

THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE CAPPADOCIANS: PAST AND PRESENT

CHRISTOPHER A. BEELEY

Introduction

A surge of new interest in the Holy Spirit has touched on many areas of Christian theology, spirituality, and church life in recent decades. This renewal follows a long period of neglect, particularly though not exclusively in the mainstream Christian West. For much of the twentieth century theologians focused overwhelmingly on Christological projects at the expense of the Holy Spirit, from new quests for the historical Jesus to the works of major theologians such as Karl Barth, Karl Rahner, and Hans Urs von Balthasar. Meanwhile, different streams of reflection inspired by the work of Hegel and Schleiermacher considered the Spirit in such close connection with universal human experience that they failed to give it the prominent place in modern theology that was initially promised—a result that served in part to fuel the Christological reaction mentioned above. Some have argued that the lack of sufficient attention to the Holy Spirit correlates with an overemphasis on church structures and authority over individual charisma and grass-roots religious movements. For certain Eastern Orthodox theologians, these concerns are ultimately tied up in the controversy over the *filioque* clause in the Western version of the Nicene Creed, which they argue subordinates the Holy Spirit to the Son and thus promotes the kind of extreme hierarchical authority represented by the newly ascendant international papacy and the modern Roman magisterium. The renewal of Christian pneumatology in recent years draws on a number of different factors, including the rise of Pentecostalism and the mainline charismatic movement and new works by

Christopher A. Beeley
Yale Divinity School, 409 Prospect Street, New Haven, CT 06511, USA
christopher.beeley@yale.edu

individual theologians and ecclesiastical bodies. It relates as well to a pervasive new interest in spirituality, mysticism, asceticism, and religious practices, and to ongoing reactions against Enlightenment epistemologies, in both the academy and society at large.¹

As interest mounted, many theologians quite naturally looked to the Cappadocians, together with the ecumenical "Nicene Creed" of 381, as helpful guides in understanding the Spirit. Yet the modern use of Cappadocian theology suffers from two serious limitations. In the first place, most interpreters have made an extremely narrow reading of the original sources, citing well-known passages from standard histories and anthologies while giving little attention to historical context, in a manner that often amounts to little more than proof-texting. Secondly, most scholars since the late-nineteenth century have viewed Basil of Caesarea, Gregory of Nazianzus, and Gregory of Nyssa as a tightly knit group engaged in a common theological endeavor, a project that some have recently termed "pro-Nicene" theology.² While it is true enough that the Cappadocians joined forces from time to time to promote the Trinitarian faith,³ they also differed from one another in significant and often far-reaching ways, particularly over the Holy Spirit. As Louis Bouyer observed forty years ago, the view that Basil is the real teacher of the group, or that Gregory of Nyssa is the great synthesizer of the other two, is simply untenable.⁴ In the interest of furthering both historical and constructive work on the Spirit, I offer here a new assessment of the Cappadocians' pneumatologies, paying particular attention to the distinctive character of each one's work. In conclusion, I identify several ways in which the Cappadocians, properly understood, can still make the sort of contribution to contemporary pneumatology that modern theologians have long sensed they should.

Basil of Caesarea

There are several factors that complicate the study of Basil's pneumatology. The first is his formative association with Eustathius of Sebaste, who was Basil's spiritual mentor in the 360s. When Eustathius emerged as one of the leading Pneumatomachians by the early 370s—well after Basil had written his major systematic work, the *Contra Eunomium*—Basil sought to disassociate himself from his former master. Yet it is not at all clear that Basil cleansed himself of Eustathian influence as fully as he alleges and scholars have accepted. A related problem is the extent to which Basil's doctrine actually developed over the course of his career—specifically, whether he shifted from being a homoiousian to being a homoousian, as is often claimed, and even whether he ends up all that far from the Pneumatomachians. As we shall see, the early *Contra Eunomium* is in some respects Basil's strongest statement of the Spirit's divinity, and it provides the blueprint for his later work, including the *De Spiritu Sancto*;⁵ yet we will need to assess more closely

just what that means. A third complication is how we are to compare Basil's work with other fourth-century theologians: above all the Nicene-homoousian framework of Athanasius and the full Trinitarianism of Gregory Nazianzen (the popular label "pro-Nicene" for all such positions being less helpful than it is assumed to be). Basil's reputation as an ardent defender of the divinity of the Holy Spirit and its consubstantiality with God the Father depends to a great extent on Gregory's *Letter 58* to Basil and his *Oration 43* "In Praise of Basil." In *Letter 58*, Gregory describes his recent defense of Basil against charges that Basil has failed to confess the Spirit's full divinity. Most readers have taken Gregory's account at face value, ignoring the sarcasm with which Gregory is in fact criticizing Basil's for his *refusal* to confess the Spirit's divinity—a rhetorical force that is confirmed by Basil's angry reply.⁶ Similarly, in his memorial oration for Basil, Gregory depicts Basil in terms of his own, strongly Trinitarian position, chiefly in order to bolster his position in Basil's former community; the piece is not an example of unadulterated historical accuracy. When we add the fact that Basil and Gregory collaborated in the early 360s, it becomes even more imperative that we examine Basil's doctrine on its own terms, without assuming that he agrees with Athanasius' homoousianism, Gregory's fully Trinitarian doctrine, or any other extrinsic framework.

In Defense of the Holy Spirit

Basil's teaching on the Holy Spirit first appears in reaction to the radical subordinationism of Eunomius and the newly ascendant orthodoxy that was established at the council of Constantinople in 360 under the sponsorship of Emperor Constantius. Eunomius and the council represented an extreme branch of the theological tradition that stemmed from Eusebius of Caesarea, while Basil represented a more centrist version of the same tradition, the so-called Homoiousians, who included Basil of Ancyra, George of Laodicea, and Melitius of Antioch. In his *Contra Eunomium*, Basil refutes Eunomius' claim that the Spirit is third in nature to the Father and the Son⁷ and is a creature (δημιούργημα, ποίημα).⁸ While he agrees that the Spirit is third in rank and dignity to the Father and the Son, Basil denies that it is therefore third in nature to them and a creature. On the basis of the Spirit's names and activities in Scripture,⁹ Basil argues that the Spirit's nature is holiness,¹⁰ and that divinity coexists in the Spirit "by nature."¹¹ A decade later, in the *De Spiritu Sancto*, Basil further explains that the Spirit's names, activities, and blessings indicate "its greatness of nature (μεγαλοφυΐα) and unapproachable power,"¹² concluding that the Spirit is "divine in nature" (θεῖον τῆ φύσει), infinite in greatness, mighty in works, and good in blessings.¹³ Although some would regard such terms of divinity as plainly indicating Basil's meaning, Basil's primary way of explicating the status of the Holy Spirit is to speak of the "communion with respect to nature" that the Spirit shares with the Father and the Son¹⁴—a Eusebian term that Basil brings to bear against

Eunomius.¹⁵ Particularly significant is Basil's comparison of the communion in nature shared by the Trinity to that shared by angels. Just as angels of different ranks and levels of jurisdiction are all angels "in nature"¹⁶ and have "communion in nature" with one another, so too the Holy Spirit has communion in its nature with the Father and the Son;¹⁷ we will consider the comparison further below. In similar terms, the Spirit has "affinity" (οἰκείωσις) with,¹⁸ "dwells" with,¹⁹ and is "inseparable" from the Father and the Son.²⁰ Occasionally Basil writes that the Spirit exists in "union" (συνάφεια) or "unity" (ἕνωσις) with the Father and the Son;²¹ however, such statements are rare and they do not seem to connote anything more than communion and inseparability. Most famously, thanks to the creed of 381, Basil also refutes Eunomius²² by saying that Christians "glorify" the Spirit.²³

Despite what may appear to be second- or third-generation anti-Arianism in the mold of Athanasius, Basil's defense of the Spirit's divinity against Eunomius is in fact a direct application of the Eusebian theological tradition, a tradition that is, at its core, anti-modalist.²⁴ (This fact is less surprising if we bear in mind that Marcellus was resident in nearby Ancyra until as late as 372.) Basil's point of departure is the conviction that the Holy Spirit, like the Son,²⁵ is a thing or a nature that exists distinctly from the Father and the Son. From this starting point, Basil proceeds to argue that the Spirit is the kind of a thing—the kind of a nature—that is holy and good in itself, and is therefore divine like the Father and Son. Hence, the Divinity "co-exists with the Spirit by nature," rather than divinizing it through grace or virtue as with angels and humans.²⁶ Basil's anti-modalist approach likewise informs the concluding statement of the *De Spiritu Sancto*: the Spirit's communion with the Father and the Son is intimate (οἰκεία), natural (συμφυής) and inseparable (ἀχώριστος), and its existence with the Father and Son before the ages and its unceasing presence with them bespeak an eternal union (ἀϊδίου συναφείας). The Spirit "really and truly co-exists" (κυρίως καὶ ἀληθῶς συνυπάρχειν) with them, and they are mutually inseparable, more like heat that co-exists with fire than heat that exists in iron, or life that co-exists with the soul than health that exists "in" the body.²⁷ The Holy Spirit, in other words, is the same kind of a nature that the Father and Son are, in a generic sense. It is the Spirit's self-subsistence, as an intrinsically holy being, that makes it divine. Notably, Basil does not say that the Spirit possesses the *same* nature as the Father or the Son. He does not share the homoousian ontology of Athanasius, still less that of his brother Gregory of Nyssa or Augustine. The same approach can be seen in Basil's argument for the Son's "likeness in essence" (ἡ κατ' οὐσίαν ὁμοιότης) with the Father,²⁸ which Basil of Ancyra had affirmed and Eunomius denied.²⁹

This anti-modalist scheme undergirds the entirety of Basil's treatment of the Holy Spirit, from the *Contra Eunomium* (c. 362-64) through the *De Spiritu Sancto* (375) and his final works from the late 370s. Basil is often thought to have shifted from a homoiousian to a homoousian position as his work

progressed;³⁰ however, the texts normally cited as evidence of this change do not bear it out. On the contrary, when Basil comes to face the Pneumatomachians more squarely in the early to mid 370s, his anti-modalist tendencies become even more pronounced. In *Letter 210*, for example, composed around the time of *De Spiritu Sancto*, Basil writes that the nature of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit is “the same, and the Divinity is one.” Read out of context, this passage may appear to be a statement of Nicene consubstantiality. Yet in this passage Basil is arguing that each of the three persons exists uniquely and completely, on the analogy of human beings who, as distinctly existing things, have the same nature (they each exist *as humans*).³¹ This is the same view of generic similarity or sameness between distinct things that we found in the *Contra Eunomium*.

Basil’s anti-modalist approach is clearest of all in his homilies from the 370s. In *Homily 15 De fide* the Holy Spirit possesses goodness, beneficence, and life by nature (κατὰ τὴν φύσιν), “existing together with” (συνουσιωμένως) the Father and Son.³² Here again, the Spirit’s divinity lies chiefly in its self-subsistent goodness and life, rather than in its possession of the goodness and life of God the Father. When Basil next makes a comparison with fire and heat, he likens the Spirit not to the heat of the Father’s fire, as we might expect, but, significantly, to the sanctification of creatures by the Spirit’s fire.³³ What it means for the Spirit to exist “in” the blessed nature and to be theorized in the Trinity (which might otherwise sound Athanasian) is that it is singular (μοναδικῶς) rather than one of the groups of things (συστήματα) like the ministering spirits,³⁴ or, as Basil further argues, that it is “above creation” because it is a sanctifier rather than sanctified,³⁵ and it “exists in heaven” and is completely “with God,” distributing gifts authoritatively and working out of its own power (αὐτεξουσίως).³⁶ In *Homily 24 Contra Sabelianos*, the anti-modalist strain becomes even stronger. Arguing that the Spirit has affinity of nature with the Father and Son, Basil stresses that the Spirit is not the same thing as the Father or Son and that there is no confusion of *prosopon*.³⁷ Rather, the three are theorized as perfect and self-sufficient in themselves, inseparably joined to each other³⁸ as three distinct things (πράγματα) that have existence with (συνουσία) one another, as the baptismal tradition demonstrates.³⁹ In fine, the Spirit must exist properly and distinctly, else there is no Trinity.⁴⁰

Basil thus argues for the divinity of the Holy Spirit, first against the Eunomians and later against the Pneumatomachians, by applying a traditional anti-modalist framework, emphasizing the Spirit’s singularity and self-subsistence as holy, sanctifying, and hence sharing communion with the Father and the Son in its nature.

Problems and Limitations

Commentators have long recognized that Basil’s treatment of the Spirit’s divinity is not without significant qualifications and limitations.⁴¹ Even

within his anti-modalist framework, Basil is not altogether clear about the Spirit's nature and divinity. Basil's main idea for describing the Spirit's divine nature, that of communion, is less decisive than is usually supposed; for angels, too, are holy by communion with God,⁴² as are individual believers and the Church at large,⁴³ and human beings can also share affinity or intimacy (οἰκειώσις) with God. While such statements can be explained as describing the human relationship with God on the model of the Spirit's,⁴⁴ they nevertheless leave unresolved how the two relationships might be different. Moreover, as Anthony Meredith has noted,⁴⁵ the Spirit's equality of honor with the Father and the Son, which is echoed in the creed of 381, does not automatically indicate equality of nature, if we take into account Basil's view that the Spirit is third in rank and dignity to the Father and Son.⁴⁶ Most famously, Basil declines to call the Spirit either "God"⁴⁷ or consubstantial with the Father when pressed to do so by his friends and allies.

Further problems arise when we compare the Spirit with the Son. Beginning in the *Contra Eunomium*, Basil regularly describes the divine status of the Son in stronger terms than he does the Spirit's, even in passages where the exegetical or rhetorical context resists such a stark differentiation. In his initial argument for the Spirit in *Contra Eunomium* book 3, for example, Basil writes that there is one divinity in the Father and the Son, yet of the Spirit he merely offers the negative statement that it is not of a foreign nature.⁴⁸ Basil speaks extensively of the communion between the Father and Son in books 1 and 2, but only indirectly of the Spirit's.⁴⁹ Even when he is considering the question of the Spirit's divinity in the *De Spiritu Sancto*, the one work that surely justifies the fullest possible attention to the Holy Spirit, Basil focuses on the Father and Son, while the Spirit often fades out of the picture.⁵⁰ In general, there is a wide range of concepts that Basil applies to the Son but not the Spirit; and much of Basil's argumentation for the Spirit's divine nature is conspicuously negative compared to his extensive positive treatment of the essence and nature of the Son.⁵¹ He never uses the language of essence for the Spirit, and he does not call the Spirit "like" the Father, even apart from essence—that is, using either homoiousian or homoian terms.⁵² While Basil is happy to say that the Father and the Son are unbegotten and begotten light,⁵³ he does not make a similar statement of the Spirit. In fact, in a letter written to Melitius of Antioch in 371, Basil repudiates just such a statement attributed to Apollinarius: "What the Father is first, the Son is secondly, and the Spirit thirdly. . . . The Father is paternally the Son, and the Son is filially the Father; and the same applies to the Holy Spirit, inasmuch as the Trinity is one God."⁵⁴ In *De Spiritu Sancto* Basil argues that it is better to say the Spirit dwells "with" the Father and Son rather than "in" them,⁵⁵ a point that works against unitive conceptions of the Trinity.

The most crucial limitation, however, is that Basil has very little to say about the Spirit's relation of origin to God the Father. Whereas the distinct

characters (ιδιώματα) of the Father and Son are “fatherhood” and “sonship,” terms that reflect their eternal relation to one another, Basil merely calls the Spirit’s “sanctifying power,”⁵⁶ a phrase that denotes the Spirit’s work toward creation and, moreover, a quality that Basil believes all three persons share.⁵⁷ Indeed, Basil generally recommends confessing ignorance about the Spirit’s mode of existence (τρόπος τῆς ὑπάρξεως).⁵⁸ Although he recognizes the Father as the source and cause of the Son and the Spirit,⁵⁹ the idea does not inform his otherwise generic view of the Spirit’s communion in nature with the Father and Son. Basil does not seem to hold that the Father conveys to the Son and Spirit *his* divinity, or that this generation forms the basis of their communion of nature.

The ambiguity of the Spirit’s nature is especially visible in Basil’s treatment of creation, which is more complicated than the categories of Divinity and creation might suggest. For Basil, the Spirit does not share in the Father’s and the Son’s work of creation *per se*, in the sense of bringing things into existence, but rather it perfects the things—above all, rational beings—that the Father and the Son have made. Basil’s clearest and most important discussion of this question comes in a famous passage of the *De Spiritu Sancto*. Here Basil argues that the Father is the original cause of all things (ἡ προκατακριτικὴ αἰτία), the Son the creative (δημιουργικὴ) cause, and the Spirit the perfecting (τεκειωτικὴ) cause.⁶⁰ The Spirit’s perfecting work consists in the preservation of the harmony of the angelic heavens,⁶¹ and the sanctification of rational beings.⁶² Similarly, Basil interprets God’s breathing into Adam not as an act of creation, as the text of Genesis indicates, but as the conferral of grace for holiness, which, after it was lost, Jesus later restored by breathing into the face of the disciples.⁶³ In this respect Basil’s view of the Spirit has not changed since the *Contra Eunomium*. Here again Basil works against the obvious sense of the biblical text to sustain his case: “When Job said, ‘The Spirit of the Lord who made me,’ I do not think he was referring to when he was created, but rather to when he was perfected in human virtue.”⁶⁴ The Spirit’s attenuated role in creation thus corresponds with Basil’s comparison of the Spirit to lower angels who have lesser jurisdiction and a smaller range of activity than higher-ranking ones.⁶⁵ The same view persists in the *Hexaemeron* and Basil’s other works of the 370s,⁶⁶ thus spanning his entire career.

Sanctification and Asceticism

Throughout his corpus, Basil identifies the Holy Spirit primarily with the work of sanctification and the Christian’s progress in virtue. In Basil’s view, human beings fulfill their purpose to become fully the image and likeness of God chiefly through the mastery of the passions.⁶⁷ Accordingly, he routinely exhorts his readers to adopt an ascetic lifestyle, a tendency that Wolf-Dieter Hauschild has called Basil’s distinctively monastic theology.⁶⁸ The regeneration that is achieved through the control of the passions, moreover, is accomplished preeminently through baptism, a theme that looms large in

the *De Spiritu Sancto*.⁶⁹ Yet in his baptismal theology and spiritual direction Basil imagines the Holy Spirit as more of a helper with Christian sanctification than its actual cause. On the one hand, the Spirit “mixes” with the soul like dye in wool or heat in iron, which causes sins to become manifest and the iron to be purified.⁷⁰ Yet, on the other hand, Basil insists that the Spirit will not mix with the unworthy,⁷¹ but comes only to those who have *already* been purified, leaving human beings on their own to master their passions. As Meredith has observed, the effects that the Spirit produces are likewise more ethical than participatory (which includes but transcends the ethical), so that even Basil’s language of divinization refers chiefly to moral perfection.⁷² Although he refers to the Spirit’s distribution of gifts⁷³ and to the Spirit’s presence in the water of baptism⁷⁴—both well established, traditional themes—Basil normally emphasizes the believer’s purity of heart, keeping of the commandments, and ascetical discipline, which lead to *apatheia*.⁷⁵

The dominant ascetical pattern of Basil’s work is that one first must conquer the passions and achieve *apatheia*, only after which the Spirit will come to reside in the purified soul.⁷⁶ Following this self-transformation, the Spirit distributes its gifts throughout the community, and spiritual direction can occur in common, as, for example, among monks.⁷⁷ Basil further restricts the Spirit’s presence and power by denying that the Spirit’s indwelling is any sort of essential union with the soul, and he issues the qualification that the Spirit is in fact “in” very many things.⁷⁸ In his role as bishop, Basil capitalizes on the notion that the Spirit bestows grace on those who are obedient⁷⁹ in order to maintain order in the Church⁸⁰ and the harmony of monastic communities.⁸¹ Indeed, Basil himself proved to be rather heavy-handed as a presbyter and bishop, from his nearly catastrophic early fight with his bishop Eusebius to his crass manipulation of Gregory Nazianzen when he appointed Gregory bishop of the dusty crossroads of Sasima as a pawn in the consolidation of his own power base. The believer’s efforts to achieve virtue independently of the work of the Holy Spirit parallels the bishop’s exercise of ecclesiastical control. Among the factors that contributed to Basil’s self-willed asceticism is his use of Stoic philosophy,⁸² reinforced by a certain reading of Origen. A second factor is the lingering influence of the rigorist Eustathius of Sebaste. In sum, there are significant parallels between Basil’s limited conception of the Spirit’s divinity and work in creation and his partial view of the Spirit’s role in sanctification and church governance.

Conclusion

When examined on its own terms and within its multiple contexts, Basil’s doctrine of the Holy Spirit is complicated and puzzling in several respects. On the one hand, he seeks to defend some sense of the Spirit’s divinity against Eunomius’ extreme subordinationism and the doctrine of the Pneumatomachians; yet, on the other hand, his pneumatology is sharply qualified

by his wider cosmological and ascetical views. On the whole, we can best describe Basil's pneumatology as an unresolved composite of several different elements. The most descriptive single characterization would be to say that Basil's doctrine represents an incomplete homoiousian position, that is, a type of Eusebian theology that has become fixed and skewed in certain ways. Basil's Trinitarian theology is Eusebian-homoiousian through and through, from his early *Contra Eunomium* to his death in 379; he is a fundamentally anti-modalist theologian, and he does not become a homoousian, as has been claimed. The consistency of Basil's pneumatology before and after his break with Eustathius shows that he remained under the influence of his former master much longer than is normally recognized.

We can further explain the idiosyncrasies of Basil's doctrine as a particular version of Origenism. This can be seen above all in Basil's agnosticism about the Spirit's generation. Basil professes ignorance about the Spirit's mode of origin, he says, because he wants to teach only what the Scriptures explicitly say about the Spirit.⁸³ Whereas the Scriptures speak "exactly and clearly" about the Son's begetting,⁸⁴ Basil does not believe that they make clear the generation of the Spirit. All that can be determined from Scripture is that the Spirit is beyond creation and that it cannot be part of "all things" that were created through the Son (John 1:3), since there is only one Holy Spirit and it possesses the "unitary nature"⁸⁵ (the anti-modalist argument, again). Basil's approach to the problem for the most part follows that of Origen.⁸⁶ Moreover, the Spirit's restricted role in creation and its proper scope of action in the perfection of rational being repeat the doctrine of Origen even more closely.⁸⁷ Basil's famous "economy" on the divinity of the Spirit was therefore less a judicious exercise of caution for the sake of ecclesiastical peace than a specific, and by the 370s an especially reticent, form of Origenism.⁸⁸

Finally, we may note the generic tendency of Basil's view of the divine nature, which appears to be informed, at least partially, by Stoic and Platonic conceptions. Basil's definition of being (οὐσία) and hypostasis (ὑπόστασις) as indicating the common versus the particular, as in a living being of any sort compared to a particular human being,⁸⁹ supports a generic view of the divine being, as we saw in the comparison to differently ranked angels. Accordingly, Basil does not regard the particular characteristic of God the Father as having any special bearing on the divine nature itself, so as to make it *his* divine being in a primary sense. Basil thus refrains from asserting a strong doctrine of the monarchy of God the Father, such as we find in Gregory Nazianzen.

To be sure, Basil's pneumatology has several enduring strengths, yet most of them are better represented by Gregory Nazianzen. Given such complications and limitations, it is not surprising that Basil has had such difficulty convincing his more strongly Trinitarian critics that he was not, in the end, all that far from Pneumatomachians like Eustathius.

Gregory Nazianzen

In addition to Gregory's *Letter* 58 and *Oration* 43, there are several other factors that one can point to in support of the idea that Basil and Gregory Nazianzen held the same doctrine of the Holy Spirit. The two men were close friends and housemates for several years during their advanced studies in Athens; they briefly shared a monastic existence in Pontus, which concentrated on studying the Bible and Origen; they both opposed the homoian regimes of Constantius and Valens; and they belonged to overlapping social and ecclesiastical networks. Yet, as many other such cases have shown, close collaboration does not automatically mean identity or even agreement on all-important matters; and in this case there are plenty of indications of disagreement and animosity, which caused the friendship to rupture painfully in the early 370s. Gregory's pneumatology is distinct from Basil's in several key respects, even beyond their famous disagreement on whether or not to call the Spirit "God."

Gregory articulated the divinity of the Holy Spirit—and consequently a full doctrine of the Trinity—from the beginning of his public ministry, at roughly the same time that Basil was composing his *Contra Eunomium*. Like Basil, he began his career in opposition to the homoian orthodoxy of 360 (he turned his attention to the Eunomians only later); yet two notable differences stand out already at this time. The first is that Gregory clearly sees the problem as a *Trinitarian* one. In his first set of *Orations*, given at Easter 362, Gregory exhorts his congregation in Nazianzus to rally behind "the sound faith in Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, the one Divinity and power,"⁹⁰ which is "the primary and blessed Trinity."⁹¹ This strong yet simple⁹² confession is Gregory's most common statement of the Trinity throughout his corpus, even when he is engaged in more refined types of argumentation.⁹³ This Trinitarian approach means, secondly, that Gregory asserts the Spirit's divinity in the same terms that he speaks of the Son's. While Basil treats the Son and the Holy Spirit for the most part separately, and, as we have seen, with unequal terms and arguments, Gregory confesses the Spirit's divinity with equally strong terms, and he understands the fundamental issue to be faith in the Trinity as a whole. From the beginning of their work, then, we can see a difference of approach that goes well beyond merely stylistic variation.

The Spirit's Full Divinity

Formed by his reading of Scripture and Origen, Gregory adopts a Trinitarian framework in which the Holy Spirit enables believers to know God the Father through Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and he focuses primarily, though not exclusively, on the Spirit's sanctifying or divinizing function. In light of its self-revelation and work of divinization, Gregory confesses the Spirit to be fully and unequivocally God. At the time of his ordination to the episcopate in 372, Gregory felt that it was crucial to confess the Spirit's divinity in clearer

terms than were being offered by the Pneumatomachians and his colleague Basil. In an early episcopal sermon he declares his opposition to the “false christs in our very midst who war against the Spirit,”⁹⁴ providing the first extant reference to the Pneumatomachians in Asia Minor⁹⁵ and at the same time issuing a public challenge to Basil, who was present in the liturgy and was at this point still associated with Eustathius—“false christs” meaning literally “falsely anointed ones,” i.e., false bishops. Gregory then announces his more complete doctrine of the Spirit in an oration replete with imagery of the Spirit’s presence and work in Gregory himself, his father, and his congregation. Finally, Gregory offers himself to the Spirit, by whom he has recently been anointed a bishop “in the almighty Father, the only-begotten Word, and the Holy Spirit, who is God”⁹⁶—a Trinitarian statement that was the strongest confession of the Spirit’s divinity to date in extant patristic literature. This full confession of the Spirit and the Trinity Gregory calls “the most perfect exposition of theology” and “the light of the complete Divinity,” which must no longer be hid under a bushel, but placed on the lampstand to illuminate the church.⁹⁷ In the spring of 380, after he has taken up residence as bishop of Constantinople, Gregory combines the statements of 362 and 372 in an even stronger declaration: orthodox Christians, he says, worship “the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, one Divinity—God the Father, God the Son, and (if you don’t mind!) God the Holy Spirit, one nature in three distinct things.”⁹⁸ This Trinitarian confession then provides the starting point for Gregory’s most extensive treatments of the Spirit in *Oration 41 On Pentecost*, *Oration 31 On the Holy Spirit* (the third *Theological Oration*), and related texts,⁹⁹ which are explicitly aimed at Eunomian and Pneumatomachian detractors and seek to consolidate the Trinitarian consensus in the Eastern capital.

As with Basil, the nature of Gregory’s doctrine can be seen also in his treatment of creation. Taking up the homoiousian distinction between the Creator and creation, Gregory again provides a stronger sense of the Spirit’s divinity. The Spirit, he says, belongs with the ruling Creator, who is beyond time and all change, and the creative reality “is called ‘God’ and subsists in three Greatest, namely the Cause, the Creator, and the Perfecter.”¹⁰⁰ Although the language of perfecting is similar, Gregory takes the Spirit to be the perfecter of all that God does, from creation to redemption to final consummation,¹⁰¹ rather than limiting the Spirit to the harmonization and sanctification of things that the Father and the Son have brought into existence. For Gregory, the Spirit is the perfection of the Divinity itself, in its *eternal* existence,¹⁰² and it cooperates in accomplishing all of the works of God.¹⁰³

On each of these points, Gregory goes well beyond Basil in conceiving the Spirit’s divinity. It is especially noteworthy, in light of the recent popularity of Basil’s “communion” language in modern Trinitarian theology,¹⁰⁴ that Gregory never uses the term to refer to the relationships among the members of the Trinity, except to describe the position of his opponents.¹⁰⁵ Rather, staying closer to the biblical idiom, Gregory speaks only of communion

shared between human beings and God.¹⁰⁶ Gregory's consistent avoidance of the language of communion with reference to the Trinity shows that he considered it a key indicator of homoian, Eunomian, and/or Pneumatomachian positions—to which he thought Basil remained dangerously close.

Trinitarian Issues

I have argued elsewhere that Gregory belonged to the same homoiousian tradition stemming from Origen and Eusebius of Caesarea in which we have just located Basil, and that he had little if any contact with the work of Athanasius.¹⁰⁷ Yet it is equally clear that Basil and Gregory developed this tradition in rather different directions. We can characterize the difference most succinctly by saying that Gregory fulfilled and completed the homoiousian tradition with a full confession of the Trinity, while Basil took it instead in a direction of studied ambiguity. As Gregory and several other contemporaries recognized, Basil was neither fish nor fowl compared with the clearer (Eusebian) alternatives of the Homoians and Gregory Nazianzen.

As a representative of the homoiousian tradition, Gregory's doctrine is also fundamentally anti-modalist, even more than it is anti-Arian or anti-Eunomian¹⁰⁸—although he is certainly opposed to both. The central tenet of Gregory's Trinitarian program—and hence of the identity of the Holy Spirit—is the monarchy of God the Father, a principle that Origenist-Eusebians had originally directed against so-called modalist monarchianism. Accordingly, Gregory holds that the monarchy of the Father—the Father's eternal generation of the Son and the Spirit as the sole cause and principle of the Trinity—is the root of both the divine unity and the distinctions between the three persons.¹⁰⁹ For Gregory, unlike Basil and Gregory of Nyssa, the divinity of the Son and the Spirit is therefore that of the *Father*, in a causally primary sense, rather than a generic divine essence that all three persons share without reference to source, like angels or human beings. Gregory thus espouses a monarchic, rather than a generic, view of the Divinity or divine nature. Because the Father eternally conveys his Divinity to the Son and the Spirit in generating them, Gregory can affirm that the Spirit is “consubstantial” (*homoousion*) with the Father—that it is not merely *a* divine nature but shares *the same* nature as God the Father—a point that all three sets of opponents denied.¹¹⁰ The consubstantiality of the Holy Spirit is thus an implication or result of Gregory's basic doctrine, rather than its foundation, as it is often imagined, and mainly operates as a cipher for the monarchy of the Father.

Closely related to his focus on the divine monarchy, Gregory gives unprecedented attention to the Spirit's unique mode of generation, which, together with the Son's begetting, he regards as central to Christian theology and spirituality.¹¹¹ Whereas Basil professes ignorance along Origenist lines, Gregory develops the same tradition in a new direction, by reading the Spirit's mode of generation in the words of Jesus himself, thereby

observing Origen's rule of not going beyond the text of Scripture in such matters. Consequently, Gregory is the first to define the Spirit's mode of generation specifically as "procession," or "going forth" (ἐκπορεύεσθαι)¹¹² from God the Father, as distinct from the Son's begetting, which constitutes a major development of Eusebian tradition.¹¹³ That the Spirit proceeds from the Father means, for Gregory, both that it is divine, sharing the Father's Divinity, and that it is distinct from the Son, because their generations are different—thus answering the Pneumatomachian charge that there are two principles of Divinity two sons, or a Son and Grandson.¹¹⁴ In completing the homoiousian legacy, Gregory is even clearer than Basil that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are differently subsisting "instances" of Divinity. For, while they are each the same, they are not *exactly* the same, in Divinity, since the Father exists unbegottenly, the Son begottenly, and the Spirit "proceedingly," or the Father is unbegotten Divinity, the Son begotten Divinity, and the Holy Spirit proceeding Divinity.¹¹⁵ In this respect Gregory is more successfully anti-Arian and anti-Sabellian—and thus a more complete Trinitarian theologian—than Basil is.

Spirituality and Exegesis

In this Trinitarian framework Gregory's pneumatology represents a distinctive *kind* of theological confession, which further distinguishes it from Basil's and Gregory of Nyssa's. As we have seen, Basil attempts to argue for the Spirit's divinity directly from the letter of Scripture, even to the point of withholding judgment on the nature of the Spirit's procession. Yet, by 380, Basil's approach had become an obvious liability to the Trinitarian cause in Constantinople, and the problem became the governing theme, or rhetorical *στάσις*, of Gregory's most important treatment of the Holy Spirit, in the third *Theological Oration*. The Pneumatomachians objected that the Scriptures do not proclaim the Spirit's divinity as they do the Son's; Basil's approach had clearly proven to be a stretch, and so they accused Gregory too of introducing "a strange and unscriptural God."¹¹⁶

Even more significant than the Pneumatomachians' challenge, however, is Gregory's response. He *agrees* that the Bible does not confess the Spirit's divinity—at least "according to the letter." Rather than demonstrating its divinity through the literal witness of Scripture, the Holy Spirit reveals itself directly, through its divinization of Christians, which occurs preeminently in baptism.¹¹⁷ It is because the Spirit divinizes Christians that it is therefore adored, worshipped, and confessed to be God: "the one is linked to the other, a truly golden and saving chain."¹¹⁸ God's presence and work through the Holy Spirit, then, is the direct source and the primary matrix of Gregory's confession of the Spirit's divinity according to the scriptures. So he argues in his poem *On the Holy Spirit* that whoever wants to understand the divinity of the Spirit must first draw the Spirit into his or her own heart,¹¹⁹ for this direct knowledge of the Spirit is the real foundation of all confession and teaching

about the Spirit's nature. Note that Gregory is not making the so-called liturgical argument: that the Spirit must be divine because Christians worship it. For Gregory, the divinizing work of the Spirit is the source of *both* the confession and the worship of the Holy Spirit.¹²⁰

This experiential or existential mode of the Spirit's self-revelation can be further appreciated in comparison with the divinizing work of Christ. Whereas Christ achieved and is himself the first instance of the salvation and re-divinization of humanity, it is only through the Holy Spirit that this divinization is conveyed to human beings other than Christ, so that it is not only the Spirit of God but also the Spirit of Christ. The Trinitarian shape of Christian salvation thus becomes clearest in light of Gregory's pneumatology. The work of the Spirit, who proceeds from God the Father, is to convey to the Church the recreation and re-divinization that was definitively accomplished in and by Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who is eternally begotten from God the Father and lives to do the Father's will. By giving rise to the knowledge of the Son, through whom God is known, the Holy Spirit is for Gregory the epistemic principle of all Christian theology, which makes it all the more crucial to a full confession of the Trinity. Being rooted in the Church's entire life in the Spirit, Gregory's pneumatology, and so his Trinitarian doctrine as a whole, is thus established on a firmer basis than a mere argument from common or identical activity, such as Basil had tried to make.

The Scriptures indicate the Spirit's divinity, then, only on the basis of the Spirit's divinizing work, corroborating, as it were, its direct self-revelation in the Christian life.¹²¹ This is the interpretation "according to the Spirit" that Gregory forecasted at the beginning of *Oration 31*: the interpretation that arises from and is an integral part of the theologian's life in the Spirit. Gregory applies the idea equally to the confession of Christ's divinity, as one would expect from Paul's argument in 2 Corinthians 3, the primary New Testament source. In both cases, Gregory's emphasis is on the spiritual mode of interpretation—that it represents a conversion and transformation of the theologian, and hence the ability to perceive the Spirit's divinity from that standpoint. From this same perspective, Gregory expresses the Spirit's presence in the Church in very strong terms in his *Oration 40 On Pentecost*. Commenting on the three occasions when the Spirit is given to the disciples in the gospels and in Acts, Gregory contrasts the first two—when Jesus gave them power over unclean spirits and diseases and when he breathed the Spirit onto them after his resurrection—with the descent of the Spirit at Pentecost. In the first two cases, the Spirit was "present in operation (ἐνεργεία)," but at Pentecost it became "present in its very being (οὐσιωδῶς), so to speak, associating with us and dwelling among us."¹²² Just as the Son came among us in bodily form in Christ, so too it was fitting, Gregory says, that the Spirit should come down to us, even in bodily form (the tongues of flame). Like the incarnation, the Pentecostal confession of the Spirit's divinity hinges on the

Spirit's real presence and demonstration of itself to the Church. Moreover, in the Pentecostal knowledge of the Holy Spirit, Gregory argues in *Oration 31*, the Spirit has brought the divinity even closer than Christ did in the incarnation—a greater revelation foretold by Jesus himself.¹²³ Through the progress of Trinitarian revelation and the “order of theology,” the Holy Spirit's presence in the life of the Church represents not only the medium and context of the knowledge of God and the work of theology, but also the apex of the divine economy, short of the parousia of Christ.

The difference between Gregory's theological method and that of Basil and Gregory of Nyssa, who believe that biblical proofs of the Spirit can be objectively foundational, is significant and far-reaching. In particular, we can see a noticeable difference in their understanding of the Holy Spirit's role in asceticism and purification. Whereas Basil places a high value on the human ability to purify oneself to become worthy to receive the Holy Spirit, Gregory Nazianzen insists that it is the Spirit who enables the process of purification all along.¹²⁴ Gregory has a clearer and more robust doctrine of grace, which is made concrete in his regard for the power of the Spirit's work in the Christian life, making his pneumatology more clearly soteriological. It is especially interesting, in this connection, to contrast Basil's and Gregory's different styles of monasticism. Basil's greater estimation of human ascetical ability corresponds with his more austere and labor-intensive form of monasticism; whereas Gregory's deeper sense that the grace of the Spirit enables all virtue and theology accords with his more moderate, contemplative spirituality. Likewise, Gregory extolled the importance of priestly character and charisma against the sort of raw ecclesiastical power that Basil exorcised.

Conclusion

Gregory offers a rich summary of his pneumatology in the opening lines of his poem “On the Spirit”: “Sing the praise of the Spirit! . . . Let us bow in awe before the mighty Spirit, who is God in heaven, who to me is God, by whom I came to know God, and who in this world makes me God.”¹²⁵ Among the three Cappadocians, Gregory offers the strongest and most comprehensive doctrine of the Spirit, from its full Trinitarian structure and cosmic scope to its deep spiritual resonance which issues in doxology and praise. In this respect, Gregory completes the Eusebian-homoiousian tradition much more satisfactorily than Basil, while at the same time remaining authentically Origenist. Gregory's confession of the Spirit's divinity “according to the Spirit” is arguably more faithful to the heritage of Origen than either Basil or Gregory of Nyssa, both of whom followed Origen himself too closely “according to the letter.” In keeping with Origen's mystical spirituality, Gregory has a stronger sense of the reality of the knowledge of God and of the believer's participation in God through the Holy Spirit than any other fourth-century theologian.¹²⁶ Gregory's pneumatology moves beyond Basil in several fundamental respects, making their disagreement over the Spirit truly substan-

tive and not merely diplomatic or rhetorical. Finally, Gregory's doctrine is free of the philosophical complications that beset Basil (and, following his lead, Gregory of Nyssa), and his opposition to the Pneumatomachians is the most authentic and perceptive of the three.

Gregory of Nyssa

Gregory of Nyssa's pneumatology is on the whole less substantial than either Basil's or Gregory Nazianzen's. This may seem surprising, given the high regard typically given to all three Cappadocians, but it is less so if we consider the actual relationship of Gregory of Nyssa's work with that of Basil and Gregory Nazianzen. As one of Basil's younger brothers, Gregory of Nyssa was influenced by their older sister, Macrina, during his youth, and he was probably tutored by Basil in rhetoric. In time, he sought to defend and complete his brother's work, writing his own lengthy *Contra Eunomium* in response to Eunomius' *Apologia apologiae* (a reply to Basil's *Contra Eunomium*) as well as *On the Creation of the Human Being*, which picked up where Basil's *Hexaemeron* left off. While he probably knew Gregory Nazianzen's Constantinopolitan orations on the Trinity, these proved to be less of an influence than his family relations. More significantly, Gregory did not receive the same advanced education that Basil and Gregory Nazianzen did in Athens, nor did he participate in their formative collaboration in Cappadocia in the early 360s. He was pursuing a career in secular rhetoric while Basil and Gregory Nazianzen were already making inroads in the leadership of the Church and quickly establishing themselves as gifted theologians, causing Macrina to seek the help of Gregory Nazianzen to persuade her brother to join the ranks of the clergy. Gregory of Nyssa was for the most part an autodidact, which left him untrained in the breadth of Greek intellectual tradition and less acquainted with recent advances in philosophy and rhetoric beyond textbook Neo-Platonism. As a result, Gregory of Nyssa is the most uniformly Platonist of the three Cappadocian fathers, which is an indication of the narrowness, rather than the breadth, of his Hellenism. In addition, he was also more closely associated with the Antiochene network of Melitius than either Basil or Gregory Nazianzen was. This association affected Gregory's Christology quite profoundly, and may also have provided the link to his being influenced by the writings of Athanasius that circulated in Antioch.

The Holy Spirit appears in many of Gregory of Nyssa's works, as would be expected from any theologian of this period.¹²⁷ However, it is not the volume of references to the Spirit that we must assess, but their substance and theological weight. When he took up Basil's contest with Eunomius, Gregory completed it on his own terms. Most important for our purposes here, he did not produce a work parallel to Basil's *Contra Eunomium* book 3 on the Holy Spirit, but mainly confined himself to the questions of theological language and Trinitarian metaphysics covered in Basil's books 1 and 2. In parallel with

this literary difference, the most notable characteristic of Gregory's pneumatology is that he treats the Holy Spirit largely as an extension and afterthought of his thinking on the Trinity, in a way that is markedly different from Gregory Nazianzen's Trinitarian doctrine. Gregory of Nyssa's most focused and comprehensive treatment of the Spirit comes in a set of treatises written in a three- to five-year period, beginning not long before the council of 381, which defend the Spirit's divinity against the Pneumatomachians.

Like Basil, Gregory of Nyssa understands the identity and work of the Spirit to be primarily that of perfection and transformation. He locates this work chiefly in baptism,¹²⁸ in terms that are closer to Basil than Gregory Nazianzen, and he understands the process of sanctification chiefly in terms of the inculcation of virtue, thus developing further a similar theme from Basil. As Martin Laird has shown, Gregory argues even more strongly than Basil that sanctification occurs through growth in virtue rather than by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in the mind.¹²⁹ With a few exceptions, Gregory's treatment of the divine presence in his major spiritual work, the *Homilies on the Song of Songs*, overlooks the Spirit to a remarkable extent, and the Spirit is, for the most part, conspicuously absent in the *Homilies on Ecclesiastes*, the *Life of Moses*, and the *Contra Eunomium*. Among all of Gregory's works, the *De instituto Christiano* stands out for its attention to the Spirit; however, Gregory conceives the Spirit there in a fairly conventional epistemic sense, in conjunction with a large number of direct biblical quotations, weakening the argument; meanwhile, the work's exceptional character in Gregory's corpus serves to prove the rule that he generally overlooks the Spirit for all practical purposes.¹³⁰ Also like his brother and in contrast with Gregory Nazianzen, Gregory of Nyssa pays little attention to the definition of the Spirit's procession.

In his Trinitarian works, written after Basil's death, Gregory goes well beyond his brother in confessing that the Spirit is "God" and consubstantial with the Father. Yet he does so in a way that merely echoes the Theodosian settlement and locks the theological in sight of Gregory Nazianzen. Gregory of Nyssa argues for the Spirit's divinity on the basis of three main points: (1) the Spirit is descriptively similar to the Father and the Son in biblical and traditional expressions;¹³¹ (2) the Spirit is inseparable from the Father and the Son—these two points being similar to Basil's work; and (3) the Spirit is co-creative with the Father and the Son.¹³² Gregory differs from Basil most notably in confessing that the Spirit exists and works, along with the Father and the Son, "in every thing and notion, both encosmic and supercosmic, those in time and before the ages,"¹³³ beyond merely the harmonization of the Son's creation and the sanctification of rational beings; here he is in full accord with Gregory Nazianzen.

However, apart from this formal Trinitarian framework, Gregory is in other respects closer to Basil than to his namesake. While Gregory links the Spirit's divinity with the process of transformation,¹³⁴ which involves both right faith and moral perfection,¹³⁵ he does not go nearly as far as Gregory

Nazianzen in appreciating either the primacy of the Spirit's grace in the Christian life or the full significance of the Spirit's work of divinization for theology in general. Again like Basil, Gregory of Nyssa frequently argues for the Spirit's divinity simply on the basis of Scripture, even after the weaknesses of Basil's approach have revealed themselves and Gregory is faced with the same Pneumatomachian challenge that confronted Gregory Nazianzen.¹³⁶ At the beginning of the *Adversus Macedonianos*, for example, he declares that he will "fully employ the testimony of Scripture, through which we have learned that the Holy Spirit both is and is called divine."¹³⁷ This approach is fundamental to Gregory of Nyssa's pneumatology and consistent across several works.¹³⁸ At times, Gregory simply asserts the common divine nature of the Trinity and then concludes that the Holy Spirit must therefore be divine.¹³⁹ It is striking how scholars and theologians have universally overlooked not only that such arguments were useless in their immediate polemical context, but that they beg the question in several respects.

Gregory's difference of approach from Gregory Nazianzen on these matters is considerable, and all the more striking if we assume that he knew at least Gregory Nazianzen's fifth *Theological Oration*. With regard to the spiritual-ascetical aspects of his doctrine, Gregory of Nyssa stands somewhere between Basil and Gregory of Nazianzen. He has a stronger sense of the divine initiative and less of a rigorist approach to asceticism than Basil does, yet he does maintain a moralist idea of synergy,¹⁴⁰ and his view of the divine initiative is less clear than Gregory Nazianzen's.¹⁴¹ All told, Gregory of Nyssa's arguments for the Spirit's divinity are less convincing than Gregory Nazianzen's and even Basil's.

As a coda, we may note what is perhaps the most unique element of Gregory's pneumatology, a pair of conceptions that bears on the Spirit's eternal relation to the Father and the Son. In defense of the Spirit's divinity, Gregory borrows an idea from Eusebius to argue that the Holy Spirit anoints Christ, "the anointed one," not only in the economy, as in his baptism, but eternally.¹⁴² Thus Gregory imagines the Son's being eternally begotten by God the Father and anointed as "Christ" by the Holy Spirit. In one respect, this may seem to be an overly excited attempt at interpreting a passage whose plain sense is economic. Yet, while that may be true, there is, at the same time, something pleasing about Gregory's instinct to see the eternal life of the Trinity so closely reflected in the economy—an instinct that he would have done well to honor even more in his other works. A related interpretation is Gregory's identification of the Spirit with God's kingdom that is exercised by Christ, the King, based on a textual variant of the Lukan version of the Lord's prayer.¹⁴³ The Spirit's anointing—both of Christ and of the baptismal candidate before baptism—thus signifies its nature as kingship, which proves its shared divinity with the Father and Son, who are each King, and the inseparability of the oil of anointing from the body that it anoints, in Jesus' baptism, signifies the Spirit's inseparability from the Son.¹⁴⁴ Aside from such passages,

the Holy Spirit in fact does little substantive work in Gregory of Nyssa's Trinitarian doctrine and his ascetical theology, where it serves primarily to fill out an otherwise pre-formed doctrine of divine unity and equality and to dress up a largely Platonic scheme of divine knowledge.¹⁴⁵

The Cappadocians and the Future of Pneumatology

Despite the caricature of a single theological edifice, the Cappadocians' views on the Holy Spirit are distinctive in several important respects. As we have seen, Gregory Nazianzen presents the most robust and penetrating treatment of the three. Indeed, Gregory stands out as the premier theologian of the Spirit in the fourth century and one of the chief authorities in all of Christian tradition. By contrast, Basil is less fully Trinitarian and ascetically robust than the other two, while Gregory of Nyssa's pneumatology is noticeably atrophied, largely due to his Platonist metaphysics and spirituality. For those who continue to speak of "Cappadocian" pneumatology as a whole, the term should now refer to the more comprehensive work of Gregory Nazianzen, supplemented with harmonious elements from Basil and Gregory of Nyssa.

A new appreciation of Cappadocian pneumatology will enable us to assess more accurately the ecumenical "Nicene Creed" of the Council of Constantinople in 381. The Niceno-Constantinopolitan Creed famously declares that the Holy Spirit is worshipped and glorified with the Father and the Son, but not that it is "God" or "of one being/consubstantial with the Father" as Gregory Nazianzen had strenuously urged when he was archbishop of Constantinople and president of the council. The language of the creed reflects the doctrine of Basil and Gregory of Nyssa more than it does Gregory Nazianzen's—or even Athanasius', for that matter.¹⁴⁶ By contrast with Gregory Nazianzen's full and clear doctrine of the Spirit, the creed of 381 is hardly satisfying—unless of course it is interpreted within the framework of Gregory's theology, as many have done over the centuries. This fact should impress on us how important it is to interpret councils and creeds in light of the theologians who informed and received them, not the other way around.

To the extent that modern theologians have turned to the Cappadocians as traditional resources, they have usually done so while gazing through the thick lenses of other modern theologians and historians such as Adolph von Harnack, Vladimir Lossky and T. F. Torrance; or, when they have read them directly, by dredging for proof texts to validate preconceived systems. When the Cappadocians are studied more closely, however, they have a great deal to contribute to constructive theology, as Pavel Florensky saw clearly in 1914.¹⁴⁷ A more thorough reading would have made a significant impact on the pneumatology of even the most sympathetic modern theologians, from Sergei Bulgakov and Florensky himself¹⁴⁸ to Torrance and Robert Jenson.¹⁴⁹ Many will be surprised to find that Gregory of Nyssa is fairly unhelpful when taken on his own, since he tends to support the Christological one-sidedness

of twentieth-century theology.¹⁵⁰ Yet the Cappadocians as a whole, anchored by Gregory Nazianzen, shed considerable light on the stagnated situation of modern pneumatology.¹⁵¹ Here I identify three main areas in which the Cappadocians still have an important contribution to make.

The first area is the much-debated relationship between the unity or equality of the Trinity and the ordering of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit with respect to each other—a central point of Trinitarian doctrine that affects much of the Church's understanding and experience of the Holy Spirit. More clearly than any other patristic theologian, Gregory Nazianzen shows that the unity and equality of the Trinity are not only compatible with the derivation of the Son and the Spirit from God the Father, but that the monarchy of God the Father is precisely what causes that unity. Where modern readers, from the admiring T. F. Torrance to the critical Wolfhart Pannenberg, assume that divine equality and the ordered structure of eternal derivation are incompatible, the Cappadocians maintain that they are necessarily entailed in one another as the central principle of the divine life. In Gregory Nazianzen's view, and to a lesser extent that of Basil and Gregory of Nyssa, the ordering of the Son and the Spirit under God the Father as their cause produces ontological *equality*, not inequality.¹⁵² Furthermore, in Gregory's work the Trinity is eminently dynamic and inclusive, and the Holy Spirit is the immediate cause of the incorporation of creatures into the divine life¹⁵³—a far cry from the disastrously static Godhead that Jenson finds in Gregory of Nyssa (as interpreted through Lossky and Gregory Palamas).¹⁵⁴ Finally, it is the Son's and the Spirit's eternal generation from God the Father that provides for the real and direct (if also incomplete) knowledge of the divine essence; God is hardly unknown in essence, as Moltmann claims.¹⁵⁵ On this basic matter, the Cappadocians speak to a wide range of modern views, from Western theologians who maintain that order and causal priority preclude ontological equality within the Trinity¹⁵⁶ to Eastern Orthodox claims that Trinitarian personhood holds priority over the divine nature.¹⁵⁷ The more scholars appreciate that Basil and Gregory Nazianzen are rooted in the anti-modalist tradition of Eusebius of Caesarea, the less they will be inclined to characterize the Cappadocians as primarily anti-Arian, homoousian theologians in the mold of Athanasius, or as defaulters from the same. For those who are disposed to imagine that systematic theology and church history are separable, here we have a premier example of just how closely related they are.

A second major area of contribution concerns the Spirit's unique identity or personhood within the eternal life of God and in the divine economy. Gregory Nazianzen's famous definition of the Spirit's generation as procession from the Father clearly distinguishes the Spirit's eternal existence from that of the Son. In his defense of the Spirit's divinity against the Eunomians and Pneumatomachians, Gregory explicitly refutes the charge that procession is insufficient for differentiating the Spirit from the only-begotten Son. As many Eastern and Western theologians have sensed, Gregory's definition

of the Spirit's mode of origin preserves the Spirit's unique personhood within the Trinity and in the divine economy more effectively than Augustine's identification of the Spirit with the love exchanged between the Father and the Son, which has so indelibly formatted Western pneumatology, affecting even those who seek to avoid its difficulties.¹⁵⁸ By holding that the Spirit's generation is indistinguishable from that of the Son without some other structural principle, such as the Spirit's generation from the Father and the Son together, the Augustinian position shares a key premise with Gregory's Eunomian and Pneumatomachian opponents—a fact that has gone almost entirely unnoticed in recent ecumenical theology.¹⁵⁹

For Basil and Gregory Nazianzen, the Spirit's unique procession from God the Father provides for its distinct and fully divine subsistence alongside that of the Son. Gregory's conclusion to the last two *Theological Orations* beautifully illustrates this parity of Son and Spirit. At the end of his formal treatments of Christ and the Spirit, Gregory admonishes his readers to draw near to God both by ascending through the names of Christ and by following the divine illumination of the Spirit.¹⁶⁰ In virtue of their distinct generation and existence, the Son and the Holy Spirit work closely with one another, yet in such a way that preserves an eschatological focus on Christ that is at the same time a vision of the Trinity as a whole. Here again, the genius of the Gregorian-Cappadocian system discerns the necessary correspondence between principles that others have considered mutually exclusive. For all its personal distinctness, the Holy Spirit does not represent a different path of access to the knowledge of God from the path of Jesus Christ; but it uniquely shares with the Son in conveying God's transforming grace and causing believers to participate in the divine nature, in a sense that reaches back to Irenaeus of Lyons and the apostles John and Paul. In this connection, it is significant that neither Basil nor Gregory Nazianzen simply applies to the Holy Spirit the same arguments that they use to establish the divinity of the Son, as they are often thought to do—the more Athanasian Gregory of Nyssa being a somewhat different case here. For Gregory Nazianzen, as we have seen, the Spirit demonstrates its divinity to Christians directly and in its own way, even as it conveys the same divine grace that Christ has conferred through his incarnation, passion, and resurrection. What have often appeared as different Trinitarian models or theological methods—Rowan Williams and Sarah Coakley, for example, speak of the linear or revelatory model versus the incorporative model¹⁶¹—are for Gregory Nazianzen one and the same thing. We could say that Gregory provides an incorporative model that is Christocentric but not strictly linear in the Barthian sense, so that Christology and Pneumatology are inseparable from one another, in either direction.¹⁶² If Gregory and Basil can help to readjust the imbalance of modern Christomonism, they can also prevent the opposite error of simply replacing it with Pneumatomonism, such as one finds in the work of Lampe and at times in Moltmann.¹⁶³

Both of these points are deeply involved in the infamous *filioque* controversy. A close study of the Cappadocians can help us see that the most productive way to approach the problem will be to focus on the larger structural and methodological questions involved, rather than to troll for theologians who do or do not speak of the Spirit existing, proceeding, or being sent through the Son, or to overanalyze the terms beyond their historical meanings. The recent statement on the procession of the Spirit by the Roman Catholic Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity does both.¹⁶⁴ It sets the *filioque* doctrine within a larger theological framework than that provided by Augustine alone, citing Greek fathers such as Gregory Nazianzen and Maximus Confessor, and it seeks to uphold the monarchy of God the Father and to argue against the ontological subordination of the Spirit.¹⁶⁵ Yet in order to reconcile the Cappadocian and Augustinian systems, it presses terms such as *ekporeusis* and *proienai* to a point of technical distinction that they do not possess in Cappadocian theology, thus distorting the Greek system it is trying to engage.¹⁶⁶ At present, it is far from resolved whether and to what extent Augustine's doctrine of the *filioque* and his identification of the Spirit with the love between the Father and the Son reduces the personhood of the Spirit (and that of the Son) and merges the Spirit's distinct identity into the Father-Son relationship in such a way that violates the structural principles of the Trinity found in Greek patristic theology. Like the Nicene Creed itself, the *filioque* controversy must, in any event, be resolved by recourse to the theologians who definitively shaped the doctrine of the Spirit's procession, which means above all comparing the work of Gregory Nazianzen and Augustine more closely. A good starting point would be to recognize the extent to which the Spirit's distinct personhood and its work of creation, redemption, and eschatological perfection are central to the Christian faith and life.¹⁶⁷

It is impossible to appreciate the full significance of the above two points without the third major area, which is the ascetical or spiritual dimension of pneumatology. It is here that the Cappadocian contribution is likely to seem genuinely new to theological discussions since the mid-nineteenth century. One of the most far-reaching aspects of Basil's and Gregory Nazianzen's work is the way they integrate so-called objective and subjective stances through their doctrines of the Holy Spirit. For the Cappadocians, the theological enterprise—and the entire Christian life—represents a particular spiritual or ascetical stance that is uniquely provided by the Holy Spirit; which means that so-called dogmatic and ascetical theology are inseparably involved with one another. For Gregory Nazianzen, Trinitarian theology is based on the presence and work of the Spirit in the Church and in the individual theologian—an approach that I have described elsewhere as “theology of the divine economy,” as opposed to conceiving them as two distinct epistemic spheres.¹⁶⁸ It is no coincidence that in the Cappadocians the theological modes of confession, disputation, and doxology and the language of

purification, illumination, deification, and participation in the Trinity fluidly intermingle in a register that is much richer than models of divine revelation or communication alone. In today's theological climate, the Cappadocian integration of theology and spirituality offers a welcome alternative to the outworn dichotomy between Schleiermacher's subjectivism, which inclines toward subordinationism, and Barthian objectivism, which inclines toward modalism, just as it shows the way beyond the supposed opposition of linear and incorporative Trinitarian models.¹⁶⁹

Finally, Cappadocian pneumatology holds powerful implications for the church's structures of authority and offices of ministry. In the same way that Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit exist and operate distinctly yet also together with one another, the Cappadocians consistently argue that there is a fundamental harmony between the divinization of individual Christians and their participation in the corporate Church, and between the charisma of church leaders and the offices they hold. Gregory Nazianzen is so emphatic on this point that he reminds his episcopal colleagues that it is an outrage to the faith for an ordained leader not to have progressed through the requisite stages of spiritual growth and not to be growing constantly in holiness. In this view, the fabled modern distinction between institutional and charismatic authority is by definition anomalous, and ultimately artificial. A Cappadocian shift of perspective on the Holy Spirit will bring into play a whole range of ascetical concerns, such as prayer, fasting, hospitality, and other bodily practices, as proper theological subjects. It will also entail what Gregory, following Paul and Origen, called the "spiritual" interpretation of scripture, which requires that we continue to repair false divisions among critical biblical study, dogmatic theology, and Christian spirituality. Here lies the potential contribution of the Cappadocians to contemporary pneumatology, in ways that are both traditional and groundbreaking.

NOTES

- 1 For recent accounts of the present renewal, see Bradford E. Hinze and D. Lyle Dabney, "Introduction", in Hinze and Dabney (eds.), *Advents of the Spirit: An Introduction to the Current Study of Pneumatology*, Marquette Studies in Theology 30 (Milwaukee, WI: Marquette University Press, 2001), pp. 14–22; Jürgen Moltmann, *The Spirit of Life: A Universal Affirmation*, trans. Margaret Kohl (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1992), pp. 1–14; and F. LeRon Shults and Andrea Hollingsworth, *The Holy Spirit*, Guides to Theology (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2008).
- 2 In the last century: see Henry Barclay Swete, *The Holy Spirit in the Ancient Church: A Study of Christian Teaching in the Age of the Fathers* (London: MacMillan, 1912), pp. 230–254; Wolf-Dieter Hauschild, *Gottes Geist und der Mensch: Studien zur frühchristlichen Pneumatologie* (Munich: Kaiser, 1972), pp. 285–289; R.P.C. Hanson, *The Search for the Christian Doctrine of God: The Arian Controversy 318–381* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1988), pp. 772–790; Michael Haykin, *The Spirit of God: the Exegesis of 1 and 2 Corinthians in the Pneumatomachian Controversy of the Fourth Century* (New York: E. J. Brill, 1994); Lewis Ayres, *Nicaea and its Legacy: An Approach to Fourth-Century Trinitarian Theology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), pp. 211–218.
- 3 For an explanation for my preference for the term "Trinitarian" over "pro-Nicene," see

- Christopher A. Beeley, *Gregory of Nazianzus on the Trinity and the Knowledge of God: In Your Light We Shall See Light*, Oxford Studies in Historical Theology (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), p. 10 n24.
- 4 Louis Bouyer, *La spiritualité du Nouveau Testament et Peres* (Paris: Aubier, 1966), p. 178.
 - 5 As Anthony Meredith observes in "The Pneumatology of the Cappadocian Fathers and the Creed of Constantinople," *The Irish Theological Quarterly* Vol. 48 (1981), pp. 196–212, at p. 198; see also Philip Rousseau, *Basil of Caesarea* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1994), p. 264.
 - 6 Basil, *Ep.* 71.
 - 7 Eunomius, *apol.* 25.4–5. See also Basil, *Eun.* 2.34: Eunomius disparages the Spirit's nature.
 - 8 Eunomius, *apol.* 20.
 - 9 *Eun.* 3.1–4.
 - 10 *Eun.* 3.2–3.
 - 11 *Eun.* 3.5
 - 12 *Spir.* 19.48; see also 9.22: the Spirit's titles in Scripture reveal its "supreme nature."
 - 13 *Spir.* 23.54.
 - 14 κατὰ δὲ τὴν φύσιν ἢ κοινωνία. *Eun.* 3.2. See also *Spir.* 18.46; 19.48; 27.68. For a catalog of Basil's various statements of the Spirit's "communion" in *Spir.*, see Dörries, *De Spiritu Sancto*, and Ysabel de Andia, "La κοινωμία du Saint Esprit dans le traité *Sur le Saint Esprit de saint Basile*", in eadem and Peter Leander Hofrichter, eds., *Der Heilige Geist im Leben der Kirche: Forscher aus dem Osten und Westen Europas an den Quellen des gemeinsamen Glaubens. Pro Oriente 29* (Innsbruck: Tyrolia-Verlag, 2005), p. 83. For similar statements concerning the Son, see *Eun.* 1.18, 27; 2.12, 28.
 - 15 See, e.g., Eusebius, *eccl. theo.* 3.19.4, on the "communion of glory" of the Father and Son. For Eunomius' denial, see *apol.* 26.
 - 16 *Eun.* 3.1.
 - 17 *Eun.* 3.2. Basil also compares the stars of different glories (1 Cor. 15:41) that have one nature (that of being a star), and human beings, who are glorified in different degrees in the many rooms of God's house (Jn. 14:2) yet have natures like one another.
 - 18 *Ibid.*, 3.3.
 - 19 *Spir.* 26.63.
 - 20 *Eun.* 2.34; *Spir.* 16.37; 26.63; *ep.* 52.4; 251.4.
 - 21 See, e.g., *Spir.* 10.24; 13.29–30; *ep.* 226.3; 236.6.
 - 22 Here Basil still has in mind Eunomius' statement that the Spirit is third in nature. Eunomius does not explicitly deny the Spirit's glory in the *Apology*, though he does by implication in the *Expositio fidei*: nothing divides God's glory (2.9); not even the Son participates in the Father's glory, which is incommunicable (3.11–17); though cf. 4.5–8: the Spirit transcends all creatures in nature and glory (4.5–8).
 - 23 *Eun.* 3.1; see also 3.3, 6; *Spir.* 23.54.
 - 24 The definitive treatment being Eusebius' *Contra Marcellum* and *De ecclesiastica theologia* from the late 330s. Anti-modalist literature continued through the 340s and 350s and would eventually include Basil's own *Contra Sabellianum et Arium et Anomoios*. In *Spir.* 72–74 Basil lists Origen, Gregory Thaumaturgus, Dionysius of Alexandria, and Eusebius among his theological authorities, with no mention of Athanasius.
 - 25 The Son is "a living and active essence" (*Eun.* 2.17).
 - 26 *Eun.* 3.5. The same point underlies Basil's famous argument that the Spirit should be classed in the reality (πράγμα) of sovereign Divinity rather than in that of servile creation: for Divinity has virtue by nature, i.e. intrinsically, whereas creation must achieve it by freewill (*Eun.* 3.2). The distinction between the two πράγματα of God and creation was conventional in homoiousian circles and does not necessarily reflect the influence of Athanasius.
 - 27 *Spir.* 26.63.
 - 28 *Eun.* 2.24; see also 1.23.
 - 29 It is indicative that Epiphanius, who represents the more Athanasian/Paulinian side of the Antiochene church, accuses the Homoiousians of holding the same doctrine of Spirit as the Pneumatomachians—i.e. a subordinationist one (*Panar.* 73.1.7).
 - 30 See esp. Drecoll, *Die Entwicklung der Trinitätslehre des Basilius von Cäsarea. Sein Weg vom*

- Homöusianer zum Neonizäner*, Forschungen zur Kirchen und Dogmengeschichte 66, (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1996); Hildebrand, *Trinitarian Theology*.
- 31 *Ep.* 210.4. The same can be said of *ep.* 236.6; see also *ep.* 105.
- 32 *hom.* 15.3 (468C).
- 33 469A.
- 34 469A; see also *Eun.* 3.7; *Spir.* 18.45.
- 35 469A–B.
- 36 472A; There are several parallels between this passage and *Spir.* 9.22.
- 37 *hom.* 24.4 (PG 31: 609B).
- 38 *hom.* 24.4 (609B).
- 39 *hom.* 24.5 (609B–D).
- 40 612A.
- 41 In *The Cappadocians*, pp. 32–33, Meredith joins the ranks as well, reversing his earlier view to a certain extent.
- 42 *Eun.* 3.2.
- 43 Here we should recall the predominant NT sense of communion being that between God and creatures: see 2 Cor. 13:13; 2 Pt. 1:4.
- 44 Rousseau, *Basil of Caesarea*, p. 267.
- 45 Meredith, *The Cappadocians*, p. 32.
- 46 *Eun.* 3.1.
- 47 A particularly clear example is the confession of faith that Basil provides in his letter to Amphilochius, from January 376 (Loeb date): “I believe in God the Father (Θεὸν Πατέρα); . . . I believe in God the Son (Θεὸν Υἱόν); . . . I believe also in the divine (θεῖον) Holy Spirit” (*ep.* 236.6).
- 48 *Eun.* 3.1.
- 49 *Eun.* 3.2.
- 50 See esp. *Spir.* 6.13–14; 18.45.
- 51 *Eun.* 3.4: the Spirit is not strange or foreign to God; 3.6: the Spirit is “beyond creation”; *ep.* 52.4; 159.2: the Spirit is “not alien from the divine nature”; 226.4.
- 52 See *Eun.* 1.23; 2.22.
- 53 *Eun.* 2.25, 27. See also *ep.* 361 to Apollinarius (assuming authenticity): whatever the *ousia* of the Father is supposed to be, that the Son’s *ousia* must be assumed to be also.
- 54 *ep.* 129.1.
- 55 *Spir.* 26.63. The point accords with the version of the Gloria that Basil defends at the beginning of the work: “Glory to the Father with (μετά) the Son together with (σύν) the Holy Spirit” (*Spir.* 1.3).
- 56 214.4; see also 236.6: fatherhood, sonship, and holiness.
- 57 Likewise, Basil’s statements that the Spirit “proceeds” from the Father (*Eun.* 2.34; *ep.* 125.3; *hom.* 24.6; *Spir.* 9.22) stand in parallel to similar statements about the Son (*Eun.* 2.25, 27) and are otherwise relatively weak, thus indicating that this term of not a description of the Spirit’s unique relation of origin.
- 58 *Hom.* 24.6, 613A (C. Sab. et Ar. et Anom., after 372). Cf. his positive treatment of the Son’s manner of being at *Eun.* 1.15–16; 2.28. Elsewhere Basil attempts a description in terms of the breath of God’s mouth (*Spir.* 18.46), and he entertains the idea that the Spirit is “from God uncreatedly” (*ep.* 125.3, from Eustathius’ statement of faith).
- 59 See *hom.* 24.4.
- 60 *Spir.* 16.38.
- 61 *Ibid.*
- 62 *Spir.* 9.22. Teachers of English-speaking students should be aware that there is a significant mistranslation of this passage in the St. Vladimir’s translation of Anderson. Jackson’s translation in the NPNF is more reliable.
- 63 *Spir.* 16.39. Gen. 2:7; Jn. 20:22–23.
- 64 *Eun.* 3.4, on Job 33.4. See also *Eun.* 2.21: creation occurs as the divine will takes its origin from the Primal Cause (the Father) like a spring, and “proceeds to activity” through his own image, God the Word, —with no mention of the Spirit, who otherwise appears several times in book 2.
- 65 *Eun.* 3.1.
- 66 While “God” is the creator and judge of all things (*Hex.* 1.3–4), the Spirit merely gives heat

- to the waters that have been made, so that they can produce life (*Hex.* 2.6, on Genesis 1:2). See also *hom. in Ps.* 32: the Word gives existence to all things, while it is the Spirit that makes rational beings holy.
- 67 *hom. in Ps.* 48; see also *Spir.* 1.2.
- 68 Hauschild, *Gottes Geist*, p. 285, following Dörries, *De Spiritu Sancto*.
- 69 See esp. *Spir.* 10.36; 15.35.
- 70 *hom on bap.* 2.
- 71 *Spir.* 16.40.
- 72 “Pneumatology of the Cappadocian Fathers”, pp. 203–204.
- 73 E.g., *Eun.* 3.4.
- 74 *Spir.* 16.35.
- 75 *Spir.* 15.35. See *ep.* 2 to Gregory Nazianzen.
- 76 *Eun.* 3.5; see also *Spir.* 26.61.
- 77 See *Moralia* 60; *Long Rules* Pref.
- 78 *Spir.* 26.62–63.
- 79 *Ibid.*, 24.55.
- 80 *Ibid.*, 16.39.
- 81 See “On the Judgment of God”; *Long Rules* 7.2.
- 82 On which, see Harriet Ann Luckman, “Pneumatology and Asceticism in Basil of Caesarea: Roots and Influence to 381” (PhD. diss., Marquette University, 2001).
- 83 *Eun.* 2.7; see also 1.1 on Basil’s general intent to follow the Scriptures; 2.2; and *passim*.
- 84 *Eun.* 2.15.
- 85 *Eun.* 3.6–7.
- 86 Origen, *princ.* pref.4.
- 87 Origen, *princ.* 1.3.
- 88 Basil himself cites Origen as an authority at *Spir.* 73, along with Eusebius, Gregory Thaumaturgus and others. The tradition of influence is here well laid-out.
- 89 *ep.* 214.4; 236. Cf. the earlier distinction between being and particular properties (ἰδιώματα or ἰδιότητες) in *Eun.* 2.28. Basil’s scheme appears to be more Stoic than Platonic, although the matter is debated. Reinhard Hübner’s article still commands the field: “Gregor von Nyssa als Verfasser der sog. Ep. 8 des Basilius. Zum unterschiedlichen Verständnis der οὐσία bei den kappadozischen Brüdern”, in *Epektasis: Mélanges patristiques offerts à Jean Daniélou*, ed. Jacques Fontaine and Charles Kannengiesser (Paris: Beauchesne, 1972), pp. 462–490.
- 90 *or.* 1.7.
- 91 τῆς ἀρχικῆς καὶ μακαρίας Τριάδος, *or.* 2.36. For other early confessions, see *or.* 2.36–38; 3.6; 6.4, 11–13, 22.
- 92 It employs only biblical terms, speaking of the “Divinity” (θεότης), while avoiding the contested language of being (οὐσία).
- 93 See, e.g., *or.* 22.12; 31.33; 40.41, 45.
- 94 *or.* 11.6.
- 95 On the different uses of the term Πνευματομάχοι by the three Cappadocians, see Beeley, *Gregory of Nazianzus*, pp. 29 n88 and 157 n14.
- 96 Or, “the holy and divine Spirit” (τῷ ἁγίῳ Πνεύματι καὶ Θεῷ).
- 97 *or.* 12.6.
- 98 Or: “the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Spirit is God” (Θεὸν τὸν Πατέρα, Θεὸν τὸν Υἱόν, Θεὸν, εἰ μὴ τραχύνη, τὸ Πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον, μίαν φύσιν ἐν τρισὶν ἰδιότησι); *or.* 33.16.
- 99 See *or.* 31.3.
- 100 *or.* 34.8.
- 101 See, e.g., *or.* 38.9.
- 102 *or.* 41.9.
- 103 *or.* 31.29.
- 104 Definitively launched into current Trinitarian thought by John Zizioulas’ *Being as Communion: Studies in Personhood and the Church* (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 1993).
- 105 These include references to Arius (*or.* 21.13) and the Eunomians (*or.* 29.14).
- 106 On the communion of human beings with God, which is most prominent in the personal

- poetry, see *or.* 41.12; *carm.* 2.1.11.1226 (*De vita sua*); 2.1.39.91; 2.1.48.69; 2.1.83.3; God's communion with human nature in the incarnation: *or.* 38.13 = 45.9; believers' communion in Christ's baptism and cross, *carm.* 1.1.10.60 (see also 1.2.22.76), in the sufferings of God, *or.* 26.12; *carm.* 1.2.34.239; in the Holy Spirit, *ep.* 168.1. On the NT meanings, see above, n. 43.
- 107 On Gregory's relation to Athanasius, see Beeley, *Gregory of Nazianzus*, pp. 277–283; on his relation to Eusebian theological tradition, see pp. 309–316.
- 108 For textual references, see *ibid.*, pp. 209, 219–220.
- 109 The idea appears in the early statement *or.* 2.36–38, cited above. For a full discussion of the monarchy, with references, see *ibid.*, pp. 201–217.
- 110 *or.* 31.10.
- 111 This is especially evident in Gregory's most important treatment of the Trinity, *or.* 25.15–18, where the very existence of the Divinity itself is seen to be dependent on the unique identities of the three persons.
- 112 Jn. 15:26; and cognates: τὸ ἐκπορευτόν, ἐκπορεύεσθαι, *or.* 31.8.16–18; τὸ ἐκπορευόμενον: 29.2. In later orations, Gregory uses as synonyms προίενα (25.15) and πρόοδος (25.15; 39.12), and, interestingly, ἡ ἐκπεμψις, "being sent" (25.16). Gregory's use of the Aristotelian term τὸ πρόβλημα, "emission," in *or.* 29.2 is merely rhetorical.
- 113 Given the number of texts that have been lost, it is impossible to say whether previous Homoiousians made a similar move. The precedent of Origen is difficult to assess for the same reason. Marcellus and Eusebius employed the term, with reference to Jn. 15:26, in their debate over the unity versus plurality of the Trinity; however, neither arrives at the signification that Gregory does: both apply it equally to the Son's generation, while Eusebius interprets it as referring specifically to the Spirit's mission in the economy (Marcellus, *frag.* 67–68 Klostermann; Eusebius, *eccl. theo.* 3.4–5). The earlier witness of Asterius, to which Marcellus refers (Asterius, *frag.* 59), is unclear from the text that remains. An important contemporary witness is Epiphanius, who in the late 370s uses the term in a way remarkably similar to Gregory, if not as strongly and clearly (*Panar.* 37.4.9; 67.56.10; 74.4.1 and 74.9.9–10.2 [from the earlier *Ancoratus*]; 76.44.7); it is unlikely that Gregory knew Epiphanius' work.
- 114 See *or.* 31.7–8.
- 115 Gregory confesses the Trinity in simple, biblical terms, as opposed to those of pagan Greek philosophy or literature: "Limiting ourselves to our own terms, we admit 'the Unbegotten,' 'the Begotten,' and 'the One who proceeds from the Father' (τὸ ἀγέννητον εἰσάγομεν, καὶ τὸ γεννητόν, καὶ τὸ ἐκ τοῦ Πατρὸς ἐκπορευόμενον), as God the Word himself says somewhere" (*or.* 29.2). See also 25.16: the unique characteristic (ἴδιον) of the Father is unbegottenness (ἡ ἀγεννησία), of the Son, begottenness (ἡ γέννησις), and of the Spirit, being sent (ἡ ἐκπεμψις).
- 116 *or.* 31.1.
- 117 Although baptism is the paradigmatic instance of divinization by the Spirit, the Spirit also works in the believer before and after the sacrament. See *or.* 31.29.
- 118 *or.* 31.28.
- 119 *carm.* 1.1.3.13–14.
- 120 As in *or.* 31.28: "From the Spirit comes our regeneration, and from our regeneration our recreation, and from our recreation our acquaintance with the honor of the one who recreates us."
- 121 See the testimonia of Scripture given in *or.* 31.29, which comes *after* the argument from divinization.
- 122 *or.* 41.11.
- 123 See esp. Jn. 14:26; 16:12.
- 124 *or.* 2.39: God can be known only by the work of the Spirit, who purifies and illuminates the theologian.
- 125 *carm.* 1.1.3.1–4.
- 126 A theological and spiritual superiority which Karl Holl observed in his 1904 *Amphilochius von Ikonium in seinem Verhältnis zu den grossen Kappadoziern* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr), pp. 159, 163, 167.
- 127 For a composite summary of Gregory's pneumatology, see Martien Parmentier's Oxford dissertation, "Saint Gregory of Nyssa's Doctrine of the Holy Spirit", printed in *Ἐκκλησιαστικὸς Φάρος* Vol. 58 (1976), pp. 41–100, 387–444; Vol. 59 (1977), pp. 323–429. On pneumatic language in Gregory's baptismal and eucharistic theology, see Monique Alex-

- andre, "L'Esprit saint: sacrements, vie spirituelle, eschatologie chez Grégoire de Nysse," in Andia and Hofrichter, eds., *Der Heilige Geist im Leben der Kirche*.
- 128 Not in an automatic or instantaneous sense, for the water of baptism gives life only if one is sanctified. *Maced.* 105. References to Gregory of Nyssa's works are by page number to the Jaeger series, *Gregorii Nysseni Opera*, except where indicated otherwise.
- 129 Martin Laird, *Gregory of Nyssa and the Grasp of Faith: Union, Knowledge, and Divine Presence*. Oxford Early Christian Studies (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).
- 130 It may also speak against the work's authenticity, which, in my view, has not been conclusively demonstrated. In addition to the anomalous teaching on the Spirit, the work expresses little of Gregory's characteristically contemplative spirituality, which would be expected in such a summary work. It obviously bears a sort of Gregorian provenance, but it is not certain (nor is it impossible) that it comes from Gregory himself.
- 131 See *Maced.* 94; *Eun.* 204–06; on the model of Basil, *Spir.* 21.52–53.
- 132 See *Maced.* 98, 105, possibly in connection with Athanasius, *Ep. Serap.* 1.9, 23. Like Athanasius, Gregory also does not equate image and likeness, as do Basil and Origen (*princ.* 3.6.1). An interesting exception to Gregory's normal pattern is his treatment of the Spirit in *or. cat.* 2, which presents an almost exclusively anti-modalist position, arguing for the Spirit's distinct subsistence but not its unity or co-equality with the Father and the Son.
- 133 *Maced.* 100.
- 134 *Maced.* 104.
- 135 *instit.* 42.8f.
- 136 See *deit.* 573C (PG vol. 46).
- 137 *Maced.* 90. See also *Eust.* 6: In reply to Eustathius' report of Macedonian accusations of tritheism, he announces his method of approach simply: "Let the Scriptures decide."
- 138 E.g., *Maced.* 92: "The Holy Spirit is called divine by both the Scriptures and the fathers." See also the strange argument in *De Deitate Filii et Spir. Sanct.*: although Gregory's opponents claim that Scripture does not say "divinity" with reference to the Spirit, on account of which it is therefore not divine (573C), the divine nature is inexpressible anyway, and "divinity" signifies seeing, which surely the Spirit does (576A). Or, alternatively, the Scriptures plainly show the Spirit to be simple, like the divine nature; therefore it is divine (*Maced.* 92).
- 139 *Maced.* 94–96; see also *Eust.* 13–14.
- 140 E.g. in the *Life of Moses*.
- 141 Martin Parmentier concludes that Gregory of Nyssa "has no systematic and coherent opinions on the problem of grace and synergy." Martin Parmentier, "Gregory of Nyssa's Doctrine of the Holy Spirit," p. 416.
- 142 E.g., *Antirr.* 221–223. See Eusebius, *HE* 1.13.13, 15; *Dem. evang.* 4.15.
- 143 *or. dom.* 3.
- 144 *Maced.* 102–103; see also *Eust.* 16.
- 145 Hence it is possible to write an accomplished study of Gregory's mystical theology with hardly any mention of the Holy Spirit: see Walther Völker, *Gregor von Nyssa als Mystiker* (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1955). For further analysis, see Beeloy, Gregory of Nazianzus, pp. 303–309.
- 146 Basil, *ep.* 159.2 speaks of conglorification, but not co-worship. In Gregory of Nyssa, *Maced.* 96–8, the worship, nature, and activity of the Spirit are linked with the Father and the Son. For recent attempts to justify the creed's shortcomings by way of Basil and/or Gregory of Nyssa, see Ayres, *Nicaea and its Legacy*, p. 257; Meredith, "Pneumatology of the Cappadocian Fathers."
- 147 Pavel Florensky, *The Pillar and Ground of the Truth: An Essay in Orthodox Theodicy in Twelve Letters*, trans. and annotated by Boris Jakim from the Russian original *Stolp i Utverzhdenie Istiny*; intro. by Richard F. Gustafson (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997).
- 148 Florensky reads the entire fourth century as being miraculously shaped by the Nicene homoousion. He thus accepts the conventional view that the Cappadocians are staunch homoousians and *de facto* Athanasians, *against* the homoiousian tradition in which they in fact stood. See *Pillar and Ground of the Truth*, pp. 39, 85.
- 149 See Sergius Bulgakov, *The Comforter*, trans. Boris Jakim (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2004, from the 1936 original), pp. 28–40; Thomas Torrance, *The Trinitarian Faith: The Evangelical Theology of the Ancient Catholic Church* (New York: T&T Clark, 1988), pp. 319–322; and Robert Jenson, *Systematic Theology*, vol. 1 (New York: Oxford

- University Press, 1997), pp. 152–153 and *passim*. Jenson’s citation of Basil, *Spir.* 16.37 inclines toward a more distinct appreciation (p. 153). See also John Polkinghorne, “Faith in the Holy Spirit” in idem. and Michael Welker, *Faith in the Living God: A Dialogue* (London: SPCK, 2001), p. 72, which follows Lossky; and John McIntyre, *The Shape of Pneumatology: Studies in the Doctrine of the Holy Spirit* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1997), chap. 4, which adopts Barthian lenses.
- 150 Including Barth, Rahner, Jüngel, and even Balthasar, who relies extensively on Gregory of Nyssa.
- 151 Among other works noted here, see the recent attempts to incorporate Cappadocian themes by Lucas F. Mateo-Seco, *Teología Trinitaria: Dios Espíritu Santo* (Madrid: Ediciones Rialp, 2005) and René Coste, *L’Évangile de l’Esprit: Pour une théologie et une spiritualité intégrantes de l’Esprit Saint* (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 2006).
- 152 For a full account of Gregory’s position and the surrounding interpretive problems, see Christopher Beeley, “Divine Causality and the Monarchy of God the Father in Gregory of Nazianzus,” *Harvard Theological Review* Vol. 100 no. 2 (2007), pp. 199–214; and idem., *Gregory of Nazianzus*, pp. 201–217.
- 153 On which, see Beeley, *Gregory of Nazianzus*, pp. 194–201 and *passim*; and the similar definition (without reference to Gregory) in Jenson, *Systematic Theology*, vol. 1, p. 160: “To say that the Holy Spirit is without qualification ‘one of the Trinity’ is to say that the dynamism of God’s life is a narrative causation in and so of God.”
- 154 A similar reading of Eastern Orthodox pneumatology that omits the Cappadocians in favor of Gregory Palamas and the Macarian homilies is Marie-Joseph Guillon, *L’expérience de l’Esprit Saint en orient et en occident*, pref. Olivier Clément (Saint-Maur: Parole et Silence, 2000), chap. 2.
- 155 Jürgen Moltmann, “The Trinitarian Personhood of the Holy Spirit” in Hinze and Dabney, eds., *Advents of the Spirit*, pp. 302–314, at p. 305.
- 156 E.g., Wolfhart Pannenberg, *Systematic Theology*, 3 vols., trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1991), Vol. I, pp. 279–280, 322–323, 385; Jenson, *Systematic Theology*, Vol. I, p. 152. Here we must include Bulgakov as well: *Comforter*, pp. 29f.
- 157 E.g., John Meyendorff, *Byzantine Theology*, p. 183; Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*.
- 158 The Augustinian framework causes problems, e.g., for Pannenberg’s understanding of the Spirit’s personhood (*Systematic Theology*, Vol. I, p. 429; Vol. II, p. 30), despite his criticism of it (Vol. I, p. 316). Likewise affected is Thomas Weinandy’s proposal for understanding the Spirit as the one in whom the Father eternally begets the Son (*The Father’s Spirit of Sonship: Reconceiving the Trinity*, Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1995).
- 159 See Gregory Nazianzen, *or.* 29.16; 31.7–9; and Beeley, “Divine Causality,” p. 208n60.
- 160 *or.* 30.21; 31.33.
- 161 Rowan Williams, “Wort und Geist” in Klaus Kremkau (ed.), *Das Religiöse Bewusstsein und der Heilige Geist in der Kirche*. Beiheft zur Ökumenischen Rundschau 40 (Frankfurt: Verlag Otto Lembeck, 1980), pp. 77–94, anthologized in English as “Word and Spirit” in idem., *On Christian Theology* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2000), pp. 107–127, introduced a theme later developed by Sarah Coakley, “Why Three? Some Further Reflections on the Origins of the Doctrine of the Trinity,” in Coakley and David A. Pailin, eds., *The Making and Remaking of Christian Doctrine: Essays in Honour of Maurice Wiles* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), pp. 29–56.
- 162 A point beautifully illustrated in Gregory’s *or.* 31.29.
- 163 On this point Staniloae is especially strong, and serves to correct an error of Lossky’s: “Trinitarian Relations and the Life of the Church” in idem., *Theology and the Church*, trans. Robert Barringer, forward by John Meyendorff (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 1980), pp. 22–25. See also the comment of Rowan Williams to the same effect: “Spirit is the pressure upon us towards Christ’s relation with the Father” (“Word and Spirit,” p. 109; see also p. 124).
- 164 “The Greek and Latin Traditions Regarding the Procession of the Holy Spirit,” *L’Osservatore Romano*, Weekly Edition, 20 September 1995, pp. 3 and 6; reprinted in Eugene Rogers, ed., *The Holy Spirit: Classic and Contemporary Readings* (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009), pp. 82–90.
- 165 *Ibid.*, pp. 84, 87.

- 166 *Ibid.*, pp. 85–86.
- 167 See, e.g., the key statements at the climax of Gregory's fifth *Theological Oration* (or. 31.28–31).
- 168 See *Gregory of Nazianzus*, pp. 194–201.
- 169 Hence Eugene Rogers rightly perceives in Gregory's work an authoritative vantage point from which to critique the Barthian approach: see *After the Spirit: A Constructive Pneumatology from Resources Outside the Modern West, Radical Traditions* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2005), p. 21, and a pneumatology that is fundamentally narrational (p. 56, on Gregory's or. 31.29; see also p. 162).