meredith (1995:109), Gregory contends that the unity of the divine nature is parallel to the unity of human nature. In fact ‘his treatises begin with the account of some unknown critique arguing that such an analogy implied tri-theism.’ It was Gregory’s intention to prove that it does not (Meredith 1995:109). In other words, ‘Nyssa applies reality to the universal idea to explain the divine Trinity better and to refute the accusation of tri-theism’ (Quasten 1975: 286). And for Gregory, ‘number is indicative merely of the quantity of things, giving no clue as to their real nature’ (Kelly 1975[1958]: 268). Willis (1976:287) says that ‘the use of number is permitted when speaking of the *hypostaseis* because there is a basis for the analogy, but in speaking of the *ousia* of God one must insist on an undivided unity’. Kelly (1975[1958]: 267) indicates that for Gregory, men must be regarded as many, because each of them acts independently; however, the Godhead is one, because the three

avriqmei/n(avlla. mi,an th.n avgaqo,thta kai. th.n du,namin kai. th.n qeo,thta kai. pa,nta tau/ta monadikw/j evxagge,llein)

⁷¹ o[ti avnaqemati,zetai par v h`mw/n pa/j o` trei/j le,gwn qeou.j kai. ouvde. Cristiano.j ei=nai kri,netai

⁷² trei/j u`posta,seij o`mologou/ntaj mi,an avgaqo,thta(mi,an du,namin kai. mi,an qeo,thta le,gein h`ma/j aivtiw/ntai

⁷³ According to Seeberg(1936:48), “Die drei Kappadocier brachten die neue vermittelnde Theologie zur Herrschaft, indem sie die Homousie im Geist des Origen interpretierten. Sie gehen aus von den drei hypostaseis oder Prosopa, die als drei individuelle Personen wie Paulus, Petrus, Barnabas gedacht werden.”



Persons do not operate separately from each other. ‘Their activity *ad extra* can only be one, and the divine Persons have it in common’ (Quasten 1975: 286).

For Gregory, ‘the divine action begins from the Father, proceeds through the Son, and is completed in the Holy Spirit; none of the Persons possesses a separate operation of His own, but one identical energy passes through all Three’ (Kelly 1975[1958]: 267; Willis 1976:287). Turcescu (2005: 55) says

Gregory writes that the divine nature common to the three Persons is uncreated, incomprehensible, infinite, uncircumscribed by space, and life giving. No divine Person can be said to be more uncreated or less uncreated than the other two, because “uncreated” describes the substance, and there are no degrees within the same substance (Turcescu 2005: 55; CEu I: 22).

In the case of human beings, Peter, Jacob, and John are called three people although they are in one human nature (Ad Ablabium: AA 38). Gregory (AA 40) goes on to explain that although they are disciples, or apostles, or witnesses, however, there is one humanity in all. For Gregory, ‘we should not speak of a multiplicity of men but of one man’ (Kelly 1975[1958]: 267). In *Ad Simplicium (De Fide)* (DF 65), he emphasizes that just as [it is said that there is] one humanity (*avnqrwpo, thj*) in Adam and Abel, there is also one deity in the Father and the Son. This means, for Gregory, that ‘to speak of “many humans” is a customary abuse of language, since we do not call somebody by the name of his nature but by that which signifies the particular subject’ (Turcescu 2005: 64). Gregory says

[T]herefore, Luke or Stephen is a man, it is not true that if some one is human, he is at all events also Luke or Steven. But the word of the *Hypostaseis* allows the application of the distinction according to the peculiar of each, and is considered as combinations in a number. But there



is one nature (AA 40-41).⁷⁴

Gregory confirms that, although the concept ‘divine Person’ is similar to human person, there is a difference between the divine Person and the human person as far as nature is concerned. For this, Gregory alternates between the term ‘community (*koino, thj*)’ and the term ‘communion(*koinwni, a*)’ (Coakley 1999: 134). For Coakley (1999: 134), ‘this distinction is significant, and crucial to the argument in Letter 38. Gregory is in this letter most certainly not enjoining the unification of separate ‘individuals’ into a ‘community’, as seems to be the model in the analytic discussion of a “plurality model”’. According to Turcescu (2005:58)

Another argument in favor of Gregory’s discussing the communion of divine Persons is to be found in the use of the term *koinwni, a* itself. In this particular work, Gregory uses two terms to express the idea of something that is common: *koinwni, a* and *koino, thj*. Yet whereas the former term is used in reference to substance or nature, the latter is used in reference to the divine Persons. Therefore, Turcescu proposes to render the word *koino, thj* by “community” and the word *koinwni, a* by “communion.” The passage... envisages the “communion of Persons” (Turcescu 2005:58)

This understanding is closely connected with the term *perichoresis*. However, for Gregory, following Gregory of Nazianzus⁷⁵ there is no modern understanding of the relationship concept of person (Turcescu 2002: 537). Turcescu (2002: 537) points out that ‘unlike contemporary thinkers, the Cappadocian fathers were not aware of the dangers of individualism, and perhaps that is why they did not make any efforts to distinguish between Person and individual.’ He adds that ‘they were more concerned

⁷⁴ ;Anqropoj ga.r o` Louka/j h; o` Ste,fanoj(ouv mh.n (ei; tij a;nqrwpoj(pa,ntwj kai. Louka/j evstin h; Ste,fanoj) VAll v o` me.n tw/n u`posta,sewn lo,goj dia. ta.j evnqewroume,naj ivdio,thtaj e`ka,stw| to,n diamerismo.n evpide,cetai kai. kata. su,nqesin evn avriqmw/| qewrei/ta| h` de. fu,sij mi,a evsti,n(

⁷⁵ See Oberdorfer’s description (2002: 86)



with distinguishing between person or individual, on the one hand, and nature or substance, on the other hand, in connection with the Christian God. At that time, the three divine Persons were not properly understood as three different entities while each was one and the same God' (Turcescu 2002: 537). However, Behr opposes Turcescu's concept of 'communion'. He says that 'the "certain continuous and uninterrupted communion" that appears in them is not, therefore, a "communion" or "community" between the Persons, as the analogy of three distinct human agents might suggest, but rather the invariability of the nature that is contemplated equally in each, the continuity of the being of the Father in the Son and the Spirit' (Behr 2004: 420-421)

Ayres rejects the modern interpretation of Gregory's *Ad Ablabium* as 'paradigm of Gregory's supposed commitment to "beginning with divine plurality rather than unity"', or even as 'a paradigm of his supposed commitment to "social Trinitarian analogies"' (Ayres 2002: 446). Gregory's treatise 'That there are not three Gods' is meant 'to point the reader away from speculating about the "social" analogy' and 'towards the very themes as necessary context for exploring the divine unity and diversity' (Ayres 2002: 446). For Behr

There is one God, and one divinity, because there is one "transcendent power," the Father, who works by the Son and in the Spirit, not as three people cooperating together in fellowship, but in terms for which there is no adequate analogy in the created world. Such analogies can provide an illustration for the relationship between identity and difference, ousia and hypostasis, providing a "grammar" of the scriptural account of God, which regulates our own theological discourse, but does not define what God is or what it is to be a divine "person." Any further analysis proceeds not so much by the introduction of new analogies, but by the analysis of how Scripture does in fact speak of the activity of the Father, Son, and Spirit. And this scriptural account only speaks of God in the singular, for there is only one God, the Father, together with his Son and Spirit, acting in a uniquely and incomparably singular manner (Behr 2004: 435).



Gregory emphasized that the one essence or one nature dwells (*mi,a fu,sij ; mi,a qeo,thj kai. ei-j Qeo.j*) in three Persons, *mi,a fu,sij (mi,a qeo,thj; koinh. th/j fu,sewj)*⁷⁶(AA⁷⁷ 39-40; 40-41⁷⁸). This understanding is closely connected with the Cappadocians' doctrine of the Trinity: 'one *ousia*, three *hypostaseis*'. It shows why three *hypostaseis* are not three Gods.

For Gregory, the doctrine of the Trinity is based on the saving faith which the Lord gives us. The Lord gives the saving faith to those who become disciples of the word, of the Father and of the Son, and he adds the Holy Spirit' (AEust 7)⁷⁹. The divine Scripture has to be our umpire and with those who's dogmas are found to agree with the Divine words, the gem of truth will surely come to them (AEus 6)⁸⁰. On the basis of this understanding, it is quite right that 'the defense of the dogma of the Trinity did not rely primarily on the metaphysical identification' (Pelikan 1971:222).

⁷⁶ Behr (2004: 425-426) says that 'Gregory's account of the mutual indwelling of the Father and the Son thus differs from what is sometimes spoken of in modern theology as a "Trinitarian perichoresis," in which the emphasis is not the "mutuality and interdependence" of the three persons in a "communion of love," so that each person is what they are by virtue of their relationship to the others, thereby revealing "what God is: ecstatic, relational, dynamic, vital" and, consequently, that "the divine unity" is located neither with the divine substance nor with the person of the Father, but rather "in diversity, in a true communion of persons." Gregory does not speak of a "Trinitarian perichoresis" of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, but only of the mutual indwelling of the Father and the Son, presumably because this alone has scriptural warrant.'

⁷⁷ Gregory of Nyssa (1958: 46). Kai. civ me.n fu,sewj h=n h` th/j qeo,tthoj proshgori,a(ma/llon a;n ei=ce kairo.n kata. to.n proapodoqe,nta lo,gon e`nikw/j ta.j trei/j u`posta,seij perilamba,nein kai. e[na qeo.n le,gein dia. to. th/j fu,sewj a;tmhto,n te kai. avdiai,retou\; p. 57.- h` de, qei,a fu,sij avpara,llakto,j te kai. avdiai,retoj dia. pa,shj evnnoi,aj katalamba,netai(di,a tou/to kuri,wj mi,a qeo,thj kai. ei-j Qeo.j kai. ta. a;lla panta tw/n Qeoprepw/n ovnomata, tw/n monadi,kwj evxagge,lletai.

⁷⁸ See Behr (2004: 415-416) ; *EpPet 2*

⁷⁹ Ti,j ou=n o` h`me,teroj lo,goj* paradidou,j o` ku,rioj th.n swth,rion pi,stin toi/j maqhteuome,noij tw/| lo,gw/(tw/| patri. kai. tw/| ui`w/| suna,ptei kai. to. pneu/ma to. a[giou\

⁸⁰ ouvkou.n h`mi/n diaithsa,tw grafh,(kai. par v oi-j a;n eu`reqh/| ta. do,gmata sunw|da. toi/j qei,oij lo,goij(evpi. tou,touj h[xei pa,ntwj th/j avlhqei,aj h` yh/foj



Even Gregory of Nyssa, philosophically the most brilliant and bold of the three Cappadocians, stopped short of providing a speculative solution for the relation of the One and the Three, or of the distinction between the properties of the One and those of the Three. Despite his great debt to Middle Platonism, Gregory did not assign to the Platonic doctrine of universals a determinative place in his dogmatics, which was finally shaped by what the church believed, taught, and confessed. His fundamental axiom was: “Following the instructions of Holy Scripture, we have been taught that [the nature of God] is beyond names or human speech. We say that every [divine] name, be it invented by human custom or handed on to us by the tradition of the Scriptures, represents our conceptions of the divine nature, but does not convey the meaning of that nature in itself”(Pelikan 1971: 222).

6.1.2 Apatheia

In *Contra Eunomium* (CEu), Gregory of Nyssa explains his doctrinal stance against Eunomius. For Eunomius following Arius, Christ can suffer because He is a creature. The two natures of Christ imply ‘two Christs’ (See CEu V(m)). Against it, Gregory (CEu, V(m). 133) declares that Christian doctrine does not preach a plurality of Christ, but the unity of the humanity with the Divinity.

Eunomius argues that if Jesus is God, the subject of the passion is the Godhead, not human nature. Gregory (CEu, VI(m) 135) replies that there can be a difference between the divinity of the Son who can submit to the suffering, and the divinity of the Father who is in absolute impassibility(immunity)(CEu, V(m) 121) ⁸¹. Gregory (CEu, VI(m)

⁸¹ ..., w`j th/j me.n fu,sewj tou/ patro.j kaqarw/j evn avpaqeia diamenou,shj kai. mhdeni. tro,pw| th.n pro.j to. pa,qoj koinwni,an avnade,xasqai duname,nhj(tou/ de. ui`ou/ dia. to. pro.j to. tapeino,teron parhlla,cqai th.n fu,sin(pro.j sarko,j te kai. qana,tou pei/ran ouvkv avdunatou/ntoj evlqei/n(w`j ouv pollh/j ginome,nhj th/j metastasewj(avlla. tro,pon tina. pro.j to. suggene.j kai. o`mo,fulon evk tou/ o`moi,ou metacwrou,shj dia. tou/ ktisth.n me.n th.n avnqrwpi,nhn(ktisth.n de.

135) argues that it is impossible that salvation is attributed to a human being, and it is impossible to accept that the incorruptible and divine nature can suffer and can have mortality. The aim of Gregory's doctrine of the 'two natures' of Christ is the salvation for human beings (CEu, VI(m), 135).

Gregory (CEu, VI(m), 136) says that the divine nature of the Son is impassible and not able to fall, while his human nature could suffer. Kelly (1975[1958]: 299) points out that Gregory 'tended to hold the two natures apart, regarding the logos as the active principle, and the manhood as the passive one, and strongly emphasized the independent character of the latter.' For Gregory (CEu, VI(m), 137), the divine nature (Godhead) works for the salvation of the world through his body. Although suffering belongs to his human nature, it is the work of God. For Gregory, the two-natures in the Person of the Son is necessary.

6.2 The Christology of Gregory

Gregory's Christology is characterized by a sharp differentiation of the two natures in Christ (Quasten 1974: 288). His criticism stems on the one hand from Eunomius' attack on Christ's two natures, and on the other hand from Appollinarius. Kelly (1975[1958]: 293) points out that for Appollinarius, 'He (Christ) is one nature since He is a simple, undivided Person; for His body is not a nature by itself, nor is the divinity in virtue of the incarnation a nature by itself; but just as a man is one nature, so is Christ who has come in the likeness of men'. He thought that 'the Lord's flesh was heavenly in origin and pre-existent' (Kelly 1975[1958]: 294). 'As corollary of this, Appollinarius affirms that Christ's flesh is a proper object of worship' (Kelly 1975[1958]: 294). His understanding caused the Christological controversy about the doctrine of the two natures of Christ.

On the other hand, Eunomians attacked the divinity of the 'Only-begotten'. If the incarnate one is consubstantial with God, it shows that there are two Christs and two

kai. th.n tou/ monogenou/j u` poti,qesqai fu,sin(CEu, V(m) 121).



Lords (CEu V(m)). According to Quasten's interpretation (1974: 288), Gregory argues that 'despite the two natures in Christ, there are not two Persons in him, but one: this is our doctrine, which does not, as Eunomius charges against it, preach a plurality of Christ, but the union of the Man with the Divinity'. Thus there is one Person.

For Eunomius, there is no union between Man and divinity. Therefore, if Christ is crucified and suffered, he is not God but a mere creature (CEu V(m) 121). The nature of the Father is pure *apatheia*, but Christ is created because his nature belongs to the creature (CEu V). The 'Only-begotten' is from a servant to the servants, and created and the nature of the 'Only begotten' to be subjected (*ktisth.n de. kai. th.n tou/ monogenou/j u`potiqesqai fu, sin*) (CEu V(m) 121). Therefore, Christ is just a creature, and is not consubstantial with God (CEu V(m) 121). Eunomians reject that the 'Only-begotten' could be Lord and Christ before his Passion (CEu V(m) 117). Eunomians hold this idea because humans are subjected to death (CEu V(m) 130). Gregory (CEu V(m) 130)⁸² argues that Eunomians hold that human nature is not eternal, nor the divine nature mortal, and since the 'Only-begotten' is a human being, he is neither eternal, nor immortal (CEu V(m) 130).

Gregory (CEu V(m) 127)⁸³ ridiculed the Eunomians as saying stars are black, the sun dark, the heaven low and water dry. Gregory (CEu V(m) 131) maintains that we believe in the union of Christ's humanity and his divinity, and therefore, the cross becomes the glory of the Lord. Therefore, as it is written in Philipians 2: 10-11, every tongue must confess that Jesus Christ is Lord (CEu V(m) 131).

6.3 The Holy Spirit

⁸² evn th/ tou/ qana,tou pei,ra| o` a;nqrwpoj(kai. ou;te evx avi?diou to. avnqrw,pinon ou;te qnhto.n to. qei/on

⁸³ w`j me,lanaj tou.j avste,raj kai. zofw,dh to.n h[lion kai. to.n ouvrano.n cqamalo.n kai. to. u[dwr xhro,n kai. pa,nta lc,gontaj ta, toiau/ta)



In his letter ‘against the Macedonians’ (AM) and the *Pneumatomachi*, Gregory of Nyssa explicates his Pneumatology. According to Gregory (AM 89)⁸⁴ we confess that the Holy Spirit is of the same status as the Father, and the Son, since the Holy Spirit is from God and from the Son as the Bible says. Turcescu (2005: 109) says that according to Gregory ‘the Holy Spirit is of the same rank as the Father and the Son, that there is no difference between them in anything, except in regard to Person.’ From the testimony of the divine Scripture, Gregory (AM 90) confirms that the Holy Spirit is God⁸⁵. This statement of Gregory responds to his opponents’ assertion that ‘the Spirit was a stranger to any natural communion with the Father and the Son, that he was thus inferior to them on every point, in power, in glory, in dignity, or everything else that is usually ascribed to the divinity’ (Turcescu 2005; 110). About the Holy Spirit, Gregory uses the analogy of a torch ‘imparting its light first to another torch and then through it to a third in order to illustrate the relation of the three Persons’ (Kelly 1975[1958]: 262). For Gregory, the third is just in ‘sequence after the Father and the Son... in all other respects we acknowledge His inseparable union with them; both in nature, in honour, in godhead, and glory, and majesty, and almighty power, and in all devout belief’ (Chang 1983:123).

Gregory of Nyssa states that the procession of the Holy Spirit is closely connected with the Son. As Kelly (1975[1958]: 262) points out ‘He (the Holy Spirit) cannot be separated from the Word.’ Gregory mentions that the Holy Spirit is from God and the Son, and in the same book, he mentions that the Holy Spirit ‘proceeds’ from God and was received from the Son.⁸⁶ For Gregory, the Father is the source (*phgh.*) of power,

⁸⁴ Gregory of Nyssa (1958: 89-90). ... to. pneu/ma to. a[giou(o[ti evk tou/ qeou/ evsti kai. tou/ Cristou/ evsti(katw,j ge,graptai. Here, for Nyssa o` qeo,j is the Father.

⁸⁵ ... th/j qei,aj grafh/j peri. tou/ a`gi,ou pneu,matoj marturi,a(di v h-j qei/on to. pneu/ma to. a[giou ei=nai, te kai. le,gesqai memaqh,kamen

⁸⁶ Gregory of Nyssa, (1958: 97). evk tou/ Patro,j evkporeuo,menon(evk tou/ ui`ou/ lambano,menon .

the power of the Father is the Son, and the Spirit of power is the Holy Spirit (AM 100)⁸⁷.