

ON DIVINE PHILANTHROPY*

FROM PLATO TO JOHN CHRYSOSTOM

BY
BISHOP DANIEL

II. FOURTH CENTURY

Brooks Otis characterized the Fourth century as «the most interesting of ancient centuries and the most relevant to our own.»¹ This indeed memorable era witnessed a dramatic reorientation of the whole Graeco-Roman world when, only a decade after Diocletian's persecution in 303², through Constantine's conversion³ Christianity succeeded in imposing itself so unequivocally as to seal its final victory, at least on the political level, with Theodosius' quenching of the last pagan mutiny at the battle of the Frigidus in 394.⁴ For what was to be more than a millenium, Theodosius I established Christianity in its catholic form as the State religion.⁵ He was also instrumental in putting the Empire on the road to the gradual incorporation of genuine Christian *humanitas* or *philanthropia* in its legislation.⁶ Ultimately that became feasi-

* Συνέχεια ἐκ τῆς σελ. 626 τοῦ προηγούμενου τεύχους.

1. «An Essay on St. Gregory of Nazianzus,» *Classical Journal*, LVI (1961), 146-65, esp. p. 146.

2. According to Henri Grégoire, *op. cit.*, p. 77, «la persécution de 303 fut moralement préparée par le philosophe païen Porphyre.»

3. A. H. M. Jones, in «The Social Background of the Struggle between Paganism and Christianity,» *The Conflict between Paganism and Christianity in the Fourth Century*, ed. Arnaldo Momigliano (Oxford, 1963), pp. 17-33, esp. pp. 33-34, contends that

when Constantine staked his faith on the God of the Christians in 312, he was ...making a very rash venture... The army was overwhelmingly pagan. The Senate was pagan. So too... was the bulk of the provincial aristocracy... and this is incidentally ... an important piece of circumstantial evidence in favour of the view that Constantine's conversion was ... the fruit of a genuine if crude religious conviction.

4. N. Q. King, *The Emperor Theodosius and the Establishment of Christianity* (London, 1961), pp. 87-89.

5. H. I. Marrou, «De la persécution de Dioclétien à la mort de Gregoire le Grand (303-604),» *Nouvelle Histoire de l'Église I*, ed. Jean Daniélou and Henri Marrou (Paris, 1963), p. 361.

6. N. Q. King *op. cit.*, pp. 109, 113, 118. Richard Honig points out in *Humanitas und Rhetorik in spät-römischen Kaisergesetzen* (Göttingen, 1960), pp. 35-36, that in the Codex of Theodosius II «die *Humanitas* wird... zum Leitmotiv für eine Gerechtigkeit.»

Th. G. Chiffot, *op. cit.*, pp. 67-68, courageously resists lightmined irony at

ble, after the fall of Diocletian, only because the Church had inspired the leaders of the Empire (one exception apart) with her own ideals through the exemplary way of life of such bishops as «Athanasius, John Chrysostom, Gregory of Nazianzus... Basil of Caesarea... Ambrose... almost all born rulers.»⁷ Julian's return to paganism was but a feeble and romantic reaction to the irresistible advance of Christianity.⁸ The vitality of Fourth century Christianity is apparent to anyone who will turn from the rather imitative orations of Libanius to the energetic productions of Athanasius, Basil and Chrysostom.⁹ I should immediately add that, culturally speaking, pagan and Christian leaders were peers,¹⁰ but my main contention would be that the Christian thinkers of that particular period of confrontation proved to be superior on the level of cult, and thus being aglow culturally they irradiated a peculiar warmth of enthusiasm even in their literary activity. Still, despite the imperial legal restrictions, the bulk of the pagans remained faithful to their ancestral beliefs.¹¹ Moreover, against the Christian escalation Iamblichus stood up as a vigorous defender of the old religion by stressing that the way to salvation was to be found in a form of ritualistic magic.¹²

The struggle between paganism and Christianity had come to be, by that time, essentially a cultural one, since ancient culture, appropriated by both rivals equally, had become mainly a neutral battlefield.

The Church moreover, was beset by heresiarchs from inside: Arius, Apollinaris, Marcellus... As far as the integrity of the cult was concerned the latter danger was of greater proportions than the rivalry with the pagans, especially since the emperors were oftentimes in

the expense of the «Constantinian» Christians or «social Christians,» which at least tried to make a world such that the Gospel would be audible. He formulates, in my my view, balanced judgement on the matter: «Sans adhérer... à leur 'mystique de l'Incarnation,' nous pouvons recevoir d' aux le souci concret de ce monde que notre témoignage ne doit pas désertier.»

7. Arnaldo Momigliano, «Christianity and the Decline of the Roman Empire,» *The Conflict between Paganism and Christianity in the Fourth Century*, pp. 1-16, esp. p. 9.

8. B. Otis, *loc. cit.*, p. 147.

9. *Ibid.*

10. Thomas Špidlik, *Orientalia Christiana Periodica*, XXIX, Fasciculus 1 (1963), alia scripta ad nos missa, 300-301, esp. p. 301., maintains the possibility that the correspondence between St. Basil and Libanius may be in part authentic.

11. Pierre de Labriolle, *op. cit.*, pp. 469-70.

12. *Proclus: The Elements of Theology*, ed. E. R. Dodds, p. XX.

Oliver Madox Hueffer, in *The Book of Witches*, (London, 1908), p. 131, specifies that «in contradistinction to the magician, the witch was in league with the demons.»

league with the heretics.¹³ Before we turn to consider the role of Athanasius and the Cappadocians of the central, dogmatic, front, I should at least mention Eusebius of Caesarea and Cyril of Jerusalem.

Eusebius of Caesarea (263-339) lived in a period when «the church had to defend itself from Porphyry's criticism, and when it expected to win the day by expounding the text of the Bible philologically and by using a scholarly chronology.»¹⁴ His main objective was to prove that the victory of Christianity «did not imply a loss of culture, but, rather, smoothed the way towards the elevation of the entire life of the spirit.»¹⁵ Hence, he could so earnestly give sanction to the Hellenistic principle that a ruler should be a copy of God's perfection.¹⁶ According to Eusebius' political theology, Constantine «reflects as in a mirror the radiance of God's virtues... and imitates His divine philanthropy by his imperial acts.»¹⁷ With his low Christology Eusebius could have easily «compared Christ and Constantine as alike instruments and manifestation of the one Eternal Logos.»¹⁸ Basically preoccupied with the old problem of polytheism, all Eusebius could see was Constantine's monarchy as «the earthly copy of the divine rule over the world, the refutation of every polytheistic error.»¹⁹ Henceforth the Arian danger was for him practically non-existent.²⁰

What is more astonishing is the fact that such a great erudite, who did not hide his admiration for Plato²¹ nor his familiarity with Plu-

13. Thus, according to Hans Lietzmann in *From Constantine to Julian: A History of the Early Church, III*, trans. Bertram Lee Woolf (London, 1953), 190, «Constantius, without noticing what he was doing, allowed himself to become the instrument for carrying out the wishes of Eusebius (of Constantinople).»

14. *Ibid.*, p. 165.

15. *Ibid.*, p. 169.

16. Francis Dvornik, *Early Christian and Byzantine Political Philosophy* (Washington, D. C., 1966) II, 616.

17. *De laudibus Const.* 2 GCS 7, 200, PG 20, 1328, quoted by Francis Dvornik, *op. cit.*, p. 619.

18. George Huntston Williams, «Christology and Church: State Relations in the Fourth Century,» *Church History*, XX (1951), 3-33, esp. 17.

There is an agreement between G. H. Williams, in *ibid.*, p. 14, and Raffaele Farina, in *L'impero e l'imperatore cristiano in Eusebio di Cesarea: La prima teologia politica del Cristianesimo* (Zurich, 1966), p. 261, according to which the imperial ideology of Eusebius is «come la confluenza delle concezioni della Regalità dell' Oriente, dell'Ellenismo e del Cristianesimo antenico.»

19. H. Lietzmann, *op. cit.*, p. 170.

20. *Ibid.*

21. *Præparatio evangelica* GCS 8, 2, ed. Karl Mras (Berlin, 1956), p. 491.

tarch²² and Philo of Alexandria,²³ was rather irresponsive to the notion of *philanthropia*.²⁴ Even though Eusebius attacked the prodigious performances of the pagan magicians,²⁵ he did so all too discretely, to the point of being glad to be able to make a sort of concord between pagan and Christian views concerning the demons.²⁶ However, this feature of cultural timidity cannot be deduced from Eusebius' oversaturation with classical culture, since other bishops will follow his path of scholarship without being at all cowed in their total dedication to the Christian cult.

St. Cyril of Jerusalem (ca. 315-386) was a man of predominantly pastoral concerns and essentially practical.²⁷ Frank Leslie Cross wrote apropos of St. Cyril: «we miss in him the theological penetration of the Cappadocians or even the dogmatic concern of an Athanasius.»²⁸

In his famous *Baptismal Catecheses*, delivered in about 348,²⁹ God is characterized as being, in spite of His justice, philanthropic.³⁰ In the *Mystagogical Catecheses*³¹ the accent put on *philanthropia* is more perceptible.³²

22. *Ibid.*, pp. 458-59.

23. *Ibid.*, p. 454.

24. There appears only once the verbal form *φιανθρωπέσθαι* in Eusebius *Kirchengeschichte* X, 8, 11 GCS II, 2, ed. Eduard Schwartz (Leipzig, 1908), 896. Also once in *De Laude*, II, 5, cited by G. H. Williams in «Christology and Church,» *loc. cit.*, p. 18. Four times in *Vita Constantini*, ed. Ivar A. Heikel (Leipzig, 1902), pp. 11, 15, 33, 49.

The problem of the authenticity of the latter work of Eusebius has not yet been finally clarified. On this point see F. Dvornik, *op. cit.*, p. 747, n. 115.

25. Jean Sirinelli, *Les Vues historiques d'Eusèbe de Césarée durant la période prénicéene* (Dakar, 1961), pp. 378-79.

26. *Ibid.*, p. 321. Eusebius' cultural timidity is specially apparent when he calls the pagan deities to witness about Christ's celestial provenience; «Vous voyez... que loin de passer pour un magicien et un charlatan, notre Sauveur Jésus, le Christ de Dieu, est reconnu comme rempli de piété... et comme un habitant des célestes demeures.» *Demonst. Evang.* III, 7 (Heikel, p. 140), cited by P. de Labriolle, *op. cit.*, p. 236.

27. Frank Leslie Cross, *St. Cyril of Jerusalem's Lectures on the Christian Sacraments: The Procatechesis and Five Mystagogical Catecheses* (London, 1960), p. xxxiii.

28. *Ibid.*, p. xxxiv.

29. Josef Andreas Jungmann, *Handing on the Faith: A Manual of Catechetics* (Freiburg, 1959), p. 5.

30. PG 33, 389B; cf. 392A.

31. Whether this work belongs to St. Cyril or to John II of Jerusalem is of secondary importance for the present study. See Cyrille de Jérusalem, *Catechèses Mystagogiques*, introduction, texte critique et notes de Auguste Piédagnel (Paris, 1966), p. 40.

32. *Ibid.*, pp. 114, 146, 160, 164.

*The Christian Trend: Athanasius and the Cappadocians.**St. Athanasius (395-373).*

The greatness of Athanasius has been seen to lie in his ability to overcome the contradictions of the classical way of thinking.³³ He indeed fought heroically for the semantic christening of the word *homousios* which was chosen to summarize the terminological intuition of the Nicene Fathers concerning the identity in the divine nature of both the Father and the Son.³⁴ Against Aetius' contention that councils are futile since the Scripture is sufficient, Athanasius replied that the fathers of the Council of Nicea merely redefined the cult of Christ which is already in the Scriptures.³⁵

He looked at the problem of redemption as the kernel of Christianity.³⁶ But the proper soteriological perspective is possible only after the Athanasian clarification that there is an absolute difference between the intra-trinitarian generation and the extra-trinitarian creation.³⁷ It seems that Arius was rightly accused of being tainted with Jewish monotheism, since for him «God was alone (μόνος), and the Word as yet was not.»³⁸ Even without a clear-cut terminology Athanasius upheld the ecclesiastical teaching of trinitarian monotheism³⁹ so thoroughly as to use the notion of the «Image of God» exclusively for the purpose

33. A. Tuilier, *Studia Patristica*, III, ed. F. L. Cross (Berlin, 1961), 421-28, esp. 428; «La puissance dialectique de saint Athanase... réside surtout dans son aptitude à dépasser les contradictions de la pensée antique.»

34. Bernhard Lohse, *Epochen der Dogmengeschichte* (Stuttgart, 1963), p. 65.

35. *De Synodis* 6. R. P. C. Hanson, *Tradition in the Early Church* (Philadelphia, 1962), p. 179.

36. H. Lietzmann, *op. cit.*, p. 248.

37. Régis Bernard, *L'Image de Dieu d'après St. Athanase* (Paris, 1952), p. 144. In this line of thinking the difference between the essential Sonship of the Logos and the adoptive sonship by grace of all others is to be understood: «ὁ Υἱὸς κατ' οὐσίαν, ἡμεῖς οἱ κατὰ χάριν... υἱοί.» *Apol. C. Arianos*, PG 25, 456C.

38. *Orat. cont. Arian.* I, 5 PG 26, 21A. H. A. Wolfson, «Philosophical implications of Arianism and Apollinarianism», *Religious Philosophy: A Group of Essays* (Cambridge, Mass., 1951), pp. 126-57, esp. p. 156, supports this surmise as a valid one, since «Arianism was a revival of the Philonic conception of the absolute unity of God.»

Athanasius at least made a definite demarcation line between the Jews and the godless pagans: «οἱ Κυριοκτόνοι Ἰουδαῖοι καὶ οἱ ἄθεοι ἔθνη.» *Epistola encycl.* PG 25, 229A; cf. *Ad Serapion* I, 28 PG 596B.

39. «Ἀδιάρητος γὰρ ἡ Τριάς, καὶ μία ταύτης ἡ Θεότης.» *Ad Serapion.* III, 6 PG 26, 633C.

of designating the Logos as the only and unique Image of the Father.⁴⁰ He even went so far as to distinguish in the Logos as God His energy and providence, called «powers» (δυνάμεις), which sustain the whole of creation, from His «essence» (οὐσία), in respect to which He is outside of everything created.⁴¹ This is perfectly in line with his apophatic approach to God.⁴² The divinity of the Holy Spirit, however, is justified by a soteriological reasoning: were the Holy Spirit only a creature we would not have any participation in the Godhead.⁴³

All that I have briefly indicated here, helps to disclose the deep dogmatic awareness that Athanasius had of the cultural all-inclusiveness of Christianity. Pragmatic as he was, he did not disdain the lower regions wherein cult and culture meet, namely, apologetics.

Taking for granted the Stoic teaching on the world as being a «great body» (σῶμα μέγα)⁴⁴ he immediately asks of the Greek pagan philosophers a seemingly impertinent question: if the divine Logos abides in the «cosmic body» why not in the human body, too?⁴⁵

Humanly speaking, it was to be expected that the pagans would maliciously enjoy the evident disunity among the Christians themselves,⁴⁶ but Athanasius, even though so deeply involved in struggling against Arianism, did not remain inactive on the less tumultuous front against the heathen. He is out to mock the anthropomorphism⁴⁷ of the pagan philosophers who mythologize rather than theologize.⁴⁸ It may also appear that Athanasius found the game all too easy when he was about to oppose the voluptuous and perverted Olympian gods to Christ's supernatural doctrine of virginity.⁴⁹

40. R. Bernard, *op. cit.*, p. 140.

41. «ἐκτὸς μὲν ἐστὶ τοῦ παντὸς κατ' οὐσίαν.» *De incarnat. Verbi* 17 PG 125A.

Fr. Georges Florovsky argued—against the view of Endre von Ivánka—that the distinction between the «Being» and «Acting» in God was for Athanasius a real and ontological one, not merely a mental or logical distinction. See «The Concept of Creation in Saint Athanasius,» *Studia Patristica*, VI, ed. F. L. Cross (Berlin, 1962), 36-57, esp. pp. 56-57.

42. Cf. *Orat. contra gentes* PG 25,5C.

43. *Ad Serapion* I, 24 PG 26, 585B; *Ibid.*, 7 PG 26, 636B.

44. *De incarnat. Verbi* 41, PG 25, 168D.

45. *Ibid.* PG 25, 168D-169A.

46. L. P. Karsavin, *Holy Fathers and Doctors of the Church* (Paris, n. d.). p. 133 (in Russian).

47. *Oratio contra gentes* 22 PG 25, 44B.

48. *Ibid.* 19 PG 25, 40C.

49. *De incarnat. Verbi* 51, PG 25, 185D-188A; cf. *Oratio contra gentes* PG 25, 25A; PG 25, 49C *et passim*.

In conclusion, I turn to Athanasius' use of *philanthropia*.

First of all, there is the ancient imperial titulation by now firmly attached to the Christian rulers⁵⁰ and even politely extended to the bishops, also.⁵¹ The most frequent usage, however, is the theological one. Thus, the Logos who became incarnate in order to liberate men from the false gods is called *philanthropos*.⁵² However, in spite of the goodness and philanthropy of God, men vanquished by their passions did not receive the proffered knowledge of God.⁵³ Athanasius admires the Word's philanthropy after He has brought dishonour upon Himself in order that we may recover our dignity.⁵⁴ He condescended to manifest to us His divine character and His love for mankind⁵⁵ by re-creating everything.⁵⁶ We men were not only the cause of His descent (*καθόδος*), since our transgression provoked the Logos' philanthropy,⁵⁷ but our very coming into being witnesses to the Word's philanthropy.⁵⁸ Through the Incarnation two gifts of the philanthropic activity of God are imparted to men: the destruction of death and the renovation of mankind.⁵⁹

The Philanthropic God calls back the sinner gone astray,⁶⁰ in the context of grace⁶¹ and mercy.⁶² He condescends even to the animals in His care.⁶³ But the divine philanthropy was supremely shown when He contained His wrath against the crucifiers of the Son of God, offering thus a time for repentance.⁶⁴ And the philanthropic name of God in itself saves from the Devil.⁶⁵

50. φιλανθρωπότητα Αδγούστε in *Apol. contra Arianos* PG 25, 600A, 609D, 629A, 632B-C, 644; cf. *Apol. ad Const. imp.* PG 25, 592A, 597A-D.

51. *De decretis Nic. synod.* PG 25, 428C, 601A, 605C,

52. *De incarnat. Verbi* PG 25, 121D.

53. *Ibid.*, PG 25, 117C.

54. *Ibid.* PG 25, 153D.

55. *De incarnat. Verbi* 8 PG 35, 109A.

56. *Ibid.* PG 25, 104B.

57. *Ibid.* PG 25, 104A.

58. *Ibid.* PG 25, 104B.

59. *Ibid.* PG 25, 124D-125A.

60. *Expositio in psalm.* PG 27, 320A; cf. *Fragm. in Matthaeum* PG 27, 353D, 381C, 520A.

61. PG 27, 332C.

62. PG 27, 353D, 381C, 520A.

63. PG 27, 528B.

64. PG 27, 393A. When interpreting verse 13 of Psalm 84 Athanasius interpreted it laconically with one word «φιλανθρωπος.» *De titulis psalm* PG 27, 1016C; cf. PG 27, 1025D, 1245B

65. PG 27, 1112C.

Rarely is *philanthropia* used to signify the charitable works of men.⁶⁶ Its divine quality appears the more eloquently since the emphasis put on the reality of the human body in the Incarnate Logos⁶⁷ adds a particular «God-appeal» to Athanasius' doctrine of salvation as deification.⁶⁸

I have found only once in a letter the formula «χάριτι καὶ φιλοανθρωπίᾳ.»⁶⁹

As Athanasius concentrated in fighting subordinationism and tritheism he did not sufficiently stress the distinctness of the Divine Hypostases.⁷⁰ Hence the terminological clarification about to be supplied by the Cappadocians was the greatest need of the century.⁷¹

The Cappadocians:

St. Basil the Great (ca. 330-379). *St. Gregory the Theologian* (330-ca. 390). *St. Gregory of Nyssa* (ca. 335-394).

It is true that Hellenism is the common basis and background of all Christian culture.¹ It is not less true that the Cappadocians were «first and primarily Christians and only secondarily and subsequently

66. PG 27, 1388A.

67. «ὁμοῦς κατὰ φιλοανθρωπίαν . . . τοῦ ἑαυτοῦ Πατρὸς . . . ἐν ἀνθρωπίνῳ σώματι ἡμῶν πεφανέρωται.» PG 25, 97C; cf. PG 25, 104A, *Ad Serapion* PG 26, 657B.

The early tendency of quasi-angelic spiritualism in Athanasius' anthropology is overcome. See R. Bernard, *op. cit.*, pp. 134-35.

68. *De incarnat. Verbi* PG 25, 192B: «The Logos became Man in order that we may be deified.» St. Antony who practically confirmed this doctrine, urged earthly Kings to be philanthropic as the only true King wants them to be. *Vita S. Antonii* PG 26, 957A.

G..H. Williams, in «Christology and Church,» *loc. cit.*, esp. p. 18, has underlined the difference from Eusebius of Caesarea, for whom salvation is rather the recovery of truth and order established by the power of a godly emperor, while for Athanasius it is the recovery of immortality through communion in the Eucharistic cult.

The «physical» orientation of Athanasian soteriology has been recognized also by Bernhard Lohse, *op. cit.*, p. 66, as well as by Arch. Cyprian Kern, *Anthropology of St. Gregory Palamas* (Paris, 1950), p. 144 (in Russian). The latter argues that Athanasius only developed Irenaeus' idea of deification (p. 101).

69. *Epistola 44* PG 26, 1441A.

70. L. P. Karsavin, *op. cit.*, p. 154.

71. B. Lohse, *op. cit.*, p. 65.

1. G. Florovsky, «The Eastern Orthodox Church and the Ecumenical Movement,» *Theology Today*, VII, No. 1 (April 1, 1950), 68-79, esp. p. 74.

Platonists.»² More precisely, they were highly sensitive eclectics³ whose intellectual independence from ancient culture one can perceive in the fact that they — contrary to Origen — strongly underlined the difference between time and eternity in their view of creation.⁴

Eunomius of Cyzicus, with his pretension to having adequately described and grasped the essence of God by the word *agennesia* (un-generateness), was in the eyes of the Cappadocians not a noetically humble theologian but merely an over-bearing «technologist»⁵. St. Basil was very much to the point when he wrote that there is even «the obscurity used by the Scripture, in order to make it difficult to gain understanding of the teachings, for the profit of readers,»⁶ but all three luminaries of Cappadocia equally emphasized the axiomatic incomprehensibility of the divine nature.⁷ Even if the wording of the trinitarian dogma (the three hypostases in one ousia) came from the Homoiousians,⁸ nevertheless much work had to be done, especially by Basil, before the notion of hypostasis could replace or modify that of *prosopon* (*persona*).⁹ Of course they were keenly aware of their task, namely, not to find the expression of the inexpressible, but terms which will point exactly in

2. B. Otis, «Cappadocian Thought as a Coherent System,» *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, XII (Cambridge, Mass., 1958), 95-124, esp. p. 124.

3. Georges V. Florovsky, *Fourth Century Fathers of the East* (Paris, 1931), p. 77 (in Russian).

John S. Romanides, «St. Cyril's 'One Physis or Hypostasis of God the Logos Incarnate' and Chalcedon» *The Greek Orthodox Theological Review*, X, No. 2 (Winter 1964-65), 82-107, esp. p. 103, has noted rightly that: «the term *ousia* as applied to the Holy Trinity by the Cappadocian and Alexandrian Fathers is neither a Platonic superstratal genus, nor an Aristotelian substratal material in which the hypostases or persons of the Holy Trinity participate» but an «undefinable and perfect... reality.»

4. B. Otis, «Cappadocian Thought,» p. 121.

5. G. Florovsky, *Fourth Century Fathers*, p. 71.

6. *De Spiritu Sancto* PG 32, 189BC, quoted by Vladimir Lossky, «Tradition and Traditions,» *The Meaning of Icons*, by Leonid Ouspensky and Vladimir Lossky (Olten, Switzerland, 1952), pp. 13-24, esp. p. 17.

7. In St. Basil: PG 29, 520C. 534C, In Gregory of Nazianzus: PG 36, 25-72. In Gregory of Nyssa: PG 45, 932f.

8. B. Otis, «Cappadocian Thought,» p. 118.

9. Johannes Quasten *Patrology*, III, 229. Cf. J. N. D. Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines* (London, 1958), pp. 263-69.

In contradistinction to Basil, Gregory of Nazianzus used «τρεῖς ὑποστάσεις», or «τρία πρόσωπα» interchangeably, presumably in order to harmonize his terminology with that of the West. See G. V. Florovsky, *Fourth Century Fathers*, p. 111.

the direction of the ineffable.¹⁰ And Basil offered the definition of the personal proprieties in the Godhead as being «paternity», «filiality» and «sanctity.» But, since the latter notion could designate all of the Three Divine Persons equally, Gregory of Nazianzus won his title of «Theologian» by giving the more adequate «relational» terms of «ungenerateness», «generateness» and «procession» (ἀγεννησία, γέννησις, ἐκπόρευσις).¹¹

Once the doctrine of the one common nature in the Tri-Personal God was elaborated,¹² then every mediatorial act of the Logos or of the Holy Spirit could only be «a gratuitous act of condescension which does not... affect God's nature.»¹³ From this an important consequence for anthropology follows, namely the classical doctrine of ὁμοίωσις (assimilation to God) is completely Christianized, since Nyssa took it from the Platonists only after having rejected their corollary of an essential or natural kinship of man and God.¹⁴ The newly acquired precision of the term *hypostasis* gave a clue for the anthropological recognition of man as a person.¹⁵ There could no longer be a shadow of pantheistic ambiguity when the Cappadocians boldly spoke of the θέωσις (deification) of men.¹⁶

Against the intellectual pessimism of Apollinaris, Gregory of Nazianzus brought forth the famous definition «τὸ γὰρ ἀπρόσληπτον

And Nyssa, also, occasionally used *prosopon* for the same purpose: *Ad Graecos* (W. Jaeger III, I, 20-21).

10. L. Karsavin, *op. cit.*, p. 166.

11. G. V. Florovsky, *Fourth Century Fathers*, p. 111.

12. Jean Plagnieux, *Saint Gregoire de Nazianze Théologien* (Paris, 1951), p. 439, wrote quite pertinently that in the Irenaeian line of theologizing the Cappadocians saw the unity, of the Trinity «comme réalisée essentiellement dans le Père.» By this he added an important correction to the basically true statement of Théodore de Régnon, *Etudes de théologie positive sur la Sainte Trinité*, Première série (Paris, 1892), p. 434: «L'unité de substance divine: voilà qui est clair pour la Latin... Chaque personne est Dieu: voilà pour le Grec ce qui ressort clairement de la révélation.»

13. B. Otis, «Cappadocian Thought,» p. 107.

14. John M. Rist, *Eros and Psyche: Studies in Plato, Plotinus and Origen* (Toronto, 1964), p. 218.

St. Basil is careful to underline the basic difference between the Creator and creature and only afterwards to speak about «ὁμοίωσις... τοῦ κτίσαντος.» PG 31, 216B. See Hans Dehnhard, *Das Problem der Abhängigkeit des Basiliius von Plotin* (Berlin, 1964), p. 73.

15. Archimandrite Cyprian Kern, *op. cit.*, pp. 138-39.

16. Gregory of Nazianzus: *Orat.* 4, 124 PG 35, 664C. Gregory of Nyssa: *Orat.* 5 PG 44, 1177D-1180A; *Beat.* 7 PG 44, 1280C.

ἀθεράπευτον (what is not assumed, cannot be healed)¹⁷ which ultimately became the cornerstone of traditional Christology.¹⁸

One can see in Basil's synergistic limitations of the omnipotence of the Holy Spirit that in his vision there was no somber cloud of predestination hanging over the genuine freedom of men.¹⁹ His idea that in our intellect (νοῦς) we possess a criterion of truth²⁰ was overemphasized by Gregory of Nyssa to such a degree that the latter lost sight of the difference between the will and the intellect.²¹ It seems that the only outlet he eventually left open for the display of the spontaneity of the will is an infinite ascensional progress in creativity.²²

The strong accent on the mystery of free will was practically applied by St. Basil, the leader of the Cappadocians, in his ecclesiastical policy of the spiritual independence of local churches, particularly against the encroachments of the autocratic emperor Valens,²³ as well as against the incipient papal claims of Damasus.²⁴ Basil did not even try to conceal his lack of appreciation for the mediocrity of Damasus.²⁵

17. *Orat.* 45, 9 PG 36, 633C; cf. PG 37, 1071.

18. Archimandrite Justin Popovich, *Orthodox Dogmatics*, II (Belgrade, 1935), 79-80 (in Serbian). Pietro Parente, *L' Io di Cristo* (Brescia, 1955), p. 67, points out the clairvoyance of Gregory of Nazianzus in his emphasis on the personal unity of Christ.

19. Hermann Dörries. *De Spiritu Sancto: Der Beitrag des Basiliius zum Abschluss des trinitarischen Dogmas* (Göttingen, 1956), p. 184.

20. Thomas Špidlik, *La Sophiologie de S. Basile* (Rome, 1961), p. 44, underlined as important Basil's phrase «Il nous est donné τὸ τοῦ νοῦ κριτήριον εἰς τὴν ἀλήθειαν.»

21. Jérôme Gaïth, *La Conception de la liberté chez Grégoire de Nysse* (Paris, 1953), p. 205, wrote that la liberté est devenue également plénitude de connaissance.»

22. *Ibid.*: «L' expérience de l' infini ne peut plus être qu' un mouvement ascensionnel créateur.»

23. Hans Lietzmann, *op. cit.*, IV, 20. Cf. Hans von Campenhausen, *The Fathers of the Greek Church*, trans. Stanley Godman (New York, 1959), p. 87.

24. Henry Edward Symonds, *The Church Universal and the See of Rome* (London, 1939), p. 86. Cf. I. Ortiz de Urbina, *Nicée et Constantinople* (Paris, 1963), pp. 209-210.

25. H. E. Symonds. *loc. cit.*, Emmanuel Amand de Mendieta, «Basile de Césaire et Damase de Rome: Les causes de l' échec de leurs négociations», *Biblical and Patristic Studies in Memory of Robert Pierce Casey* (Freiburg, 1963), pp. 122-66, esp. p. 135, wrote appropos of the lack of confidence toward the Western bishops among their Eastern colleagues: «Partisans... d' une politique ecclésiastique assez formelle, et essentiellement pratique, les Occidentaux... jugent plus sûr d' adhérer... à la lettre du symbole de Nicée. Le danger que recèle cette attitude... est qu' on en

The harbinger of modern subjective lyric poetry, Gregory of Nazianzus,²⁶ also became the target for the attacks of the same Roman pope because he also had been the friend of Meletius of Antioch.²⁷ At the Second Ecumenical Council (381) however, where all the Cappadocians were present (theologically, Basil too)²⁸ the superiority in theological leadership of the Eastern bishops was manifested not only in that they formulated the Church's Creed without any legates from the West, but also in their decision to reject the innovation of the ultimate appeals to Rome decreed by the council of Sardica (344),²⁹ as well as to give purely practical reasons for the honorific priorities of the old and new Rome.²⁹

As far as their eschatology was concerned, among the Cappadocian Fathers Basil proved himself sober indeed when he made his eschatological expectation to be concretely prefigured by monastic communities of selfless love,³⁰ while Gregory of Nazianzus daringly spoke of a purgative baptism of fire and³¹ Gregory of Nyssa, by his over-optimistic idea of *apocatastasis* (restoration of all things), revealed only his incapacity to apprehend the difference between intellect and will in man.³²

With this sketchy background the use of the term *philanthropia* in the works of the three Cappadocians may be more clearly seen.

vienne à admettre... qu' une union extérieure et formelle ... soit en fait... l' unique condition qui garantisse l' orthodoxie.»

26. Βασίλειος Τατάρης, *Ἡ συμβολὴ τῆς Καππαδοκίας στὴ Χριστιανικὴ σκέψη* (Athens, 1960), p. 200.

27. H. E. Symonds, *op. cit.*, p. 87.

H. Dörries, *op. cit.*, p. 176 wrote: «Basilius zwischen den Synoden... er will von keinem neuen Bekenntnis wissen und bereitet doch die kommende Entscheidung vor.»

28. H. E. Symonds. *op. cit.*, p. 87.

29. Herduin, I 809, cited in *ibid.*, p. 87, n. 6. I. Ortiz de Urbina, *op. cit.*, wrote: «Les évêques réunis à Constantinople ne disent pas qu' on ait envoyé à Rome les écrits dogmatiques du concile 'oecuménique' dans l' intention de les faire approuver, mais bien pour les communiquer fraternellement» (p. 234).

30. Peter Nagel, *Die Motivierung der Askese in der alten Kirche und der Ursprung des Mönchtums* (Berlin, 1966), p. 107: «Der von Basilius dem Grossen geprägte Typus des koinobitischen Mönchtums sucht als Abbild des Leibes Christi in der Erfüllung des Liebesgebotes und in der Gemeinschaft des Geistes bereits in dieser Zeit die eschatologische Zukunft zu präfigurieren.»

31. G. V. Florovsky, *Fourth Century Fathers*, p. 187.

32. *Ibid.*, pp. 187-88. Jean Daniélou, *Origène* (Paris, 1948), p. 282, argues that Gregory of Nyssa was free from Origenistic *apocatastasis*.

The Nicene-Origenistic tradition of Cappadocia³³ revealed itself as propitious soil for the further growth of Christian «philanthropology.»³⁴

In order to escape repetitions I will offer first a general use of *philanthropia* common to all three theologians presently under consideration, and afterward, the specific expressions characteristic of each of them in particular.

Inescapably, there is *philanthropia* addressed as a flattering title to a magistrate or ruler,³⁵ as well as generally indicating the virtue of compassion.³⁶ Oftentimes it is found in the company of other virtues³⁷ especially with *chrestotes*.³⁸ Philanthropy by itself could mean the renunciation of anger,³⁹ the quality of a physician,⁴⁰ humility⁴¹ or simply polished urbanity.⁴² It is the very opposite of the greedy *misanthropia* of usurers.⁴³ Rarely is it found with a negative connotation,⁴⁴ but more

33. H. von Campenhausen, *op. cit.*, p. 87.

34. *The Philocalia of Origen* proves even publicly in what high esteem Origen was held by St. Basil and Gregory the Theologian, and the absence in it of the term *philanthropia* seems to me a matter of pure accident. Cf. *The Philocalia of Origen*, text revised by J. Armitage Robinson (Cambridge, 1893), p. 277.

35. Basil: *Epist.* 110 PG 32, 520C; 521A. Nazianzus: PG 35, 549C; 557B; 561B; 565ACD; 573A; 629C. Nyssa: *In Flacillam* (W. Jaeger), IX 479, 480.

36. Basil: *Epist.* 88 PG 32, 469A. Nazianzus: PG 35, 564B; 577B; 585A; 625B; 628A; 635B; 641-A-B; 648C; 681C; 693A; 700A; 712C; 724B; 741B; 800A; 824B; 868B; 1016A; 1024B-C; 1097B; 1125B; 1141D; 1204C; 1212B; 1240B. PG 36, 357B; 369A; 385C; 461B; 465C. PG 37, 97C; 148B-C; 152C; 162C; 205C; 240B; 244C; 261A; 320C. Nyssa: PG 46, 785B. *C. Eunomium libri*, ed. Werner Jaeger (Leiden 1960), I, 23, 59. (Critically edited works of Gregory of Nyssa will be designated as «W. Jaeger.») VIII, II (W. Jaeger), 6.

37. Basil: PG 31, 1353C. Nazianzus: PG 35, 864B-C. After having called for witnesses Paul and Christ Himself that the greatest virtue is ἀγάπη, Gregory deduces from it φιλοπρωχία, συμπάθεια, ελεος, and φιλανθρωπία. PG 35, 977A-C; 1017B. PG 36, 445B.

38. Basil: PG 32, 461A; 524A-B. Nazianzus: PG 35, 881B-C; 1061B; 1064B.

39. Basil: PG 30, 160C.

40. Basil: PG 29, 332B; PG 32, 684C. Nyssa: III, I (W. Jaeger), 3.

41. Basil: PG 31, 537B; 553B. Nazianzus: PG 36, 208B.

42. Basil: PG 30, 664B. Nazianzus: PG 35, 941D; 1176C. PG. 36, 304B.

43. Basil: PG 29, 280A-B. Nyssa: V (W. Jaeger), 345; IX (W. Jaeger), 202. Devil is called *misanthropia* in PG 46, 844A.

44. Basil: PG 30, 209B as unreasonable laxity. Nyssa: V (W. Jaeger), 329. IX (W. Jaeger), 197.

often with the meaning of practical almsgiving⁴⁵ or as invitation to imitate God, the supreme *Philanthropos*.⁴⁶

Theologically, *philanthropia* stands for the steady attribute of God's benevolence regardless of human attitudes toward Him,⁴⁷ but it is more particularly attributed to Christ.⁴⁸ God is philanthropic when warning before punishment⁴⁹ as well as in punishment itself.⁵⁰ He is philanthropic in judgment,⁵¹ especially since He establishes a balance between trials and joys.⁵² The divine philanthropy means above all the pardon of sins,⁵³ or time for repentance.⁵⁴ It could mean also, the humility and longsuffering of God,⁵⁵ as well as the healing power of God.⁵⁶ Also it is manifested as the salvation or consolation of sinners.⁵⁷ Divine *philanthropia* significantly appears together with the term *oi-*

45. Basil: PG 31, 276A; 300C; 325A. PG 32, 593A. Nazianzus: PG 35, 896A-C; 904C; 908B-C. PG 36, 241B; 376A.

46. Basil: PG 31, 648B; PG 32, 645A. Nazianzus: deplores the lack of imitation of God's philanthropy in PG 35, 949C; cf. PG 35, 952B-C and 35, 976C. The greatest and most philanthropic thing is the inclination toward God and appropriation of Him (PG 35, 1086A) or to imitate Christ's passion (PG 36, 232C). Nyssa: used only the vague term ἀπειρή as the way to ὁμολώσις (PG 44, 1200C).

47. Nazianzus: PG 35, 965A. PG 36, 388B; 404B; 412A. Nyssa: PG 46, 484B. Vol. I (W. Jaeger), p. 348, 350; VI (W. Jaeger), 46; IX (W. Jaeger), 100.

48. Basil: PG 29, 524D. PG 31, 933B. Nazianzus: PG 35, 876B. PG 36, 109D. Cf. Gregory von Nazianz, *Die fünf theologischen Reden*, ed. Joseph Barbel (Düsseldorf, 1963), p. 198. The rare verbal form is in PG 36, 118C (J. Barbel), p. 242. Nyssa: VIII, II (W. Jaeger), p. 10.

49. Basil: PG 30, 352C; 576D. Nazianzus: specifies that God's philanthropy may induce some into carelessness, henceforth the divine *chrēstotēs* is refused to such a sinner (PG 35, 1013C). Nyssa: God is reducing his punishment. See Grégoire de Nyse, *La Vie de Moïse*, ed. Jean Daniélou, p. 98.

50. Basil: PG 30, 613D. Nazianzus: PG 35, 1061A; 1181B.

51. Basil: PG 29, 489A. PG 30, 352A. Nazianzus: PG 37, 148C. Cf. PG 35, 888B-C. Nyssa: PG 44, 593A.

52. Basil: PG 32, 553B. Nyssa: I (W. Jaeger), 350.

53. Basil: PG 32, 957A. PG 31, 1260-A-B. Saint Basile, *Lettres*, II, ed. Yves Courtonne (Paris, 1961), 213. Nazianzus: PG 36, 368C. Nyssa: V (W. Jaeger), 298.

54. Basil: PG 32, 576A. PG 31, 1089C. Nyssa: PG 44, 460A.

55. Basil: PG 30, 140A. PG 31, 933B. Nazianzus: PG 34, 953A.

56. Basil: PG 29, 485C; cf. PG 30, 448C; 576B; PG. 32, 921C. Nyssa: V (W. Jaeger), 298.

57. Basil: PG 32, 192C. PG 31, 1172C; cf. PG 32, 253C. Nazianzus: PG 36, 384A; cf. PG. 37, 304B.

konomia;⁵⁸ it is apophatic in its magnitude⁵⁹ and the source of divine reward.⁶⁰ Moreover, it is the miraculous self-expression of God through His work in the Incarnation.⁶¹

Only St. Basil qualified epistolary activity as philanthropic,⁶² the grace as *φιλανθρωποτατη*⁶³ and the Holy Spirit as *Philanthropos*.⁶⁴ He saw a mark of philanthropy in God's manner of speaking in riddles concerning punishment and reward,⁶⁵ as well as in dividing mankind in two parts: those who are married and those who live in virginity.⁶⁶ St. Basil's *Shorter monastic Rule* opens with the praise of God's philanthropic attributes: «ὁ φιλόανθρωπος Θεός, ὁ διδάσκων ἄνθρωπον γνῶσιν.»⁶⁷ According to him the Only-Begotten Son appears to the creation as its philanthropic father and good intercessor.⁶⁸ For St. Basil there is philanthropy even in God's use of known human words in order to indicate the truth of the secret ritual «dogmas.»⁶⁹ He stressed not only the practical value of the divine philanthropy as being the basis of the prohibition of usury,⁷⁰ but even on the highest level of theologizing Basil discerned the reality of *philanthropia* as being the divine power different from His judicial, creative, or prognostic powers — all these being not the names of the simple essence, but of the manifold divine

58. Basil: PG 32, 812B. Nazianzus: PG 35, 433A. PG 37, 208B. Nyssa: III, I (W. Jaeger), 171. the term *κατάβασις* is practically synonymous with *οικονομία* in VI (W. Jaeger), 304.

59. Basil: PG 32, 240C. Nyssa: sees it in the context of an ineffable joy: VIII, II (W. Jaeger), 20.

60. Basil: PG 32, 405C; 456B. Nazianzus: PG 35, 908B; cf. 1052D. Nyssa: VIII (W. Jaeger), 88.

61. Basil: PG 34, 1356A. Especially in the wonder of perpetuating the succession of bishops. PG 32, 629A. Nazianzus: PG 35, 860C; «καλὸν ἢ φιλανθρωπία καὶ μάρτυς αὐτὸς ὁ Ἰησοῦς . . . γενόμενος ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν ἄνθρωπος,» Nyssa: PG 45, 860A; cf. PG 45, 889A. III, I (W. Jaeger), 15.

62. PG 32, 277D.

63. PG 32, 1017B.

64. PG 29, 361D; cf. PG 32, 100A. The height of ingratitude is to disappoint the philanthropy of the Divine Benefactor: PG 32, 160B.

65. PG 30, 52A. There is an equilibrium in such a phrase of Basil: «φοβήθητε αὐτοῦ τὸ ἰσχυρόν, καὶ μὴ ἀπογνῶτε αὐτοῦ τῆς φιλανθρωπίας» (PG 29, 481C).

66. PG 31, 628B.

67. PG 31, 1080.

68. PG 29, 392A.

69. PG 31, 1144A.

70. PG 29, 277C.

energies which are partially knowable, in contradistinction to the *ousia* which is entirely unknowable.⁷¹

Proper only to Gregory of Nazianzus is his interpellation of the servant of Christ as «φιλόθεε καὶ φιλόανθρωπε»⁷² and the invention of the word *authophilanthropia*. «philanthropy itself», closely knit with ἀγάπη.⁷³ However, the poet among the three Cappadocians did not see any poetical value in the word *philanthropia*.⁷⁴

A particular feature of the «philanthropology» of Gregory of Nyssa is the clear assertion that the divine philanthropy gives meaning to the whole creation.⁷⁵ The gift of virginity comes from the same source.⁷⁶ Also in the anthropological design of God, Nyssa was able to see the blueprint of divine philanthropy.⁷⁷

Thus in the hands of great theologians the term *philanthropia* became finally a theological notion indicating one specific attribute of God.

The Pagan Trend: Emperor Julian (ca. 325-363).

Libanius (314-ca. 393). *Themistius* (ca. 317-388).

For the last offspring of the Emperor Constantine, philosophy and religion were militantly inseparable.¹ What proved to be even more explosive was his belief that, as the Johanne Logos was in the beginning with God, Asklepios, too, was from the beginning with Helios.² However,

71. Saint Basil, *The Letters*, III, trans. Roy J. Deferrari (Loeb), Letter 234, 372-73.

72. PG 35, 893C.

73. PG 35, 1152B. Donald Farlow Winslow emphasized the use of *philanthropia* in Gregory's writings in his «The Concept of Salvation in the writings of Gregory of Nazianzus» (unpublished dissertation, Harvard University, 1967), pp. 138-39, 142, 147.

74. It is not found in Gregory's *Poemata moralia* (PG 37, 521-968), neither in his *Poemata historica* (PG 37, 969-1600).

75. (W. Jaeger), 162.

76. Grégoire de Nysse, *Traité de la virginité*, ed. Michel Aubineau (Paris, 1966), p. 266, n. 2. Cf. VIII, I (W. Jaeger), 254.

77. VIII, I (W. Jaeger), 195.

1. Hans Raeder, «Kaiser Julian als Philosoph und religiöser Reformator», *Classica et Mediaevalia*, VI, fasc. 1-2 (1944), 179-93, esp. p. 182.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 185. A. J. Festugière, *Antioche*, pp. 71-72, has tried to explain the apostasy of Julian: Il apparaît... qu' aucun homme vraiment spirituel ne prit soin de l' âme de Julien au temps où cette sollicitude lui eût été nécessaire. Georges de Cappadoce... n' était qu' un aventurier... si quelque prêtre... lui avait ouvert

Julian's religious outlook was not simply a whimsical opposition to Christianity, but had its undergirding principles in Neoplatonic philosophy.³ He attempted to monopolize the wealth of classical culture for the pagan cult exclusively by prohibiting Christians from teaching in the schools, since they could not properly interpret ancient Greek literature (equated with the holy scriptures of Hellenism) if they did not believe in the old gods.⁴ Such zeal was not to the taste even of the pagan writer Ammianus Marcellinus.⁵

Under the influence of Libanius⁶ and Themistius,⁷ Julian was in an excellent position to become acquainted with the pagan tradition of *philanthropia*.⁸ He used the term, however, much less frequently than Themistius,⁹ and narrowed it down so as to mean, in judicial practice, only *clementia* (mercifulness)¹⁰. His endeavor was, also, to link philanthropy with pagan piety in the context of the ancient doctrine of *δμολωσις Θεῶν*.¹¹ By attempting to promote his *philanthropia* as *liberalitas* in social institutions, Julian secretly competed with Christianity, while in his public propaganda he insisted on the restoration of the ancient Hellenic and, particularly, Athenian virtue of *φιλανθρωπία*.¹²

Even though a bookish person,¹³ Julian knew how to fight for his beliefs. Obedient to his deity he attacked the Church, but died young, allegedly with the cry of despair: «Helios, thou hast ruined me!»¹⁴

un coeur de père, il serait bien étonnant que plus tard... il n'y eût jamais fait allusion... Julien ne fut jamais un ingrat.

3. *Ibid.*

4. H. Raeder, *loc. cit.*, p. 189, wrote: «Er (Julian) betrachtete die griechischen Literaturwerke... als Religionsurkunden, deren Erklärung nur solchen Lehrern anvertraut werden durfte, die selbst in einem positiven Verhältnis zur alten Religion standen.»

5. He wrote (XXV, 4,17) about Julian: «Superstitiosus magis quam sacrorum legitimus observator.» Quoted by H. Raeder, *loc. cit.*, p. 189, n. 5.

6. Giuseppe Rissioti, *Julian the Apostate*, trans. Joseph Castelleo (Milwaukee, 1960), p. 27f.

7. J. Bidez, in *L'Empereur Julien: Oeuvres complètes*, I, I (Paris, 1932), 112, wrote apropos: «Thémistius est au nombre de ceux qui ont fourni à Julien son érudition.»

8. Cf. especially *Ibid.* I, II, 156, 158 *et passim*.

9. Jürgen Kabiersch, *Untersuchungen zum Begriff der Philanthropia bei dem Kaiser Julian* (Wiesbaden, 1960), p. 19.

10. *Ibid.*, p. 20.

11. *Ibid.*, p. 53.

12. *Ibid.*, p. 89.

13. Glanville Downey, *Ancient Antioch* (Princeton, 1963), p. 174.

14. C. Riccioti, *op. cit.*, p. 259.

That he had made a deep impression not only on his own age, one can see from the fact that Christians felt it necessary to write against Julian even in the next century.¹⁵

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According to Glanville Downey, Julian's friend *Libanius* looked upon *philanthropia* «as one of the greatest qualities which both the emperor and his subjects might possess.»¹⁶ Before I turn to the imperial aspect of philanthropy I should present the other minor uses of the term.¹⁷

Philanthropia in Libanius' work stands vaguely for a well-intentioned disposition¹⁸ or a diffuse mentality of the people.¹⁹ It may mean the hospitality of the city of Antioch,²⁰ the very opposite of wrath,²¹ organizing public amusements,²² or an ingredient of good oratory.²³ It is ascribed to the magistrates²⁴ or judges,²⁵ but above all to the emperors. He praised Julian for his philanthropic inclination toward the less fortunate,²⁶ and exhorted his royal pupil to follow only his inborn *philanthropia*,²⁷ a law for rulers²⁸ who with it crown their victories by pardoning their enemies.²⁹ After the famous riot of 387 the pagan spokesman of Antioch thought it appropriate to invite the Emperor Theodosius

15. St. Cyril of Alexandria PG 76, 508. Cf. André de Ivanka, «But et date de la composition du 'Corpus Areopagiticum'» (résumé), *Actes du VI Congrès International d' Études byzantines*, I (Paris, 1950), 239-40.

16. G. Downey, «'Philanthropia' in Religion and Statecraft in the Fourth Century after Christ», *Historia*, IV (1955), 199-208, esp. p. 204.

17. I have used the critical edition of Richardus Foerster, *Libanii Opera* (Leipzig, 1903-1924; II vols.).

18. *Or.* 11 I, fasc. 2, 522; *Or.* 20 VI, 296. Cf. *Or.* 23 VI, 403, 406; *Or.* 29 VI, 609; *Or.* 34 VII, 123; *Or.* 45 VII, 534; *Or.* 49 VII, 675; *Progymnasmata* 6 VIII, 147.

19. *Or.* 50 VII, 710. Cf. *Or.* 29, III, 74; *Or.* 36, III, 231; *Or.* 57 IV, 161. Going together with ἐπιτελεια in *Declamatio* 13 VI, 74 or with εἰσβολα in *Declamatio* 15 VI, 116. Also, as a reminiscence of the philanthropic virtue of the Athenians: *Declamatio* 14 VI, 99 and *Declamatio* 21, VI, 324.

20. *Or.* 11, I, fasc. 2, 488. Cf. *Declamatio* 3 V, 206.

21. *Declamatio* 4 V, 281.

22. *Or.* 10 I, fasc. 2, 410.

23. *Or.* 11 I, fasc. 2, 492. Cf. *Declamatio* 48 VII, 628.

24. *Or.* 22 II, 480. Cf. *Or.* 33 III, 175.

25. *Or.* 27 III, 26.

26. *Or.* 15 II, 134.

27. *Ibid.*, p. 135.

28. *Ibid.* p. 137.

29. *Ibid.*, p. 150.

to practice *philanthropia* toward Antioch,³⁰ since no normal man would beat the mad.³¹ In another oration Libanius encouraged him to imitate the philanthropy of Philip of Macedon toward Athens,³² for, says he, great is the distance between fear and *philanthropia*.³³ On the list of virtues philanthropy has first place,³⁴ because emperors are expected to judge rather according to philanthropy than according to the strict legality.³⁵

Libanius' theological use of *philanthropia* is rather meagre. Diana, for example, showed her philanthropic pity by punishing a deer instead of a guilty girl.³⁶ Philanthropy is found in the shadow of Zeus,³⁷ and all the gods are *φιλανθρωπότεροι*.³⁸ There is a somewhat vague inference that Hellenic *philanthropia* rests on piety toward the gods.³⁹ The clearest indication of his theological awareness concerning philanthropy is the instance wherein he asserts that Julian's attraction to *philanthropia* is explainable only because the gods cohabit with him.⁴⁰

I shall soon compare his attitude with Themistius' more impressive use of *philanthropia*.

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*Themistius of Byzantium*⁴¹ aspired to be recognized as a philosopher in his own right,⁴² but his opponents rated him much lower—as nothing more than a sophist.⁴³ The professional jealousy Libanius had

30. *Or.* 19 II, 394.

31. *Ibid.*, p. 388.

32. *Or.* 20 II, 431.

33. *Ibid.*, p. 432. Cf. pp. 439, 444. Also *Or.* 27 III, 34; *Or.* 33 III, 181.

34. *Or.* 30 III, 114. Cf. *ibid.*, p. 88. It is qualified with «ὑπερβολή» in *Or.* 45 III, 360. There is, also, the superlative exclamation «ὄφιλανθρωπότετατε βασιλεῦ» in *Or.* 48 III, 471; 485.

35. *Laudatio Constantii et Constatnis* 49 IV, 290-91.

36. *Or.* 5 I, fasc. 1, 316.

37. *Or.* 26 III, 8.

38. *Or.* 47, III 413.

39. *Declamatio* 13 VI, 25.

40. *Or.* 14 II, 130.

41. I am using his works in the critical edition: *Themistii Orationes quae supersunt*, ed. H. Schenkl and G. Downey, I (Leipzig 1965) in my abbreviation designated as «O. Downey»; and *Themistii Orationes*, ed. Guilielmus Dindorfii (Leipzig, 1832), which will be designated as «Dindorfii.»

42. *Or.* 11 (G. Downey), p. 220; cf. *Or.* 21 (Dindorfii), p. 296.

43. Peter Wolf, *Vom Schulwesen der Spätantike*; Studien zu Libanius (Baden-Baden, 1952), p. 13. Already since Carneades' times (Second century B.C.) the phi-

of Themistius goes hand in hand with the rivalry between Antioch and Constantinople.⁴⁴ However, Themistius' works, as well as the games of the hippodrome, are almost the only signs that Constantinople—the upstart new capital—had a soul.⁴⁵

Themistius focused his attention almost exclusively on the royal art of leadership and on its loftiest ideal, classical *philanthropia*. In a few instances, however, he did use the term with connotation other than that of imperial virtue. Thus, philanthropy stands for hospitality⁴⁶ or the pleasant spectacle of a jeering assembly.⁴⁷ But the most important semantic change seems to be in the tendency to use *philanthropia* instead of *agape*.⁴⁸ In his flowery lectures given to the successors of Constantine, Themistius tried to impress on their mind the highest moral ideal of Hellenism. When someone has a royal soul, he would declaim, and gathers into it all the good traits of an upright character, he can show himself as having the virtue of *philanthropia*.⁴⁹ The ruler must rule over himself first, and his inborn philanthropy is the source of all other virtues.⁵⁰ The second in order is courage.⁵¹ Then follow justice and moderation. But each and all of these virtues may adorn every commoner. To become really royal they must be sealed with the golden seal of philanthropy⁵² One can see then, that according to Themistius' ideology, *philanthropia* is more sublime than all other virtues by the sole fact that the King of heaven is not called patient or courageous, but philanthropic,⁵³ since that august notion reveals something of the divine propriety.⁵⁴ In the heat of rhetorical exaggeration he might give the

Iosophers had opposed the rhetoricians for the curriculum. See George Kennedy, *The Art of Persuasion in Greece* (London, 1963), p. 324.

44. Paul Petit, *Libanius et la vie municipale au IV^e siècle après J.-C.* (Paris, 1955), pp. 167-68.

45. *Ibid.*, p. 173.

46. *Or.* 24 (Dindorfii), p. 362. Once it is used together with *κηδεμονία*, *Or.* 15 (G. Downey), p. 285, or with *εὐνοία*, *Or.* 3 (G. Downey), p. 65.

47. *Or.* 23 (Dindorfii), p. 343.

48. G. Downey, «Themistius and the Defence of Hellenism in the Fourth Century. » *Harvard Theological Review*, L (1957), 259-74, esp. p. 271, wrote: «In some cases it seems actually to have replaced *agape*.» Cf. *Or.* 1 (G. Downey), p. 24.

49. *Or.* 1 (G. Downey), p. 8. There is the list of royal virtues: τὸ πρῶτον, τὸ ἐπιεικέες, τὸ ἡμέρον (*ibid.*).

50. *Ibid.*

51. *Or.* 1 (G. Downey), p. 9.

52. *Ibid.*

53. *Ibid.*, p. 11.

54. *Ibid.*, p. 12.

wrong impression, as if saying that only the emperor could imitate the divine virtue.⁵⁵ Sometimes he knows how to coin a happy laconic definition: «θεοφιλής Βασιλεὺς ὁ φιλόανθρωπος» («The friend of man is an emperor dear to the gods.»)⁵⁶ A philanthropic emperor is not unrestrained in handling men, since he loves them.⁵⁷ How infinitely more becoming to an emperor is the title lover of mankind (*philanthropos*) than that of lover of wine (φιλοῖνος) lover of pleasure (φιλήδονος), lover of gold (φιλόχρυσος) or lover of money (φιλάργυρος).⁵⁸

Agesilaos, king of Sparta, was too deficient in the virtue of *philanthropia* to be a true king.⁵⁹ And there follows the inevitable reminiscence of Xenophon.⁶⁰ In the same breath Themistius glorifies Diogenes of Sinopa, a real philosopher, who was not only a preacher but also a doer of philanthropy.⁶¹ Homer also called the pure and godlike love of men (φιλότης ἀνθρώπων) the inward beauty of kingship. This love according to Themistius, has the synthetic name *philanthropia*.⁶² It is rather the wishful thinking of a courtier than a reality when Themistius proclaims the Roman emperors to be capable of containing their anger through being pious and philanthropic.⁶³ Nonetheless, he tried his best to give to the rulers of the Roman world the best education available.⁶⁴ Flattered by Valens' attention to his speeches, Themistius would praise him with enthusiasm: «I have often reflected that there is no other cause for that love of mankind (*philanthropia*) of yours... than love of literature (*philologia*)».⁶⁵

At first glance it would seem that Themistius, well remunerated by his august audience, tastelessly flatters his sovereign when he says that Valens is equal to Alexander the Great, even to the point of puzzl-

55. Thus in *Or.* 1 (G. Downey), p. 12, «μακάριος ἄνθρωπος ὄντως ἐκεῖνος, ὃς μόνος δύναται τῷ θεῷ κοινωνεῖν ἀρετῆς.»

56. *Ibid.*, p. 13.

57. *Ibid.*, pp. 17-18.

58. *Ibid.*, p. 18.

59. *Or.* 2 (G. Downey), p. 33.

60. *Ibid.*, pp. 33-34.

61. *Ibid.*, p. 39.

62. *Ibid.*, p. 74.

63. *Or.* 7 (G. Downey), p. 133. *C. Or.* 1 (G. Downey), p. 8.

64. G. Downey, «Education and Public Problems as seen by Themistius,» *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association*, LXXXVI (1955), 291-307, esp. p. 298.

65. *Or.* 11 (G. Downey), p. 221. G. Downey's translation in «Education and Public Problems,» p. 301.

ing the common people as to whether he is a god or a man.⁶⁶ In fact, if one replaces Persia by the African possessions of the New Rome, Valens' empire then was not much smaller than that of Alexander. As far as the numinous character of Valens is concerned, again Themistius has to be taken seriously. For him the emperor is, indeed, an offspring of Zeus, a royal image on earth of the King above.⁶⁷ The Arians, also, maintained a similar idea of the perfect harmony between the earthly Roman monarchy and the heavenly divine monarchy.⁶⁸ The Cappadocians fought against this analogy, especially St. Gregory of Nazianzus, who ended the controversy by concluding that «the divine monarchy in the Trinity had no equivalent on earth.»⁶⁹ We see time and again how everything we touch especially in the Fourth century, is ultimately motivated by the cult. Therefore, in dealing with Themistius' emperor-worship and its central notion of *philanthropia*, we ought to search out his own theology, which undergirds his political theory.

When Iamblichus is said to have gone away from Plotinus' austere philosophy in the direction «of what would nowadays be called spiritualism and theosophy,»⁷⁰ this sounds to me slightly anachronistic, since Iamblichus still had around him a living pagan tradition and his choice to go to the roots of the pagan cult could not have much in common with the rather amateurish and outlandish theosophy of modern days.⁷¹ If to the ancients the essence of religion was the rite,⁷² and if in their sacrifices they found «their shelter from the mercilessness and meaninglessness of mechanical causation,»⁷³ then Iamblichus' theurgy was, for a believing polytheist,⁷⁴ the only available means of mystical liberation from fate. In this connection he set forth a very cogent argument, if seen from the point of view of his belief: «With good reason,

66. *Or.* 7 (G. Downey), p. 147.

67. *Or.* 11 (G. Downey), p. 217; cf. *Or.* 1 (G. Downey), p. 13.

68. F. Dvornik, *op. cit.*, p. 728.

69. *Ibid.*, p. 728.

70. M. L. W. Laistner, *Christianity and Pagan Culture in the later Roman Empire* (Ithaca, N. Y., 1951), p. 24.

71. *The Theosophy of E. P. Blavatzky* edited in eleven fascicles (Asuncion, Argentina, 1958-1966). In Russian.

72. A. D. Nock, *Conversion* (Oxford, 1933), p. 161.

73. Martin P. Nilsson, *Religion as Man's Protest against the Meaninglessness of Events* (Lund, 1954), p. 28.

74. A. Brelich wrote in «Ser Polytheismus,» *Numen*, VII (1960), 123-36, esp. p. 133: «Der Polytheismus... vor allem für die sogenannten höheren Kulturen und nicht für die sogenannten primitiven charakteristisch ist.»

therefore, do we perform to the gods every holy rite in order that they may deliver us from the evils... as they alone, through the moral power of persuasion, have rule over necessity (ἀνάγκη).»⁷⁵ In order to understand what kind of literature we have in our hands,⁷⁶ I must make a new step so that I may re-examine from a new standpoint the problem of the impersonal and personal character of deity as understood by the pagans.

First, there remains as formly established the philosophical Hellenic «dogma» that god is utterly simple and without diversity,⁷⁷ as well as impersonal.⁷⁸ But below this highly sophisticated doctrine we find that in the traditional pagan religion «the Olympian gods were not felt to transcend the world in the sense of existing somehow apart from it». ⁷⁹ Anthropomorphically, they were believed to be persons.⁸⁰ But, by definition, the plurality of the gods excludes the personal omnipotence of any one of them.⁸¹ Hence, their devotee strives to establish a relationship with all of them if possible, as in the case of Iamblichus who sees how «in the presence of the greater gods» («τῶν κρείττωνων

75. *Iamblichos: Theurgia or the Egyptian Mysteries*, trans. Alexander Wilder (London 1911), p. 260.

Jane E. Harrison wrote in *Prolegomena to the Study of Greek Religion* (Cambridge, 1922): «Greek religion contained two diverse, even opposite, factors: on the one hand the element of *service* (*therapeia*), on the other the element of *aversion* (*apotrope*). The rites *service* were connected... with the Olympians... The rites of *aversion* with ghosts, heroes and underground divinities.» Cited by Royden Keith Yerkes, *Sacrifice in Greek and Roman Religions and Early Judaism* (New York, 1952), p. 53.

76. M. P. Nilsson, *Geschichte der griechischen Religion*. II (Munich, 1950), 429, wrote apropos of Iamblichus; «De mysteriis» that it is «Grundbuch der spätantiken Religion.» Cited by Martin Sicherl, *Die Handschriften, Ausgaben und Übersetzungen von Iamblichos De Mysteriis: Eine kritisch-historische Studie* (Berlin, 1957), p. XVIII.

77. Richard H. Overman, *Evolution and Christian Doctrine of Creation: A Whiteheadian Interpretation* (Philadelphia, 1967), p. 249.

78. See above, p. 17, n. 3.

79. R. Overman, *op. cit.*, pp. 245-46.

80. A. Brelich, *loc.cit.*, p. 127. The teacher of Iamblichus, Porphyry, according to Pierre Benoit, *Exégèse et théologie* (Paris, 1961), II, 436, wrote against the Christians: «Si les Chrétiens avaient une idée saine de la 'monarchie' divine, ils comprendraient qu'elle comporte, non l'unicité absolue de Dieu, mais seulement sa suprématie... par rapport aux puissances célestes qui préside... au gouvernement du monde.» But, also, he is deadly serious about the oracle of the goddess Hecate saying that Christians are polluted, impure, fallen into the pitfall of error» (*ibid.* p. 435).

81. *ibid.*, p. 127.

παρόντων) the evil spirits (κακά πνεύματα) disappear.⁸² Such an experience ought to be taken seriously since it comes from a serious man. If nowhere else, there at least we have converging pieces of evidence which both pagan and Christian mystics have left us in literary documents whose authenticity no one questions, namely that they had known by experience the daemonic or demonic world.⁸³ In the Fourth century, however, the issue was not simply an opposition between Christian fideism and Hellenic rationalism⁸⁴ nor between Christian cult and pagan culture, but was, rather, a fight between these two cults, two faiths, both equally using rational arguments taken from the same Hellenic culture in order to protect their respective mysteries.⁸⁵ On the pagan side we have two types of religious leaders: one bent rather on theurgic practices— Iamblichus⁸⁶ and Julian.⁸⁷ And the other, less mystically concerned, which stressed more the values of *paideia*, represented by Libanius and Themistius.⁸⁸ The second, soberer line had also greater use for the notion of *philanthropia*. The reason for this I will give toward the end of this study.

Except for Gregory of Nazianzus, the Cappadocians were, in comparison with Athanasius, less preoccupied with the problem of paganism, as if they realized that with the pacification of the internal war in the Church all other external rivals would be overcome painlessly.

While highly appreciative of ancient *paideia*,⁸⁹ Gregory of Nazianzus was very severe toward the pagan cult. He followed the example

82. *Jamblique, Les Mystères d'Égypte*, texte établi et traduit par Edouard des Places (Paris, 1966), p. 116.

83. Beside Iamblichus' testimony we have another in Book xi of Apuleius' *Metamorphoses*. Cf. A. D. Nock, *op. cit.*, pp. 138-55, esp. p. 145. From the Christian side, the classical *Vita Antonii* of St. Athanasius (PG 26, 876 *et passim*).

84. There was also a pagan *πίστις*. Cf. J. Rist, *op. cit.*, p. 220.

85. Bernard Kötting, *Christentum und heidnische Opposition am Ende des 4. Jahrhunderts* (Münster, 1961), p. 22. wrote: «Die Widerstandskraft der heidnischen Religiosität verschanzte sich bei den Mysterien.» Apropos of the Christian *disciplina arcani* see Emmanuel Amand de Mendieta. *The «Unwritten» and «Secret» Apostolic Traditions in the Theological Thought of St. Basil of Caesarea* (Edinburgh, 1965), pp. 4-5.

86. J. Bidez, *L'Empereur Julien: Lettres et Fragments* (Paris, 1960), p. 129.

87. *Ibid.*, p. 130.

88. The latter, for example, insisted on the identity of virtue and knowledge. See G. Downey, «Themistius and the Defence of Hellenism,» p. 265.

89. Gregory of Nazianzus praised the Peripatetic School as «brilliant» and the Stoa as «venerable: Or. 4 PG 35, 568A. Cf. PG 35, 592-; 581D.

of Athanasius and not that of Origen, who was more lenient in this respect.⁹⁰ He drew a very sharp line of demarcation between the major cults, according to their respective doctrines on the God-head: «There are neither three principles, which would mean paganism or polytheism, nor one Judaic principle, somewhat narrow, selfish and impotent.»⁹¹ His positive teaching is found in the exhortation to Maximus the Philosopher wherein he proclaims his cultural commitment to the «unity in Trinity worshipped in unity, which has in an admirable way both (personal) distinctness and (natural) oneness.»⁹²

Gregory of Nyssa, in his short address *Ad Graecos*, writes coolly that «God» is the common name for essence, not for the Divine Persons.⁹³ J. Daniélou has noticed that Nyssa held the pagan philosophy to be sterile, while only the Church was the fruitful Mother.⁹⁴ Nonetheless, Nyssa tended to some comprehensive Christian view in which he could incorporate — all error excluded — the Jewish element of the unity of the divine nature, as well as the pagan element of distinguishing the hypostases.⁹⁵

It seems, however, that Gregory of Nazianzus' exclusive view prevailed because he knew how to impress people with his vivid description of the «impure sacrifices» offered by the Emperor Julian.⁹⁶

I shall now briefly indicate the cultural involvement of Libanius and Themistius.

Libanius did not even try to appear «monotheistic».⁹⁷ He unabashedly confesses his faith in Diana who helps in war.⁹⁸ She is proclaimed by him to be philanthropic and philhellenic because she abolished human sacrifices in her honor.⁹⁹ On another occasion he laments the decrease of the sense of sacredness at the opening ceremony of the Olympic games¹⁰⁰ and in a better mood he enjoys retelling the purely Antio-

90. J. Plagnieux, *op. cit.*, p. 318, n. 149.

91. *Or.* 25 PG 35, 1220C-1221A.

92. *Or.* 25 PG 35, 1221D.

93. III, I (W. Jaeger), 19-33, esp. pp. 19-20.

94. Grégoire de Nyse, *La Vie de Moïse*, ed. Jean Daniélou, p. XXVI.

95. *Orat. catech. magna* PG 45, 20A.

96. *Or.* 4 PG 35, 533.

97. He did use, but rarely, *θεός* (in the singular): IV, 318; VI, 371. Also *τὸ θεῖον*; V, 30 *et passim*. More often, however, *θεοί*: *Or.* 18 II, 369; *Or.* 24 II, 528; *Or.* 47 III, 405, 413; *Or.* 57 IV, 166 *et passim*.

98. *Or.* 5 I, I, 309.

99. *Ibid.*, p. 314.

100. *Or.* 10 1, 2, 405.

chene, home-made, mythology about the tragic love of Apollo for the aloof Daphne, who was, as the story goes, vindictively, if esthetically, changed into the laurel tree.¹⁰¹ He feared, also, the magic incantations over the dead chamaeleon found in his classroom,¹⁰² but was bold in defending the pagan temples from destruction¹⁰³ and in asking of Theodosius that the pagan sacrifice of incense remain legal.¹⁰⁴

In his address to Julian, Libanius was proud to announce that in Nicomedia, where Julian came to profit from his teaching, he found also «an oracular sparkle,» and there, says he, the future emperor was healed from his hatred of the gods.¹⁰⁵ Julian meant for him the resurrection of the dead and the re-confirmation of the good old fame of the Empire.¹⁰⁶ In his presence the elated rhetorician was overjoyed at being in a position to assert his faith publicly: «Now is the time to want to live, a time of sacrifices for longevity. Now, indeed, one can truly live... when the fire mounts upon the altars and the air is purified by the sacred smoke: when daemons dwell with men and men converse with daemons.»¹⁰⁷ Here we can feel Libanius' faith inspiring this quasi-liturgical hymn. His «monody» on the destroyed temple of Apollo in the suburb of Antioch¹⁰⁸ reveals a deep attachment to the local shrine.¹⁰⁹

Taking into account all the professional grandiloquence of a «docteur ès beaux gestes,» Libanius nonetheless must have been genuinely distressed by the death of Julian in order to meditate suicide.¹¹⁰

101. *Or.* 11 I, 2, 467.

102. *Or.* 26 III, 228. The Christians also believed in the existence of the magic arts; not to do so would mean disbelieving the old and the New Testaments. See. A. A. Barb, «The Survival of Magic Arts,» *Conflict Between Paganism and Christianity in the Fourth Century*, ed. A. Momigliano (Oxford, 1963), pp. 100-125, esp. p. 115.

103. *Or.* 30 III, 110.

104. *Ibid.*, pp. 104-105.

105. *Or.* 13 II, 67.

106. *Ibid.*, p. 78.

107. *Ibid.*, p. 80.

108. *Or.* 60 IV, 311-21.

109. *Ibid.*, p. 314.

110. R. Foerster-Münscher's article on Libanius in *Paulys Real-Enzyklopädie der Classischen Altertumswissenschaft* (Stuttgart, 1924) K-L, col. 2499. He suspected the Christians of having killed the emperor. See J. Misson, *Recherches sur le paganisme de Libanius* (Louvain, 1914), p. 91, n. 4.

In my opinion, A. J. Festugière is all too prone to minimize Libanius' religious engagement. See his *Antioche païenne et chrétienne: Libanius, Chrysostome*

His struggle to preserve the social structure of the Hellenistic *polis* was dominated by the will to oppose Christianity.¹¹¹ One could detect in the following fragment, which is a jewel of oratory, almost a secret challenge to Christianity: as if Libanius was saying: do not we Greeks have in Socrates someone at least as moving as your Christ?

Let Socrates now philosophize, but for me let him also prophesy; swans sing before their death, and give up their soul — musical is the death of a musical bird. But even the Attic nightingale and the swan were suffered to sing. Socrates is a fellow-slave of theirs, and himself is sacred to Apollo. Thou didst once proclaim, O Pythian: «Of all men, Socrates is wisest.» But now the wisest is foolishly told to die.¹¹²

In the realm of philosophy Themistius was renowned for his paraphrases of Aristotle,¹¹³ but on purely religious ground he submitted to the authority of Homer¹¹⁴ to such a degree as to give Libanius the right to praise him in this revealing fashion: «σοὶ φίλοι μὲν οἱ καὶ τοῖς θεοῖς, ἐχθροὶ δὲ οἱ καὶ τοῖς θεοῖς» («Your friends are also the friends of the gods, as your enemies are the enemies of the gods»)¹¹⁵ Indeed, one can discern a cultural nostalgia, not merely a literary reminiscence, when

et les moines de Syrie (Paris, 1959), p. 230. A scholar for whom «Eschyle et le livre de Job sont sur le même plan» (*ibid.*) will hardly be able to discern the dynamic influx of cult in and through the works of culture.

111. G. Downey, *Ancient Antioch* (Princeton, 1063), p. 196.

112. *De Socratis silentio* 27 (Foerster) *Declamatio* 2 V, 140-41. There is also the «pagan passion» of Prometheus who suffered «for having loved men too much». Aeschylus' «Prometheus Bound.» vs. 123. Cited by E. des Places, «Un Thème platonicien dans la tradition patristique: Le Juste crucifié (Platon, République 361e4-362a2)», *Studia Patristica*, IX, III, ed. F. L. Cross (Berlin, 1966), 30-40, esp. p. 38.

113. Herman F. Bouchery, *Themistius in Libanius' Brieven Critische uitgave van 52 brieven, voorzien van een historisch commentaar en tekstverklarende nota's* (Antwerp, 1936), p. 37. wrote: «bewondering voor Themistius' Paraphrases van Aristoteles zoo groot was, dat hij zijn eigen leerlingen uit alle kracht sanspooorde, naar het woord van den meester te Constantinopel te gaan luisteren; het orakel van Apollo, dat hij liet raadplegen, zou Themistius zelfs genoemd hebben: 'Een tweede Socrates, de wijste aller Hellenen.'»

114. In Homer he found the valid description of the deity as being the friendly one, the saviour, whose are all the titles of philanthropy. *Or.* 6 (G. Downey), p. 118. He explicitly stated that Homer is worthy of belief, since he offers truth and not mere poetic inventions. *Or.* 11 (G. Downey), p. 223. Even Pindar's pantheistic verse is welcomed. *Or.* 6 (G. Downey), p. 115.

115. *Ep.* 402 (404) in the critical edition of H. Bouchery, p. 36.

Themistius imagines seeing in the delegates (probably Christians, by majority) gathering in Constantinople to be seeing the pilgrims (θεωροί) to Delos.¹¹⁶ In the oration dedicated to his father, Themistius names the judges of the after-life Rhadamanthys and Minos,⁵ and uses the technical mystery-language of the initiation such as: «approaching the adyta of awe, filled with dizzy agitation of mind.»¹¹⁷

Presently I must try to give an answer to the question of whether Themistius did or did not have a monotheistic vision of the Godhead.¹¹⁸ No doubt, from the Second century on in the eyes of many pious pagans even the gods of Greek mythology were «no more than mediating daemons, satraps of an invisible supramundane King.»¹¹⁹ And Themistius does use philosophical language that leads one to believe that he is a monotheistically oriented thinker: God is omnipresent, says he,¹²⁰ totally independent and unhindered, governing the universe.¹²¹ The very holiness of the divinity (ἡ θεότης) is verified not otherwise than by its taking the initiative in philanthropy.¹²² The three distinctive attributes of Themistius' god are eternity of life, the possession of power, and the never-ceasing activity of a benefactor to men.¹²³ He indeed most frequently uses the notion «god» (θεός) in the singular.¹²⁴ However, he did not shrink from using not only literarily permissible mythological adornments,¹²⁵ but even the outright plural: «the gods» (θεοί).¹²⁶ All this allows me to conclude that Themistius cannot be taken for a mono-

116. *Or.* 4 (G. Downey), p. 78. ⁵*Or.* 20 (Dindorfii), p. 287.

117. *Ibid.*

118. This is the contention of G. Downey, «Education and Public Problems,» p. 299, and of A. D. Nock, *op. cit.*, p. 159.

119. E. R. Dodds, *Pagan and Christian in an age of Anxiety*, p. 38.

120. *Or.* 15 (G. Downey), p. 283.

121. *Ibid.* He knows no appophatic flight into the incomprehensibility of the Godhead, although he once uses the expression «οὐσία ὑπερούσιος» in *Or.* 1 (G. Downey), p. 12,

122. *Or.* 6 (G. Downey), p. 116.

123. *Ibid.*

124. *Themistii Orationes* I (G. Downey), pp. 5, 12, 55, 60, 72, 73, 82, 93, 94, 99, 100, 101, 108, 109, 116, 117, 135, 136, 139, 130, 185, 202, 216, 223, 228, 262, 274, 276, 333. Also τὸ θεῖον: pp. 71, 98, 100, 109.

125. *Ibid.*, pp. 66, 70, 109, 138 271-272.

126. *Ibid.*, pp. 33, 37, 47, 115, 131, 135, 137, 168, 201, 220. Also in the famous *Or.* 26, ed. Hubert Kesters, *Plaidoyer d'un socratique contre le Phèdre de Platon; XXVe discours de Thémistius* (Louvain-Paris, 1959), p. 264. Both Plato and Aristotle are qualified as «divine» (θεῖος). *Or.* 2 (G. Downey), pp. 42, 274 and 286.

theist.¹²⁷ And Gregory of Nazianzus, so culturally over-sensitive, who is a rather reliable witness in the matter, did not know of the challenging existence of any sort of pagan monotheism running parallel with that of Jewish monotheism.¹²⁸ Hence, when Themistius speaks of universal salvation, since all schools of philosophy, with more or less circumambulation, finally reach the same goal,¹²⁹ he is in reality competing with Christianity on behalf of the traditional Hellenic religion of polytheism. It is for this reason, in my opinion, that he can so casually speak of Plato's *ιερουργία* (sacrificial ministry), as well as of the intititatic apparitions of Venus and the Graces.¹³⁰ The competition with Christianity is even more conspicuous when Themistius coolly insinuates that there have been many incarnations: at the predetermined times, says he, «the divine powers... descend from heaven... clothing themselves with the bodies similar to ours... for the sake of communion with us.»¹³¹ This can be understood only as an unambiguous credal statement on the part of a culturally aware polytheist.

By now it should have become even clearer that my notion of *cult* comprises not only the exteriorizations of concrete historical piety as manifested in paganism, Judaism and Christianity, but also the *reality* to which these different types of piety are only the response—namely the presence of God, and of the gods or demons. In this perspective, we can understand why Gregory of Nazianzus denied the character of *philanthropia* claimed for the pagan gods: by doing so he was simply denying that they were divine.¹³² The same Gregory who praised Julian's great intellect¹³³ mocked the Julian who had yearned after initiations administered in darkness by subterranean demons,¹³⁴ but when overwhelmed by their fearful apparitions, had presumably made the sign of the cross.¹³⁵

Only in the light of the serious cultural commitment of these writ-

127. J. Kabiersch, *op. cit.*, p. 15: «Themistius hat sein Heidentum nie verleugnet.»

128. *Or.* 25 PG 35, 1220C-1221A.

129. *Or.* 16 (G. Downey), p. 289.

130. *Or.* 16 (G. Downey), p. 289.

131. «Θεῖαι δυνάμεις . . . ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ κατιοῦσαι . . . σώματα ἡμφιεσμένοι, παραπλήσια τοῖς ἡμετέροις . . . ἔνεκεν τῆς πρὸς ἡμᾶς κοινωνίας.» *Or.* 7 (G. Downey), p. 137.

132. *Or.* 4 PG 35, 656A.

133. PG 35, 532.

134. *Or.* 4 PG 35, 577C.

135. *Ibid.*, p. 580A.

ers can we properly understand what they lived for and what they wrote about. The canonization of the three Cappadocians is so universally accepted in the Church because they gave in their writings the evidence of their apprehension of the ineffable perfection of the *Christian cult*. Out of respect for their theology the Orthodox Church has also accepted St. Basil's liturgy as one of her most festive solemnities,¹³⁶ and adorned Gregory of Nazianzus with the very rare title of «the Theologian» par excellence.¹³⁷ Gregory of Nyssa, however, despite his acknowledged good name, was not so popular, it seems, because of his somewhat exaggerated attachment to Origen.¹³⁸

From the point of view of my study the three Cappadocians represent a significant development in Christian «philanthropy»: they firmly introduced the notion of the divine philanthropy into their theological system, and thereby offered a model John Chrysostom could later imitate and develop.

When we turn to the pagan side using my criterion of *cultural commitment*, we can also compare more meaningfully the places which Libanius and Themistius occupy respectively. One may agree that Libanius, from the literary point of view, is a greater artist than Themistius.¹³⁹ But when their cultural awareness and capacity are compared, then the superiority of Themistius, in my view, is undeniable. He seems to have been the most intelligent leader among the worshippers of the gods in the Fourth century. While Libanius presents a narrow-minded picture of the emperor's being *philanthropos* merely because he is Greek and ruler over the Greeks.¹⁴⁰ Themistius, on the other hand, offers a universal vision of the emperor's *philanthropia* as comprising not only the Romans but the Scythians and other barbarians as well.¹⁴¹ Thus, Themistius showed the alertness in up-dating his faith so as to make it

136. J. Quasten, *Patrology*, III, 226-27.

137. G. V. Florovsky, *The Fathers of the East*, p. 107. The opening lyrical exordium of Gregory's Oration I *In sanctum Pascha* is still sung in the liturgy of the Eastern Church; «Ἀναστάσεως ἡμέρα» (PG 35, 396). Apropos I may adduce here what my Parisian teacher Vladimir Lossky liked to say—that he would agree that the Orthodox Church should be called «Eastern only in English, and there only as an adjective of «Easter».

138. *Ibid.*, p. 188.

139. H. Lietzmann, *op. cit.*, III, 243.

140. *Or.* 15 (Foerster), p. 128. He openly stated that the barbarians imitate the beasts. *Or.* 15 (Foerster), p. 129.

141. *Or.* 10 (G. Downey), pp. 200-201.

presentable in facing Christianity. He may even have nurtured some higher interests than his personal advancement by trying to be around the emperors: a secret hope that another, wiser, Julian might reappear...

Even from the point of view of pagan use of *philanthropia*, Themistius is more important than Libanius. While Libanius addressed many orations to the emperors in which the notion of *philanthropia* is never mentioned,¹⁴² Themistius, in spite of the similar situations to be found among his orations,¹⁴³ knew how to make out of a few of his orations almost formal treatises on *philanthropia*.¹⁴⁴ He especially knew how to insist on the pagan theological aspect of emperor-worship. Thus the emperor's likeness to the godhead is, according to Themistius, perceptible from the fact that in the ritual invocations of god during the ceremony of the emperor's triumphal march one does not acclaim the victorious ruler as «Germanicus», or «Scythicus» but as «*philanthropos*», «pious» and «saviour».¹⁴⁵ Only the philanthropic emperor, knowing the weakness of the letter of the law, is able to heal its impotence by adding his own intuition, since he is the law himself and even above all laws.¹⁴⁶ For Themistius, however, in contradistinction to Julian, the royal *philanthropia* does not mean only *clementia* but *aeguitas*, also.¹⁴⁷ His universalism appears clearly in his imperial «theology», also. Here is a good example of it: Cyrus was entitled to be called only persophile, Alexander only macedonophile, Augustus, in his turn, only Romanophile, but the title of being simply *philanthropos* fits only an emperor who would not exclude any man from his protection.¹⁴⁸ The imitation of the emperor's philanthropy and *παρότης* is recommended to all by Themistius.¹⁴⁹ But his view of the divine *πρόνοια* (providence) as being equivalent to *ἀνάγκη* (necessity) makes his theology — even in comparison with that of Iamblichus — gloomy indeed. Especially when the emperor

142. *Or.* 12 (Foerster) II, 9-45; *Or.* 13 (Foerster) II, 63-82; *Or.* 14 (Foerster) II, 87-113; *Or.* 49 (Foerster) III, 452-68.

143. *Themistii Orationes*, ed. G. Downey: *Or.* 3; *Or.* 6; *Or.* 9; *Or.* 13; *Or.* 16; *Or.* 18.

144. *Or.* 1; *Or.* 6; *Or.* 19 (G. Downey), pp. 4-25, 106-125 and 328-39.

145. *Or.* 19 (G. Downey), p. 333.

146. *Or.* 1 (G. Downey), p. 21. In *Or.* 2, p. 59 Constantius is invoked as «*θειότατε ἀυτοκράτορ*.» Cf. *Or.* 3, p. 65: «O, divine head.» We practically have here the classical theory of *Nomos Empsychos*. Cf. J. Kabiersch, *op. cit.*, p. 20.

147. J. Kabiersch, *op. cit.*, p. 20.

148. *Or.* 10 (G. Downey), p. 201.

149. *Or.* 17 (G. Downey), pp. 308-309.

as the «offspring of Zeus» had to be taken for the embodiment of Zeus' necessity. This is the somber conclusion one is entitled to draw from Themistius' theological equation that πρόνοια is ἀνάγκη.¹⁵⁰ This may also be the clue to the understanding of his personal loyalty even to the Christian emperors. According to his own theology he had no other choice.¹⁵¹

The last problem I must briefly discuss in this chapter is the alleged «republicanism» of Julian and Libanius as opposed to the monarchist ideology of Themistius, on the one hand, and the Cappadocians on the other. F. Dvornik, by stressing that Themistius is the pagan parallel of Eusebius,¹⁵² and that Gregory of Nazianzus and Gregory of Nyssa were only repeating the ideas of Eusebius' imperial theology,¹⁵³ has not seen the basic *cultural borderline* separating these bishops from the pagan philosopher, nor that their cultural, and, more specifically, political, similarities are secondary, since they are put in theological systems excluding each other. F. Dvornik has misrepresented the meaning of Julian's romantic dreaming about the constitutional Roman Principate¹⁵⁴ and his scant regard for the imperial purple and diadem.¹⁵⁵ In my opinion all Julian's political and social effort was motivated by his cultural commitment to the gods whose voices he obeyed.¹⁵⁶ He was a man serious enough to disparage the trifles of regalia, but that only shows even more clearly what he did prize as his highest power, namely, that of *Pontifex Maximus*, the supreme high-priestly office of the Roman Emperor.¹⁵⁷ The military and political powers were only means in the hands of a «*Kirchenvater des Hellenismus*»¹⁵⁸ who had good reasons for having to persecute Athanasius.¹⁵⁹

Themistius, in spite of his monarchist outlook, which was then

150. *Or.* 7 (G. Downey), pp. 128-29.

151. J. Kabiersch, *op. cit.*, p. 55, has not realized this somber character of Themistius' εὐσέβεια which undermines, also, his notion of φιλανθρωπία.

152. F. Dvornik, *op. cit.*, p. 623.

153. *Ibid.*, pp. 685 and 689.

154. *Ibid.*, p. 660.

155. *Ibid.*, p. 665.

156. G. Ricciotti, *op. cit.*, p. 203. R. Rémondon, *op. cit.*, p. 166: «Son idée de l'empereur sacré descendant du Soleil... ayant en lui l'âme d'Alexandre... est incompatible avec l'idéal du *Princeps* republicain auquel il veut revenir».

157. *L'Empereur Julien: Lettres*, ed. J. Bidez, p. 98f. R. Rémondon, *op. cit.*, p. 167: «Il est le grand pontife d'un clergé hiérarchisé à l'imitation du clergé chrétien.»

158. H. Raeder, *loc. cit.*, p. 192.

159. J. Bidez, *L'Empereur Julien: Lettres*, p. 123.

a common political world-view, distinguished well between a ruler of divine calling and a tyrant: he praised Plato for not having associated with the tyrant of Syracuse.¹⁶⁰ And if he did not have Libanius' Athenian democratic taste,¹⁶¹ they shared a more important link: their common faith in the gods of Hellenism.¹⁶² Regarding the praise given to Constantius by Themistius¹⁶³ and Libanius,¹⁶⁴ as well as by Gregory of Nazianzus,¹⁶⁵ this is again understandable only from their respective cultural «economy». Themistius and Libanius were loyal even to the Christian emperors since their allegiance to the Roman Empire as such was of a religious character. Gregory, on the other hand, magnanimously praised Constantius as the most philanthropic ruler because he preserved Julian and Gallus from the praetorian extermination.¹⁶⁶ Also, in comparison with Julian, even the Arianizing Constantius was considered by the theologian from Nazianzus as a kind of Christian. The intractable Ambrose did the same¹⁶⁷ and he is, like Athanasius, above any suspicion of emperor-worship.¹⁶⁸

John Chrysostom, to whom we finally turn, will be even sharper in drawing boundaries between the cults existing in the then Mediterranean world.

(To be continued)

160. *Or.* 34 (Dindorfii), p. 460.

161. *Or.* 44 (Foerster), p. 482.

162. J. Kabiersch, *op. cit.*, p. 15, n. 43.

163. *Themistii Orationes* (G. Downey), *Or.* 1 and 2, pp. 4-56.

164. *Laudatio Constantii et Constantia* 59 (Foerster) IV, 209-96.

165. *Or.* 4 PG 35, 535.

166. PG 35, 549.

167. PG 35, 529-530.

168. Nonetheless, St. Athanasius has praised the philanthropy of Constantius: *Apologia ad Constantium Imp.* 10 PG 25, 608.