

ON DIVINE PHILANTHROPY*
FROM PLATO TO JOHN CHRYSOSTOM

BY
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Chrysostom puts his anthropology in a Trinitarian framework by insisting that the plural of «Let us make man» (Gen. 1: 26) is explainable only by the plurality of the Divine Persons.⁵⁶ Man created in the image of God is, however, not of the same essence.⁵⁷ Being in the image means that God gave him dominion over all the earth, not as a reward for any works, however, but out of sheer philanthropy.⁵⁸ It is noteworthy that the original sin of man was to pretend to be of the same essence with God.⁵⁹ Chrysostom considers as a sign of the unflinching philanthropy of God the fact that He did not completely take away the dignity of man after he had totally broken the commandment, but, being *Philanthropos*, spared the transgressor and left him a part of his initial sovereignty, namely, the power over animals.⁶⁰ The rationality adorning the human soul is also from the divine *philanthropia*.⁶¹ It was the Philanthropic God who was the first to tailor fur coats for men in order to cover their shame after the Fall.⁶²

Only Christ is called «the very man» (αὐτοάνθρωπος), because He is also God.⁶³

The Devil was envious of man's felicity in paradise, while God in His philanthropy does everything for men.⁶⁴ The arch-evil demon, because of the wickedness of his deliberate choice (προαίρεσις), fell from the rank of the angelic powers, trying with all possible machinations to strip from man all the good things he had received from the divine philanthropy.⁶⁵ He is behind the seduction of the serpent.⁶⁶ However, he acts only through the permission of God.⁶⁷ Adam sinned in paradise by

* Συνέχεια ἐκ τῆς σελ. 249 τοῦ προηγούμενου τεύχους.

56. *In Genes.* VIII PG 53, 71-72.

57. *Ad popul. Ant.* III PG 49, 57.

58. *Ibid.* VII PG 49, 93.

59. *Ibid.* XI PG 49, 122.

60. *In Genes.* IX PG 53, 79.

61. *Ibid.* XII PG 53, 103,

62. *Ibid.* XVIII PG 53, 150.

63. *De laud. S. Pauli* V, PG 50, 498.

64. *Huit catéchèses baptism.* (Wenger), p. 136. Cf. *In Genes.* XXII PG 53, 188.

65. *In Genes.* XVI PG 53, 126.

66. *Ibid.* XXVII PG 53, 240.

67. *Fragm. in Job* PG 64, 549 B, Cf. *In Romanos* III PG 60, 414.

indolence.⁶⁸ In fact, our indolence is the opposite of the divine philanthropy.⁶⁹ Chrysostom, then, draws the triangle of freedom; God is unchangeably recognized by His divinely steady philanthropy; the Devil makes himself known by envy, and man is defined, here, by indolence (ῥαθυμία).⁷⁰ The expulsion from paradise is a paedagogical punishment inspired by the divine philanthropy.⁷¹

In the case of Enoch's miraculous transfer to heaven, however, we can see that God did not want to see men dying at all, but, out of His philanthropy, He left the fear of death as a sobering lesson to fallen mankind.⁷²

Sins are destroyed by the grace and philanthropy (χάριτι καὶ φιλανθρωπίᾳ) of the crucified Christ.⁷³

The mystery of free will is tenaciously defended by Chrysostom, always in the context of divine philanthropy.⁷⁴ All the opponents of free will in man he stamps out as Manichaeans.⁷⁵ He emphasizes the greatness of our potential betterment, and that only if we wish (ἐὼν βουλώμεθα), through the divine philanthropy we can overcome our indolence and quickly return to the initial abundance.⁷⁶ Chrysostom is fond of drawing the metaphysical triangle of freedom, namely, God on the top and the Devil and man at the base. God is always recognisable by His philanthropy, man (a martyr, in this case) by his endurance, and the devil by his malevolence.⁷⁷

The self-controlling power (ἀντεξούσιον) is implanted in our nature by God, who in His philanthropy left to man the capacity to decide for himself.⁷⁸

68. *Ad popul. Ant.* IV PG 49, 66.

69. *In Genes.* VI PG 53, 56.

70. *Ibid.* XV PG 53, 124.

71. *Ibid.* XVIII PG 53, 151.

72. *Ibid.* XXI PG 53, 180.

73. *De sancta Pentecoste* PG 50, 463. Ludovic Robberechts, *Le Mythe d' Adam et le péché originel* (Paris, 1967), pp. 25-26, writes in this regard: «La croyance en une certaine liberté et l'espérance en une suppression possible du mal peuvent suffire pour l'intelligence... Si elle ne résout pas le problème du mal, la Bible est tout entière une réponse à celui-ci, une réponse valable et, à nos yeux, la plus valable.»

74. *In Genes.* XIII PG 53, 109.

75. *In Joannem* XLVI PG 59, 257.

76. *In Genes.* VII PG 53 56. Cf. *Adv. Jud.* VIII PG 48, 928; *In Romanos* III PG 60, 416 et passim.

77. *In Romanum mart.* I PG 50, 608.

78. *In Genes.* XIX PG 53, 158; *Huit catéchèses baptism.* (Wenger), p. 113.

The «involution» of the cosmos culminates, for Chrysostom, with the creation of man, and all things came into being by the ineffable philanthropy of God in order to honor man.⁷⁹ Only in this perspective may the divine tenderness extended downward upon the animals be meaningfully called the divine philanthropy.⁸⁰

Soteriology also is under the sign of divine *philanthropia*.

God, who wishes that all man should be saved (I Tim, 2:4), is defined as the philanthropic God.⁸¹ If «few are saved» it is only because few give the half of their possessions to the poor, indeed not even a tenth of their riches.⁸² However, Chrysostom is quick to re-assure the businessmen of his audience and to show that he knew well the «theology of the things of this world,» and therefore⁸³ he would exclaim: «Let us not despise the concern for this wordly life.»⁸⁴ And almsgiving is always there to express the soul's philanthropic bent.⁸⁵ But, if God rebuked even Moses, saying that it was not his business to know which are to enjoy His philanthropy, much less are we entitled to scrutinize this mystery.⁸⁶

For Chrysostom, the Cross is the sign of joy, because it opened the gates of heaven.⁸⁷ Hence, we do not feel sorrow because of the Cross, far from it, but because of our sins.⁸⁸ Through the Cross there came about the salvation of all.⁸⁹ «And the Cross is, indeed, the act of the ineffable philanthropy towards us.»⁹⁰ Moreover, Chrysostom ascribes the accomplishment of the Cross to the Trinity as a whole.⁹¹ To create

Parrhêsia is also given in the context of the divine philanthropy. See *De beato Philogonio* VI PG 48, 754.

79. *In Genes.* VII PG 53, 66.

80. *Ibid.* XXVIII PG 53, 254.

81. *De incomprehens.* II (Flacelière), p. 160. Cf. *Ad Stagirium* I, 5 PG 47, 437; II, 7 PG 47, 460.

82. *In Matth.* LXIV PG 58, 615.

83. Cf. Gustave Thils, *Theologie der irdischen Wirklichkeiten* (Salzburg, n. d.), especially pp. 32-34.

84. *In Matth.* LXIV PG 58, 615; cf. *In Romanos* XV PG 60, 547-548.

85. *Ibid.*

86. *In Romanos* XVI PG 60, 558.

87. *Adv. Jud.* III PG 48, 867.

88. *Ibid.* PG 48, 868.

89. *Ibid.* VI PG 48, 910.

90. «Καὶ γὰρ ὁ σταυρὸς δι' ἡμᾶς τὸ τῆς ἀφάτου φιλανθρωπίας ἔργον.» *In Romanos* VI PG 60, 408.

91. Peter Stockmeier, *Theologie und Kult des Kreuzes bei Johannes Chryso-*

the world out of nothing was an act of divine philanthropy, but to see the Son assuming the flesh in order to suffer — this fact transcends the divine philanthropy itself.⁹²

Grace and philanthropy are for Chrysostom interchangeable notions.⁹³ Therefore, whatever is said on the problem of grace touches the notion of the divine *philanthropia* also.

Stoyan Goshevich has discovered three different stages in Chrysostom's theology that expressly involve the Three Divine Persons in the gradual process of imparting grace to men.⁹⁴

For Chrysostom there is no such things as irresistible grace, which could only mean a metaphysical rape of the soul;⁹⁵ however, he is no way a harbinger of Pelagianism.⁹⁶ He can say, to keep the balance, that our race is justified not by our own works, but by grace alone.⁹⁷

The Jews also are saved by grace like the whole of mankind. All this is the proof, for Chrysostom, of the ineffable philanthropy of the Creator.⁹⁸

However, Chrysostom is aware of the apophatic character of the two wills encountering each other in the act of synergism: «When you hear grace spoken of, do not imagine that the reward of deliberate human choice (*προαίρεσις*) is denied by it. To say grace does not mean that the effort of human choice is disappreciated, but only that the arrogance of rebellion is cut off.»⁹⁹ Anthony Kenny tries to stricture

stomus (Trier, 1966), p. 62. He added: «Mit dieser Einordnung entzieht Johannes Leiden und Sterben des Herrn jedem verengenden Rahmen, und nicht zuletzt einer sentimentalен Missdeutung.»

92. *In Hebraeos* IV PG 63, 40.

93. In one instance he says that one does nothing by his own strength, but by the grace of God. (See *Ad Stagirium* I, 9 PG 47, 445-446). Elsewhere he says: salvation is not from our own achievement, but from the philanthropy of God. (See *De compunct.* II, PG 47, 417; cf. *In Genes.* XXIV PG 53, 212; 245, 252 *et passim.*)

94. *St John Chrysostom's Doctrine on Divine Grace* (Athens, 1956), p. 64. (In Greek.)

95. *De laud. S. Pauli* IV PG 50, 487.

96. Georges de Plinval, *Pélage, ses écrits, sa vie et sa réforme* (Paris, 1943), p. 134, wrote apropos: «On ne peut pas dire qu' en aucun point de son commentaire Pélage suive réellement tel ou tel auteur, pas plus Origène que Jean Chrysostome».

97. *Adv. Jud.* VII PG 48, 919.

98. *In Joannem* XIV PG 59, 94.

99. *In Romanos* II PG 60, 404. Elsewhere, he says: «The zeal of man has no sufficiency by itself, unless he receives an influence from above; similarly, the heavenly influence is of no benefit to us, unless zeal be present... Virtue is woven out of these two together.» PG 58, 742.

Chrysostom for having «reduced predestination to mere prescience,»¹⁰⁰ which concretely means that «God's» foreknowledge is not the cause of sin, nor of virtue.»¹⁰¹ The same writer has pointed out that the theologians of Marseilles, the opponents of Augustine of Hippo, «were afraid that Augustine's doctrine might cause negligence or despair in the faithful.»¹⁰² Some modern authors, coming from widely different cultural horizons, would agree that the Bishop of Hippo was in error on some cardinal points of the doctrine.¹⁰³

Chrysostom's evangelical understanding of freedom before God is refreshing because his vision of God is genuinely an optimistic one. He would encourage his audience by saying: if we contribute only a small portion God will add from above — and, thus, our salvation is ready — because of the ocean of *philanthropia* of the Lord.¹⁰⁴

Since, for Chrysostom, the Church «begins with God and ends and finds rest in God,»¹⁰⁵ it is not astonishing that he should give her

100. «Was Chrysostom a semi-Pelagian?» *Irish Theological Quarterly*, XXVII (1960), 16-29, especially p. 26.

101. *Ibid.*, p. 27. Chrysostom could not be more explicit in defending the honesty of God and the freedom of men, but by teaching that since Christ died for all men, the only thing which makes a difference between those who will be saved and those who will not, is human good or ill will. *In Romanos XVI PG 60, 554.*

102. A. Kenny. *loc. cit.*, p. 27.

103. First there is the general exegetical clarification from Gerhard Kittel: «the New Testament knows of no rigid predestination to eternal perdition» (see *Wrath, Bible Key Words*, pp. 88-89). Joannes Baptista Pighi in considering Augustine's handling of the thorny problem of evil and predestination stressed that when it came to composition «the artist in Augustine... tended to take over from the theologian.» See *Mélanges Christine Mohrmann*, pp. 252-69, especially p. 255.

Augustine is presumably guilty of having loaded the doctrine of original sin with gloomy juridical connotations. See John S. Romanides, *Original Sin* (Athens, 1957), pp. 24-25; 76; 112. n. 2 (in Greek), and Julius Gross, *Entstehungsgeschichte des Erbsündendogmas* (Munich, 1960), I, 375: «Mit seiner [Augustine] Erbsünden-neuerung hatte er einen eklatanten Sieg errungen — aber nicht über die Pelagianer, sondern auch über...Menschlichkeit.»

Jacques-François Thomas writes in *Saint Augustin s' est il trompé? Essai sur la prédestination* (Paris, 1959): «Les Grecs ont mieux su garder la confiance en Dieu que Saint Augustin» (p. 80). «Ainsi, reconnaissons qu' il n' est tout de même trompé... c' est le moment de lui appliquer la sagesse du proverbe: 'Amicus Plato, sed magis amica veritas.'» (p. 93).

104. *De poenitentia III PG 49, 299.*

105. John Karmiris, «The Ecclesiology of the Three Hierarchs,» *The Greek Orthodox Theological Review*, VI. No. 2 (Winter, 1960-1961), 135-85, especially p. 182.

the divine attribute of *philanthropia*: «δύναμις καὶ φιλανθρωπία τῆς Ἐκκλησίας.»¹⁰⁶

Since the supreme ruling principle resides in the Trinity,¹⁰⁷ the Apostles, on earth, are collectively invested with the pastoral rule and care of the whole universe.¹⁰⁸ The power of the keys was given to all of them, not only to Peter.¹⁰⁹ Paul, because of his humility, became the first among all and Peter in his turn the foundation of the Church.¹¹⁰

It is noteworthy that in the majority of cases, whenever Chrysostom speaks of the two supreme Apostles, he gives the precedence to Paul.¹¹¹ He noticed, also, that Paul did not wait for Peter, neither did he ask James' approval, but moved by his own zeal started to preach in Damascus.¹¹²

The priority among the Apostles, according to Chrysostom, is not of the kind that this-worldly men fight for. The three supreme Apostles, Peter, John and James were healed from their rivalry and retired from their priority.¹¹³ He takes for granted that no one stands above Paul,¹¹⁴ and that the lust for primacy is in any case proper only to the pagans.¹¹⁵

Chrysostom endorses the liturgical equality of all the national tongues,¹¹⁶ and emphasizes that Paul treated the Romans as equal to other ethnic groups. A proud Antiochene, Chrysostom recalls that the Syrians were teachers of the Romans.¹¹⁷

The highest enactment of the divine philanthropy in the Church,

106. PG 52, 393-394.

107. Constantinos D. Mouratides, *Essence and Structure of the Church according to the Teaching of John Chrysostom* (Athens, 1958), p. 139. (In Greek.) Cf. Athanasias M. Yeftich, *Ecclesiology of St. Paul according to St. Chrysostom* (Athens, 1967) (In Greek.)

108. *In utilit. lectionis Script. In princip. Act.* III PG 51, 93.

109. *In Matt.* XXIII PG 57, 308.

110. *Ibid.* III PG 57, 38. Cf. *In Joannem* LXXXVIII PG 59, 477-479.

111. A. Théodore (Dumortier), p. 90; *Ad popul. Ant.* I PG 49, 24; *De S. Babyla* 3 PG 50, 538; *La Virginité* (Musurillo-Grillet), p. 382 *et passim*. There are exceptions: *In S. Ignatium* PG 50, 593; *De Lazaro concio* V PG 48, 1021; *In illud: In faciem Petro* PG 51, 375.

112. *De laud. S. Pauli* VII PG 50, 510.

113. *In Matth.* LVIII PG 58, 568.

114. *Ibid.* LXV PG 58, 621.

115. *Ibid.* PG 58, 622.

116. *De studio praesentium* PG 63, 487.

117. *In Romanos* I PG 60, 399-401.

however, is the Eucharist.¹¹⁸ For the sake of the most realistic expression of the belief in the sacramental presence of Christ on the altar, Chrysostom is sometimes called «*Doctor Eucharistiae*».¹¹⁹ He sees the kernel of the mystery in an «essentially supernatural structure of the reality of salvation, which comprises a co-related understanding of it and a definite prerequisite ethos.»¹²⁰ The theme of the new creation (II Cor. 5:17), understood by Chrysostom as the sacramental independence which the believers of the New Testament have in regard to space and time, is linked with the Eucharistical partaking of the cup of Christ.¹²¹ In general, all those who search the new things of incorruption in the context of grace will enjoy the peace and philanthropy of God and will be deemed worthy to be called by the name of Israel.¹²²

Moreover, God's philanthropy is experienced not only through His gifts, but also through chastizement.¹²³ He warns his audience that the destruction of Jerusalem by Vespasian and Titus «will apply both against the Marcionites and against those who do not believe that there is a hell.»¹²⁴ And he adds: «Once more, I am compelled to seem harsh, disagreeable, stern... For we do good, not by the pleasure we give, but by the pain we inflict. So it is also with the physician.»¹²⁵ Nonetheless, he has also a sweet medicament, when he says: only if we want to be φιλόθρωποι, we shall then see Jesus in glory and hear Him tell us «Rejoice, come ye blessed ones of My Father.»¹²⁶

Chrysostom has elaborated a typology according to which the Ark of Noah is the Church, Noah prefiguring the Christ; the dove standing for the Holy Spirit, and the branch of olive for the philanthropy of God.¹²⁷

Chrysostom teaches loyalty to the State, especially when the em-

118. *De Sacerdotio* III, IV (Nairn), pp. 51-52.

119. Gustave Bardy, «St. Jean Chrysostome,» *Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique*, Vol. VIII, cols. 660-690, esp. col. 680.

120. G. Fittkau, *Der Begriff des Mysteriums bei Johannes Chrysostomus* (Bonn, 1953), p. 84.

121. *De regressu Joannis ex Asia* PG 52, 423.

122. *In Galatos* VI PG 61, 679.

123. *Ad popul. Ant.* VII PG 49, 93; *In Genes.* XXV PG 53, 230-232.

124. *Homilies on the Acts of the Apostles*, Vol. XI of *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, ed. Philip Schaff (Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1956), Hom. V, p. 35.

125. *Ibid.*

126. *In Matth.* LXXXIX PG 58, 784.

127. *De Lazaro concio* VI, 7 PG 48, 1037.

peror is a philanthropic ruler.¹²⁸ But Flavian is, for him, also a sort of a ruler, even more august than the emperor,¹²⁹ since bishops have received «nothing less than the whole authority of heaven.»¹³⁰ The greatness of the royal philanthropy lies in the fact that it can be compared with the philanthropy of God.¹³¹

Chrysostom knew well that the relationship between the Church and the Empire ought not be one of mere legality or power, but one of mutual confidence.¹³² However, he found himself in a situation such that he had to reprimand the Empress¹³³ and to give the following ultimatum to Arcadius of Constantinople, his first parishioner: «From God the Saviour have I received this church with a charge to secure the salvation of this people, and I cannot abandon her. If you desire so (even though the City is of a different opinion) you must expell me by force, that I may have for excuse of my desertion your absolutism.»¹³⁴

After such clear teaching and heroic practice it is puzzling why F. Dvornik should write a sweeping judgment like this: «The idea of the superiority of spiritual power over the temporal... the East was never able to comprehend.»¹³⁵ I see here an unpreparedness properly to evaluate the attitude of the Byzantine episcopate, which practically never condescended to compete with rulers on the level of the old creation, because they felt almost beyond the reach of the emperors on their level of the Church's sacramental Kingdom, which is not of this world. For this reason it seems to me, Per Beskow has more adequately described one aspect of the relationship between the Church and the Empire in the nascent Byzantium³ saying: «When the Kingship of Christ is considered to be realized above all in the cult, the areas of conflict diminish accordingly.»¹³⁶ Chrysostom did emphasize that Christians are

128. *Ad popul. Ant.* IV PG 49, 66.

129. *Ibid.* III PG 49, 50.

130. De Sacerdotio III, V (Nairn), p. 54. Graham Neville (trans.), *Saint John Chrysostom: Six Books on the Priesthood* (London, 1964), p. 72.

131. *In Hebraeos XIII* PG 63, 108.

132. Stephan Verosta, *Johannes Chrysostomus Statsphilosoph und Geschichtstheologe* (Graz, 1960), p. 338.

133. *Ad imperatricem Eudoxiam* PG 64, 493 A.

134. Palladius, *Vita Chrysostomi* PG 47, 32.

135. Francis Dvornik, *Byzantium and the Roman Primacy* (New York, 1966), p. 19.

136. *Rex Gloriar: The Kingship of Christ in the Early Church* (Stockholm, 1962), p. 327.

«soldiers of the heavenly King,¹³⁷ but he did not forget to underline the spiritual character of the kingship of Christ.¹³⁸

While the Papacy developed the Hellenistic ideal of a priestly king,¹³⁹ the successor of Chrysostom in the chair of Constantinople, Germanus, was to start a resistance movement against the iconoclastic emperors encroaching even on the dogmatic level of the priestly office.¹⁴⁰ For Chrysostom the royal power of Christ is manifested especially in the Eucharist and the Eucharist is the «invisible» heavenly cult. In it was the only valid place where the superiority of spiritual power over the temporal could and should be realized. This «detail» of history, therefore, invalidates the generalization of F. Dvornik.

In his spirituality, Chrysostom advocated the unity of dogmas and everyday life,¹⁴¹ as he tried to unite harmoniously the two ideals — the monastic and the sacerdotal.¹⁴² The notion of *philosophopia* reflects mainly the ideal of ascetic exploit¹⁴³ and virginity,¹⁴⁴ while voluntaristic optimism¹⁴⁵ and philanthropically inspired activity were to his priestly liking.¹⁴⁶ The Imitation of Christ, however, was the unifying principle of his ethics,¹⁴⁷ because regardless of marital or monastic sta-

137. P. van der Aalst, *Christus Basileus bij Johannes Chrysostomus* (Utrecht, 1966), p. 12.

138. *Ibid.*, p. 81.

139. Walter Ullmann, *The Growth of Papal Government in the Middle Ages* (London 1962), p. 26 f.

140. George Ostrogorsky, *History of the Byzantine State*, trans. Joan Hussey (Oxford, 1956), p. 145. The Byzantine court ceremonial and the imperial absolutism had also their roots in the Hellenistic and Roman worlds (p. 29), but the emperor never succeeded in uniting in his hands both imperial and sacerdotal powers — all to the contrary, the imperial authority received its most severe setback from the Orthodox Church of Byzantium (p. 28). Anyway, humanly speaking, the abuses of the political power are always more easily to be pardoned in a layman, than in a priest. Is not there also a divine reason for this?

141. *In Genes.* III PG 53, 31.

142. Bruno H. Vandenberghe, *Saint Jean Chrysostome et la parole de Dieu* (Paris, 1961), p. 44.

143. G. J. M. Bartelink, «Philosophie» et «philosophe» dans quelques oeuvres de Jean Chrysostome,» *Revue d'ascétique et de mystique*, XXXVI (1960), 486-92, especially p. 492.

144. *De Sacerdotio* III, XVII (Nairn), p. 89.

145. «Ἀρχεῖ θελῆσαι μόνον, καὶ τὸ πᾶν γέγονεν.» *In Matth.* XVII PG 57, 263.

146. *Ibid.* L PG 58, 509.

147. *Adv. Jud.* IV PG 48, 881; *De Anna* IV PG 54, 666; *In Genes.* XVII PG 53, 138.

tus, all equally are exhorted to become imitators of the Lord's philanthropy.¹⁴⁸ That He is really philanthropic one can see from the fact that He made the virtuous life easy.¹⁴⁹ Chrysostom differs from the Stoics in that he believes that all—women, children, priests, barbarians—can equally lift themselves to the high level of spiritual activity.¹⁵⁰

If someone is too weak to keep the strict rules of Lent, no one will blame him for taking food, since we have a meek and philanthropic Lord.¹⁵¹ Elsewhere, however, he will extol the strictness of the New Testament commandments.¹⁵²

Concupiscence (ἐπιθυμία) between the opposite sexes is not frowned upon by Chrysostom.¹⁵³ Pleasure, obviously, can be of pure or sinful inspiration.¹⁵⁴ Sexual life in the purity of marriage is a gift of the philanthropic God.¹⁵⁵ Chrysostom's defense of unprocreative intercourse does not, however, endorse contraception, which is for him worse than homicide, a mutilation of nature.¹⁵⁶

He passionately denounced the savagery which the proprietors of the estates displayed toward their serfs.¹⁵⁷ However, he considered that not the work in itself is the punishment for sin, but the pain attached to it.¹⁵⁸

There is nothing more pleasurable, according to Chrysostom, than having a pure conscience.¹⁵⁹ And the most desirable deification may be ultimately achieved through the Eucharist.¹⁶⁰ The unity of men and

148. In *Genes*. XXX PG 53, 274.

149. In *Math*. XVI PG 57, 254.

150. Ivo auf der Maur, *Mönchtum und Glaubensverkündigung in den Schriften des hl. Johannes Chrysostomus* (Freiburg, 1959), p. 89.

151. In *Genes*. X PG 53, 82.

152. In *Math*. XVI PG 57, 248; 258.

153. In *Romanos* IV PG 60, 418.

154. *De Lazaro concio* I PG 48, 979 ἀήδονή καθαρά: In *Math*. XXXIV PG 57, 404; In *Joannem* I PG 59, 27.

155. In *Genes*. XVIII PG 53, 154.

156. John T. Noonan, *Contraception: A History of its Treatment by the Catholic Theologians and Canonists* (Cambridge, Mass., 1965), p. 79.

157. Roger A. Pack, «Studies in Libanius and Antiochene Society under Theodosius» (unpublished dissertation, University of Michigan, 1935), p. 29. Cf. In *I ad Cor*. XXVII PG 61, 229.

158. Lucien Daloz, *Le Travail selon Saint Jean Chrysostome* (Paris, 1959), p. 74.

159. *De studio praesentium* PG 63, 485.

160. A. Theodorou, *On the Deification of Man: Teaching of the Greek Fathers of the Church till John of Damascus* (Athens, 1956), p. 91. (In Greek.)

«Ἐγένετο γὰρ Ἰῶς ἀνθρώπου, Θεοῦ γνήσιος ὢν Ἰῶς, ἵνα τοὺς τῶν ἀνθρώπων υἱοὺς τέχνα ποιήσῃ Θεοῦ.» In *Joannem* XI PG 59, 79.

angels is sealed in the body of the Incarnate Lord, the divine philanthropy made tangible, which the angels carry in the procession of the Church's liturgy, praying for their concelebrants on earth.¹⁶¹

On high, hosts of angels chant the divine doxology; below, men standing in choir in the Churches are their faithful imitators with the same doxology. On high, the Seraphim cry aloud the Tri-holy hymn; below, a multitude of men raise up the same hymn. A solemn celebration common to heavenly and earthly creatures alike is knit together into one single thanksgiving, one single rejoicing, one single festal standing-in-choir. For the ineffable condescension of the Master has forged it together; the Holy Spirit has woven it together; the harmony of its voices has been fitted together with the Father's good-will. The beautiful timing of its parts it obtains from on high; and being set in motion by the Trinity as by a kind of plectrum, it intones its exultant and blessed choric hymn, its angelic song, its incomprehensible symphony.¹⁶²

Among all those in heaven and on earth, Chrysostom most liked one who is for him the greatest here below and the best acquainted with the reality on high — St. Paul, «an earthly angel and heavenly man»,¹⁶³ into whose mouth he puts his own characteristic utterance — the inseparableness of grace and philanthropy — even so as to spontaneously insert in Paul's saying (I. Cor. 15:10a) the «missing» notion of philanthropy: «χάρῃτι αὐτοῦ καὶ φιλανθρωπία ἐμὲ δὲ ἐμίλ...»¹⁶⁴.

This saying, in my opinion, fitly applies to the Antiochene imitator of Paul, too.

In the cultural confrontation of his own times Chrysostom had to deal with three different kinds of opponents, namely, heretics, Jews and pagans.

The most dangerous to the Church, according to Chrysostom, were the heretics.

There is every reason to fear that, while trying to aim a blow at one enemy, you will be struck by the other. If someone

161. This analogy can be deduced from *De incomprehens.* III PG 48, 726 D (Flacelière), p. 202.

162. *Il illud «Vid. Domin.»* I, 1 PG 56, 97-98.

163. *De poenitentia* II PG 49, 290.

164. *In Genes.* XXXI PG 53, 285.

says that the Godhead is one, Sabellius distorts the expression at once, to favour his own madness. If, on the other hand, someone makes a distinction and says that the Father is one, the Son another, and the Holy Spirit another, up gets Arius, twisting the distinction of Persons into a difference of Substance. We must shun and avoid the impious confusion of the one party and the mad division of the other by confessing that the Godhead of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit is one, but adding that there are three Persons.¹⁶⁵

The worst of all are Manichaeans and other gnostic dualists. Chrysostom would say that Plato and the pagans had the knowledge of God's goodness,¹⁶⁶ and the Jews also would reject their horror of marriage.¹⁶⁷ The pagans are much better off than those dualists who enforce virginity.¹⁶⁸

However in another situation where the pagans are the main adversaries Chrysostom will side with the heretics because they still worship the Crucified from Palestine.¹⁶⁹ That attitude is not merely a kind of diplomacy, but one of philanthropic patience even on the level of dogma.

Some would question the sincerity of Chrysostom's practice of philanthropy by imputing to him anti-semitism. Thus Léon Poliakov¹⁷⁰ and A. J. Vishner¹⁷¹ have attacked him as a forerunner of Nazi racism. This is, however, anachronistic. Marcel Simon has established the fact that Chrysostom, for his own time, kept the «via media».¹⁷²

If Chrysostom hates the Synagogue, this is motivated by dogmatic reasons: because it disbelieves the predictions of the prophets fulfilled in Christ,¹⁷³ and because it is there that God in the Trinity of

165. De Sacerdotio IV, IV (Nairn), pp. 115-16. G. Neville (trans.). *Six Books on Priesthood*, p. 118.

166. *La Virginité* (Musurillo-Grillet), p. 116.

167. *Ibid.*, pp. 114-116.

168. *Ibid.*, p. 102.

169. *De laud. S. Pauli* IV PG 50, 489.

170. *Histoire de l'antisémitisme* (Paris, 1955), I, 41.

171. «Johannes Chrysosomus als anti-joods polemicus» *Nederlands Archiev for Kerkegeschiedenis* (1954), pp. 192-206, especially p. 197.

172. *Recherches d'histoire Judéo-Chrétienne* (Paris, 1962), p. 153. Chrysostom, according to M. Simon, is forced to «faire front de deux côtés à la fois: d'un côté contre ceux qu'égare le mal judaïque, de l'autre contre ceux qu'aveugle une trop rigide aversion pour les choses juives.»

173. *Adv. Jud.* I PG 48, 850.

the Divine Persons is blasphemed.¹⁷⁴ «Since they have disowned the Father, crucified the Son, and rejected the Spirit's help, who would dare to assert that the synagogue is not a home of demons.¹⁷⁵ Exclusiveness of a cultural nature is bluntly unleashed when Chrysostom says: «if the cult of the Jews is holy and great, ours must be false.»¹⁷⁶

Using prophetic and Pauline language, Chrysostom did call both Jews and unruly Christians dogs.¹⁷⁷ Obviously, the memory of the alliance between the Emperor Julian and Jews who were trying to rebuild their Temple must have lingered in Chrysostom's mind.¹⁷⁸ However, he did not think that all the Jews were collectively guilty of the blood of Jesus, but only conscious individuals.¹⁷⁹ He admired the Christian Jew, Paul, for being concerned to save all his kinsfolk, which is, at the same time, a sign of Chrysostom's eschatological sympathy for the Jews.¹⁸⁰ Chrysostom sees the ineffable philanthropy of God in that He uses the Jewish minority in order to arouse the Gentile Christian majority to thankfulness.¹⁸¹

In the heat of vehement orations against the Jews, Chrysostom enunciated the most humanitarian maxim, as if to indicate that he had no base pogromic intentions: «καὶ ὁ ἄνθρωπος τοῦ κόσμου παντὸς τιμιώτερος.»¹⁸² He was outspokenly against the use of force in fighting

174. *Ibid.* PG 48, 852.

175. *Ibid.* PG 48, 850-852. Translated by Gregory Baum in *Is the New Testament anti-Semitic?* (Glen Rock, N. J., 1965), p. 18.

176. *Adv. Jud.* I PG 48, 852. It is probable that Chrysostom could have overheard from the Jews in Antioch the provocative interpretation of the opening verse of «Pirkê Abbot»: «The expression *Kal Yisrael* is to emphasize that every Israelite, no matter how sinful he may be, eventually has a share in the world to come.» See *Ethics of the Fathers*, annotated and translated by Hyman E. Goldin (New York, 1962), p. 1, n. 1.

While Hans Joachim Schoeps, *The Jewish-Christian Argument: A History of Theologies in Conflict* (London 1965), p. 6, is rather optimistic concerning the eschatological union of the Jews and the Christians. Jakob Jocz, *The Jewish People and Jesus Christ: A Study in the Controversy between Church and Synagogue* (London, 1962), p. 96, on the contrary, asserts that «Church and Synagogue can only exist in eternal challenge to each other.»

177. *Adv. Jud.* I PG 48, 845 and *De coemeterio et cruce* PG 49, 398.

178. *Adv. Jud.* V PG 48, 900-901; cf. *In Matth.* V PG 57, 41.

179. *Cur in Pentec. acta. In princip. Act.* IV PG 51, 111.

180. *De laud. S. Pauli* I PG 50, 477.

181. *Cur in Pentec. acta.* PG 51, 112.

182. «Indeed, man is more precious than the whole of the cosmos.» *Adv. Jud.* VII, 7 PG 48, 916.

religious error.¹⁸³ And he proudly insisted on the philanthropy of the Crucified toward the Jews when He everlooked their self-condemnatory outcry.¹⁸⁴

Gregory Baum has concluded that the Fathers «were not inspired by a human dislike of the Jews; it was simply the concern for the Church... that prompted them to use such language.»¹⁸⁵ The problem of the balance between zeal and philanthropy in Chrysostom, as part of a more complex Jewish problem, will continue to be hotly debated until the end of the world.

A. J. Festugière is only partially right when he says: «The historian knows only what he is told; he cannot penetrate the secrets of the heart.»¹⁸⁶ A historian, however, has the right and the duty to compare similar phenomena and to try to find reasons for their similarity and eventual opposition. To say that two things in the realm of the same culture are similar merely by coincidence — if not proven beyond any doubt — means nothing less than the capitulation of the mind.

The problem we face is the external similarity between Themistius and Chrysostom, for both of whom the notion of *philanthropia* is central.

It seems that since Clement of Alexandria and Origen, *philanthropia* had acquired a great prestige among the Christian elite; nonetheless, I think it is permissible to make an inference from the fact that if Chrysostom was so sensitive as to respond to the criticism of Porphyry,¹⁸⁷ he ought to have reacted with greater zest against a contemporary camouflaged opponent of his faith, Themistius. «It is plain from his writings that (Themistius) was fighting for the survival of Hellenism, and was attempting to show that paganism could supply everything that Christianity could offer.»¹⁸⁸ Themistius, after seeing the fail-

183. *De S. Babyla, contra Julianum et Gentiles* PG 50, 537. I agree with Fr. Dvornik, *Early Christian and Byzantine Political Philosophy*, II, 785, and J. A. de Aldama, *op. cit.*, p. 229, that this work is authentic.

184. *Cur in Pentec. acta*, PG 51, 110. D. Judant, *Les Deux Israël* (Paris, 1960), p. 180, n. 1, translated a balanced thought of Chrysostom: «L' Apôtre éloigne en même temps les Juifs du désespoir et les Gentils de l' orgueil.»

185. G. Baum, *op. cit.* p. 19.

186. *Hermès Trismégiste*, IV, 267. Cited by E. R. Dodds, *Pagan and Christian*, p. 83.

187. «For he, who wrote against us the treatise *On Matter*, confuted himself.» *In Joannem* LXVI PG 59, 370.

188. G. Downey, «Education and Public Problems,» pp. 291-307, especially p. 292. Herman F. Bouchery, *Themistius in Libanius' Brieven*, p. 42, spoke about

lure of the theurgical leaders of paganism,¹⁸⁹ as well as Libanius' traditional academic seclusion,¹⁹⁰ decided to be a philosopher engaged in politics.¹⁹¹ It was something new and daring to speak to the crowds about philosophy.¹⁹² But this move was probably planned in order to attract as many as possible, by way of culture, to the pagan cult. He even publicly invokes the Pythian Apollo, who supposedly helps not only individuals, but crowds also.¹⁹³ His insistence on the imperial *philanthropia* has unmistakably in view the old pagan cult.¹⁹⁴

Chrysostom, in his turn, could recognize that kings are made by divine philanthropy.¹⁹⁵ However, in him there is no trace of fatalistic submissiveness to the emperor. On the contrary, he claims that if in Christ there is no more difference between slave and free, even less is there a chasm between an earthly king and the commoner.¹⁹⁶ The relationship between Chrysostom's understanding of the imperial *philanthropia* and the ancient Hellenistic philanthropy ascribed by the pagans to the divine ruler, represented latterly by Themistius, was a relationship of contrast and outright opposition. Chrysostom, obviously, has an altogether different ground upon which to build his freedom and independence from the emperor cult, when he proclaims that the Church is not established by the *pax regia*, but on the power of God.¹⁹⁷ My long introduction¹⁹⁸ is justified only if seen as the ideological background to which Chrysostom opposes his own world-view. Indeed, Chrysostom might say along with the pagans that the greatness of the royal *philanthropia* consists in the very fact that it is comparable to the philanthropy of God,¹⁹⁹ and he might, also, similarly use the classical theme of imitation of the philanthropic God;²⁰⁰ nonetheless Chrysostom's perspective is

Themistius' «principieele neutraliteit» in things religious. In my opinion, he was mistaken.

189. Even such a zealous missionary as Julian could show his aristocratic contempt for Christianity as «a religion for farmers.» J. Quasten, *op. cit.*, III, 397.

190. H. F. Bouchery, *op. cit.*, pp. 118-119.

191. Hubert Kesters, *Plaidoyer d' un Socratique contre le Phèdre de Platon*, p. 264.

192. *Ibid.*, p. 248.

193. *Ibid.*, p. 276.

194. See above «Θεολογία» 53 (1982), p. 1083.

195. *De Sacerdotio* IV, I (Nairn), p. 99.

196. *In Romanos* I PG 60, 399.

197. *Adv. Jud.* V PG 48, 886.

198. See above «Θεολογία» 53 (1982), pp. 95-128, 460-475 and 612-627.

199. *In Hebraeos* XIII PG 63, 108, Cf. PG 49, 84; PG 48, 860; PG 60, 409.

200. *In Epist. II ad Cor.* XIV PG 61, 501; cf. PG 53, 274.

entirely different from that of the pagans, since for him the priesthood is mystically higher than Christian royalty.²⁰¹ Henceforth, it is to be understood that the priestly philanthropy manifested chiefly through the administration of the heavenly sacraments is incomparably higher than the temporal earthbound philanthropy of kings here below.²⁰² The latter, however, is far from being overlooked or underestimated by the indefatigable preacher of almsgiving.²⁰³ Nevertheless, we discern here a new scale of values that enters into Chrysostom's appraisal of the Christian emperor. In the very presence of Arcadius, for example, Chrysostom managed to deprive the Emperor of the usual title of *philanthropos*, which he programmatically ascribed only to the martyrs, the bearers of the heavenly crown.²⁰⁴ The difference in the political evaluation of kingship and royal philanthropy which existed between Chrysostom and Themistius only uncovers a deeper opposition on the level of their respective irreconcilable theologies.²⁰⁵ This is the reason why Chrysostom's notion of the divine philanthropy, also, is as much richer than the same notion used by Themistius, as Chrysostom's idea of God is theologically richer than Themistius' idea of the divinity. The ideological struggle between the two champions of *philanthropia* was engaged in not only on the level of culture, but on the higher cultural level as well. Behind the obvious «Kulturkampf» there was a hidden «Kultuskampf.»

With such a perspective we can understand why Chrysostom was so harsh toward classical pagan culture. For him it is an obvious sign of the divine power working in Matthew that an unlearned man such as he can «philosophize» better than Plato.²⁰⁶ This does not mean, however, that he rejected the cultural values of the Classical polis with its particular ideal of *philanthropia*.²⁰⁷ But he abhorred the reverse

201. *Ad popul. Ant.* III PG 49, 50.

202. *De sacerdotio* III, V (Nairn), p. 54.

203. Eberhard F. Bruck, in «Ethics vs. Law: St. Paul, the Fathers of the Church and the 'cheerful giver' in Roman Law,» *Traditio*, II (1944), 97-121, especially p. 108, wrote that Chrysostom was the unflinching champion of the underprivileged who developed the theory of the proper attitude of mind in giving better than did the Cappadocians themselves.

204. *Praesente Imperatore* PG 63, 473.

205. To the Roman emperor, who was considered by the pagans as equal to God, Chrysostom opposes the Christ who comes as a humble carpenter and pours out his ineffable philanthropy on the Cross. *In Romanos* II PG 60, 408.

206. *In Matth.* I PG 57, 18. Many of Plato's inventions being against nature, according to Chrysostom, are inspired by the demons (*In Matth.* I PG 57, 19).

207. This was the contention of Arch. Cyprian Kern, *op. cit.*, p. 174, although

side of the medal: the worship of the demons in the pagan cult.²⁰⁸ Therefore he could pugnaciously ask a question such as this; «And what... is that Athena of theirs, and Apollo, and Juno? They are different kinds of demons.»²⁰⁹ The divine *philanthropia* of Jesus is manifested in the fact that Christ liberated not only His believers, but the unbelievers as well from the tyranny of the ancient error.²¹⁰

Chrysostom was aware of the crucial importance of education,²¹¹ although he stressed the priority of moral upbringing as being independent from and superior to literary training.²¹² His very cultural behaviour and literary creativity followed the best Hellenic tradition of Demosthenes.²¹³ However, Chrysostom's refusal to take classical literature as the unsurpassable «holy scriptures of Hellenism» gave him the advantage of being above the slavish imitative attitude of Libanius and even Themistius. A relative internal peace on the dogmatic front of the Church, enjoyed at the end of the Fourth century,²¹⁴ was used by Chrysostom to penetrate more deeply into the somewhat lower regions of cultural life by his Christianized notion of the ancient *philanthropia*, which was able to rally the rising Christian *intelligentsia* to a greater enthusiasm than the homely and not very aristocratic *agape* or *charis* could.²¹⁵ He felt free to take from classical models what he considered fit for his homiletic purpose. At any rate he placed, like the old masters, thought above the form of the language.²¹⁶ Such an attitude is much closer to that of the modern man than the over-enthusiastic idolizing of the Hellenic achievement by certain leaders of the Renais-

he admitted, at least, that Chrysostom emphasized ethical creativity on the ascending way toward perfection.

208. J. Daniélou, in the preface to Henri Maurier's *Essai d' une théologie du paganisme* (Paris, 1965), p. 9, wrote: «Les Pères de l' Église... soulignent que la grâce n' a jamais abandonné... les païens eux-mêmes, mais ils insistent... sur le fait que les cultes païens... sont inspirés par les démons.»

209. Philip Schaff (ed.), *Homilies on the Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 30-31.

210. *De S. Babyla, contra Julianum et Gentiles* PG 50, 535. He calls the pagan cult requiring human sacrifices «bestial liturgies».

211. G. Downey, «Education and Public Problems,» p. 306. See Chrysostom's *Address on Vainglory and the Right Way for Parents to Bring up their Children*, in M. L. Laistner's *Christianity and Classical Culture* (Ithaca, 1951), appendix.

212. *Adv. oppugnat vit. monast.* III, 11 PG 47, 367. The palm of wisdom is humbly given to the Apostles (PG 47, 368).

213. Caius Fabricius, *op. cit.*, p. 131.

214. *Huit catéchèses baptis.* (Wenger), p. 120, n. 1.

215. G. Downey, «Themistius», p. 271.

216. C. Baur, *op. cit.*, I, 313, n. 15.

sance.²¹⁷ But Chrysostom also knew the tension between the eschatological overlooking of everything in this world²¹⁸ and cultural involvement on earth. After all, he was proud of being a citizen of Antioch, a man-made center of civilization, loyalty to which was so compelling that even a Christian like Chrysostom might cherish its ancient ideal alongside his own loyalty to the heavenly citizenship.²¹⁹

I should not omit a small parenthesis on Chrysostom's attitude in the important skirmish between Theophilus of Alexandria and the «Origenistic» monks of Egypt.

If Chrysostom gave shelter and protection to the persecuted hermits known as the Long Brothers,²²⁰ that action could have been motivated by sheer philanthropic — and perhaps political — reasons. It is revealing that once Chrysostom was deposed from the patriarchal throne of Constantinople, his opponent, the pope of Egypt, suddenly was not concerned any longer for the dogmatic charges he had raised against the Long Brothers and smoothly reconciled himself with them.²²¹

It is true that Chrysostom wrote against the anthropomorphic understanding of the image of God in man,²²² and that he urged that one must go beyond all images and reasonings;²²³ nevertheless he did recognize the value of the biblical images as reflecting the inaccessible mysteries of God.²²⁴ Even Epiphanius of Cyprus was cautious enough to condemn both the crude «anthropomorphite» literalism of the *imago Dei* and the vagaries of Origenistic spiritualism.²²⁵

The emphatic realism of Chrysostom's Eucharistic piety, more than anything else, elevates Chrysostom above any suspicion of a dechristologized «Origenistic» spirituality.²²⁶

217. F. Copleston, *op. cit.*, III, 212 *et passim*.

218. Cf. *La Virginité* (Masurillo-Grillet), p. 350; *Sur la Providence* (Malingrey), p. 274.

219. G. Downey, *Ancient Antioch*, p. 199.

220. C. Baur, *op. cit.*, II, 192-93.

221. Antoine Guillaumont, *Les 'Kephalaia Gnostica' d' Evagre la Pontique et l'histoire de l'Origenisme chez les Grecs et chez les Syriens* (Paris, 1962), p. 66. Cf. pp. 82-83.

222. *In Genes.* VIII PG 53, 72-73.

223. *Sur la Providence* (Malingrey), p. 140.

224. *Ibid.*, p. 74.

225. G. Florovsky, «Theophilus of Alexandria and Apa Aphou of Pemdje,» *Harry Wolfson Jubilee Volume* (Jerusalem, 1965), pp. 276-310, especially p. 301.

226. G. Florovsky, «The Anthropomorphites in the Egyptian Desert,» *Akten*

If Theophilus, before his «conversion» to anti-Origenism, could invoke the shape of an Ethiopian (he had in mind the distinctive physical traits of the Negro race), as «proof» that man's body has nothing to do with the image of God,²²⁷ then Chrysostom can easily be justified as having nothing to do with «Origenistic» racially argued pseudo-theology. First, as a younger follower of the Cappadocians he probably had read Gregory of Nazianzus saying clearly that what counts in the sacramental life is man's spiritual side: «Be baptized... be saved, and though you be an Ethiopian in body, be made white in soul.»²²⁸ However, more convincing material is given by Chrysostom himself: he emphatically rejected the idea that the election of Isaac and rejection of Ishmael, born from an Egyptian slave woman, has anything to do with their social or, ultimately, racial, provenience. The election depends strictly on goodness or badness of character as foreknown by God.²²⁹ Moreover, barbarians — a notion without a derogatory connotation for Chrysostom²³⁰ — were qualified by Chrysostom as having been philanthropic toward Greek soldiers lost in a foreign land.²³¹

This is conclusive evidence that Chrysostom did not suffer from «Origenistic» misconceptions, either racially or spiritually.

The most conspicuous recognition of Chrysostom's perfect orthodoxy was the fact that the Church accepted as her main liturgical expression the *ordo* named after him.²³²

My concluding remarks will bear on Chrysostom's use of the divine *philanthropia* as the central notion of his «theodicy».

On the excruciating question, «Whence evil?» in the realm of human life, Chrysostom replies that it comes neither from nature nor from God, but from our own will, from our indolence.²³³ He is not satisfied

des XI. Internationalen Byzantinistenkongresses 1958 (Munich, 1960), pp. 154-59, especially p. 157.

227. G. Florovsky, «Theophilus of Alexandria», p. 300.

228. *In sanctum baptisma* XXVI, PG 36, 384.

229. *In Romanos* XVI G 60, 555.

230. A. Wenger, *Huit catéchèses*, p. 60, n. 3.

231. *De S. Babyla, contra Julianum et gentiles* PG 50, 569.

232. See Hans-Joachim Schulz, *Die byzantinische Liturgie* (Freiburg im Breisgau, 1964), pp. 36-39. I have found a phrase of Chrysostom exactly reproduced in the «Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom»: «Ὁ γὰρ ἐκ τοῦ μὴ ὄντος εἰς τὸ εἶναι ... παραγαγὼν.» *Huit catéchèses* (Wenger), p. 258. Cf. also *In Genes.* II PG 53, 28.

233. *In Matth.* LIX PG 58, 577.

with the rational and moral explanation traditionally given as the explanation of children's suffering;²³⁴ therefore he added that there must be another, apophatic, reason for it, which only the Creator Himself knows.²³⁵ The reasons of divine justice are also impenetrable.²³⁶ Everything is ultimately motivated by some divine reason and His philanthropy (λόγῳ τινὶ καὶ φιλανθρωπίᾳ).²³⁷

The mystery of the free acceptance or refusal of the divine philanthropy is at the very center of Chrysostom's view of salvation, since in His philanthropy God is too polite to use constraint.²³⁸

To those who wish to cover their basic indifference with such a phrase as «God is philanthropic anyway,» Chrysostom, at his wits end, somewhat impatiently retorts:

I do not simply say that God is philanthropic, but that there is nothing more philanthropic than He Himself... The Scripture is an abyss of problems. If we solve one, we have not solved it completely. But according to human understanding the proper solution of these problems is faith through which we know that God acts justly, philanthropically and usefully.²³⁹

He calmly recommends: «Do not try to be more philanthropic than God Himself, after you have suffered a thousand evils. Furthermore, even if you wanted to, you could not do so in the least, because 'as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My counsels higher than your counsels.'»²⁴⁰

The ultimate justification of God Chrysostom sees in the sacrifice of His Only Son Who suffered ignominiously for our sake.²⁴¹ Finally, even the notion of divine *philanthropia* is inadequate to verbalize the ineffable reality which is in God.²⁴² Therefore Chrysostom used to underline the apophatic dimension of the divine philanthropy by saying

234. *Ad Stagirium* I, 8 PG 47, 445.

235. *Ibid.*

236. *In Romanos* VI PG 60, 439.

237. *In Genes.* X PG 53, 88.

238. *De ferend. reprehens. et de mutat. nomin.* III PG 51, 144. Cf. *In Genes.* XVII PG 53, 140.

239. *In Act.* XXIV PG 60, 183.

240. *Ibid.* L PG 60, 350.

241. *In Romanos* XIV PG 60, 534.

242. *Demonēs non gubernare mundum* PG 49, 248.

that it is «superabundant»²⁴³ or «ineffable.»²⁴⁴ Chrysostom is keenly aware of the difference between ἀπόφασις (sentence, assertion) and ἀπόδειξις (demonstration),²⁴⁵ hence, also, of the fact that human syllogisms are incomparably less illuminating than the conclusive assertions of faith. And God cares for all equally by giving all the gift of faith which is the source of all good things.²⁴⁶ However, Chrysostom did not try to hide the fact that there is a logical antinomy in the revelation of the divine philanthropy which is disturbingly inseparable from the divine justice (δικαιοκρισία).²⁴⁷ For him it would be unjust for Nero and Paul to share the same lot.²⁴⁸ The divine philanthropy would be emptied of its meaning, for Chrysostom, if Paul and the Devil should be equally crowned.²⁴⁹ And he calmly rejects the accusation that he cares more for the glory of God than God Himself.²⁵⁰

Themistius, from the opposite camp, did not save paganism from its decay by preaching his doctrine of automatic salvation for all.²⁵¹ In the strict and honest faith of Christianity, however, God is justified by his gift of free will which is given to all.²⁵² And Chrysostom can only assure everyone that as far as God is concerned he is philanthropic even in applying punishment.²⁵³ He recommends, even, optimistically, that we should never despair of the salvation of the pagans.²⁵⁴

According to Chrysostom heresy originates either from ignorance

243. *In Genes.* XXI PG 53, 180; VII PG 53, 67; PG 53, 80; PG 53, 113-114; PG 53, 123; *In Matth.* XVI PG 57, 250; *Huit catéchèses* (Wenger), p. 111 *et passim*.

244. *In Genes.* XXI PG 53, 175; 181; 221; 243; 249. *In Matth.* XIII PG 57, 215; 482. *Huit catéchèses* (Wenger), pp. 110, 112. Cf. *In Romanos* XIV PG 60, 530; *De poenitentia* I PG 49, 280.

245. *In Romanos* III PG 60, 412.

246. PG 60, 600. Hell is there only because of the unbelievers. PG 60, 674.

247. PG 60, 634; cf. PG 53, 190. PG 57, 243.

248. PG 60, 636.

249. PG 60, 637.

250. PG 60, 553.

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

252. PG 60, 425. From our choice of behavior depends whether we will earn condemnation to ourselves or will be deemed worthy of the divine philanthropy. PG 53, 69.

Already Clement of Alexandria was aware of the danger of a sentimental distortion of the love of God. See A. Mehat, «Θεός Ἀγάπη: Une hypothèse sur l'objet de la gnose orthodoxe,» *Studia Patristica*, IX, Part III, ed. F. L. Cross (Berlin, 1966), 82-86, especially p. 85.

253. PG 60, 424 *et passim*.

254. PG 53, 68.

of the sacred texts or from an arbitrary choice of them.²⁵⁵ Anders Nygren, for example, chose to define God as *agape* only.²⁵⁶ *Agape* is for him the center of Christianity.²⁵⁷ For Chrysostom, however, *agape* is only one among the many attributes of God, and, on the human level, it is only the prerequisite disposition without which the Trinity cannot take up its abode in the believer.²⁵⁸

Obviously, then, for Chrysostom the center of Christianity is the very Person of Christ, not any particular attribute of God arbitrarily isolated; and he stresses furthermore that where one Person of the Trinity is present, there is, also, the whole Trinity.²⁵⁹ Thus, in order to escape from falling into the sin of arbitrariness, Chrysostom dares to acknowledge both the meek and the strict side of the divine attributes. As far as I can see, if God is, for Chrysostom, the pre-eternal *philanthropos*, and he still goes on chastizing and threatening with hell, then his philanthropy must be taken as it is revealed, namely, as both meek and terrifying. But Chrysostom is very explicit in ascribing the responsibility for hell entirely to men.²⁶⁰ His very last argument would be that God's *philanthropia* existed before the creation in his willingness to save all.²⁶¹

From an unsystematic preacher like Chrysostom, it is astonishing to find a detailed map of virtues;²⁶² in it we see how the intermediary place between *agape* and almsgiving is assigned to human philanthropy. This is so, in my opinion because *agape* is higher, on the human level, since it is open in both directions: toward God and toward man; while philanthropy offers only one-way relationship with God, namely, through the interposed persons of the poor.

However, since *agapê*, *erôs*, *philia*, and *philanthropia* are indivisible in God, they must be for Chrysostom, practically synonymous on the human level also. Thus, *philanthropia* is assimilated to *agapê*,²⁶³ *agapê*, in its turn, to *erôs*,²⁶⁴ and *erôs* to *philia*,²⁶⁵ but because only *phi-*

255. *Argum. In Romanos* PG 60, 391.

256. *Agape and Eros*, trans. Philip S. Watson (Philadelphia, 1953), p. 47.

257. *Ibid.*, p. 48.

258. *In Romanos* VIII PG 60, 464.

259. PG 60, 519.

260. PG 60, 568. Evil occurs only on God's permission. PG 60, 583.

261. PG 53,36. God's philanthropy is perfectly unselfish. PG 53,35.

262. *Ad illuminandos catechesis* II PG 49, 238.

263. *In Joannem* XXII PG 59, 160.

264. *Ad eos qui scandalizati sunt* PG 52, 490. Cf. PG 49, 72.

265. *In illud: Hoc scitote* PG 49, 275. Cf. *De beato Philogonio* XI PG 48, 753.

lanthropia is promoted by Chrysostom's use as a synonym for grace (*χάρις*) which, in its turn, is the common name for all of God's attributes,²⁶⁶ *philanthropia* alone is the term which mirrors the opposing attributes of God such as justice-love and election-freedom.²⁶⁷ By this antinomic distinction between the two aspects of meek and stern philanthropy Chrysostom only safeguarded the mystery of the dogma of freedom,²⁶⁸ and succeeded in expressing the data of the biblical revelation with this ancient and prestigious notion of divine *philanthropia*. Nevertheless, the center of Christianity for Chrysostom is the Divine Trinity, to whom his «equation» of grace and philanthropy («*χάριτι καὶ φιλόανθρωπιᾳ*») is finally ascribed. Because of the fundamental freedom offered to mankind one is entitled to conclude that in spite of the dialectical tension between the stern aspect of the divine justice and the meek loving-kindness of God running parallel to each other, the message of Chrysostom resounds with the ringing of the paschal bell of joy. In his last work Chrysostom wrote: «Inexplicable indeed is the providence of God and incomprehensible His concern; His goodness is beyond words and unsearchable His philanthropy.»²⁶⁹

It is not by chance that the divine *philanthropia* is the last word in this careful construction.²⁷⁰

Despite the synonymous interchangeability of such terms as *philanthropia*, *agapê erôs*, *pronoia*, *philia*, *charis*, *kêdemonia*, *agathotês*, the first of these terms, *philanthropia*, gained supremacy over the others for polemical and esthetic reasons, indeed so much so as to become a structuring element, not only in Chrysostom's homiletic achievement, but even more, a unifying concept conveying the maximum coherence to his theological understanding of himself and of the Tri-Personal God. For anyone insensitive to the irrational dimension of

266. V. Lossky, *Theology*, p. 86.

267. *In Hebraeos* XXXVII PG 63, 186. *In Epist. I ad Cor.* PG 61, 13. Cf. 62, 718.

268. The election is made by the divine foreknowledge (PG 60, 557), through which God elects not on the basis of the external facts: since David was guilty of murder and adultery and the Pharisee, on the contrary, a keeper of the Law (PG, 60, 558), but on account of the internal disposition of the doer (PG 60, 558-560).

269. *Sur la Providence* VIII, 12 (Malingrey), p. 140.

270. On the last page of Chrysostom's farewell treatise we read such a definition of God: «*Τοιοῦτος γὰρ ὁ φιλόανθρωπος Θεός.*» *Sur la Providence* XXIV, (Malingrey), p. 276.

freedom in both God and man, the double aspect of divine philanthropy, as expounded by Chrysostom, will, of course, remain a book closed with seven seals. The concept of the divine *philanthropia* has, indeed, a disturbing wealth of meaning. It contains in itself the entire mystery of the dispensation of God.

C o n c l u s i o n

We have detected in our meandric study the semantic changes and enrichment of the notion of divine *philanthropia* — from Aeschylus and Plato, through Philo the Jew and later pagan and Christian writers, down to Themistius of Byzantium and Chrysostom. The cultural and cultural tension between Graeco-Roman paganism and Christianity is the background against which the competitive insistence on divine philanthropy becomes understandable. Chrysostom victoriously completed the «Kulturkampf» that started with Justin, Clement of Alexandria, and Origen, in which the Cappadocians, before Chrysostom, had best embodied the Church's power to transform culture.

In the hands of Chrysostom the reality of the divine *philanthropia* has not been philosophically trimmed so as to become a smooth, classifiable notion. Whatever pertains to God is mysterious and Chrysostom excelled in the effort to make us aware of that immense divine mystery in which he caught a glimpse of the concomitance of logically clashing attributes, as well as a supralogical consonance of opposites in one particular divine attribute like *philanthropia*. He was indeed thoroughly consistent in practicing the «negative» way of thinking which «forbids us to ... form concepts which would usurp the place of spiritual realities.»¹ However, in order to have become accepted as an apophatic thinker, Chrysostom, of course, had to have asserted first the traditional cataphatic teaching of the Church. Without the positive revelation of the divine philanthropy, which is really, even though partially, knowable, his apophaticism would have collapsed into being merely another name for agnosticism.

Chrysostom's unsystematic theological work becomes a serene and meaningful whole if we perceive these three assumptions as forming the basis of his «philanthropology»; absolute epistemological humility before the unknowability of the essence of God; knowledge through faith that He is philanthropic in His activity, and that suffering is permitted and endured by God Himself as the proof, beyond human understanding, of His philanthropy.

Since Chrysostom, not only the cult but also the culture of Eastern Christendom has been built upon the notion of God the Philanthropic (Θεὸς φιλόανθρωπος).

1. V. Lossky, *Theology*, p. 42.

EPILOGUE

There is a modern ring in Chrysostom's attempt to prove that we are loved — no matter who and where we are — and even infinitely loved, since our Friend and Lover is the infinite Triune God.

On the other hand, not being narrow-minded in his vision of salvation, Chrysostom was against a purely sentimental fraternalization without a lasting unanimity rooted in the dogmas of piety. Therefore, as the poet of divine philanthropy, he could jealously complain: «Today the contrary happens... we choose friends rather from among the Jews and pagans than from among the children of the Church.»² However, as interpreter of the paradoxical texts of the Gospel, Chrysostom could not help being paradoxical himself. Thus, a few days later he would stress that Christ in His love beyond words prayed for those who crucified him.³ A contemporary writer who dares to be optimistic has said that Chrysostom is one who a thousand years in advance prepared the antidote to Machiavelli's doctrine, as well as to the fallacies of modern dictatorial ideologies. Chrysostom is expected by him to be the great and humble helper on the way of mankind's moral regeneration.⁴

The heresy of our days is the vulgar complacency in the adequacy of human reason. Eunomius of Cyzicus, an opponent of Chrysostom, tried in his vanity at least «to think really big»: he imagined that he had grasped the very essence of God. The Eunomiuses of today are puffed up on account of incomparably smaller pretensions, merely by thinking that they are about to comprehend our little cosmos.

In this respect, Chrysostom's prescription of faith as a tonic for man's real grandeur under God is as valid today as in his own times:

For since what God gives transcends reasoning entirely, it is but reason that we need faith... For reasonings... are like some labyrinth, or puzzles which have no end to them anywhere, and do not let the reason stand upon the rock.⁵

2. *In Matth.* LIX PG 58, 581.

3. *Ibid.* LXI PG 58, 588.

4. Peter Mar, *Orthodox Russia*, No. 872 (August, 1967), pp. 7-8. (In Russian.)

5. *In Romanos* II PG 60, 409. Translation in *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, ed. Philip Schaff, Vol. IX (Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1956), p. 349.

Chrysostom also had a good sense of the natural tendency to self-respect in the human race; only he wanted to place it in the fruitful perspective of an eternal growth: in the infinite framework of the divine philanthropy. No one is more of a Humanitarian than God, he says, and He proved His point by becoming human (Man) Himself. This is the supra-mundane light which enables Chrysostom to have the exhilarating vision that he summed up in two words: *Theos Philanthropos*.

One who has read at least the masterpieces of Chrysostom and still has not acquired the humility of faith, has missed the wonderful «space-craft» heading for Jerusalem in heaven.

But the indefatigable Chrysostom gives us a second chance, and one can always re-read his golden pages on the ineffable philanthropy of God.

It was chiefly because of Chrysostom's contribution that the culture of Byzantium was the greatest in Christendom and almost never-aging, because he himself shone in it with rays of the uncreated warmth which he liked to call divine philanthropy.