

From First Fruits to the Whole Lump: the Redemption of Human Nature in Gregory's *Commentary on the Song of Songs*

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1 Introduction

For at least 150 years, Gregory's soteriology has remained more controversial than other parts of his theology. The charge was originally led by Wilhelm Herrmann in his Latin dissertation *Gregorii Nysseni sententiae de salute adipiscenda*.¹ Herrmann, who went on to become one of the most influential Lutheran theologians of his time, the teacher of both Karl Barth and Rudolf Bultmann, accused Gregory of lacking a sound conception of the appropriation of Christ's salvific deed by humankind. Herrmann focused on a number of passages, especially in Gregory's *Adversus Eunomum*, the *Antirrheticus*, and the *Catechetical Oration* to argue that Gregory's understanding of salvation was "physical" and not "ethical".² Once human nature had been divinised in the person of the saviour, this effect was passed on by virtue of the "natural" cohesion of universal humanity without any regard for individual faith or individual agency.³

Herrmann was not oblivious of the fact that the Nyssen did emphasise human effort on the road towards spiritual and ethical perfection. Yet he argued that in those passages Gregory not so much mitigated his physical doctrine, but overcompensated for it.⁴ In other words, while he may have alternated between one view in which individual persons receive redemption purely by virtue of their participation in the human race, and one according to which their own works were key and the role of Christ seemingly reduced to that of an exemplar, both were ultimately an expression of his failure to conceptualise the divine and the human role in the process of redemption. The physical doctrine of salvation and a semi-pelagian view of human perfection would thus only be two sides of the same coin.

1 W. Herrmann, *Gregorii Nysseni sententiae de salute adipiscenda*, Halle/s 1875.

2 *Ibidem*, 10–12.

3 *Ibidem*, 16–37.

4 *Ibidem*, 37–49.

Herrmann's Latin dissertation of merely 49 pages was probably never read by too many people. His views became influential initially because Albrecht Ritschl, in his historical treatment of the doctrines of justification and reconciliation, drew heavily on Herrmann's thesis for his brief treatment of the church fathers.⁵ Even more important, arguably, was Adolf Harnack's decision to adopt Herrmann's view in his magisterial *History of Dogma*. The relevant paragraph in Harnack's admirably clear prose reads as follows:

Gregory was able to demonstrate the application of the Incarnation more definitely than Athanasius could [...]. But he does so by the aid of a thoroughly Platonic idea which is only slightly suggested in Athanasius, and is not really covered by a biblical reference. Christ did not assume the human nature of an individual person, but human nature. Accordingly, all that was human was intertwined with the Deity; the whole of human nature became divine by intermixture with the divine.⁶

It is immediately evident that Harnack modified Herrmann's thesis. The main thrust of his criticism is no longer Gregory's alleged inability to reconcile God's salvific act with human agency. Rather, it is Gregory's fateful reliance on a Platonic theory of universal humanity that is to blame for his inadequate concept of salvation. This assessment, of course, is fully in line with Harnack's more general view that Hellenisation was a deeply ambivalent process in Christian history, but it is significant to note how Harnack's intervention in the debate changed the very question that was asked. Henceforth, the main point of disagreement between Gregory's detractors and his defenders concerned his use of the concept of universal human nature in his soteriology and its philosophical background.⁷

There is little doubt that a grasp of Gregory's specific concept of universal human nature is indeed necessary for a full understanding of his soteriology; yet it is arguable that in the ensuing scholarly debate about this problem, Herrmann's original issue slipped too far from the attention of patristic theologians.⁸ The present paper, therefore, is partly intended as a reminder that

5 A. Ritschl, *Die christliche Lehre von der Rechtfertigung und Versöhnung*, Vol. 1, Bonn 1888, 12–14.

6 A. Harnack, *History of Dogma* (tr. N. Buchanan), Vol. 3, London 1894–1899, 297.

7 Cf. mainly R.M. Hübnér, *Die Einheit des Leibes Christi bei Gregor von Nyssa: Untersuchungen zum Ursprung der "physischen" Erlösungslehre*, Leiden 1974; J. Zachhuber, *Human Nature in Gregory of Nyssa: Philosophical Background and Theological Significance*, Leiden 1999.

8 Cf. however, the controversy between Adolf Martin Ritter and Ekkehard Mühlberg in the 70s: A.M. Ritter, "Die Gnadenehre Gregors von Nyssa nach seiner Schrift 'Über das Leben des

important questions about Gregory's doctrine of salvation remain unanswered, specifically concerning his notion of the divine and human roles in the appropriation of Christ's redemptive act.

As will, I hope, become apparent, Gregory's *Commentary on the Song of Songs* offers particularly interesting material for such an examination if perhaps not for an unequivocal adjudication of the matter. I have decided to focus in particular on Gregory's use of the biblical metaphor of the "first fruits" (ἀπαρχή) and the "dough" (φύραμα) which he employed to illustrate the progression of humanity's redemption throughout his works. Herrmann already singled out his use of this "physical" metaphor "qua [Gregory] innumeris locis salutem ad universam hominum translata describit".⁹

In what follows I shall start from some observations on Gregory's place in the history of Patristic uses of this metaphor to go on with a consideration of three passages from the last two of Gregory's homilies in which he makes use of the first fruits and the dough to illustrate his understanding of the redemptive process. As we shall see, the underlying soteriological principles are by no means identical, but this in itself will help us get a better sense for Gregory's approach to the doctrine of salvation.

2 First Fruits and Dough in Earlier Patristic Thought

Herrmann's interest in Gregory's use of the metaphor of "first fruits" and the "dough" has already been noted. Yet neither he nor Isaak August Dorner, whose ethical interpretation of Gregory's teaching Herrmann rejected,¹⁰ showed any concern for its biblical and Patristic roots even though it is arguable that this background can help elucidate some of the theological problems Gregory had inherited.

a Romans 11.6 and Its Background

In Rm 11.16a Paul wrote that "if the dough offered as first fruits is holy, so is the whole lump". It is one of a series of metaphors he uses to illustrate the lasting

Mose', in: H. Dörrie—M. Altenburger—U. Schramm (eds.), *Gregor von Nyssa und die Philosophie*, Leiden 1976, 195–239; E. Mühlenberg, "Synergism in Gregory of Nyssa", *Zeitschrift für neutestamentliche Wissenschaft* 68 (1977) 93–122. While Ritter and Mühlenberg addressed Gregory's soteriology, however, their main point of interest was the relationship between his doctrine of grace and human free will.

9 W. Herrmann, *Gregorii Nysseni sententiae de salute adipiscenda*, 34.

10 I.A. Dorner, *Entwicklungsgeschichte der Lehre von der Person Jesu Christi von den ältesten Zeiten bis auf die neueste dargestellt*, Vol. 1, Stuttgart 1845–1853, 958–960.

importance of the election of the people of Israel, but it is unique in this context in at least two ways.

Firstly, it is itself based on allusion to a biblical text. In Num 15.17–21 a sacrifice is described whose precise meaning is not entirely clear,¹¹ but which for readers of the Septuagint suggested that a first part of the dough (ἀπαρχή φυράματος) prepared from the annual grain harvest should always be set aside. A loaf made of this “first fruits” of the dough was to be offered up to JHWH.

In practice this meant that this loaf was for the benefit of the priests at the temple. Philo therefore interpreted this law as guaranteeing that the sanctity of the priests would spread to the people of Israel as a whole:

God commands those who are making bread, to take of all the fat and of all the dough, a loaf as first fruits for the use of the priests, making thus, by this legitimate instruction, a provision for those men who put aside these first fruits, proceeding in the way that leads to piety; for being accustomed at all times to offer first fruits of the necessary food, they will thus have an everlasting recollection of God, than which it is impossible to imagine a greater blessing.¹²

Philo’s understanding of sacrifice as leading to the sanctification of those who bring the offering, might help understand something decidedly odd in Paul’s use of this imagery. For within the Old Testament context that which is made holy by means of sacrifice is thereby radically separated from the profane remainder.¹³ Paul’s intention, however, is different: the participation of some Jews in the Christian community implies that ultimately “all Israel will be saved” (11.26) once their πλῆρωμα (11.11) has become part of the new order of salvation. Like Philo, Paul seems to think that holiness in a part spreads to holiness in the whole, but unlike the Alexandrian philosopher he thinks that this possibility exists even apart from their apparent activity, at least at the present moment. He does, of course, emphasise the need for those Israelites not to “persist in unbelief” (v. 23), but has to reckon with the fact that for now they actively

11 Mainly because the meaning of the Hebrew term “arisōt” is uncertain: cf. T.R. Ashley, *The Book of Numbers*, Grand Rapids, MI 1993, 282–283.

12 Philo, *De specialibus legibus* 1 132–133; Cf. on Philo’s understanding of the ἀπαρχή J. Leonhardt, *Jewish Worship in Philo of Alexandria*, Tübingen 2001, 192–201.

13 L. Keck, *Romans*, Nashville (TN) 2005, 273; cf. B.D. Gordon, “On the Sanctity of Mixtures and Branches: Two Halakic Sayings in Rm 11.16–24”, *Journal of Biblical Literature* 135 (2016) 355–368 for a fundamentally different interpretation of the background of Paul’s metaphor.

resist the new faith. This idiosyncratically sacrificial background of the verse is its first remarkable element: the sanctification of a part sanctifies the whole, at least potentially.

Verse 16a stands out from the remainder of the Rm 11 in another way too. Within the context of the chapter it is evident that an important aspect of Paul's hope for the future of Israel's salvation is its original election (v. 29) and the piety of the earlier Israelites (v. 28, probably also 16b). His statement about first fruits and dough, however, appears to make, or at least imply, a claim about the relationship between the faith of Jewish Christians and the salvation of the whole people of Israel. This is so counterintuitive that readers of the epistle have sometimes been tempted to assume that the "first fruits" is Abraham or generally the patriarchs.¹⁴ This, however, is almost certainly wrong: Paul clearly is talking here about the "remnant chosen by grace" (v. 5, cf. v. 14), the "elect who obtained" salvation. This raises the question of how their salvation can have any impact on the future salvation of their compatriots? Paul's overriding logic seems to be theocentric and predestinarian: their existence proves that God's election of Israel has not come to an end but that God, on the basis of his power (v. 23), will finally graft in again the branches that were broken off the olive tree (vs 19; 23). Yet it is undeniable that Paul's metaphor in verse 16a invites speculation about another possibility as well, namely that the holiness of the first fruits *spreads* through the whole dough until its "fullness" (v. 11) has been made holy.

These observations may help explain the particular way Rm 11.16 has been received in the Early Church. The verse seems to have enjoyed a special popularity above and beyond the remainder of the section from which it is taken. It is often cited by itself; in some ways it seems to have commanded attention apart from its context within Paul's larger text. Furthermore, its use from the very beginning was soteriological; the fathers assumed it was containing information about the precise way salvation as worked in Christ spreads to the plurality of believers. This does not mean that they agreed on what this information was. Nor does it mean that the context within Rm 11 should be ignored for understanding their respective take on Paul's simile.

b *The Valentinian Exegesis of Rm 11.16*

Interest in Rm 11.16 as a soteriological proof text seems to have originated with the Valentinians. From two sources we know that they made use of the verse in

14 In the early Church Diodore of Tarsus and Ambrosiaster: G. Bray (ed.), *Romans*, Illinois 1998, 282. For modern exegetes cf. L. Keck, *Romans*, Nashville (TN) 2005.

their doctrine of three races of man, pneumatic, psychic, and somatic. Irenaeus reports their teaching in the following words:

The Saviour received first-fruits of those whom he was to save, Paul declared when he said, “And if the first-fruits be holy, the lump is also holy”, teaching that the expression “first-fruits” denoted that which is spiritual, but that “the lump” meant us, that is, the psychic Church, the lump of which they say he assumed, and blended it with himself, inasmuch as he is “the leaven”.¹⁵

The indignation of the Bishop of Lyons at the suggestion that “the psychic Church” might be merely second in the order of salvation, is palpable in this passage. Yet the Valentinian exegesis should not for this reason be dismissed off hand but deserves to be taken seriously. They clearly perceived the relevance of Paul’s pronouncement about the holiness of the remnant and the future salvation of many.¹⁶ To the former, they applied Paul’s predestinarian teaching in Rm 11, while for the latter they emphasised the importance of free will as we can see from a passage in the *Excerpta ex Theodoto*: “for what is spiritual is saved by nature; what is psychic has free will having the potential to choose faith and incorruptibility as well as unbelief and corruptibility; what is somatic will perish by nature”.¹⁷

According to Irenaeus, the Valentinians made one additional assumption in their exegesis of Rm 11.16: they identified the Saviour (σωτήρ) as the leaven (ζύμη). Irenaeus suggests that the basis for this identification was their exegesis of the Parable of the Leaven¹⁸ in which they took the leaven to refer to the Saviour.¹⁹ It is however conceivable that they were also thinking of 1 Cor 5.6 (“a little yeast leavens the whole batch of dough”). In any case, the result is an interpretation of Rm 11.16 according to which Christ as the leaven raises together with himself first the pneumatics as the first fruits, then the Church as the “batch of dough”.

15 Irenaeus, *Adversus haereses* 1 8 3 (tr. ANS 1, 327 [with changes]).

16 Since Klaus Koschorke’s doctoral dissertation, Valentinian ecclesiology has been re-evaluated. It is now usually recognised that their teaching of the three classes was underwriting a much more inclusive and dynamic soteriology than had been previously thought. K. Koschorke, *Die Polemik der Gnostiker gegen das kirchliche Christentum*, Leiden 1978; B. Aland, “Erwählungstheologie und Menschenklassenlehre”, in: M. Krause (ed.), *Gnosis and Gnosticism*, Leiden 1981, 148–181.

17 Clement of Alexandria, *Excerpta ex Theodoto* 56,3.

18 Mt 13.33.

19 Irenaeus, *Adversus Haereses* 1 8,3.

Once again, the outlines of Irenaeus' report are confirmed by the *Excerpta*:

Jesus Christ assumed in himself by an act of power (*δυνάμει*) the Church, those who are elected and those who are called (cf. Mt 22.14); the former, spiritual, from the mother, the latter, psychic, from the dispensation. And he saved and lifted up what he assumed and through them what was substantial: "If the part of the dough offered as first fruits is holy, then the whole batch is holy; and if the root is holy, then the branches also are holy".²⁰

Paul's comment about the relationship between Israel's "remnant" and the entire people has here been transformed into a theory about the progress of salvation from a primary group of the "elect", the pneumatics, (but cf. Rm 11.7!) to the bulk of ordinary believers, the psychics who comes to faith by choosing it over against unbelief. Contrary to what has often been written, the intention of this argument seems not so much to denigrate the psychics' potential for salvation but to explain its possibility. The Church contains both, pneumatics and psychics, and so the assumption of one part ultimately leads to the salvation of all.

A new element is the introduction of a reference to Christ into the internal logic of the Pauline verse. This may be explained, as Irenaeus suggests, by a combined exegesis of two or more passages, but one might wonder whether not the sacrificial language in Rm 11.16 itself contributed to this addition. The first fruits, after all, is itself holy only by its participation in the holiness of the divine so a speculative reader might find such a reference implied in Paul's own words.

c *Anti-Gnostic Interpretations: Irenaeus and Origen*

Irenaeus did not, as far as we know, respond to this interpretation with his own exegesis of Rm 11.16. Instead, he sought to rebut the Valentinian reading of this verse by insisting that it was at odds with Paul's overall teaching. As Jeffrey Bingham has suggested, Irenaeus drew in particular on Rm 8 to argue that, the seemingly predestinarian or even deterministic passages in chapters 9–11 notwithstanding, Paul ascribes human sinfulness only or at least essentially to human agency. "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God"²¹ is not said on the basis of a physical disposition, but refers to the wrong moral

20 Clement of Alexandria, *Excerpta ex Theodoto* 58,1–2.

21 1Cor 15.50.

choices.²² Similarly, if “persons who are not bringing forth fruits of righteousness [...] use diligence and receive the word of God as a graft [cf. Rm 11.23], [they] arrive at the pristine nature of man [*pristinam hominis naturam*]—that which was created after the image and likeness of God”.²³

It was, however, up to Origen to develop a detailed anti-Gnostic exegesis of Rm 11.16 in his extensive *Commentary on Romans*. Like Irenaeus, Origen emphasised that there is only one nature of all men—or indeed of all spiritual beings (*unam esse naturam omnium hominum, immo omnium rationabilium*)²⁴—whose property is their free will which remains decisive even in the face of outside influences (*aliquid [...] extrinsecus vel ad mala provocet vel hortetur ad bona*).²⁵ The distinction between first fruits and the batch of dough cannot therefore be one between different classes of people. Instead, Origen identified the ἀπαρχή with Christ. To support this interpretation, he adduced Col 1.15 where the apostle called Jesus “the firstborn of all creation” (πρωτότοκος πάσης κτίσεως). The combined reading of these two verses permitted Origen an interpretation of Paul’s reference to first fruits and the lump of dough as an illustration of the transmission of Christ’s salvific agency to humanity in general. The salvation worked by Christ, the “first fruits”, extends to the entirety of the human race (*ex hac delibatione sancta omnis massa humani generis sanctificatur*).²⁶

The mechanism of this transmission, according to Origen, is the gift of the Holy Spirit: the holy root²⁷ passes on the fullness of sanctity to the branches connected to it and gives them new life through the Holy Spirit.²⁸ In practice, this means that those “branches” benefit from the divine word, which by means of its wisdom, leads to the flourishing of virtues.²⁹ Origen thus does not move away at all from his emphasis on free will as the foundation of the salvation of rational creatures; on the contrary, the relationship suggested by the metaphor of first fruits and dough is thoroughly spiritual and ethical even though it is also worked by God.

It is difficult not to feel that Origen is reading Rm 11 against the Pauline text. So keen is he to avoid any concession to the perceived threat of Gnos-

22 Irenaeus, *Adversus Haereses* V 10, 1.

23 *Ibidem*. Cf. J. Bingham, “Irenaeus Reads *Romans* 8: Resurrection and Renovation”, in: K.L. Gaca—L.L. Welborn (eds.), *Early Patristic Readings*, New York—London 2005, 114–133, here: 123–126.

24 Origen, *Commentarius in Epistulam ad Romanos* VIII 11 (PG 14, 1191 C).

25 *Ibidem* (PG 14, 1192 A).

26 *Ibidem* (PG 14, 1193 B).

27 Rm 11.16b.

28 *Ibidem* (PG 14, 1193 C).

29 *Ibidem*.

tic teaching that he all but drowns out Paul's predestinarian message.³⁰ Still, his interpretation of first fruits and dough is intriguing. While at first sight, the identification of Christ as the "first fruits" may seem counterintuitive in the present text, Origen clarifies that Christ for him is also "the true Israel."³¹ In this way, the salvific work by means of which the "first fruits" sanctifies through the divine word and its wisdom has "always" (*semper*) operated in the same manner, first in the old Israel and now in the Church.³²

That the introduction of Christ into the interpretation of Paul's simile owed something to its sacrificial overtones was merely an intriguing speculation in the case of the Valentinians. For Origen it emerges as a distinct possibility as his interpretation of Rm 11.16 ties in neatly with his exegesis of the first fruits in his *Homilies on the Book of Numbers*.³³ There too he identifies Christ as the ultimate first fruits, the "first fruits of first fruits" (*primitiarum primitiae*),³⁴ justifies this in the first instance with 1 Cor 15.20 (Christ as "first fruits of those who sleep"), and indicates that 1 Col 15 is also pertinent.³⁵ Not surprisingly perhaps, given the biblical context of the Book of *Numbers*, he adds a sacrificial dimension to his interpretation:

These first fruits are offered no longer to the high priest, but to God, in accordance with the fact that "he offered himself as a sacrifice to God" (cf. Eph 5.2) and by rising from the dead "he sat down at the right hand of God" (Col 3.1).³⁶

The sanctification of the first fruits, accordingly, is now the result of the final sacrifice in which Christ offered himself up to God. Those who participate in this act, participate in his own holiness as well. Characteristically, this participation is understood by Origen in the first instance as participation in the resurrection (on the basis of 1 Cor 15.20). Christ's eternal life is passed on to the faithful and overcomes for them their own mortality.

While direct evidence for the combination of this text with Origen's exegesis of Rm 11.16 is absent, it may nevertheless not be too far-fetched to summarise

30 Cf. his lengthy attempts to "explain away" the "hardening of hearts" in *De Principiis* III 1, 7–17.

31 Origen, *Commentarius in Epistulam ad Romanos* VIII (PG 14, 1193 C).

32 *Ibidem*.

33 Origen, *Homilia in Numeros* 11, 4 (PG 12, 647–650).

34 Origen, *Homilia in Numeros* 11,4[,7] (PG 12, 650 A–B).

35 *Ibidem*.

36 *Ibidem*. (tr. T.P. Scheck, *Origen, Homilies on Numbers*, Illinois 2009, 57).

Origen's anti-Gnostic understanding of the verse on the basis of both passages as follows:

1. Christ is the first fruits offering himself to God, and as a result of this sacrifice the community of those who are united to him is transformed into likeness with God as well. In the past, this has been achieved through his identification with the historic Israel and its priestly, sacrificial cult, but in the new dispensation, he is the head of the Church which through him is immediately connected with God and as the "dough" made holy alongside with him.
2. This transformation of the dough is described in almost purely ethical terms; in fact, it appears that the distinction between those human beings who are connected to Christ and those who are not is entirely based on their moral choices. Origen, it may thus seem, reduces divine agency in the process of salvation to spiritual exhortation. Against the Valentinians, however, he emphasises the notion of a universal human nature to argue that on its basis the sanctification of the first fruits (Christ) is passed on to all humanity. The solution to this seeming dilemma is that for Origen divine agency works alongside human volition. Christ is Wisdom³⁷ and thus operates in and through human moral perfection. To the extent that the potential for such perfection is given to all people by means of their free will, Origen's identification of the dough with the whole of human nature does not have to vitiate against his apparent alignment of salvation with moral perfection.
3. A tension does, however, emerge insofar as Origen also considers the universal resurrection and thus the overcoming of mortality as an effect of Christ's sacrifice as the first fruits. In this connection, the notion of the "total mass of the human race" (*tota massa humani generis*) is more suggestive of a physical relationship between Christ as first fruits and humanity as the dough.

3 Gregory's Use of *Rm 11.16*

Moving on to Gregory, it is, first of all, obvious that the metaphor of first fruits and dough appealed to him: he employed it over twenty times in his extant writings.³⁸ This paper, however, will not analyse the full breadth of these pas-

37 Cf. e.g. Origen, *Commentarii in Evangelium Joannis* 119 (111).

38 J. Zachhuber, "Phyrama", in: L.F. Mateo-Seco—G. Maspero (eds.), *The Brill Dictionary of Gregory of Nyssa*, Leiden 2010, 612–614.

sages, but rather focus on those to be found in Gregory's late *Commentary on the Song of Songs*.³⁹ There are not many instances to consider, but they occur in theologically central and rather dense passages. Eventually, I hope, an analysis of these passages against the background of the earlier history of interpretation will shed light on Gregory's particular use of the Pauline metaphor and, thereby, help improve our understanding of his soteriology.

a Gregory's Use of First Fruits and Dough in Homily XIII

I shall start my investigation from a lengthy passage in Gregory's thirteenth homily.⁴⁰ The biblical text he wrestles with is the "colloquy of friends and bride,"⁴¹ a passage in which the female lover is asked to explain how and why her beloved is different from and better than other men. For Gregory, the subject speaking here is the human soul and the object of her discourse is Christ himself. This for him raises the question of how what is "unknowable" (ἀγνοούμενον) about God becomes visible in Christ to those who perceive truth with the eyes of the soul.⁴² To this, Gregory replies in the first instance that "the teacher" (ἡ διδασκαλος) thinks of Christ's humanity, his created part, because in and through the latter the uncreated and invisible nature of the deity can to some extent be grasped.⁴³

This, Gregory continues, is "the great mystery of our religion."⁴⁴ God became revealed in the flesh; he who was in divine form turned towards men in the role of a slave. In the unique historical act of the Incarnation (ἄπαξ) he took on the frail nature of the flesh through its first fruits. Continually (ἀεί) he sanctifies the whole lump of the nature together with the first fruits. By means of those who unite themselves with him, he nurtures his own body, the church, whose members are increasingly integrated into him as limbs of this very body: eyes, mouth, and hands.⁴⁵

It is significant that Gregory in the present place describes the goal of Incarnation and, more broadly, redemption in the terminology of cognition and knowledge. In Christ, the eternal becomes visible and perceptible in the flesh. Nature becomes transparent for the divine; matter allows us to perceive spirit;

39 Cf. on the date: P. Maraval, "Chronology of Works", in: Mateo-Seco—Maspero (eds.), *The Brill Dictionary of Gregory of Nyssa*, 158.

40 *Cant XIII* (GNO VI 380,7–386,17).

41 Ct 5,9–16.

42 *Cant XIII* (GNO VI 380,10–15).

43 *Cant XIII* (GNO VI 381,10–17).

44 *Cant XIII* (GNO VI 381,16–382,6).

45 1 Cor 12.12.

the created gives a glimpse of the uncreated. This surely is not an *ad hoc* argument, but harks back to some of Gregory's most powerful earlier work. In the *De anima et resurrectione*, he had through the mouth of his sister, Macrina, presented the argument that much as the world displays the wisdom and power of its maker, the human body allows us to infer the existence of an intelligible soul.⁴⁶

This approach is characteristic of Gregory's understanding of *phusis*, nature, as a reality that is perceived by the senses in the first instance, but then reveals deeper strata of being to those who know how to perceive properly.⁴⁷ Unlike Plotinus or Augustine, Gregory usually does not privilege introspection but the careful observation of the visible world around him. This, incidentally, is borne out also by his many digressions about anatomical, astronomical and generally "scientific" problems. Gregory evidently experienced the world through the visual perception of its empirical reality, and in and through that reality, not by turning away from it, he sought to progress towards the intelligible and divine nature as the true centre and source of its being.

If human nature, therefore, is said to be created in God's image, this for Gregory means that it is the privileged gateway for this kind of perception. Seeing human persons endowed with mind and goodness, we can and ought to "see" God analogically in his intelligible and spiritual being and as the perfect goodness. And if the image is now darkened and disfigured as the consequence of human sin, this means that, conversely, it has become more difficult to "see through" their sensible appearance and perceive in and through them something of God's own beauty and goodness.

The economy of salvation, consequently, is the process by means of which this damage is undone; this it seems is what Gregory is saying in the present passage. Christ is the first fruits insofar as his humanity uniquely permits us a glimpse of the divine, according to Jn 1.14: "and we saw his glory".⁴⁸ The appearance of God in the flesh sets off the restoration of God's creation by establishing a human being whose *created* reality displays, as far as possible, the characteristics of the uncreated deity.

Behind this seeming simplicity there lurks, of course, a much more complicated issue. It is evident, and Gregory is fully aware of it, that for human beings to fulfil their potential of making God visible on earth requires their active,

46 *An et res* (GNO III/3 120).

47 J. Zachhuber, "Die Seele als Dynamis bei Gregor von Nyssa: Überlegungen zu seiner Schrift *De anima et resurrectione*", in: C. Sedmak—M. Bogaczyk-Vormayr (eds.), *Patristik und Rezilienz: Frühchristliche Einsichten in die Seelenkraft*, Berlin-New York 2012, 211–232.

48 *Cant XIII* (GNO VI 381,7–8).

volitional collaboration.⁴⁹ Otherwise the Fall into sinfulness would never have been possible in the first place.⁵⁰ Redemption, then, must involve both divine and human agency. It is more than a pedagogical programme for the moral improvement of humankind, but it is not achieved by divine fiat either. Gregory does not in the present place explain what this means for Christology, but is more explicit about the subsequent progression of salvation history in and through the church. How does he strike the balance between the two?

It is this very link he hopes to elucidate with the formula of first fruits and dough. While on the one hand emphasising divine agency—God drew frail human nature to himself in the unique act of the Incarnation, continues to “co-sanctify” (συναγιάζει⁵¹) the whole “dough” of human nature, and “nurtures” (τρεφών⁵²) his body, the church—Gregory equally makes it clear that this process involves the active collaboration of those who “unite themselves with God through participation in the mystery” (ένουμένων αὐτῷ κατὰ τὴν κοινωνίαν τοῦ μυστηρίου:⁵³ a reference to the Eucharist?). While he describes human membership in the church in rather passive terms (“being grafted as members onto the common body”⁵⁴), he mentions their faith as a prerequisite for this process.⁵⁵

Further down in the text of the same homily, Gregory returns to the same topic and enlarges on the consequences the “co-sanctification” has for the whole lump:

All these statements with their description of the bridegroom’s beauty point not to the invisible and incomprehensible realities of the Godhead but to the things that were revealed in the economy, when Deity, having put on human nature, was revealed on the earth and held converse with human beings. By their means, as the apostle says, “the invisible things of him [...] have been clearly apprehended in his works” (Rm 1.20) as revealed through the foundation of the cosmos that is the church. For the creation of the cosmos signifies the foundation of the church, in which, according to the word of the prophet, both a new heaven is created (which is “the firmament of faith in Christ” [cf. 2 Col 5],⁵⁶ as Paul says) and a new

49 *Perf* (GNO VIII/1 194,14–196,15).

50 For example, *Op hom XVI* (PG 44 184).

51 *Cant XIII* (GNO VI 381,22).

52 *Cant XIII* (GNO VI 382,2).

53 *Cant XIII* (GNO VI 382,1).

54 *Cant XIII* (GNO VI 382,3–4).

55 *Cant XIII* (GNO VI 382,3).

56 Cf. Col 2.5: τὸ στερέωμα τῆς εἰς Χριστὸν πίστεως ὑμῶν. Gregory saw here an echo of Gn 1.6–8, the creation of the “firmament”.

earth is established (cf. Is 65.17), which drinks “the rain that [...] falls upon it” (cf. Heb 6.7), and another humanity, renewed by the birth from above “after the image of its creator (cf. 3 Col 10) is fashioned [...]”.⁵⁷

Throughout his works, Gregory made use of the Pauline terminology of salvation as a new creation,⁵⁸ but there are no other passages in which the analogy is drawn and developed in such detail. The reason Gregory does it here becomes evident a little later when he explicitly asserts that the church as a new cosmos permits the perception of “him who is all in all”:

Well, then, just as the person who looks upon the perceptible cosmos and has grasped the Wisdom that is displayed in the beauty of these beings infers, on the basis of what the eye sees, the invisible Beauty and the well-spring of Wisdom, whose outflow contrived the natural order of what is, so too the person who attends to this new cosmos that appears in the creation of the church sees in it the One who is and is becoming “all in all” (cf. 1 Cor 15.28) as, by way of things our nature can take in and comprehend, he directs our knowledge toward that which cannot be contained.⁵⁹

At this point, a preliminary summary of Gregory’s position can be offered. Christ’s humanity is the primary means permitting us the perception of divine nature within the confines of the created order that is, in such a way as our nature can grasp it. Subsequently, the same function is increasingly fulfilled through the church, which is his body. By means of the various charisms present in it, this “new creation” in its turn makes the created order transparent for its divine creator.

In this account, in spite of Gregory’s occasional emphasis on human participation, salvific agency is primarily ascribed to God. God is and remains the author and the subject of the salvific dispensation. He reveals himself in human form in the Incarnation; he plants and nurtures his body, the church; he integrates people into this unit as members. In particular, Gregory is happy to draw on the analogy between the creation of the natural world and the “new creation” of the church without feeling the need to dwell too much on any dissimilarity between the two. And yet he is careful not to set divine agency in opposition to human action. Human faith and the cultivation of human virtues are described as corresponding responses to God’s initiative.

57 *Cant XIII* (GNO VI 384,13–385,5; tr. Norris, 405–407).

58 2 Cor 5.17. E.g. *Eun III/2* 52–53 (GNO II 69,22–70,13).

59 *Cant XIII* (GNO VI 385,22–386,9; tr. Norris, 407).

When set against earlier interpretations of the first fruits and the dough, the immediate impression is how closely Gregory follows the interpretation suggested by Origen: the first fruits is Jesus Christ, and the dough is the single human nature which he like his orthodox predecessor stipulates. More broadly reminiscent of Origen is Gregory's attempt to balance divine and human agency, the emphasis on Christ's continued sanctification of humanity and, particularly, the Church alongside the insistence on human free will and moral responsibility.

This apparent proximity of Gregory's teaching to his great Alexandrian forerunner, however, cannot conceal major differences between them. Notably, Gregory is very clear that the first fruits is not simply Christ but Christ's human nature. Throughout the passage, he inscribes his interpretation of Rm 11.16 into an Incarnational logic according to which the Logos assumes "the first fruits of our nature".

One major reason for this change must be the altered doctrinal context. Origen's exegesis of Rm 11.16 was strongly motivated by his opposition to the Gnostic idea of distinct classes of human beings. For Gregory, by contrast, the main danger is Arianism. In his own soteriology, he follows the lead of Athanasius' *De Incarnatione* with its emphasis on deification.⁶⁰ As for the patriarch of Alexandria before him, affirming the reality of *theosis* is ultimately an extension of the confession of the Son's full deity, and *vice versa*: as much as it is only the true Word of God who can save humankind, it is also the case that the transmission of his divine nature onto humanity and the ensuing overcoming of corruptibility are the most prominent effects of the Incarnation.

Unlike Athanasius, however, Gregory tends to respond to this problem by means of what Aloys Grillmeier has called a "divisive Christology" (*Trennungs-christologie*).⁶¹ This is evident in the present part of *Homily XIII* as throughout he speaks about divine and human as very nearly two different subjects in the saviour. It is within this overall framework that Gregory's insistence on Christ's *humanity* as the first fruits of our common nature must be understood. Within a Christology defined by the opposition between the *active* divine and the *passive* human element,⁶² the first fruits is part of the latter: it is what *is assumed*, not in itself part of divine agency.

60 Cf. Athanasius, *De Incarnatione Verbi*, 54,3.

61 A. Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition* (tr. J. Bowden), Vol. 1, London 1975, 299.

62 Cf. J. Zachhuber, "Gregory of Nyssa, *Contra Eunomium* 111/4", in: J. Leemans—M. Cassin (eds.), *Gregory of Nyssa: Contra Eunomium 111. An English Translation with Commentary and Supporting Studies*, Leiden 2014, 313–334, here esp. 319–321.

This might seem like a small change but it is easy to see how it can potentially have major consequences. Origen had wrestled the Pauline verse away from the Gnostics by insisting that “first fruits” as well as the “root” were divine (Son and Spirit); their holiness sanctified human nature. For Gregory, however, both first fruits and dough refer to humanity, and the question therefore arises what property of human nature can explain the transfer of holiness from the former to the latter? In the present context, this problem remains unaddressed because Gregory emphasises continued divine agency by way of his reference to 2 Cor 5,17 (the Church as a new creation), but this may simply indicate that the metaphor of first fruits and dough does as yet not play a major role in his argument. As a matter of fact, it would be hard to say quite what Gregory’s current references to Rm 11,16 are meant to achieve except to stress the coherence and identity between Christ’s humanity and ours.

b *Christ’s Humanity as First Fruits and Head of the Church*

If so far we have learned about Gregory’s conception of the Incarnation and salvation, we have not yet gleaned a more secure interpretation of Gregory’s understanding of the metaphor of first fruits and dough itself. What precisely is the relationship between Christ’s human nature and the subsequently sanctified humanity of those who are embraced by his body, the church? In what sense does the solidarity between first fruits and dough contribute to the salvific process?

Elsewhere in *Homily XIII*, Gregory makes again use of the metaphor of first fruits and dough.⁶³ The context is his exegesis of Ct 5,11 where the beauty of the beloved is described by comparing his head to “kephaz gold” (χρυσίον κεφάζ⁶⁴). Gregory, struggling with the Greek of the Septuagint, surmises that the original meaning is “pure gold”;⁶⁵ but what does this signify? He suggests that the emphasis is on purity, on the absence of “mixture with sullyng matter”⁶⁶ which, according to him, points once again to Christ, “but not according to the eternity of his divinity” but “according to the man who was the vessel of deity”.⁶⁷ In this sense, he observes, Paul called Christ the “head of his body, the church”.⁶⁸

63 *Cant XIII* (GNO VI 390,10–393,11).

64 *Cant XIII* (GNO VI 390,11).

65 *Cant XIII* (GNO VI 390,11–14).

66 *Cant XIII* (GNO VI 390,19).

67 *Cant XIII* (GNO VI 390,22–391,2).

68 Col 1,18.

Therefore the head of the body that is the church, the first fruits of our entire nature, is this pure gold, unreceptive of any form of evil and unmixed with it.⁶⁹

The metaphor of first fruits and dough is thus explained with the help of yet another metaphor—Christ’s humanity is the head of the body, which is the church. Gregory here does not give any further indication of how either of the two notions should be understood, and I suspect it would not be wise to bring in at this point more philosophical theories he proffers elsewhere.⁷⁰ So much, in any case, seems clear: the relationship he has in mind is one of organic or quasi-organic continuity; it is an asymmetric relationship in which the source or point of origin communicates its properties to those parts that are connected with it. They depend on this source and, while they truly share in its properties, they will not display them in the same purity.

Neither one nor the other of the two metaphors, however, provides a straight answer to the question of *what kind* the relationship in the case of Christ and his church is. Gregory’s reference to Christ’s ethical perfection in the present place and the mention of his sinlessness and truthfulness might suggest a spiritual link in which Christians emulate the virtuous life of Jesus. On the other hand, we have observed earlier Gregory’s strong emphasis on divine agency throughout the whole process and his insistence that the church is God’s new or second creation. Quite how these two elements come together, Gregory does not say and the metaphors he employs do not necessarily help clarify his meaning in the present place.

c *Gregory’s Exegesis of the Good Samaritan in Homily XIV*

Gregory refers to first fruits and dough again at the very end of the fourteenth homily.⁷¹ The use of the term *πλῆσιον*, neighbour, in Ct 5.16 inspires Gregory to an allegorical interpretation of the Parable of the Good Samaritan.⁷² The robbed man is humanity, descended from an exalted place, fallen among the thieves, robbed of its “imperishable gown” (*ἄφθαρτον ἔνδυμα*⁷³) and left “half-dead”⁷⁴ which, according to Gregory, means that “death advanced to the middle of our nature as the soul remained immortal”.⁷⁵

69 *Cant XIII* (GNO VI 391,11–14; tr. Norris 413).

70 J. Zachhuber, *Human Nature in Gregory of Nyssa*, 198 (see n. i above).

71 *Cant XIV* (GNO VI 427,9–429,5).

72 Lk 10.25–37.

73 *Cant XIV* (GNO VI 427,15).

74 ἡμιθανή; Lk 10.30.

75 *Cant XIV* (GNO VI 427,16–17). I note as an aside an anti-sacrificial swipe in Gregory’s com-

The Samaritan, of course, is Christ, more precisely the Logos,

Who wrapped the whole of humanity about him through the first fruits of the dough, in which there was a portion of every nation, of Jew and Samaritan and Greek and all human beings at once.⁷⁶

Gregory then goes on to explain the remaining details of the parable: the Samaritan's animal is Christ's body,⁷⁷ the inn is his love of humankind,⁷⁸ the two coins signify the love of God and neighbour.⁷⁹

At first sight, Gregory's use of the pair first fruits–dough in this passage is almost identical with the instances I have analysed before. In fact, the similarity goes straight to the wording with which Gregory describes Christ's assumption of human nature in the Incarnation.⁸⁰ And yet there are a number of interesting differences or at least nuances worthy of our attention.

Most interesting, perhaps, is the contrast between his earlier application of the "lump of dough" to the church as compared with his present mention of all humanity.⁸¹ One certainly should not draw too sharp a distinction; after all, Gregory in one earlier passage also spoke of "the dough (φύραμα) of the common nature"⁸² and contrasted Christ as the "head of the body, the church; the first fruits of our whole nature".⁸³ Yet it is evident nonetheless that Gregory's intention in our previous passages from *Homily XIII* was to move on from Christ's transformation of human nature in the Incarnation to its continuation in the church. The church was the "new creation" which, derived from Christ's perfect humanity, displays the properties of human godlikeness and thus permits the perception of its creator. From the context, it appeared that the reference to first fruits and the whole lump of dough was meant to be read in this way although its precise interpretation, as I noted, was not spelled out by Gregory in those texts. In his exegesis of the Good Samaritan, by contrast, Gregory shows

ment that priest and Levite signify the "useless" law as "the blood of bulls and goats cannot absolve sin" (*ibidem*, 18–21).

76 *Cant XIV* (GNO VI 427,21–428,2; tr. Norris 453).

77 *Cant XIV* (GNO VI 428,2–3).

78 *Cant XIV* (GNO VI 428,5–6).

79 *Cant XIV* (GNO VI 428,11–13).

80 Cf. GNO VI 427,21–22: τὸν πᾶσαν τὴν ἀνθρωπίνην φύσιν διὰ τῆς ἀπαρχῆς τοῦ φυράματος περιθέμενον' with 381,19–22: ἄπαξ πρὸς ἑαυτὸν διὰ τῆς ἀπαρχῆς ἐπεσπάσατο τὴν ἐπίκτητον τῆς σαρκὸς φύσιν, ἣν [...] ἀνέλαβεν [...].

81 See pp. 245–247 above.

82 *Cant XIII* (GNO VI 381,22).

83 *Cant XIII* (GNO VI 391,11–12).

less concern for those who specifically join his body. Instead, he focuses on the totality of humankind, symbolised by the robbed man. Human nature explicitly is the entirety of the human race; Gregory mentions the various nations that partake of it. The mythical nature of his account seems to compel him to this logic: all humanity is a single voiceless individual whose lot can only be improved by the application of condescending, agapeic care of which it is the passive recipient.

On closer inspection, things become if anything more complicated. For Gregory evidently struggles against these implications; in fact, the extent of his struggle can be measured by the implausibility of his exegetical claims. The inn of the parable, he suggests, is Christ's love for humanity: once a person enters into this place, Christ too will enter into them.⁸⁴ Later he claims that the coins left with the innkeeper for the care of the robbed man somehow imply that the latter too will be judged at the second coming of Christ on the basis of his fulfilment of the double command to love.⁸⁵

At the danger of judging harshly, both suggestions seem to me bizarre from an exegetical point of view: the gospel text just does not mention any activity on the part of the robbed man. Yet the very awkwardness of Gregory's interpretation may be significant, as it seems to indicate his awareness of the problematical consequences of a line of thought in which fallen humanity is reduced to a passive object of divine salvation.

Yet this is not all. Somehow, Gregory's decision to build into his argument the need for human fulfilment of the law as a correction against the tendency to demote humanity to an inanimate object, also jars with his account of redemption in the earlier homily which, as we have seen, maintained a focus on divine agency throughout. It almost seems as if Gregory's exposition of the history of salvation through the parable of the Good Samaritan pushes him into two opposite directions: on the one hand reconstructing redemption as a process in which humanity participates as a purely passive object; on the other hand, by stressing more strongly the need for human synergism in the redemptive process.

d *Gregory's Theocentric Understanding of Salvation*

In order to gain the right perspective for an assessment of the different accounts Gregory gives of human redemption in the passages analysed, it may be useful at this point to recall Gregory's overall purpose in the homilies: to

84 *Cant XIV* (GNO VI 428,7–9).

85 *Cant XIV* (GNO VI 428,13–429,5).

account for human spiritual perfection. As he explained, the *Song of Songs* was written for those already progressing on the road towards purification.⁸⁶ Through his homilies, he seeks to elucidate the details of this human journey towards God. He is therefore, inevitably, concerned with human development in all its ambiguity, the need to be motivated, the tendency to slacken or even falter, the risk of being distracted, and so forth.

It is significant, then, that in this very context, Gregory's account of redemption is so strongly theocentric given that one *might* easily have suspected that the ascetic context would have tempted him to emphasise the human aspect of salvific history. Yet if anything he appears to do the exact opposite stressing divine agency throughout this process. This could be observed in all the texts we have looked at, albeit in various ways. It can be confirmed most strikingly by a quick glance at a famous text towards the end of the entire commentary.⁸⁷ Gregory there illustrates the different degrees of perfection by speaking of redemption as a "second creation", echoing his earlier language of the church as the "new creation". For this "second creation", Gregory uses the terminology otherwise known from his cosmology: there is special and temporal spacing (*διαστηματική παράτασις*⁸⁸) so things do not happen at the same time but unfold and develop over time.⁸⁹ This development occurs in a logical progression (*ἀκολουθία*⁹⁰) so there will be some who are already nearing perfection while others are only at the beginning of their spiritual path. While Gregory in the same context does refer these differences to human volition (*προαίρησις*), it is nevertheless striking how strongly there too he emphasises divine agency by construing this history in strict analogy to the evolutionary unfolding of material creation from God's initial creative impulse.

This perspective seems to chime particularly well with Gregory's soteriological texts in *Homily XIII*, as they seemed to integrate the Christ event into a salvific dispensation whose chief agent is the Logos. Assuming the "first fruits" of humanity which then becomes the head of a "body", the community of those who permit themselves to be connected with him. This community is described as a "new creation" and thus ascribed in its existence to the activity of the Logos. In this scheme however, as we have noticed, it is difficult, almost impossible to discern what precisely Gregory has in mind when he speaks of first fruits and lump of dough. He does not dwell on any link between Christ's and our human-

86 *Cant I* (GNO VI 14,13–15,2).

87 *Cant XV* (GNO VI 457,19–460,2).

88 *Cant XV* (GNO VI 458,20–21).

89 *Cant XV* (GNO VI 459,17).

90 *Cant XV* (GNO VI 458,16).

ity to explain the progress of salvation from the “head” to the “body” except for the most general and probably merely formulaic mention of “our nature”.

Things are somewhat different in Gregory’s exegesis of the Good Samaritan. There the allusion to human nature as *one* unit seems more evident and Gregory’s allusion to first fruits and lump of dough therefore appears to carry more weight. Interestingly, we have seen that Gregory immediately adds to this with an emphasis on human need to act in correspondence with the divine gift.

4 Conclusion

It is at this point that we can return to the question posed at the outset of this essay. Is there any justification for Wilhelm Herrmann’s charge that Gregory’s understanding of salvation is “physical”? Is there evidence that Gregory construes the transmission of salvation from Jesus Christ to the rest of humanity in such a way that leaves no room for human agency and that he overemphasises human co-operation in the salvific process in a seeming attempt to compensate for that physical tendency?

The brief answer to all these questions must be yes. As we have seen, Gregory uses the metaphor of first fruits and dough in a way that leaves him open to precisely this accusation. Unlike for Origen, the first fruits for Gregory is Christ’s humanity, and as his exegesis of the Good Samaritan has shown, he is willing to think of the cohesion of Christ’s humanity with human nature in its entirety as the basis of the spread of human salvation from the saviour to redeemed humanity. Furthermore, he then seemed to emphasise good works as required for salvation in such a way that made little sense either exegetically or theologically.

And yet this is not the full answer to our initial question. For while Gregory clearly is willing to adopt a physical account, he also has recourse to a very different soteriology, as we have seen in the texts from *Homily XIII*. There he offered a much more consistently theocentric account of salvation in which God continues as the agent of salvation beyond the historical Incarnation. This was expressed by way of an elaboration of the notion of the Church as a “new creation”, an imagery that was reiterated at the end of *Homily XIV*. Interestingly, this theocentric soteriology enabled Gregory to refer to human activity and moral perfection as well, and in a much more plausible way than in his exegesis of the Good Samaritan.

It is nevertheless remarkable that Gregory’s use of first fruits and dough is not very pronounced in the latter group of texts. Herrmann was probably therefore right to find in his references to Rm 11.16 an indication of Gregory’s

“physical” tendencies.⁹¹ Still, his charge against Gregory could and should have been more nuanced recognising the presence of more than one soteriological argument in his work indeed, as we have seen, sometimes in one and the same work.

At the same time Gregory’s use of the physical model is in itself sufficiently worrying to raise the question of its historical and systematic origin. Various answers have been given to this question: Harnack saw the overall impact of Platonism as crucial, whereas Reinhard M. Hübner sought to blame indirect Gnostic influence.⁹² Given, however, that Gregory’s major conceptual innovation with regard to the Pauline metaphor was the identification of the first fruits with Christ’s *humanity*, it is arguable that the problematical character of his Christology has to be considered a main factor.

The Nyssen was extremely concerned with the utter transcendence of the Logos to stem Arian notions of his ontological inferiority to the Father. He therefore avoided the unitive Christology found in Irenaeus or Athanasius seeking instead to preserve a dual perspective on the divine and the human throughout. As a consequence, he lacked a conception of what would later be called the hypostatic let alone a personal union; he was effectively unable to speak of the saviour as one single subject.

It would seem that this tendency to separate Christ “according to his deity” and “according to his humanity” led to an analogous bifurcation of his soteriology with separate effects ascribed to Christ’s divinity and to his humanity. Yet as Christ’s human nature was altogether passive and merely “assumed” and “divinised” by the Logos, its soteriological effects could only be conceptualised as those of a quasi-agent or even a pseudo-agent: an impersonal universal nature in which salvation spreads from the first fruits to the whole dough. While any soteriology has to reckon with the systematic significance of the solidarity between Christ’s humanity and ours, this problem is exacerbated by Gregory’s reluctance to think of the saviour as a single, divine-human person. If Christ is the first fruits of all humankind—as Origen suggested—it must be as this one individual, paradoxically and inseparably uniting God and the human being.

91 See above at n. 1.

92 R.M. Hübner, *Die Einheit des Leibes Christi bei Gregor von Nyssa*, 315–324.

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