

Essay

The Tritheist Controversy of the Sixth Century with English Translations of Neglected Syriac Quotations from Works of Earlier Church Fathers, Used by Peter of Callinicus in His Polemic Against Damian of Alexandria (*Contra Damianum*)

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Abstract: An arrangement of Patristic quoted sources translated from Greek into Syriac were used by Peter of Callinicus in his works against Damian of Alexandria within the sixth-century Tritheist Controversy. Exemplifying one useful role for a translator, the quotations have been extracted and saved from inaccessibility in Peter's very hefty volumes and presented side-by-side, author-by-author in checked and (where necessary) revised English. This not only better clarifies the argumentative thrust of Peter's diatribes and how he himself translates Greek into a Semitic tongue, but it will serve Patristic scholarship in showing how the thoughts of well-known Greek Fathers are conveyed in Syriac in the contexts of earlier theological debates. A key theme of this presentation is the Tritheist Controversy which broke out more than a hundred years after the acrimonious controversy over the Council of Chalcedon had cooled down. The focus is mainly on the dispute over the doctrine of the Trinity between the so-named miaphysites, the Syrian Patriarch Peter of Callinicus/um (d. 591) and Coptic Pope Damian of Alexandria (d. 605), which, in turn, led to the schism between Alexandria and Antioch lasting about 30 years. It comprises two parts: (i) A brief outline of the origins, narrative, and postlude of the Tritheist controversy of Peter with Damian and its doctrinal issues; (ii) identifying, enlisting and reproducing numerous seminal quotations in English from the works of earlier Church Fathers contained in Peter's *magnum opus* in support and in refutation of (or 'against') Damian of Alexandria; and (iii) reflection on issues of translating Patristic texts.



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1. The Treatise Against Damian

Those of us who have become interested in the controversy between Peter of Callinicus the 'miaphysite' Patriarch of Antioch (581–591)¹ and Damian (578–605), his counterpart and spiritual superior of Alexandria, will know that they fell out and that they fell out over the doctrine of the Trinity. When the dust had settled on their graves and when churchmen turned their minds to assuaging the bitterness of the rift between fellow-believers, men pronounced the whole quarrel a mere logomachy, a battle of words in which the contestants had been at cross-purposes (see Michael the Syrian, *Chronicle* [ed. Chabot (repr. 1963)], 10,26 [vol. 2, p. 391 col. 1]). No doubt these churchmen were in part, at least, right—even if in matters of this kind, ecclesiastical diplomacy, as so often happens, puts *akribeia* to flight and remoulds the past to its own liking. No doubt, too, as Gregory the Theologian observes (*Oratorio* 31,2) (and this is for both our contestants, Peter and Damian, almost

the equal of a divine utterance) “men must have something to blaspheme or life would be unliveable”—or, to paraphrase more charitably, a living theology demands adventurous debate, and the adventure runs the perpetual risk of turning into temerarious blasphemy. No doubt, moreover, a calm student of church affairs would have good cause to point to this quarrel as one further symptom of the rickety structure of a miaphysite church which lacked secular authority to moderate its internal doctrinal disagreements. All that would be true, or at least, partly true. Yet it would all, also, be beside the point. Peter and Damian were in dispute about the substance of the faith. That is what they believed and, if we are to understand them, what we must try to believe too. When Peter called Damian a ‘Sabellian’ and Damian retorted by calling Peter a ‘Tritheist’ each meant what he said.

About 586 Peter of Callinicus became involved in a stormy controversy with his patron Damian, Patriarch of Alexandria, over a problem which arose during the course of anti-Tritheist polemics. Damian was accused by Peter of Sabellianism on the grounds that in the course of refuting Tritheism he had taught that the divine hypostases were themselves the characteristic properties of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Thereupon Damian accused his critic of Tritheist sympathies. What follows is a brief word about Peter’s writings.² But I will confine myself here to those which contain the seminal quotations from the works of St. Severus of Antioch, viz. in Peter’s *Anti-Tritheist Dossier* and *Adversus Damianum*.

1.1. The Anti-Tritheist Dossier

Peter wrote at least three treatises one of which is his *Anti-Tritheist Dossier* which also concerns us here and which has survived in only one manuscript, viz. British Library Add. 12155, containing an extensive florilegium (hereafter using edn. by Ebied, Van Roey and Wickham [Orient. Lovan. Analec. 10] as ATD). It bears the title: “Rebuttal of those who are charged with Sabellianism and who therefore maliciously spread the libellous report about us of holding the heathen dogmas of the Tritheists”. The writing, then, is not directed against that Tritheists (as (Baumstark 1922, p. 177) has wrongly suggested) but against people accused of Sabellianism, the heresy diametrically opposed to Tritheism. The author’s aim is not to refute either Trithiesm or Sabellianism but simply to prove that the accusation of Tritheism advanced by his Sabellian, or Sabellianizing, opponents is utterly baseless and that, quite the contrary, he has from the start of his Patriarchate (581) up to the moment of composing his dossier of documents (586/7) always fought against that heresy (ATD, pp. 15–19). The Anti-Tritheist Dossier of Peter of Callinicus forms part of the controversy between the two Patriarchs of Antioch and Alexandria. It was connected with the struggle against Tritheism and started as a result of Damian’s refutation of Tritheism. The work, which is evidently incomplete and may even be a portion of the lost Book I *Adversus Damianum*, is the dossier of documents (prefaced by a short Introduction) assembled by Peter to show how he and Damian were once friends, how they had fallen out and how shamefully he (Peter) has been maltreated and slandered. Peter will prove that so far from being a tritheist himself, as Damian alleges, he has been a highly successful combatant of tritheists with one outstanding convert to show for it; besides which Damian in earlier days wrote him extremely flattering letters, congratulating him on his prowess in the battle. Moreover, when Peter had arranged to meet Damian to sort the issues out in Egypt, the whole thing turned out to be a fiasco, for which Damian was to blame. That in outline is the subject matter.

1.2. Peter’s Magnum Opus: Contra Damianum

As mentioned above, Damian accused his critic (Peter) of Tritheist sympathies. Peter, in turn, put together his *magnum opus*: *Against Damian* (hereafter using edn. by Ebied, Van Roey and Wickham, *Contra Damianum* [Corp. Christianum Ser. Graec. vols. 29, 32, 35, 54],

Bks. I–IV as CD) in which he rebuts the thesis defended by Damian in his refutation of the tritheists, that the characteristic properties of the divine persons, i.e., Fatherhood, Sonship and Procession are the Hypostases themselves. What this article reveals is that the Patristic doctrine of the Trinity inherited by Peter and Damian alike was, if not actually inconsistent, at least expressed in various and quite puzzling ways.

Let it be clear that we lack all but fragments of CD, which was originally written in Greek, which is why it stands edited and translated (along with other works by Peter) in the Greek Series of *Corpus Christianorum* series as just indicated. The only extant versions of it are in Syriac, in fact translated into Syriac by Peter, and so what follows are crucial extracts from a translation of the Greek into the most important Semitic language used for Christian theology in the Eastern churches of the Patristic period. The express purpose of the presentation of the extracts, then, has to be carefully stated. Below are sequences of translated quotations of Greek-writing Fathers (from St Athanasius of Alexandria to St Theodosius of Alexandria) (listed as i–viii above) out of Peter’s Greek translated into Syriac. The material has already been Englished from the Syriac by the present writer, Rifaat Ebied, with Albert Van Roey and Lionel Wickham, yet the quotations lie rather locked away within five huge volumes of both the *Orientalia Lovaniensis Analecta* and *Corpus Christianorum Series, Series Graeca* that translate all of Peter of Callinicus’s extant writings on this stormy controversy. The object here is lift these quotations out of these dense volumes, where they are likely to fall neglected, and, by first checking over them again, put them into an organized arrangement (in the order of their appearance in Peter’s works) so that modern Patristic scholars can see them side-by-side or in clusters for comparative study. By doing so, researchers can then gauge their significance in the transferences from Greek into Syriac thought and clarify the role and effects of quoting authoritative texts of famed Fathers in the development of theological arguments. Instead of leaving these important quotations in textual obscurity, the case of Peter of Callinicus confirms that a key task of translators is not only to present whole texts, or single texts as wholes, but, where pertinent, to extract passages that can throw further light on the thought of quoted Fathers as expressed in their earlier contexts, to test the accuracy of the extant texts we have for them, let alone help us to assess the difficulties of conveying Greek theology into a Semitic tongue. It should be remembered that most of Peter’s quotations derive from works written about earlier and different debates than the one Peter was involved in, and various scholars have already stated their hopes for an easier way to perceive more readily what the Callinicus’ quotations can tell us about earlier doctrinal debates, not just those around alleged Tritheism in the sixth century. What follows, then, is meant to be of wider service to Patristic study, and not merely of relevance to researching one, albeit crucial, episode, but in opening up new perspectives on the central doctrinal debates of the fourth and fifth centuries.

2. Quotations in English from the Works of Earlier Church Fathers Contained in Peter’s *magnum opus* in Support and in Refutation of (or ‘Against’) Damian of Alexandria

2.1. Quotations from the Works of St. Athanasius of Alexandria (ca. 296–373)³

In presenting these quotations in his surviving *magnum opus*, Peter introduces St. Athanasius the Great with such wonder-inducing appellations as “mighty and apostolic”; “luminary of the Church”; “exact and vigilant” and “guide to truth”.

The translation of these quotations is already published and may be found in (Ebied 2014, pp. 3–23).

2.2. Quotations from the Works of St. Basil of Caesarea (ca. 330–379)⁴

2.2.1. From *Adversus Eunomium* Bk. 1 (for the Greek, see Patr. Graec. vol. 29, cols. 497–572; using Sesboue ed., [Sourc. Chrét. 299], pp. 140–268)

Basil the Great explains this, writing as follows in the first discourse *Against Eunomius*: I, for my part, think the title ‘ingenerate’ harmonizes especially well with our notions. But inasmuch as it has no place in Bible and is the starting point for their blasphemy, I declare that it could rightly be suppressed, the word ‘Father’ being equivalent in meaning to ‘ingenerate’ besides bringing in the idea of the Son by the connected relationship. And again: Let us not, therefore, call him ‘ingenerate’ but ‘Father’ unless we are going to be wiser than the teachings of the Saviour, who said: “Go baptize in the name of the Father” [Matt 28:19]—not ‘in the name of the ingenerate’ (CD vol. 29, p. 68).

It has been demonstrated irrefragably that this divinely inspired father [**Basil**] takes ‘ingenerate’ (ἄγεννητος) like the other titles, too, as outside the substance. He shall teach us again, too, how ingeneracy, though following it, is said to be outside God the Father’s hypostasis. He speaks as follows, then, when demolishing and deriding the feeble onslaughts of impious Eunomius by rebuttals in the first of the books addressed to him: Having declared that “if he is not prior to himself nor is there another to be prior to him, ingeneracy must follow him”, he subsequently becomes aware that, as a consequence of the premisses, the argument has come out to the opposite conclusion. For if ingeneracy follows God, it evidently follows him externally; now what is outside God is not his substance and therefore the argument collapses. To avoid this fate what does he do? Paying scant attention to the derision he was likely to incur by uttering non-sequiturs, he corrected the argument and brought it to the desired end, by saying: “Rather ingeneracy is the substance itself”. But this is quite out of key with the preceding words. For how can God have the ingeneracy, which both follows him and does not follow him but instead is based in the very concept of the substance? But yet he does not allow the sophism to be demolished entirely. For if, having said that ingeneracy follows Him, he had let the argument rest here, he would have been unable to call “ingeneracy” the substance of the God of all, or to prove that the Only-begotten Son is alien in respect of the substance to him, since no external accompaniment can separate the affinity of substance between Father and Son. But now by adding “but rather ingeneracy is the substance itself”, he has proved that whatever God is, is ingeneracy. That he is preparing all this as a course for the onslaught of his blasphemy he will show when he has progressed somewhat in the argument. His initial statement, indeed, has been seen to be a consequence of the truth of the realities, by following from the points conceded. But the final addition has been tossed in from heretical thought, our author having no compunction at all towards making a *volte face* to set the argument straight. For how can the same thing follow God and be God, when it is well-known to everybody that what follows is different from what it follows (Ibid., pp. 124, 126)?

Basil the Great is a trustworthy witness on this point when in the first book *Against Eunomius* he says the following: Our Lord Jesus Christ in his statements about himself, revealing the Godhead’s generosity and providential grace towards men, indicated this by some marks viewed as belonging with him, calling himself “door”, “way”, “bread”, “vine”, “shepherd” and “light” (John 10:9; 14:6; 6:35; 15:5; 10:14; 8:12), though He is not polyonymous, for the names do not all have the same bearing as one another. “Light” has one meaning, “vine” another and “shepherd” another; but being single in respect of the substrate, one substance simple and incomposite, he names himself differently at different times, suiting the different titles to the conceptions. For he attributes the various names to himself in accordance with the difference in the activities and by relation to the recipients of his benefits (Ibid., p. 230).

For **Basil the Great** said: Thus, evil seems not only to oppose good but also itself (Ibid., p. 286).

Now it is especially worth noting in addition to this what wise **Basil** says in a passage not quoted by us hitherto. He writes as follows in the first book *Against Eunomius* and shakes down his [Eunomius's] whole mischief: Amongst the names used of God, then, some are indicative of what belongs with God, but some, on the contrary, of what does not belong with him. From both these an impression, so to say, of God is created for us: from the denial of things inappropriate to him and from the acknowledgement of things belonging to him. For instance, when we name him 'incorruptible', we are potentially saying to ourselves or our listeners: 'Do not imagine God as subject to corruption'. When too we name him 'invisible' we are saying: 'Do not imagine that he can be apprehended by the eye's sense'. Now in this way too when we name him 'ingenerate' (Syr. ܐܠܗܐ) we are saying: 'You should think of God's being as dependent on no cause or higher principle'. And, in general, from each of these we learn not to lapse into unseemly notions in our ideas about God. Therefore, to recognize the special property of God, we forbid one another in talking about God to debase our notions to what is unfitting, so that men may never imagine God to be one of the corruptible beings or one of the visible or one of the created beings. And so through all these negative terms there is a sort of denial of what is alien, our understanding being illuminated and rejecting ideas of what does not belong to him. Again, we call God 'good', 'just', 'creator' and 'judge' and everything else of this kind. As, then, in the former case, the expressions indicated a denial and negation of what is alien to God, so here they indicate the positing and the existence of what is God's own and viewed as fittingly belonging with him. From each of the two kinds of appellation we learn either about the existence of what belongs to him or about the non-existence of what does not belong to him. Now 'ingenerate' is one of the non-existent things, for it indicates the fact that God has no generation. We shall not argue over whether one is to denominate this 'negation', 'prohibition' or 'denial' or whatever you like. But that 'ingenerate' does not indicate any of the things God has, has, I think, been sufficiently ascertained in what has been said. The substance, on the other hand, is not something God does not have, but is the very being of God, which it would be the height of folly to count amongst the non-existents (Syr. ܐܠܗܐ ܐܝܢ). For if the substance were among the non-existents, how could any other of the things mentioned exist? But 'ingenerate' has been proved to be reckoned along with the non-existents. Therefore, he who states that this term is indicative of the substance is a fraud (Ibid., pp. 320, 322).

Therefore, let us investigate this matter before those others. Let us clarify our understanding on this point with the help of the fathers' words and thoughts. **Basil**, then wise in things divine, wrote in the *Refutation*, instructing us as follows: 'Ingenerate', if it is a name, is not a substance, for names are indicative of substances, and are not themselves substance. Again, in the first book *Against Eunomius* he also says the following: Among the names used of God, then, some are indicative of what belongs with God but some, on the contrary, of what does not belong with him. From both these an impression, so to say, of God is created for us: from the denial of things inappropriate to him and from the acknowledgment of things belonging with him. And later on, again: We call God 'good', 'just', 'creator' and 'judge' and everything else of this kind. As, then, in the former case the expressions indicated a denial and negation of what is alien to God, so here they indicate the positing and the existence of what is God's own and viewed as fittingly belonging with him (CD vol. 32, pp. 196, 198).

Wise **Basil**, then, spoke in his first book *Against Eunomius* as follows: It would be pleasant for me, then, to ask him whether he preserves this goodwill alike towards all the things said about God or only with regard to this word? For if he regards nothing at all

by mental invention lest he be thought to adorn God with human appellations, he will acknowledge what are spoken of God to be, all alike, substance. How, then, can it fail to be ludicrous to declare that creativity is substance, or providence, again, and fore-knowledge likewise, and in a word, to posit every activity as substance? And if all these tend towards one meaning, all the terms must have the same potential as one another, as in the case of those with many names: for example, when we call the same person ‘Simon’, ‘Cephas’, and ‘Peter’ [cf. Mark 3:16; John 1:42]. So someone who has heard of the immutability of God would be led towards ingeneracy: one who has heard of his being without parts will be brought to his creativity. What could be more absurd than this confusion, when someone legislates against common usage and the teaching of the Spirit by removing the meaning of each term? Despite the fact that when we hear about God that “He made all things in Wisdom” [Psalm 104:24] we learn his creative skill; when that “He opens his hand and satisfies the desire of every living thing” [145:16] the providence which is throughout; when the “He made darkness his hiding-place” [18:11] we are instructed in the invisibility of his nature; when, again, it is said in the *persona* of God, “I am and have not changed” [Mal 3:6] we learn the eternal sameness and immutability of the substance. How, then, can it not be plain insanity to say that its proper meaning does not underline each term, but to decree, against actuality, that all the terms have the same potential (Ibid., pp. 226, 228)?

Basil wrote, then, in the first book *Against Eunomius* as follows: Having declared that ‘If he is not prior to himself nor is there another to be prior to him, ingeneracy (ἡγεγεννησικία) must follow him’, he subsequently becomes aware that, as a consequence of the premisses, the argument has come out to the opposite conclusion. For if ingeneracy follows God, it evidently follows him externally; now what is outside God is not his substance and therefore the argument collapses. To avoid this fate what does he do? Paying scant attention to the derision he was likely to incur by uttering non-sequiturs, he corrected the argument and brought it to the desired end, by saying: ‘Rather ingeneracy is the substance itself’. But this is quite out of key with the preceding words. For how can God have the ingeneracy, which both follows him and does not follow him but instead is based in the very concept of the substance? But yet, he does not allow the sophism to be demolished entirely. For if, having said that ingeneracy “follows him,” he had let the argument rest here, he would have been unable to call ‘ingeneracy’ the substance of God of all, or to prove that the Only-begotten Son is alien in respect of the substance to him, since no external accompaniment can separate the affinity of substance between Father and Son. But now by adding ‘but rather ingeneracy is the substance itself’, he has proved that whatever God is, is ingeneracy. That he is preparing all this as a course for the onslaught of his blasphemy he will show when he has progressed somewhat in the argument. His initial statement, indeed, has been seen to be a consequence of the truth of the realities, by following from the points conceded. But the final addition has been tossed in from heretical thought, our author having no compunction at all towards making a *volte face* to set the argument straight. For how can the same thing follow God and be God, when it is well-known to everybody that what follows is different from what it follows (Ibid., pp. 452, 454)?

Besides this, let us examine in due order other statements, too, of the divinely inspired father [**Basil**], which are set down in the first book *Against Eunomius* the impious, but will instruct us in the truth of sound doctrines. Why, then, he says is it absurd for certain things even about the God of all to be accepted in this way in accordance with inventive thought, and primarily this very thing which is the whole subject of our argument? For we find that ‘ingeneracy’ is used in no different way. We say, indeed, that the God of all is incorruptible and ingenerate, calling him by these names in accordance with various ideas. For when we survey the first world-eras and discover that God’s life falls beyond all beginning, we call him ingenerate. When, on the other hand, we stretch our mind to future world-eras, we

call him infinite and unlimited, not comprehended by any end whatsoever, incorruptible. So, just as endlessness of life is called ‘incorruptibility’ so also its unbeginningness has been called ‘ingeneracy’ as we view the two things in him in accordance with inventive thought. What reasoning, then, will gainsay that each one of these terms, too, will be the result of inventive thought and an acknowledgement of whatever truly belongs to God. And later: Since, then, God’s substance has been seen to be incomprehensible and ineffable to man’s understanding, it remains to disclose, with regard to ingeneracy itself, what it is and how it is perceived in the God of all. We discover, then, in reasoning, that the idea of ingeneracy does not fall for us within the consideration of what he is but rather (I speak the expression under compulsion) of how he is. For our mind investigates whether “the God over all” [cf. Ephes 4:6] has some cause prior to him and then, unable to think of one, names his unbeginningness of life ‘ingeneracy’ (Ibid., pp. 468, 470).

Listen to the wise doctor [**Basil**] himself, who says of Eunomius in the first book *Against Eunomius*: He [Basil] denies that ingeneracy is viewed in God by way of inventive thought supposing that thereby it will be easy for him to attempt to prove that ingeneracy is the substance and thereby demonstrate indubitably that the Only-begotten is dissimilar in substance from the Father. For this reason, he entangles himself with the expression ‘inventive thought’, on the ground that it indicates nothing at all but only has subsistence in utterance, and he pretends that it is unsuitable to honour God by thoughts (Ibid., p. 474).

The master of mysteries [**Basil**], having said this and duly discussed in thought, went on to say: Why, then, is it absurd for certain things even about the God of all to be accepted in this way in accordance with inventive thought, and primarily this very thing which is the whole subject of our argument (Ibid., p. 474)?

With this thus proved, let us go on to investigate the notion introduced to us by ‘ingeneracy’. The very statement by **Basil** the Great set down for examination will show it us, then. For he says: We discover, then, in reasoning, that the idea of ingeneracy does not fall for us within the consideration of what he is but rather (I speak the expression under compulsion) of how he is (Ibid., p. 490).

And a little later he [**Basil**] said similarly: Then just as in the case of men, ‘being from something’ is not their substance, so neither is it possible in the case of the God of all, to call ingeneracy (which is equivalent to ‘not being from anything’ his substance. A person calling unbeginningness a substance does something similar to somebody who, being asked what Adam’s substance and nature were, should reply ‘not being from the intercourse of man and woman but being formed by the hand of God’. ‘But I am looking’, the other will say, ‘not for the mode of the hypostasis but for the material substrate itself of the man, which I am very far off learning from your answer’. This happens to us too with the word ‘ingeneracy’ (Syr. ܐܢܝܢܐ ܕܥܡܪܐ) whereby we learn how God is rather, and not the nature itself (Ibid., pp. 490, 492).

Therefore, the great herald of truth, **Basil**, shall again proclaim to you what he also proclaimed to Eunomius, who was striving to prove the Father ingenerate as if this was something outlandish over which some of those with a desire to be devout might have doubts. For he says: Why have I set down all this talk of his? So that the fellow’s nonsense, which he uses throughout his entire discourse, may be known. For having said that it is clear to everybody’s common notions that God is ingenerate, he attempts to produce proofs of it to us, acting somewhat like a man who wants by words to teach people with healthy vision at bright noontide that the Sun is the most luminous star in the sky. But if someone who gives a verbal proof of things known to the senses is ludicrous, how can someone who teaches things professed in common by everybody not be guilty of equal witlessness? For these matters are far clearer to men of sound mind than those which are visible to the eyes. For if there were anybody who blasphemed against this truth and argued that the

ingenerate was begotten either by himself or by another perhaps the inanity might have an excuse. But if no one up to today either of those who are outside our theology or even of those from the Church itself who have withstood the truth, has attained to such a pitch of witlessness as to doubt the ingeneracy of the ingenerate, I fail to understand the profit derived from these words. Do we really need Aristotle's and Chrysippus' syllogisms to learn that the ingenerate has not been begotten either by himself or by another, and is not older or younger than himself? (CD vol. 35, p. 74).

As **Basil the Great** also testifies, writing, as he does, as follows in the first book against the wicked man: But that fellow, taking a path from the argument he had forcibly seized, went on from these to the main claim that ingeneracy is the substance of the God of all, so that when this is acknowledged he will have the dissimilarity in substance between the Only-begotten and the Father as an undisputed point (Ibid., pp. 208, 210).

And again: He denies that ingeneracy is viewed in God by way of thought, supposing that thereby it will be easy for him to attempt to prove that ingeneracy is the substance and thereby demonstrate indubitably that the Only-begotten is dissimilar in substance from the Father (Ibid., p. 210).

To these utterly impudent and profane blasphemies shall be proclaimed very seasonably and justly the words in which **Basil**, truth's athlete, answered Eunomius, this redoubtable writer's master: Oh, the wicked and shameless blasphemy! Oh, the hidden guile and the manifold knavery! He speaks precisely with the devil's own cunning, intending to prove the Only-begotten Son and God unlike God the Father (CD vol. 54, p. 40).

Basil the Great wrote, then, in the first book *Against Eunomius* the miscreant, as follows: But let us first remind ourselves of this, that this is the man, who, in the previous words, very arrogantly promised us that he would clearly state the naked truth to us. Where then, is it written here: 'we believe that ingeneracy (Syr. ܐܝܢܐܝܬܐ) is the substance of the God of all' or 'we believe that the Only-begotten is unlike the father in substance'? And again: But that fellow, But that fellow, taking a path from the argument he had forcibly seized, proceeded from there to the main claim that ingeneracy is the substance of the God of all, so that when this is proved he will have the dissimilarity in substance between the Only-begotten and the Father as an undisputed point (Ibid., p. 118).

2.2.2. From *Adversus Eunomium* Bk. 2 (see Patr. Graec. vol. 29, cols. 573–652; using Sesboue ed., vol. 2 [Sourc. Chrét. 305], pp. 10–142)

Nevertheless, at this point too, to convince readers, it will not, I think, be wrong to set down one text, from **Basil the Great** only, who says this, and clearly (indeed, rather expressly) explains in his second book *Against Eunomius*: But with regard to God's appearing to be composite unless ingeneracy and light are taken to be the same thing, we can say that if we took ingeneracy as part of the substance his argument (being that what is compounded of different things is composite) would have some ground. But if we assert God's substance to be light, life or goodness, if all of him, whatever he is, is life, all of him is light and all of him is goodness, and the ingeneracy follows the life, how can the simple in substance not be incomposite? For the modes indicative of his property will not damage the condition of simplicity; or, in that case, all statements about God prove God composite. And, so it looks, if we are going to save the idea of simplicity and being without parts, we shall either say nothing about God except ingeneracy and shall refuse to call him 'invisible', 'incorruptible', 'immutable', creator', 'judge', and all the names we use now for His glory; or, if we accept these names, what are we going to make of them? Are we to take them and apply them all to the substance? In that case, we shall prove him not only composite but also compounded from dissimilar parts by virtue of the diversity of meanings of each of the names. But shall we take them as outside the substance? Whatever principle they hit on over each of these, they must apply to the title 'ingenerate' (CD vol. 29, pp. 58, 60).

Basil, then, the standard of orthodox doctrine, wrote as follows in the second book *Against Eunomius*: Though what man in his right mind would go along with the argument that things whose names are different must also have different substances? Peter's, Paul's and in a word, all men's names are different, but there is one substance of all of them. For which reason, in the majority of respects we are identical with one another, but only in the properties appearing with each individual are we different from one another. So, titles are not indicative of substances, but of the properties which characterize each one. When, therefore, we hear 'Peter' we do not understand by the name his substance (I mean now by 'substance' the material substance which the name does not indicate at all) but we receive mental impressions of the properties appearing with him. For from this word we immediately understand the son of Jonas, the one from Bethsaida, Andrew's brother, the one who was summoned from fishermen to the apostolic ministry, the one who, because of the pre-eminence of his faith, received the promise that the Church should be built upon him [e.g., Mark 1:16; Matt 16:18; John 1: 44; 21:15–17; cf. Plato, *Respublica* V–VII]. None of these is the substance, understood as the hypostasis. So that the name separates for us the characteristic mark of Peter, but in no way displays the substance itself to us (Ibid., pp. 94, 96).

But in superabundant proof that God-clad **Basil** expressed his own view when he said that ingeneracy followed God the Father, we will cite him as a witness. He said as follows, in the second book *Against Eunomius* the execrable: But with regard to God's appearing to be composite unless light and ingeneracy are taken to be the same thing, we can say that, if we took ingeneracy as part of the substance, his argument (being that what is compounded of different things is composite) would have some ground. But if we assert God's substance to be light, life or goodness, if all of him, whatever He is, is life, all of him is light and all of him is goodness, and ingeneracy follows the life, how can the simple in substance not be incomposite?... For in this passage the doctor [Basil] did not proceed to confirm the truth from the declaration of Eunomius when he says that ingeneracy follows God, but on the contrary, he refutes his stupidity for arguing and saying that unless one says ingeneracy is identical with substance, God will appear composite. That is why, a little before this passage, he had said: But he [Eunomius] here transfers the antithesis between the properties to the substance and thus deduces the ground for his blasphemy, scaring us, as if we were children, with his sophisms that if the light is something else beside the ingeneracy, God will necessarily be proved composite. What do I say? That unless the light is something else beside the ingeneracy, it cannot be used to refer to the Son any more than ingeneracy can (Ibid., p. 132).

... Pre-eminence of his faith, received the promise that the Church should be built him. None of these is the substance. So that the name separates for us the characteristic mark of Peter, but in no way displays the substance itself to us. Again when we hear Paul, we understand a collection of other properties: the man from Tarsus, the Hebrew, legally a Pharisee, Gamaliel's pupil, the zealous persecutor of God's churches brought by an awe-inspiring vision to recognize the truth, the Apostle of the Gentiles (see 2 Cor 11:22; 12:11–12; Acts 9:5–7, 11; 22:3; 23:6). All these are defined by the single word "Paul" (Acts 13:9). And a little later: It is obvious, then, from what has been said that in the case of the Father and Son also (Acts 9:20), the names do not display the substance but are indicative of the properties (Ibid., p. 186).

This shall the Church's great doctor, **Basil**, teach us, speaking as he does, as follows in the second of the books *Against Eunomius* the impious: There is a certain antithesis between unbegotten and begotten through the function of the terms (though not in the nature of the realities), a fact which they exploit. But no opposition between the lights can be found, either in the use of the term or in the idea (Ibid., p. 160).

Listen, then, to what **Basil** the Great teaches us on this point. In his second book *Against Eunomius* (as we have repeatedly quoted it) he said: Though what man in his right mind would go along with the argument that things whose names are different must also have different substances? Peter's, Paul's and in a word, all men's names are different, but there is one substance of all of them. For which reason, in the majority of respects we are identical with one another. But only in the properties appearing with each individual are we different from one another. So, titles are not indicative of substances, but of the properties which characterize each one. Again: It is obvious, then, from what has been said, that in the case of Father and Son also, the names do not display the substance, but are indicative of the properties. So, there is no room for the argument to introduce a contrariety of substances on the ground of a difference in names. Indeed, that way Eunomius would demolish himself first. For if 'creature' and 'offspring' differ, there will be different substances belonging to the Only-begotten Son of God following the difference of the names (Ibid., pp. 262, 264).

He [**Basil**] wrote, too, in the second book: For we will not here allow him to reshape and remodel the expression 'he begot' (said of the Father) so as to call the Son of God an 'offspring'. It is wrong, indeed, for one trained in true religion to make a facile leap to something which a connexion of words requires; no, he should cherish the names laid down in the Bible and abide by them, so that with their help he may fulfil a doxology fit for God. For if those who originally translated the Hebrew language into Greek did not venture on an interpretation of certain names but carried over the same Hebrew expression (as for example, 'Sabaoth', 'Adonai', 'El' and whatever is of that kind) displaying this respect not only towards the divine names but also many others, how much reverence ought we not to have regarding the Lord's names? Yet when would they have tolerated fabricating any of these names, they who lacked the confidence to translate certain words lest they destroy accuracy of ideas through failure to correspond with the meanings? (Ibid., pp. 322, 324).

He [**Basil**] wrote in the same way in the second book, as follows: And, so it looks, if we are going to save the idea of simplicity and being without parts, we shall either say nothing about God except ingeneracy and shall refuse to call Him 'invisible', incorruptible', 'immutable', 'creator', 'judge', and all the names we use now for His glory; or, if we accept these names, what are we going to make of them? Are we to take them and apply them all to the substance? In that case, we shall prove Him not only composite but also compounded from dissimilar parts by virtue of the diversity of meanings of each of the names (CD vol. 32, pp. 228, 230).

He [**Basil**] also proves this in the second book *Against* the same evil *Eunomius*, by saying: But he here transfers the antithesis between the properties to the substance and thus deduces the ground for his blasphemy, scaring us, as if we were children, with his sophisms that if the light is something else beside the ingeneracy, God will necessarily be proved composite. What do I say? That unless the light is something else beside the ingeneracy, it cannot be used to refer to the Son any more than ingeneracy can. But one will, from the above, learn also the difference between the meanings. It is said that "God dwells in light" (1 Tim 6:16) and that "He decks himself in light" (Psalm 104:2), but nowhere does the Scripture say that he dwells in his own ingeneracy or that he has it for his covering. And again: but with regard to God's appearing to be composite unless ingeneracy and light are taken to be the same thing, we can say that if we took ingeneracy as part of the substance his argument (being that what is compounded of different things is composite) would have some ground. But if we assert God's substance to be light, life or goodness, if all of him, whatever he is, is life, all of him is light and all of Him is goodness, and the ingeneracy follows the life, how can the simple in substance not be incomposite (Ibid., p. 458)?

These texts, then, having been examined, let us pass on to other divinely inspired words of wise Basil, whereby he demolishes, as if by these other words, the novel and deceitful insanity and despoils it utterly of its knavish trickery. He [**Basil**] wrote, then, as follows, in the second book *Against Eunomius* the impure: But afterwards, in adherence to his blasphemies, he will say: 'The Father also was not Father to begin with, but became so later'; and so, if it was good and fitting to God's goodness to be Father, why was what benefits Him not present to Him in the beginning? For they must necessarily impute the defect itself either to ignorance of something better or to impotence: ignorance, if He discovered the good later; and impotence, if aware of and understanding it, He fell short of excellence. But if (which it is impermissible to say) it was not a noble thing for Him to be Father, why did He change to choose the inferior? However, let the blasphemy recoil upon those who were its cause! The God of all, indeed, is Father eternally, never beginning to be Father. For he was not prevented from the accomplishment of His will by lack of power nor did He delay for the revolutions of eras so that, as with men and the rest of living beings, he should effect his aim after the completion of the age when capacity for begetting reaches him (for it belongs to madmen to think and utter these things), but He has His fatherhood (so to name it) co-extensive with His eternity. Therefore, the Son, being before time, and ever existing, never began to exist, but from when there has existed the Father there has also existed the Son, and with the idea of the Father there immediately enters that of the Son (Ibid., p. 498).

And how, again, with your fabricating these things arbitrarily and witlessly, will there not justly fit you what **Basil**, athlete in truth, exclaimed to Eunomius, your master also, when he wrote as follows: Those doctrines of yours are truly worthy of the judges you have fabricated. For you lay down the law with as much facility as if you were in a bazaar of dreams or an assembly of drunkards with nobody hearing or understanding what is said, because you think your *ipse dixit* suffices in place of all proof (CD vol. 35, p. 60)?

The God-clad **Basil**, then, wrote in the second of the books *Against Eunomius* as follows: So, when we hear of a man as father we then also apprehend the idea of passion; but when that God is Father, we are elevated in thought to the impossible cause. But one who is used to this appellation in relation to passional nature will deny what transcends his thoughts' comprehension as an impossibility. For on observing the passion of things corruptible one ought not to disbelieve the impassibility of God (Ibid., p. 500).

Look at what **Basil the Great** says in his second book *Against Eunomius*: But he here transfers the antithesis between the properties to the substance and thus deduces the ground for his blasphemy, scaring us, as if we were children, with his sophisms that if the light is something else beside the ingeneracy, God will necessarily be proved composite. What do I say? That unless the light is something else beside the ingeneracy, it cannot be used to refer to the Son any more than ingeneracy can (CD vol. 54, p. 20).

And later: And so it looks, if we are going to save the idea of simplicity and being without parts, we shall either say nothing about God except ingeneracy and shall refuse to call him 'invisible', incorruptible', 'immutable', 'creator', 'judge', and all the names we use now for His glory; or, if we accept these names, what are we going to make of them? Are we to take them and apply them all to the substance? In that case, we shall prove him not only composite but also compounded from dissimilar parts by virtue of the diversity of meanings of each of the names (Ibid., pp. 20, 22).

How, indeed, can you forget what the doctor [**Basil**] also taught on this point in the second book *Against Eunomius*, when he wrote: So that when we hear 'unbegotten light' we understand the Father, but on hearing 'begotten light' we apprehend the thought of the Son, *qua* 'light' and 'light' no contrariety obtaining between them but *qua* 'unbegotten'

and ‘begotten’ an antithesis being seen in them. For it is the nature of properties to disclose otherness in an identity of substance (Ibid., pp. 22, 24)?

... For, according to **Basil**, in the case of ‘Father’ and ‘Son’ the names do not indicate substances but are indicative of properties (Ibid., p. 38).

2.2.3. From *Adversus Eunomium* Bk. 4 (see Patr. Graec. vol. 29, cols. 672–709)

Likewise, he [Basil] also said in the *Rejoinder*: if powerlessness is the opposite of power and unwisdom of wisdom, and all mutual contraries are mutually opposed, ingeneracy is the opposite of generacy. Therefore, Father and Son are mutually contrary in substance if ingeneracy be substance and not a mode of existing (CD vol. 29, p. 148).

But in the book entitled *Refutation* he [Basil] also speaks in the following fashion: ‘Ingenerate’, if it is a name, is not a substance. For names are indicative of substances and are not themselves substance. But if ‘ingenerate’ is substance itself, let them state the substance’s name. For we do not get understanding from the substances but from the names and the operations, especially of things incorporeal. If ‘ingenerate’ is the name of the substance of God, either God, knowing his own substance, did not know the name of the substance or, knowing the name, he misled the hearers. For the Lord says: “‘Omnipotent’ is my name” and, when asked by Moses what his name was, he said: “I am ‘He who is’” [Exod 3:14] and again: “The God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob—this is my name for ever” [15]; and David said: “The Lord’ is thy name” [cf. Psalm 8:1]. But the name ‘ingenerate’ he did not use of himself nor did any of the saints either. Now, if he did not mislead and was not ignorant (for it is blasphemy to speak this way) ‘ingenerate’ is not his name (CD vol. 29, p. 324).

Basil, then wise in things divine, wrote in the *Refutation*, instructing us as follows: ‘Ingenerate’, if it is a name, is not a substance, for names are indicative of substances and are not themselves substance (Ibid. vol. 32, p. 196).

2.2.4. From *Adversus Eunomium* Bk. 5 (see Patr. Graec. vol. 29, cols. 709–73)

Basil, the great luminary of the Church, then, discoursing of the Holy Ghost in the *Refutation*, wrote as follows: again we understand ‘ingenerate’ as unsubstantial: the utterly non-existent. Anyone who said ‘unsubstantial’ has eradicated hypostasis and substantial being. ‘Unsubstantial’, indeed, and ‘non-subsistent’ mean a non-existent nature, which does not exist at all. But if one says ‘substantial’ and ‘subsistent’, one has meant an existing hypostasis. And again, a little prior to this he wrote: Yet, indeed, the prophet himself will explain this by saying: “By the Word of the Lord were the heavens made firm and all their power by the breath of his mouth” [Psalm 33:6]. But just as there is not in God uttered word, but living, subsistent and active Word, so there is not in God outpoured Spirit; there is not dissoluble air but hallowing power, substantial, actual, subsistent (CD vol. 35, p. 478).

2.2.5. From *De Fide* (see Patr. Graec. vol. 31, cols. 464–72; cf. Clav. Patr. Graec. 2859)

Likewise, also, in the sermon *On the Faith* he [Basil] writes: “Son”—not an acquisition; “Maker”—not a work; “Creator”—not a creature. He is all those same things that the Father is. “Son”, I said, and “Father”. Save me only those properties (CD vol. 32, pp. 432, 440).

In the sermon *On Faith*, then, where he took even more care (if I may so put it) to raise the listeners’ minds to true divine knowledge, wise divine **Basil** wrote as follows: Passing over everything in thought, gazing above the sky and transcending it, with the mind alone, survey the beauties there: the heavenly hosts, the choruses of angles, the principalities of the archangels, the glories of the dominions, the hierarchies of thrones, the powers, the rulerships, the authorities. Passing above all these things, elevated in your thoughts above all creation and uplifting your mind beyond them, think of the divine nature, stable,

unchangeable, immutable, impassible, simple, incomposite, indivisible, light inaccessible, power unspeakable, grandeur unlimited, glory bright-shining, goodness desirable, beauty incomprehensible, deeply affecting the soul smitten by it but incapable of being made known by speech as it deserves: there, the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, the uncreated nature, the dignity of lordship, the natural goodness (CD vol. 54, pp. 260, 262)!

For **Basil** the Great, herald of truth, said: There, the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, the uncreated nature (Ibid., p. 266).

2.2.6. From *De Spiritu Sancto* 17 (see Patr. Graec. vol. 32, cols. 68–217; using Prughe ed. [Sourc. Chrét. 17 bis]; cf. Clav. Patr. Graec. 2839)

Saint **Basil**, then, shall come forward and from his spiritual treasures philosophize for us on the point in hand, with plainly expressed correct theology. He writes to Amphilochius *On the Holy Ghost* as follows: The Lord, in teaching the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, did not teach a number with them, for he did not say ‘into first, second and third’ or ‘into one, two and three’ but he bestowed the knowledge of the faith which brings to salvation, through holy names. Therefore, what saves us is faith; but number has been invented as a mark to indicate the quantity of subjects (CD vol. 29, pp. 302, 304).

2.2.7. From *Epistula* 38 (see Patr. Graec. vol. 32, cols. 325–340; using Patrucco ed., [Soc. Edit. Internaz.] pp. 178–94)

However, listen to **Basil the Great**, one of many, who on the issues presently under discussion, discourses, as follows, in the letter written to his brother Gregory *On Substance and Hypostasis*: This is the reason why we say that, in the commonness of substance, the marks appearing in the Trinity and delivered by the faith, by means of which the property of the *prosōpon* is disclosed, are disparate and incommunicable, each *prosōpon* being apprehended separately by his own marks. So that through the marks mentioned the separation of the hypostases will be discovered but in the infinity, incomprehensibility, uncreated existence, freedom from local circumscription and in all similar things there will be no difference in the life-giving nature, i.e., between the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, but instead there is contemplated in them a close and unbreakable participation. By the same ideas, from which one may see the grandeur of the Holy Trinity we believe in, gazing fixedly at the glory one reaches the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost (Ibid., p. 102).

Basil, wise in divinity, wrote similar things in the *Letter to his Brother Gregory* [of Nyssa] as follows: If you carry over to divine doctrines, then, the concept of the difference between substance and hypostasis you have recognized among us men, you will not be at fault. Whatever your mind suggests to you as to the being of the Father (for it is impossible to have any absolute idea for the soul to rest on, because it is our conviction that he transcends every idea) apply this understanding also to the Son and likewise to the Holy Ghost. For the concept of uncreatedness and incomprehensibility is one and the same in the case of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost. For one is not more, another less incomprehensible and uncreated. Now because we ought to have an unconfused separation in the Trinity by particular marks, we shall not use for the particularizing separation what is viewed as common: I mean, e.g., uncreatedness, transcendence of comprehension or anything like that. We shall seek only the means whereby the concept of each is clearly and unconfusedly separated from what is perceived to accompany him (Ibid., pp. 108, 110).

In the letter, too, written to his brother Gregory *On Substance and Hypostasis*, he [**Basil**] says: One who says ‘man’ has effected a vague understanding in the ear by the indefiniteness of the meaning, so that the nature is signified by the term whereas the reality itself, which subsists and is signified properly, is not indicated by the term. But one who says ‘Paul’ has shown that the nature subsists in the reality which is signified by the name. This then is the hypostasis: not the indefinite thought of the substance, which, as a result of

the generality of the object indicated, obtains no stability; but that thought which presents and delimits the common and unbounded in some reality by means of the properties appearing on it; such a thing as Scripture is wont to do, too, in the narrative about Job and in many other places. For because it was about to relate Job's circumstances, it first recalled what was common and said "man" and immediately defined him in his particularity by the addition "a certain" [LXX Job 1:1; cf. 1:13–2:13]. Yet with regard to the description of the substance, since that would bring no benefit to the proposed aim of the discourse, it was silent, whereas it characterizes 'a certain' by its own features of his mode of life and all the externals which, being taken together, would distinguish him and set him apart from the general meaning (CD vol. 32, p. 198).

'How', someone may perhaps ask, 'will we not be rejecting Basil's statement which says that hypostasis is the collection of the properties?' (Ibid., p. 256).

Take a look, indeed, at Basil the Great, who spoke as follows at the beginning of the letter written to his brother Gregory *On substance and Hypostasis*: Seeing that many people, by failing to distinguish, in the mystic doctrines, between the community of the substance and the concept of the hypostasis, lapse into the same ideas and suppose that it makes no difference whether we say 'substance' or 'hypostasis', and consequently certain people, who accept things like this without examination, have seen fit to speak of 'one hypostasis' just as they do of 'one substance'; and conversely, those who accept three hypostases suppose they ought, as a result of this profession, to teach a division of the substances corresponding with the same number; for this reason, so that you too do not suffer the same fate, I have composed for you a short essay on the subject as a reminder (Ibid., p. 288).

Wise Basil, the great pastor of the Church, proves this clearly by saying as follows, in the letter to his brother *On Substance and Hypostasis*: But in the same way also, one who has accepted the Son and the Spirit along with him. For it is impossible to invent cleavage or division in any way such that the Son should be conceived of apart from the Father or that the Spirit should be separated from the Son. No, a certain ineffable and unknowable communion and separation is apprehended in them, with the difference in the hypostases not sundering the connection of nature and the community of substance not merging the properness of the marks (Ibid., pp. 344, 346).

Truth's champion [Basil], then, speaks as follows, in the same letter just now mentioned: Seeing, then, that the Holy Ghost, from whom all bestowal of graces upon creation springs, depends upon the Son with whom He is apprehended indivisibly, whereas He has his being from the cause of the Father whence also he proceeds, He has this sign as indicative of the property of the hypostasis: the fact that He is known after the Son and along with Him and subsists from the Father. But the Son, who makes known the Spirit (who proceeds from the Father) through and with himself, alone shining forth in Only-begotten fashion from the ingenerate light, has no participation, by the properness of the marks, with the Father or with the Holy Ghost. No, He is known as unique by the stated indications. But the all-transcending God alone has, as a distinctive mark of his hypostasis, the fact that he is Father and alone subsists from no cause; and by means of this mark again he too is known properly. This is the reason why we say that, in the commonness of substance, the marks appearing in the Trinity and delivered by the faith, by means of which the property of the *prosōpon* is disclosed, are disparate and incommunicable, each *prosōpon* being apprehended separately by his own marks (Ibid., pp. 346, 348).

And again: Just as, then, in the example we recognize also clearly the difference between the colours and it is impossible to apprehend by sense the remoteness of one from another, so you are to consider that it is possible to think in the case of divine doctrines that the properties of the hypostases, like some colours appearing in the rainbow shine upon each of those believed in the Holy Trinity; whereas no difference in one from another

is to be discovered in the natural property, but in the community of the substance the indicative properties give light upon each. For there too, in the example, what beams forth the many-coloured light was one substance, reflected by the sunray, but the colour of what appears is multiform (Ibid., p. 348).

For he [**Basil**] wrote in the letter just mentioned, as follows: so one who has observed the beauty of the image is endowed with a mental picture of the exemplar. And one who has taken up into his understanding the form, as it were, of the Son, has imprinted it with the impress of the Father's hypostasis, seeing him by it, not because he sees the Father's ingeneracy in the impress derived from him (otherwise he would be totally identical and not different) but because he sees the ingenerate beauty in the generate. And again: So the Son's hypostasis becomes as it were the form and the *prosōpon* of the indication of the Father, and the Father's hypostasis is recognized in the Son's form, the property viewed in them abiding for the clear distinction of the hypostases (Ibid., pp. 354, 498, 500).

Basil the Great, wise in things divine wrote, then, in the *Letter to his Brother*, as follows: So we say this: that what is said properly is signified by the word 'hypostasis'. For one who says 'man' has effected a vague understanding in the ear by the indefiniteness of the meaning, so that the nature is signified by the term whereas the reality itself, which subsists and is signified properly, is not indicated by the term. But one who says 'Paul' has shown that the nature subsists in the reality which is signified by the name. This then is the hypostasis: not the indefinite thought of the substance, which, as a result of the generality of the object indicated, obtains no stability; but that thought which presents and delimits the common and unbounded in some reality, by means of the properties appearing on it (CD vol. 35, pp. 374, 376).

This we can clarify also from the words the doctor **Basil**, his brother, wrote to him *On Substance and Hypostasis*, as follows: For just as a body always exists in a shape, but the concept of a body is one thing but that of shape is another, and no one in giving the definition of either of them would arrive at that of the other; nevertheless, even though in concept one separates shape from body, nature does not admit of the separation, but either is thought of along with the other connectedly; so does the Apostle think [cf. 1 Cor 15:44], and we must teach as the word of faith the difference, unconfused and divided, of the hypostases (CD vol. 54, p. 328).

Listen to **Basil** the Great, captain of true religion, theologizing in the letter to his brother *On the Difference between Substance and Hypostasis* and saying as follows: But do not be surprised if we say the same thing is both united and divided, and if we discover some new and paradoxical, as it were enigmatical, united separation and separated conjunction. For if anyone listens to the words without captiousness or cavil, he can discover something similar among objects of sense, too. And I beg you, regard my words as an illustration and shadow of truth, not as the very truth of the realities. For it is impossible to harmonize completely what is viewed in the illustrations with what gave rise to the need for illustrations. How, then, do we say, we can understand, by means of the sensibly perceived, what is at once separated and united (Ibid., p. 398)?

For **Basil**, standard and teacher of all respect and honour towards God, says this too in the same previously mentioned letter: For above in the example, too, what illumines the many-coloured brilliance was one substance, reflected by the sunray, but the colour of what appears is multiform, reason teaching us, even through creation, that we do not experience anything new in doctrinal discussions whenever we fall into an intellectual difficulty and are seized with giddiness at the prospect of assenting to some statement. For just as with things viewed by the eyes the experience has shown itself too great for words, so also in the most sublime doctrines, the faith, which teaches separation in hypostasis and union in substance, is too great for the comprehension of reasoned thought (Ibid., pp. 410, 412).

2.2.8. From *Epistula* 52 (see Patr. Graec. vol. 32, cols. 392–96; using Courtonne ed., vol. 1 [Édit. Budé], pp. 133–37)

For as to the man who does not follow the intention of the holy Fathers at all points and does not reckon their word more powerful and more exact than his own notions, Saint **Basil** ruled that he deserves censure for his presumption, in the *Letter* he sent to the *Canoness on the Trinity*, where he wrote as follows: ‘For not following the Fathers and not considering their word more accurate than our own understanding deserves censure, because it is full of presumption’. Therefore, we too will be right to import no addition and make no substraction in the Fathers’ teaching (Ibid., p. 386).

2.2.9. From *Epistula* 210 (see Patr. Graec. vol. 32, cols. 768–77; using Courtonne ed., vol. 2 [Édit. Budé], pp. 189–97)

And so not we, but the divinely inspired word of Basil the Great, shall opportunely shout aloud to the deaf, “listen!”, and to the blind, “attend and see!” [Isa 18:18] (to remind him rightly and frequently of his words). We must rest our mind upon some substrate, construct mental images of the marks with it and thus come to understand the full meaning of the hypostases. Basil wrote in the manner in his *Letter to the Town Councillors of Neocaesarea*: For we must recognize that just as the one who does not profess the commonness of the substance lapses into polytheism, so also the one who will not admit the properties of the hypostases slips away into Judaism. For our mind must rest upon some substrate and have the impress of its clear marks and thus have imagination of the one loved. For if we had not conceived of the fatherhood or considered the one for whom this property was set aside, how could we have taken in the idea of God the Father? For it is not enough to itemize the difference of the *prosōpa*; one must acknowledge each *prosōpon* as existing in true hypostasis, as well. Since even Sabellius did not abstain from fabricating *prosōpa* without hypostases by pronouncing the same God one in substrate, transformed as each need arose and speaking at different times as Father, Son and Holy Ghost (CD vol. 29, p. 206).

Saint **Basil**, then, shall come forward and from his spiritual treasures philosophize for us on the point in hand, with plainly expressed correct theology. He writes to Amphilocheus *On the Holy Ghost* as follows: The Lord, in teaching the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, did not teach a number with them, for he did not say ‘into first, second and third’ or ‘into one, two and three’ but he bestowed the knowledge of the faith which brings to salvation, through holy names. Therefore, what saves us is faith; but number has been invented as a mark to indicate the quantity of subjects (Ibid., pp. 302, 304).

And he [**Basil**] wrote as follows in the *Letter to the People of Neocaesarea* (its beginning goes: On the other hand, I did not need to open my mind to you): But if it is said: “Go and baptize in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost” [Matt 28:19], we should not think on that account that a single name has been entrusted to us. For just as one who says *Paul and Silvanus and Timothy* has mentioned three names but linked them together with the word ‘and’, so one who states the name of Father and Son and Holy Ghost, states three and connects them by the conjunction, teaching that under each name lies a proper meaning because the names are indicative of the realities. But nobody with even a slight share of intelligence doubts that the realities have full, proper being. Father and Son and Holy Ghost have the same nature and one Godhead but different names which display to us definite and complete ideas. For it is impossible for a mind which has not been made aware of the properties of each, to perform an unconfused doxology to the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost (Ibid., p. 304).

Again in his *Letter to the Town Councillors of Neocaesarea*, he discourses more clearly on the point, as follows: For we must recognize that just as the one who does not profess the commonness of the substance lapses into polytheism, so also the one who will not admit

the properties of the hypostases slips away into Judaism. For our mind must rest upon some substrate and have the impress of its clear marks and thus have imagination of the one loved. For if we had not conceived of the fatherhood or considered the one for whom this property was set aside, how could we have taken in the idea of God the Father (CD vol. 35, p. 376)?

2.2.10. From *Epistula* 214 (see Patr. Graec. vol. 32, cols. 785–89; using Courtonne ed., vol. 2 [Édit. Budé], pp. 202–6)

Because of a fraternal dispute between the Easterns and the Romans, related to this, wise **Basil**, hating the wicked heresies of the accursed Sabellius and Arius equally and to the same degree, defeated them, He wrote in the *Letter to Count Terentius* (the beginning of which is: When we heard that your Reverence had again been forced) and said as follows: But along with this news a report has reached us that the brothers too, of Paulinus' side, are speaking to your Rectitude about their union with us, us, I mean, who are of the party of the man of God, Bishop Meletius. These, I hear, are presently circulating a letter from the Westerns which entrusts the bishopric of the Church of Antioch to them but rejects the admirable Meletius bishop of God's true Church (CD vol. 32, pp. 112, 114).

And a little later: For I for my part, if a certain man receives a letter of men and thinks grand things of it, shall not consent to stand in awe of him on that account; not even if he comes from heaven itself, but does not agree with the sound word of faith, shall I be able to count him a participant in holy things. For consider, my admirable friend, that the falsifiers of the truth, those who import the Arian schism into the sound faith of the fathers, proffer no other excuse for not accepting the religious doctrine of the fathers, except the idea of consubstantiality which they interpret wickedly and as a slander against the whole faith, saying that the Son is declared by us to be consubstantial in hypostasis. If we yield them that a pretext, as a result of our agreeing with those who out of simplicity rather than wickedness say this or similar things, nothing will prevent our giving an indisputable handle against ourselves and strengthening the heresy of those whose sole exercise in addresses to the Church is not to equip their own arguments but to slander ours. But what could be a worse slander, more capable of unsettling the majority of folk, than if some of us should be seen to speak of one hypostasis of Father, Son and Holy Ghost, some who despite frequent clear confession of the difference between the *prosōpa* nevertheless confess what was accepted by Sabellius formerly who says this very thing: "God is one in hypostasis but is presented by Scripture in the guise of *prosōpa* in various fashions to suit the particularity of the subject-matter, sometimes taking upon itself the Father's words whenever there is occasion for this *prosōpon*, sometimes those which are fitting for the Son whenever He condescends to a concern for us or to other actions of the scheme of salvation, and sometimes he wears the *prosōpon* of the Spirit whenever the occasion demands words of such a kind from such a *prosōpon*"? If, therefore, some of our people are seen to say that Father, Son and Holy Ghost are one in the substrate but to profess three perfect *prosōpa*, how can they not be supposed to be giving a clear and irrefutable proof of the truth of what is said about us (Ibid., pp. 114, 116)?

Likewise Basil too, in the *Letter to Terentius*, said that the concept of the substance is Godhead, as follows: "There too the concept of the substance is common, like goodness, Godhead or whatever else is conceived of (CD vol. 54, p. 52).

And again: For this is how Saint **Basil**, too, in the *Letter to Terentius*, explains the concept of the divine substance from our humanity, when he writes as follows: "If we too must say briefly what appears to us to be the case, we will say this: that substance possesses with regard to hypostasis the same conceptual relationship as the common to the particular. For each of us participates in being and is such and such a person, by both the common

concept of substance and by the properties belonging with him. In this way, furthermore, the concept of the substance is common (for example, the goodness, Godhead, or whatever else is conceived of), but the hypostasis is seen in the property of fatherhood, sonship or hallowing power” (Ibid., p. 256).

2.2.11. From *Epistula* 236 (see Patr. Graec. vol. 32, cols. 876–85; using Courtonne ed., vol. 3 [Édit. Budé]. pp. 47–255)

He [Basil] wrote, indeed, in the same manner on substance and hypostasis *To Amphilochius* as follows: Substance, indeed, and hypostasis possess the same distinction as holds between common and individual, between, say, animal and such a man. Which is why we profess one substance in the Godhead, so as not to differentiate the concept of the being, but particular hypostases in order that the conception of Father, Son and Holy Ghost may exist in us unconfused and clear (CD vol. 32, pp. 288, 290).

2.2.12. From *In illud*: ‘*In Principio erat Verbum*’ (see Patr. Graec. vol. 31, cols. 472–81; cf. Clav. Patr. Graec. 2860)

God-clad Basil, also makes this clear by writing as follows in the discourse he composed on *In the Beginning was the Word*: So he said ‘Word’ in order to disclose to you the Father’s impassible generation, to give you a full theology of the Son’s being, and to show you thereby the non-temporal connexion of Father and Son (Ibid., p. 412).

2.2.13. From Ps. Basilus Caesariensis. *Contra Sabellianos* (see Patr. Graec. vol. 31, cols. 600–17; cf. Clav. Patr. Graec. 3674)

He [Basil] strongly reinforced and clarified these words when he wrote in the sermon *Against Sabellians and Arians* as follows: And though you do not attack me, all those of you who have either imperfectly followed what was said or who stand around us to vilify us, unwilling, as you are, to receive anything worthwhile from us but watching to catch hold of something we speak, will say, ‘he preaches two gods, he announces polytheism. Not two gods, because not two Fathers! One who introduces two Beginnings preaches two gods. Such is Marcion and anybody like him in impiety!’ And again, anyone who calls the begotten different in substance from the begetter, he too says ‘two Gods’, introducing, as he does, polytheism because of the dissimilarity of substance. For if there is one ingenerate Godhead and one generate, it will be you who are preaching polytheism, calling ingeneracy opposite to generacy and, clearly, making the substances opposite, if the Father’s substance is ingeneracy but the Son’s substance generacy; in which case you will be speaking not only of two Gods, but of two mutually antagonistic Gods. And, what is worse, you are assigning the conflict not to the will but to a division of nature which can never reach a peaceful concord (CD vol. 54, pp. 120, 122, 136).

2.2.14. From Pseud. Basilus Caesariensis. *De Eis dicunt Filium esse dissimilem Patri* (using “Une Homile contre les Anoméens attribué à Saint Basel de Césarée”, [ed. Van Roey], *Orientalia Lovaniensia Periodica* 28 [1997]: 188–91; cf. Clav. Patr. Graec. 2988)

For the same warrior for truth said also in the address *To Those who say the Son is unlike the Father*: ‘But if’, they say, ‘he begat, he gave some of his ingeneracy’ (Syr. ܐܬܝܠܕ ܕܐܬܝܠܕ) And how did he give any of his unbegottenness to the one whom he brought into being through his begetting of him, for ingeneracy is the negation of God’s being begotten? But you are reckoning a negation as the substance. The Father is not begotten. This is the meaning of ingeneracy. So how can not having been begotten be a substance? How, indeed, could the one who was begotten receive any of it (CD vol. 32, p. 504; vol. 35, p. 210; vol. 54, p. 122)?

2.3. Quotations from the Works of St. Gregory of Nazianzus (pp. 330–390)⁵

2.3.1. From *Epistola* 101 (see Patr. Graec. vol. 37, cols. 176–93; using Gallay and Jourdan ed. [Sourc. Chrét. 208], pp. 36–68)

Let us, then, please, quote the words themselves, by the master of mysteries, against Apollinarius, and from them too, justly rebut the insanity directed against the Godhead. The doctor [**Gregory**] wrote, then, in the *Second Letter to Cledonius*, as follows: But because, proud of their discussion of the Trinity, they falsely accuse us of being unsound on the faith, and entice the majority, it must be known that Apollinarius, though giving the name of Godhead to the Holy Ghost did not keep the meaning of Godhead. For making the Trinity consist of a great Spirit, a greater Son and a greatest Father like radiance, beam, and Sun (as is clearly written in his treatise) is a ladder of Godhead not leading up to Heaven but taking one down from Heaven. Whereas we recognize Father, Son and Holy Ghost as God, and these not as mere appellations which determine an inequality of honours and powers, but as there is one and the same name, so also there is one and the same nature of Godhead, substance and power (CD vol. 54, pp. 196, 224).

2.3.2. From Oration I (*In sanctum Pascha et tarditatem*) (see Patr. Graec. vol. 35, cols. 396–401; using Bernardi ed. [Sourc. Chrét. 247], pp. 72–82)

But until he does so, he should take the trouble to learn what the man, who owes his title and name to his excellent and exact theology, **Gregory** (pastor and teacher of **Nazianzus**, and indeed of the whole world taught us about the subject. He wrote, then, in the *First Oration on Easter* (its beginning is: The day of Resurrection) teaching that Father, Son and Holy Ghost are one Godhead and power, as follows: But do you offer as fruit to god and to us your being tended well (and a few lines later) not listening to the strange voice which steals in, secretly, and will drive you away from truth over hills, wastes, pits and places the Lord does not visit, and remove you from wholesome faith in Father, Son and Holy Ghost, the one Godhead and power, have ever heard and ever will *hear* (Ibid., p. 354; cf. John 10:27).

2.3.3. From Oration 2 (*Apologetica*) (see Patr. Graec. vol. 35, cols. 408–513; using Bernardi ed. [Sources Chrét. 247], pp. 84–240)

But I have been so far from saying or thinking the three hypostases—those of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, I mean—or their characteristic properties mere appellations or [empty] names or relationships bereft [of the realities] (CD ATD, p. 65 and cf. Ibid., p. 69).

And we must also recognize that fatherhood, i.e., ingeneracy, or generacy or procession are not empty names and ‘relationships bereft realities (as **Gregory the Theologian** says somewhere) (CD vol. 35, p. 390).

2.3.4. From Oration 4 (*Contra Iulianum I*) (see Patr. Graec. vol. 35, cols. 532–664; using Bernardi ed. [Sourc. Chrét. 309], pp. 86–292)

Now listen again to what **Gregory the Theologian** said on this point in the first *Invective Against Julian*: “To us”, he says, “belong concepts and speaking Greek, to us who worship the gods; but to you belong irrationality and rusticity, and your wisdom is nothing more than ‘believe!’”. I do not think that the Pythagorean philosophers amongst you will ridicule it: their first and greatest point of doctrine, more fitting for words in gold or lead, is “*ipse dixit*”. For after the first philosophy of silence, much esteemed by the initiates in Pythagoreanism, in order that they might become habituated through silence to modest quantities of speech, it was the rule, so it is said, that, when asked about, or deciding any doctrine whatever and being required to give a reason, they should give no other answer but ‘This was what Pythagoras approved’, and that the reason for whatever doctrine he approved should be unquestioned and unexamined. “*Ipse dixit*” [Cicero, *De natura deorum*

1.10] comes to the same thing as our ‘believe’, in other words and syllables, even if you will not cease mocking and sneering at it: it means that we may not discredit the utterances of divinely inspired men; instead, their trustworthiness should be the proof of a statement, stronger than all the force of dialectics and counter-argument (CD vol. 54, pp. 386, 388).

2.3.5. From Oration 6 (*De Pace I*) Esp. 22 (see Patr. Graec. vol. 35, cols. 721–52; using Calvet-Sebasti ed. [Sourc. Chrét. 405], pp. 120–78)

And in the *First Oration on the Peace* he [Gregory] wrote as follows: Rejoice and exult, best of fathers and most affectionate towards his children, clothed and arrayed with all of them as you are, like a bride by her adornment. And a little later: Safeguarding the noble charge we have received from the fathers, you worship the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, and you recognize the Father in the Son and the Son in the Holy Ghost, in whom we were baptized, in whom we have believed, whom we have confessed. Before uniting them we separate them, and before we separate them we unite them: not the three as one *unus* (for they are not unhyposstatic names or applied to a single hypostasis, so that our wealth will reside in names and not in realities) but the three one *unum*. For they are one *unum* not by hypostasis but by Godhead; the Unity is worshipped in the Trinity and the Trinity gathered into the Unity, all of it to be worshipped, all of it royal, co-regent, equal in glory, supra-mundane, supra-temporal, uncreated, invisible, impalpable, unbounded, alone knowing itself so far as its internal ordering goes but venerated and worshipped alike by us, and it alone appearing in the Holy of Holies (CD vol. 29, p. 306).

Again, too, in the *First Oration on Peacemakers*, when he discourses on the peace of the holy angels, he [Gregory] proclaimed that the Holy Trinity is, and is believed to be, one God, as follows: But the rest abide in their own dignity, the beginning of which is peaceableness and lack of dissension, having obtained their being one from the holy and praiseworthy Trinity, from whom also comes illumination, because it both is, and is believed to be, one God (CD vol. 54, p. 354).

2.3.6. From Oration 11 (*Ad Gregorium Nyssenum*) 4 (see Patr. Graec. vol. 35, cols. 832–41; using Calvet-Sebasti ed. [Sourc. Chrét. 405], pp. 328–46)

Besides this, it is pertinent for us to look also at the opinion expressed by **Gregory the Theologian** on the subject. He wrote in the oration *On Gregory of Nyssa*, speaking as follows about the holy martyrs: Let us pay this tribute to their exploits: that we too become crowned and inheritors of the same glory; both the glory they have from us and that which is reserved for them in heaven, glory whose memorials and certain small marks are the things seen (CD vol. 32, p. 204).

2.3.7. From Oration 14 (*De Pauperum Amore*) (see Patr. Graec. vol. 35, cols. 858–909)

Besides this, he [Gregory] also spoke as follows in the oration *On the Love of Poverty*, writing: But you are witnesses also of the suffering. The harsh and pitiable spectacle is set before your eyes, incredible save to those who know, men dead and yet alive, mutilated in most of the limbs of the body, almost unrecognizable for who they formerly were or where they come from. No, rather they are the wretched remnants of sometime men; who tell their fathers, mothers, brothers and places as indications of who they are: ‘I am so and so’s son, so and so is my mother, such and such is my name, and you were once my friend and acquaintance’. And why do they do this? Because they cannot be recognized by their former mark (Ibid., p. 206).

2.3.8. From Oration 20 (*De Dogmate et constitutione Episcoporum*) 5–6, 11 (see Patr. Graec. vol. 35, cols. 1065–80; using Mossay and Lafontaine eds. [Sourc. Chrét. 270], pp. 56–84)

Gregory the Theologian spoke as follows in his *First Oration on the Doctrine of God*: We worship, then, the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, separating the properties but uniting the Godhead, and neither merge the three into one (lest we fall sick with Sabellius's ailment) nor divide into three of different stock and foreign (lest we rave with Arianism). For why should we force, as it were, a plant very bent in one direction over to the other side and correct distortion with distortion, instead of straightening it out half-way and taking our stand within the bounds of true religion (Ibid., p. 76)?

'Why', someone might say to him, 'because on hearing God-clad Basil say: We must acknowledge each *prosōpon* as existing in true hypostasis, we understand the hypostasis as the same as *prosōpon*, is it necessary also, when the **Theologian** said: Because we must preserve one God and profess three hypostases or *prosōpa* and each of them along with its property, to think the *prosōpa* the same as the characteristic properties of the *prosōpa*?' (Ibid., pp. 400, 402).

But for elucidation and confirmation of what is said it will be useful to listen in full to the **Theologian's** words, which are as follows: But if you do not investigate, whether we should speak of the Son's generation (Syr. ܩܕܝܫܐ ܕܒܢܐ) or hypostasis or whatever else which one may find fuller in sense than these (for what is to be thought and said overcomes my tongue), do not investigate the procession of the Spirit either. lest the same It will be enough for me that I hear 'the Son' and 'from the Father' and that whatever the Father is yet the Son is and nothing beyond this will I investigate, thing happen to me as to words which, on being shouted frequently, fall utterly away, or as to a gaze extended towards the Sun's ray; for the more accurately a man seeks to see, the more will he be damaged in his perception, and will be deprived of the faculty of seeing because what is seen overcomes the gaze by its abundance, if it desires to see all and not in so far as it is safe. You hear of generation; do not investigate how! You hear of the Spirit who proceeds from the Father; do not investigate how! But if you do investigate the Son's generation and the Spirit's procession, I too will investigate the coupling of your soul and your body (Ibid., p. 408).

Tell us, then, what you wrote in the subsequent passage: so he [**Gregory**] who in his theology destroyed the whole fortress of heresy, shall illuminate dwellers in the darkness of ignorance, teaching, as he does, that generation is hypostasis in his *First Oration on Theology*. For he says: 'But if you do not investigate, whether we should speak of the Son's generation or hypostasis or whatever else which one may find fuller in sense than these (for what is to be thought and said overcomes my tongue)' (CD vol. 35, p. 276).

2.3.9. From Oration 21 (*In Laudem Athanasii*) Esp. 35 (see Patr. Graec. vol. 35, cols. 1081–28; using Mossay and Lafontaine ed. [Sourc. Chrét. 270], pp. 110–92)

Gregory the Theologian spoke as follows in his *First Oration on the Doctrine of God*: We worship, then, the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, separating the properties but uniting the Godhead, and neither merge the three into one (lest we fall sick with Sabellius' ailment) nor divide into three of different stock and foreign (lest we rave with Arianism). For why should we force, as it were, a plant very bent in one direction over to the other side and correct distortion with distortion, instead of straightening it out half-way and taking our stand within the bounds of true religion (CD vol. 32, p. 76)?

Again, **Gregory the Theologian** attests this, too, in the *Oration on the Burial of the famous Athanasius*, saying as follows: But what I find especially to marvel at in the man and what it would be damaging to keep silent on because the hour brings forth especially schisms in plenty, this I shall add to what has been said. His action will be instructive to our contemporaries too, if we look towards him. Just as not only what the hand has let go as it draws it off is cut off from the water but also what is shed as it drips between the fingers, so

also not only the impious is sundered from us but also the very religious, not over merely trifling and negligible doctrines (for that would be a slight evil) but heretofore also over words that convey the same meaning. For when we say ‘one substance’ (Syr. ܥܬܝܬܐ ܥܬܝܬܐ) and ‘three hypostases’ (Syr. ܬܠܬܐ ܡܬܠܬܐ) with true religion (Syr. ܥܬܝܬܐ ܥܬܝܬܐ) (for the first indicates the nature of the Godhead, the second the properties of the three) the Italians understand them in the same way as we, but they were unable, owing to the constraints of their language and its poverty of terms, to distinguish ‘substance’ (Syr. ܥܬܝܬܐ) and ‘hypostasis’ and therefore ‘*prosōpa*’ was introduced so that three substances might not be accepted. What happens? Something ridiculous and pitiable; the verbal triviality was thought a difference of faith. And consequently, Sabellianism was fabricated in ‘three *prosōpa*’ and Arianism in ‘three hypostases’—contentious fabrications. But what after that? By the constant addition of small annoyances (the annoyance produced the quarrel) the ends of the earth were in danger of being rent asunder along with the words. So the saint, truly a man of God and great steward of souls, on seeing and hearing this, did not feel it appropriate to disregard so absurd and irrational a dissection of the word, but applies his own remedy to the ailment. How, then, does he do this? Inviting both sides to come to him, so gently and humanely, he carefully investigated the meaning of their statements and, because he found both sides of one mind and not removed from one another on any point of principle, indulgent to the terms, he bound them by the realities. This was more beneficial for them than the exercises and lengthy discourses which everybody is writing nowadays, and to which is coupled a certain ambitiousness, and, therefore, perhaps, some innovation is made with regard to doctrine—this, I say, is more valuable than the many vigils and prostrations on the ground, things profitable only to those who accomplish them. This was of worth equal to the man’s exile and famous flights (Ibid., pp.104, 106).

Perhaps you will say that the **Theologian** ruled absolutely that the hypostases are ingeneracy (Syr. ܥܬܝܬܐ ܥܬܝܬܐ), generacy (Syr. ܥܬܝܬܐ) and procession (Syr. ܥܬܝܬܐ ܥܬܝܬܐ), when he said: For when we say ‘one substance’ and ‘three hypostases’ with true religion (for the first indicates the nature of the Godhead, the second the properties of the three) (Ibid., pp. 146, 148)!

However, it would be as well here too, by way of reminder, to set out statements dealing with the point. **Gregory the Theologian**, then, in his oration *On the illustrious Athanasius*, as we have already frequently quoted, says: For when we say ‘one substance’ and ‘three hypostases’ with true religion (for the first indicates the nature of the Godhead, the second the properties of the three) the Italians understand them in the same way as we, but they were unable, owing to the constraints of their language and its poverty of terms, to distinguish ‘substance’ and ‘hypostasis’ and therefore ‘*prosōpa*’ was introduced so that three substances might not be accepted (Ibid., pp. 270, 272).

2.3.10. From Oration 22 (*De Pace II*) (see Patr. Graec. vol. 35, cols. 1132–52; using Mossay and Lafontaine eds. [Sourc. Chrét. 270], pp. 218–58)

See again how **Gregory the Theologian**, too, forbids and restrains any enquiry beyond the limit of our reasonings, laying down the measure of enquiry and concession over divine doctrines, lest one of these things should be harmed by the other, and taking much care for the caution due. For he wrote in the third oration *On the Peacemakers*, giving the following admonition: What is this, you people? How long is it to go on? Shall we not become modest, even though tardily? Shall we not wake up? Shall we not be ashamed? Even if of nought else, shall we not beware of the enemies’ tongues ready to disparage with lies? Shall we not desist from this great contention? Shall we not recognize which of the issues we can comprehend and to what extent, but which are beyond our powers; which belong to the present time and to the base mixture which obfuscates the mind, but which to the world to come and to the liberty it brings; so that we may love the former now but be purified by the

latter when we are finally perfected and cease from desire? Shall we not discriminate for ourselves between what we ought not to enquire into all, what, in their stead, we should enquire into with moderation, and what we ought to leave out of account and concede however they may be to the lovers of contention, as things which do no damage to our argument; what we must grant to faith alone and what to reasonings; what we must fight for with diligence, by words and without weaponry (CD vol. 54, pp. 412, 414)?

2.3.11. From Oration 23 (*De Pace III*) Esp. 8 (see Patr. Graec. vol. 35, cols. 1152–68; using Mossay and Lafontaine eds. [Sourc. Chrét. 270], pp. 280–310)

But if also, because, as first cause, the Father is called the Beginning of Godhead and is said to come to creatures through Godhead (for the same guide to exact theology said in his [Gregory's] *Second Oration on Peace*: Therefore, to the extent that God is more honourable than creatures, will it be more glorious for the first cause to be the Beginning of Godhead rather than of creatures, and through intervening Godhead come to creatures, rather than the opposite, that the Godhead should be made to subsist for their sake, which is what it pleases these very high-up investigators to suppose), this redoubtable fellow thinks he can find some sort of aid for his doctrine, by shamelessly positing another Beginning. . . (Ibid., pp. 198, 200).

He [Gregory] wrote similar things too in the *Second Oration on Peace*, as follows: But I, by introducing a Beginning (non-temporal, without division or bounds) of Godhead, honour equally both the Beginning and what are from the Beginning; the former, because Beginning of such, the latter because thus and such are they from such: divided neither by a 'when' nor by nature nor by venerableness, being one separably and unitedly separable (to speak paradoxically), not less praised for mutual relationship than when each of them is viewed and apprehended on its own (Ibid., pp. 398, 400).

2.3.12. From Oration 25 (*In Laudem Heronis Philosophi*) esp. 16 (see Patr. Graec. vol. 35, cols. 1179–1225; using Mossay and Lafontaine eds. [Sourc. Chrét. 284], pp. 156–204)

And again, in the *Oration on Heron the Philosopher*: Truly we call the Father 'Father', and much more truly than with our human fathers; because he is Father solely, in his own fashion, and unlike bodies; and sole, for without intercourse; and he is Father of the sole, for of the Only-begotten; and only: for not first, a son; and wholly Father of a whole—something unknown, indeed, with us; and from the beginning, for not latterly. Truly we call the Son 'Son', because he is Son solely, of the sole, and in a unique way, and only. For he will not later be Father, and the whole is Son and of the whole, and from the beginning and has never begun to be Son, for Godhead does not change its mind, nor is deification progressive so that the one should ever lack anything of being Father or the other of being Son (CD vol. 35, pp. 520, 522).

In the oration *On Heron the Philosopher* also, he [Gregory] gave a preliminary outline of the same teaching and the following counsel: But now you are to teach that we know only thus much: a unity adored in Trinity and Trinity in unity, having a paradoxical division and union (CD vol. 54, p. 400).

But the same Gregory testifies again too that in things incomprehensible when reason correspondingly fails, toil and trouble in our reasonings when we stand up for the true faith, is better than departure from it through following the conventional train of reasonings, when he taught lovers of true wisdom in the oration *To Heron the Philosopher*: Do not be afraid of 'procession', for God, who is rich in all, has no necessity either to proceed or not proceed. But fear estrangement and the warning laid down, not to those who profess as God, but to those who blaspheme against the Holy Ghost. Do not give wrong honour to the single sovereignty either by contracting or curtailing the Godhead. Do not be embarrassed by the charge of tritheism so long as another runs the risk of ditheism. For either you have

back, and this when I was hidden in a rock, in the Word which was, for our sake, incarnate; and gazing a little while, I saw, not the primal and immortal nature known to itself (I mean to the Trinity) all of which waits inside the first gateway and is hidden by the cherubim, but only all that is hindmost and reaches us (Ibid., pp. 356, 358).

2.3.15. From Oration 29 (*Theologica III*) esp. 10 (see Patr. Graec. vol. 36, cols. 73–104; using Gallay and Jourjon eds. [Sourc. Chrét. 250], pp. 176–224)

But I have been so far from saying or thinking the three hypostases—those of the Father, son and holy ghost, I mean—or their characteristic properties mere appellations [or empty] names or relationships bereft [of the realities] (CD, ATD, p. 65).

The **Theologian** preaches in the *First Oration on the Son*: why do you declare that ingenerate and generate are not the same thing? If you mean the uncreated and the created, I should be in agreement, for the unbeginning and the created are not the same thing in nature; but if you mean the begetter and the begotten, the statement is invalid, for it is absolutely necessary that they should be the same thing; indeed it is the nature of begetter and offspring that the offspring should be the same thing by nature as its begetter (CD vol. 29, pp. 38, 40).

The **Theologian** expressly calls the begetter and the begotten the same thing by nature. Let us, then, look also at what he writes about ingeneracy and generacy (Syr. ܐܰܕܰܡܰܠܰܐ ܐܰܕܰܡܰܠܰܐ ܐܰܕܰܡܰܠܰܐ). He says: “Or thus again: what do you mean by ‘the ingenerate’ and ‘the generate’? If you mean ingeneracy and generacy—no, these are not the same thing; but if you mean those who have these properties, why should they not be the same thing?” (Ibid., p. 40).

Let **Gregory** come forward for us, therefore, and explain the accuracy of what has been stated by his true theology. He instructs us, then, in the *First Oration on the Son*, as follows: why do you declare that ingenerate and generate are not the same thing? If you mean the uncreated and the created, I should be in agreement, for the unbeginning and the created are not the same thing in nature; but if you mean the begetter and the begotten, the statement is invalid, for it is absolutely necessary that they should be the same thing; indeed it is the nature of begetter and offspring that the offspring should be the same thing by nature as its begetter. Or thus again: what do you mean by ‘the ingenerate’ and ‘the generate’? If you mean ingeneracy and generacy—no, these are not the same thing; but if you mean those who have these things, why should they not be the same thing (Ibid., p. 54)?

We must also then recognize that fatherhood (i.e., ingeneracy) or generacy or procession are not empty names and relationships bereft of realities (as **Gregory the Theologian** says somewhere). . . (Ibid., p. 82).

But **Gregory**, too, rich in the grace of theology, said things in agreement with and akin to this in his *First Oration on the Son*, as follows: This is the way you may learn that ‘ingeneracy’ and ‘God’ are not identical. If they were identical, ingeneracy would also have to be the ingeneracy of somebody because God is somebody’s God; or, since ingeneracy is not somebody’s, God could not be somebody’s either, for things totally identical have the same consequences. But the ingeneracy is not anybody’s; whose could it be? But God is somebody’s God; everybody’s in fact. So how can God and ingeneracy be identical? And again, since ingeneracy and generacy are mutually opposed as condition and privation, we must bring in mutually opposed substances; which is not allowed of. Or again, since conditions are prior to privations and privations are the removal of conditions, not only must the Son’s substance be prior to God the Father’s but it must also be in process of removal by the Father’s on your suppositions (Ibid., p. 148).

Gregory the Theologian with the same invincible weapons of the Spirit subdued blasphemy when he wrote, as follows, in his *First Oration on the Son*: How could we pass over this next point of theirs which is no less remarkable than these last statements? ‘Father’,

they say, is a term either for the substance or the activity, meaning to tie us down by the alternatives. If we say ‘for the substance’, we shall be agreeing that the Son is of a different substance, seeing that there is one substance of God and this (according to them) the Father has prior possession of. But if we say ‘for the activity’ we shall be admitting that the Son is a creature and not an offspring. For where there is an active producer, there must be a product of activity. And they will say, ‘we wonder how the product can be the same as the producer’. I should have felt very abashed myself at your dilemma, had it been necessary to accept one of the alternatives instead of stating a third, truer possibility avoiding both. My subtle friends, ‘Father’ is not a term either for the substance or for the activity but for the relationship, the manner of being, which obtains between Son and Father or Father and Son. For just as with us, these appellations indicate close kindred and affinity, so also there they signify the sameness of nature between begotten and begetter. But, to please you, suppose that the Father is some substance: he will certainly bring the inference of the Son and not alienate him, according to common-sense and the meaning of the appellations. Suppose, if you will, that it is a term for the activity, even so you will not catch us out that way either. For the very thing he will have been actively producing is the consubstantiality, even if the thought of this active production is otherwise absurd (Ibid., p. 264).

To this we also attach in due order words by **Gregory the Theologian** which will illuminate the minds of readers more clearly than the sun’s beams and will totally disperse the darkness of heretical wrong thinking. He wrote as follows, then, in the *First Oration on the Son*: Our argument, then, is: just as horse, ox and man and each under the same species have one concept and whatever shares in the concept is called by that name in the full sense but whatever does not share in the concept is either not called by that name or not called by it in the full sense, so also God has one substance, nature and appellation, even though the names are also separated along with the particular separate notions. Whatever he is called in the full sense, that god is; and whatever he is by nature, by that he is truly called because our truth is not in names but in realities (Ibid., pp. 324, 326).

Gregory the Theologian, too, indeed, in the *First Oration on the Son* pokes fun at such witlessness and says: Or thus again: what do you mean by ‘the ingenerate’ and ‘the generate’? If you mean ingeneracy and generacy—no, these are not the same thing: but if you mean those who have these things, why should they not be the same thing? Because also unwisdom and wisdom are not the same thing as each other, but are with the man himself. Neither do they divide the substance off, but are divided off with the substance. Or are immortality, freedom from evil and immutability God’s substance? But, if so, there are many substances of God and not one (CD vol. 32, p. 230).

He [**Gregory**] says similar things in the *First Oration on the Son*: How, then, was he begotten? It would have been no great generation had it been comprehended by you, you who do not even know your own generation. And again: Let god’s generation be honoured with silence. It is a great thing for you to learn that he was begotten, but how, not even the angels are able to conceive of, not to mention our granting that you might understand. You want me to show you how (Ibid., p. 410)?

My good fellow, you hear the divinely inspired father proclaim: The one who has a different fleshly generation has also a different spiritual generation (Ibid., p. 410).

For having taken up to start with the Son’s generation he [**Gregory**] later passed on to discuss the Father and said: Or rather, the one whose existence is not the same has also a different generation. Is it not because not only the generation of him who was begotten but also that of him who begat can be, and be spoken of, in certain different senses? For after alluding perhaps to this he said: But if you do not investigate, whether we should speak of the Son’s generation or hypostasis or whatever else which one may find fuller in sense than these . . . Observe him explaining in the words set down that it is the Father’s generation

also which is being spoken of, for he says: But they are different things, I think: willing and will, generating and generation, speaking and speech—unless we are drunk. The former are the moving, the latter as it were the motion itself. So what is willed is not the will's (for that by no means follows!) nor is the generated the generation's, nor the heard the expression's; but they are the willer's, the begetter's and the speaker's (Ibid., pp. 410, 412).

For we clearly heard the doctor proclaim that he who begat and he who was begotten are the same as those who have ingeneracy and generacy, whereas ingeneracy and generacy are not the same thing (Ibid., p. 416).

Clever sirs, your battle is not against us here but, clearly, with the **Theologian**, who plainly said that he who begat and he who was begotten (i.e., those who have ingeneracy and generacy) are the same, whereas ingeneracy and generacy are not the same thing (Ibid., p. 416).

For, as the same Theologian said, 'all the predicates of something are not simply predicates of its substrate' (CD vol. 35, p. 24).

And in the *First Oration on the Son*, he [Gregory] says this: then, why do you declare that ingenerate and generate are not the same thing? If you mean the uncreated and the created, I should be in agreement, for the unbeginning and the created are not the same thing in nature; but if you mean the begetter and the begotten, the statement is invalid, for it is absolutely necessary that they should be the same thing; indeed it is the nature of begetter and offspring that the offspring should be the same thing by nature as its begetter. Or thus again: what do you mean by 'the ingenerate' and 'the generate'? If you mean ingeneracy and generacy—no, these are not the same thing; but if you mean those who have these things, why should they not be the same thing (Ibid., pp. 84, 86)?

And again: 'But if' they say, the Son is the same as the Father in substance, and the Father is ingenerate, the Son will be so too' Yes, if God's substance were ingeneracy and so there would be the novel mixture of generate and ingenerate. But if the difference belongs with the substance, why do you say this as if it were a powerful objection? Or are you also your father's father, because you are the same in substance as him? Is it not clear that it is with the property remaining immovable that we are to look for what God's substance is, if we are indeed looking for it? This is the way you may learn that 'ingeneracy' and 'God' are not identical (Ibid., p. 90).

But they are clearly convicted of being sick in mind to the last degree, and of gnawing off petty phrases like mice and dwelling on the letter like Jews, although the same doctor said in the *First Oration on the Son*, as follows: 'He was in the beginning without cause (for what is cause of God?) but later he "became" because of a cause: it was that you, his despiser, might be saved; you who on account of this spurn his Godhead which assumed your denseness' (Ibid., p. 312).

Listen to **Gregory the Theologian**, who aims at them in the *First Oration on the Son*. He said the following: But they, as if fearful of not stirring up everything against the Truth, profess that the Son is God (whenever they are compelled to do so by word and testimonies) but by homonymity and only by participation in an appellation. But when we retort to them 'What, then? Is the Son not God in the full sense, in the way that a picture is not the living thing? How then is he God, if he is not God in the full sense?' They say, 'Yes, what is to prevent these being homonyms as well as both of them being said in the full sense?' And they will offer us dog (dry-land and marine) which are homonyms and said in the full sense. And a few lines later: So that the man depicted and the living man come closer to your 'Godhead' than the dogs of your illustration. Or allow to both an equality of the natures in honour just as you allow a participation in appellation, even if you are introducing the natures as different, and you have destroyed those 'dogs' of yours which you discovered in your encounter with inequality (CD vol. 54, pp. 54, 56).

He [Gregory] wrote similar things too in the *First Oration on the Son*, as follows: These are our answers to riddlers, unwilling answers (for vexatiousness, indeed, and retorts are unpleasing to the faithful, for one adversary is enough) but necessary on account of those who fall, since medicines too are necessary because of illnesses, in order that they may know that they are not completely wise and are not invincible in those superfluities which make void the Gospel. For when we put forward the power of reason, abandon believing, and destroy the credibility of the Spirit by investigation, and when subsequently reason is vanquished by the grandeur of the realities (for vanquished it must be, proceeding, as it does, from the frail organ of our mind) what will happen? The weakness of reason appears to belong to the mystery, and thus the grandeur of reason is found to be something that “makes void the Cross”, as Paul, too, held [1 Cor 1:17]. For faith is the fullness of our reason (Ibid., p. 414).

2.3.16. From Oration 30 (*Theologica IV*) (see Patr. Graec. vol. 36, cols. 104–33; using Gallay and Jourjon eds. [Sourc. Chrét. 250], pp. 226–74)

And he [Gregory] discloses to us extensive teaching on the divine names in the *Second Oration on the Son*, declaring as follows in similar fashion, after dissolving the ‘inescapable’ Arian objections: this whole discussion dealing with counter-arguments, then, will get as far as being a first-stage note for fuller work by closer investigators. But it is perhaps appropriate and relevant to the previous words that we should not pass the Son’s titles by either, without inspection (titles which are numerous and applied to numerous aspects understood as belonging with him) but should establish the meaning each of them has and reveal the mystery of the names. We must start from here: God is nameless. Not only do reasonings indicate this but also the wisest and most ancient Hebrews (so far as they have allowed us to conjecture). For when would those who used special characters to honour God and did not consent to anything else inferior to God being written down with the same letters as God, on the ground that God ought not to share even to this extent in our condition, have agreed to indicate the individual and indissoluble nature by an evanescent expression? Nobody, indeed, has ever breathed in all the air: no mind has grasped, no expression comprehended God’s substance fully; either. No, we sketch what applies to him on the basis of what belongs with him and put together from the various features various dim, feeble images. Our chief theologian is not one who has discovered all (for the shackle does not admit of all) but one who has imagined more than another and collects more in himself truth’s image or mark or whatever else we call it. So far, then, as we can comprehend, ‘He who is’ and ‘God’ stand especially as names of the substance, and of these especially ‘He who is’; not only because when He was prophesying to Moses on the mountain and was asked what his name was, he called himself this (bidding him tell the people, “He who is has sent me”) but also because we find this name even fuller in sense [cf. Exod 3:1, 14–15]. For this name ‘God’, though it is interpreted, by those who fuss noisily over these things, as derived from ‘running’ or ‘burning’ (on account of constant movement and consuming of evil habits, for that is why he is also called a “consuming fire”) [Deut 4:24; Heb 12:28–29], yet, none the less, it is relative and not absolute, just as the word ‘Lord’ also is the Lord’s name and it is only said, “for I am the Lord, thy God, that is my name” [Isa 42: 8] and “the Lord is his name” [Exod 15:3]. Whereas we are seeking the nature, the being on its own not bound to another, but that which is truly to God, even in its entirety, neither limited nor cut short by what is prior or subsequent to it (for that neither was nor will be). But of the other titles, some clearly pertain to power, whereas some to his providential ordering; and this in a two-fold way: supra-corporeally and corporeally. For example: ‘omnipotent’ and ‘king’ (whether ‘of glory’, ‘the ages’, ‘the powers’, ‘the beloved’, or, ‘those who reign’) or ‘Lord’, too, of ‘Sabaoth’ (that is to say, whether of soldiers or the mighty or sovereigns) [Ps 24:10]; these clearly pertain to power. Whereas “God”, “of

salvation", "retributions", "peace", "justice", "of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob" and of all the spiritual and God-regarding Israel [e.g., Psalms 79:9; 94:1; Heb 13:20; Isa 30:18; Exod 3:6]; these pertain to providential ordering. For because we are providentially ordered by these three things, by fear of punishment, hope of salvation and, besides these, by hope of glory and by the practice of the virtues, based on these, the term 'retributions' providentially ordains fear, whereas 'salvation' ordains hope and 'virtues' their practice. So that, as bearing God in himself, one who accomplishes some of these things will hasten the more towards perfection and the kinship which comes from virtues. These, then, so far, are the Godhead's common names. The proper names, on the other hand, are: of the unbeginning, 'Father'; of the one who was begotten without beginning, 'Son', and of the one who has proceeded or proceeds ingenerately, 'Holy Ghost'. But let us proceed to the appellations of the Son, which is the starting point of the argument. For I think he is called 'Son' as being the same thing in substance as the Father, and not only that, but as being also therefrom. Whereas he is also called 'Only-begotten', not only because he alone is from the only one, but also because he is so in a unique mode, unlike bodies. He is called 'Word' because he has the same relationship to the Father as word to mind, not only in respect to the impassibility of his generation but also because of his close connection and revelatory power; indeed, perhaps one might say, as definition to what is defined, seeing that a definition is also called a 'word'. For "He who has" understood "the Son" (for this is what 'seeing' means) *has* understood "the Father too" and the Son is the short and plain demonstration of the Father's nature [cf. John 14:9b]; for every offspring is a silent 'definition' of its begetter. Indeed, were one to say too that it is because he is in what exists, he would not be astray in so saying, for is there anything which does not exist by the Word? He is called 'Wisdom' as the knowledge of divine and human realities; for how could the maker be ignorant of the principles of what he has made? He is called 'power' as preserver of what have come into existence and giver of power that they should stand fast. He is called 'Truth', as being one, not many, in nature; for truth is one, whereas falsehood is much cloven; and as being the Father's pure 'seal' and most truthful impression. He is called 'Image' as being consubstantial and because he is from the Father but not the Father from him; for it is the nature of the image to be an imitation of an archetype and of the one whose image it is said to be [cf. Col 1:5, 11, 15 etc.]. But more so: for here unmoving of the moving, but there living of the alive. He has, too, more unvaryingness than Seth from Adam [cf. Gen 5:3], and beyond that of begotten from begetter. For such is the nature of things simple: not, to be like in this respect and unlike in that, but to be a total representation of a totality and to be the same rather than a likeness. He is called 'Light', as being the brightness of souls made pure in word and conduct. For if ignorance and sin are darkness, light will be knowledge and divine living [cf. Col 1:12–13]. He is called 'Life', because he is the stay and substantiation of all rational nature. For "in him we live and move and are" [Acts 17:28; cf. Col 3:4] according to the meaning of a twofold inspiration: the breath we all breathe; and the Holy Ghost all are pervaded by, so far as we open the mouth of our understanding. He is called 'Justice', because he is the one who justly apportions to those under the law and to those under grace, to soul and body: so that soul is ruler, body is in subjection; and the higher has rule over the inferior, lest the inferior rise up against the higher. He is called 'Sanctification', as being purification, so that the purifier may pervade in purity. He is called 'Redemption', because he frees us who are held by sin, and he gave himself for us as a ransom cleansing the world. He is called 'Resurrection', because he raises us up hence and returns us, dead as we were from sin, to life. These, then, so far, are what we have in common with him who is above us and because of us [Isa 30:18; 1 Cor 1:30bβ:] (CD vol. 29, pp. 326, 328, 330, 332).

What are we to say of **Gregory the Theologian**, not to mention divine Scripture itself or the entire number of divinely inspired fathers who eradicate and overturn such madness from the foundations? For he wrote in the *Second Oration on the Son*, as follows: But let us proceed to the appellation of the Son, which is the starting point of the argument. For I think he is called ‘Son’ as being the same thing in substance as the Father, and not only that, but as being also therefrom. Whereas he is also called ‘Only-begotten’, not only because he alone is from the only one, but also because he is so in a unique mode, unlike bodies (CD vol. 35, p. 520).

Again, in the *Second Oration on the Son*, he [**Gregory**] is seen to say similar things: Is not, then, he created me spoken along with cause? For he created me as the beginning of his ways, for his works [Prov 8:22], but the works of his hands are truth and judgement [Ps 111:7] because of which he was anointed with Godhead for this is the unction of manhood. On the other hand, he begets me is without cause—or you are to show some statement with it. So what reasoning will dispute the fact that Wisdom is called a creature in respect to the earthly generation, but offspring in respect to the first and more incomprehensible (CD vol. 32, pp. 392, 394)?

2.3.17. From Oration 31 (*Theologica V*) (see Patr. Graec. vol. 36, cols. 133–72; using Gallay and Jourjon eds. [Sourc. Chrét. 250], pp. 276–342)

It is pertinent that you should hear his teaching in the discourse *On the Holy Ghost*: ‘The Holy Ghost’, he [**Gregory**] says, ‘must be presumed to be either an individually existing thing or something viewed in something else: what experts in such matter call respectively “substance” (Syr. ܫܡܝܬܐ) and “accident” (Syr. ܬܠܝܬܐ). If the Holy Ghost is an “accident”, he must be an energy (Syr. ܩܘܬܐ) of God. What else, whose else, could he be (for it is better thus, and avoids composition)? If he is an energy, then clearly he is put into operation, does not operate himself and ceases as soon as he has been activated. This is the kind of thing an energy is. How, then, does he act, say such and such things, set apart, is grieved, is vexed (all things clearly, that belong to one who moves, not to a movement)? But if he is a substance, and not one of the things belonging with the substance, he will be thought of either as a creature or as God. For not even the inventors of goat-stags can think up what is half-way or anything sharing, or composed of, both. But if he is a creature, why do we believe in him or how are we perfected in him? For our believing in something and our believing about it are not the same. The former belongs to the Godhead, the second to everything’ (CD vol. 29, pp. 42, 44).

It remains, after this, for us to show that the divinely inspired **Theologian** took not only ‘unbeginning’ and ‘unbegotten’, but also ‘generate’ and ‘proceeding’, not as mere empty names but as indicative of the hypostases. He spoke in the oration *On the Holy Spirit* as follows: Again, where did you get those citadels of yours, ‘ingenerate’ and ‘unbeginning’, or we ‘immortal’? Show us the exact words or we shall reject them! And you will be killed by your own principles, because your terms will have been destroyed and the wall of the fortress you were relying on. Or is it not recognized that they are derived from things which imply them, though they are unmentioned? What are they? “I am the first and I am hereafter” [cf. Isa 44:6] and: “Before me there was no other God and after me there shall be none” [cf. Isa 43:10]. For all ‘is-ness’ is mine; it did not begin and will not stop. You have taken these truths of there being nothing before him and of there being no cause more ancient than he is, and called him ‘unbeginning’ and ‘ingenerate’. The fact that he will not cease to exist means he is ‘immortal’ and ‘imperishable’ (Ibid., pp. 64, 66).

This is proved again by the same text of **the Theologian**, which says in the oration *On the Holy Ghost*: In what particular, then, does the Spirit fall short of being Son? For were there no deficiency, he would be Son. There is no deficiency, we say, for God lacks nothing. It is their difference in what one might call ‘manifestation’, or ‘mutual relationship’

which has also caused the difference in their appellations. For the Son does not fall short in some particular of being Father, for sonship is no deficiency. But that does not make him Father. By the same token would the Father fall short in some particular of being Son, for the Father is not the Son? No, this gives no ground for any deficiency or subordination of substance, but the very fact of not being begotten, of being begotten and of proceeding has given them the names which are applied to them, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, respectively, so that the three hypostases' freedom from confusion may be preserved in the single nature and power of the Godhead (Ibid., p. 178).

We will, then, as concisely as possible learn the meaning of the other texts of **the Theologian** and proceed to the testimony from the father which is quoted after that. He wrote, then, about the Holy Ghost: If the fact that he is neither clearly nor very often named 'God' in the Bible (as the Father is earlier, and the Son is later) is made an occasion of your blasphemy and such excessive garrulity and impiety, we shall release you from this affliction, by philosophizing a little about realities and names mainly outside the Bible's practice. From this, too, the difference has been made plain to all who want to see it, between realities and names. If not, let the absurd advocates of folly say how they think we ought to interpret about realities and names! Or will they say that this is said periphrastically? But it is obvious that this is the way of nobody except people who make a habit of blathering old-wives' nonsense. But when, the Trumpet of Theology says, did you hear of God as a 'body'? This being non-existent, has been made up. For we have, so far as we can, named the things of God from our condition (Ibid., p. 342).

Take note of this, you sophist, and consider the extremely apt way **the Theologian** proclaims to you: There being, then, this whole difference between names and realities, why are you so excessively servile to the letter, why do you mix with Jewish wisdom and follow the syllables and let the realities go, confining the great mystery of godliness, like Sabellius, only to names (Ibid., pp. 342, 344)?

Before the close examination of this, readers must know that no orthodox thinker disagrees with people who simply term the hypostases of the Holy Trinity 'properties'. For we find some of our God-clad fathers using this expression in relation to the hypostases, and especially **Gregory the Theologian**. For example, at one point in the oration *On the Holy Ghost* he says: Thus, do I stand on these matters and will stand and would have it so for everyone who loves me, that we should confess the Father as God, the Son as God, the Holy Ghost as God, three properties, one Godhead undivided in glory, honour, substance and sovereignty as a fairly recent God-clad saint philosophized (CD vol. 32, pp. 46, 48).

For **Gregory the Theologian** said, in the *Oration on the Holy Ghost*, the following too: "One commingling of light, as it were in three mutually linking Suns" (CD vol. 35, p. 392).

Listen to **Gregory the Theologian** who says in the *Oration on the Holy Ghost*: He is called 'Spirit of God', 'Spirit of Christ', 'Mind of Christ', 'Spirit of the Lord', 'Lord Himself', 'Spirit of adoption, of truth, of liberty' (CD vol. 54, p. 62).

He [**Gregory**] gave teaching similar to that already quoted when he said in the *Oration on the Holy Ghost*, as follows: Finally, then, I decided it was certainly best to bid farewell to images and shadows as deceptive and very lacking in truth, but I myself, would hold to the more religious view, would take my stand on few words, would use the Spirit as my guide, would keep to the end as close associate and companion that source whence I have received illumination as in this world I walk, and would urge others, as best I can, to worship Father, Son and Holy Ghost, one Godhead and power, to whom be all glory and honour and power for ever and ever. Amen (Ibid., p. 356).

We shall be right to couple with these words what **Gregory the Theologian** said in his oration *On the Holy Ghost*: For neither is the Son 'Father' (for one is Father), but is whatever the Father is; nor is the Spirit 'Son' because from God (for one is the Only-begotten) but is

whatever the Son is. For three are 'one in Godhead', and one is 'three in properties', so that there can be neither Sabellius's 'one' nor the 'three' of present evil division (Ibid., p. 398).

Let us observe too the grateful mind of this true 'theologian' in the oration *On the Holy Ghost*, and let us imitate him as best we can. For he theologizes about the union and separation belonging to the mystery and, not finding anything below to compare with the reality, or any finite area in which he comprehended it, he said this: As I pondered in myself many things in curiosity of mind and directed my reason all ways, I sought to obtain some illustration for so great a reality and there is nothing in our world below with which to compare the divine nature. For even if a small resemblance be found, the great thing itself escaped me and left me below with the illustration. And later: And there is nothing at all to give standing to my mind in the illustration, when I consider what is imagined, except a man take one thing from the illustration with a grateful mind and discard the rest (Ibid., pp. 414, 416).

Similarly he [Gregory] wrote in the oration *On the Holy Ghost* as follows: You, therefore, have released yourself from the business by a single word and have gained a pyrrhic victory, having done something similar to those who hang themselves from fear of death. For you have denied the Godhead, so as not to labour in fighting for the single sovereignty, and have surrendered the point at issue to the enemy. But as for me, even if I am forced to toil somewhat I will not surrender what is to be adored (Ibid., p. 418).

2.3.18. From Oration 32 (*De Moderatione in Disputando*) (see Patr.Graec, vol. 36, cols. 173–212; using Moreschini ed. [Sourc. Chrét. 318], pp. 82–154)

Let us, in confirmation of what has been said, now recollect our previous detailed examination and show that the Theologian recognizes each of the hypostases of the Holy Trinity viewed individually, as nature, like the rest of the Church's doctors. Saint Theodosius shall testify again to this when he speaks as follows in the same discourse *On Theology*: **Gregory** who was bishop of **Nazianzus** but who enlightened everyone under the sun by his teachings, shall teach clearly that the Father too has been called 'nature'; he speaks as follows in the oration *On orderliness in Discussion*: 'Do not scrutinize the Father's nature, the Only-begotten's substance, the Spirit's glory and power: the single Godhead and radiance in the three, the nature undivided, the confession, glory and hope of believers' (CD vol. 29, pp. 44, 46).

2.3.19. From Oration 33 (*Contra Arianos et de Seipso*) (see Patr. Graec, vol. 36, cols. 213–37; using Moreschini ed. [Sourc. Chrét. 318], pp. 156–96)

In the discourse *Against the Arians* he [Gregory] says: 'We worship the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost: God the Father, God the Son and God (if you are not obdurate) the Holy Ghost' (Ibid., p. 42).

In the oration *Against the Arians* he [Gregory] says: We worship the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost; God the Father, God the Son and God (if you are not obdurate), the Holy Ghost; one nature in three spiritual, perfect properties subsisting of themselves, divided in number and undivided in Godhead (CD vol. 32, p. 48).

'Not supposing that the characteristic properties (we mean fatherhood, sonship and procreation and the like) are hypostases or conversely, again, thinking foolishly of the "spiritual, perfect and individually subsisting properties" as characteristic properties of the prosōpa'. Oh, the outlandish and irrational teachings (CD vol. 35, p. 48)!

If, therefore, they call them perfect, and between perfect things there is no difference *qua* perfection they must concede that the characteristic properties also are 'spiritual, perfect and individually subsisting properties' (Ibid., p. 76).

2.3.20. From Oration 37 (*In Dictum Evangelii: "Cum consummasset . . ."*) (see Patr. Graec. vol. 36, cols. 281–308; using Moreschini ed. [Sourc. Chrét. 318], pp. 270–318)

For **Gregory** wrote as follows in the oration *On the Gospel* saying: However, he bears all things, accepts all things. And what is marvellous? He endured blows, he was subjected to spitting, He tasted gall because of my taste [cf. 1 Cor 13:7; Mark 15:19; Matt 27:34]. He endures even now when he is stoned, not only by those who despoil him but also by ourselves who seem to be devout. For our using corporeal terms in speaking of the incorporeal is perhaps the part of despoilers, perhaps of stoners. But let him again grant pardon to frailty. For we stone unwillingly, but being unable to speak otherwise, we use what words we have (Ibid., p. 22).

2.3.21. From Oration 38 (*In Theophania*) (see Patr. Graec. vol. 36, cols. 312–33; using Moreschini ed. [Sourc. Chrét. 358], pp. 104–48+92)

As for the names indicative of these things, we find some of them set down in holy scripture; since God, because of his love to mankind, reveals himself through them in the measure he knows beneficial to us, in order that he may draw us to him (as the **Theologian** puts it) by what is understood, for what is totally beyond understanding, is beyond hope and beyond endeavour. By being uncomprehended he is wonderful, and being wonderful he is loved the more (CD vol. 29, pp. 72, 74).

The master of exact theology [**Gregory**] speaks, then, as follows in the oration *On the Nativity*: When you hear of the generation of God, of the Virgin and the swathing bands and all that belongs to bodily advent, do not be ashamed! For nothing god approaches sullies him, even though it appears to you to do so; no more does he share our impurity than does the Sun, from the things over which it passes in its course, yet also giving them some of its impurity. But revere in the same way both the first incorporeal generation and the second spotless and pure, free from the pleasure wherein is shamefulness (CD vol. 32, p. 392).

For one can see those even who serve draughts from Eutyches' cup of error alleging saint **Gregory's** words *On the Epiphany*, 'The discarnate becomes flesh, the Word condenses' (CD vol. 35, p. 312).

So it is obvious from here that Gregory said that the Word condensed with our denseness meaning that he hypostatically united our substance to himself truly without illusion. That is why he also said: "The Word condenses, the invisible becomes visible, the impalpable becomes palpable, the timeless begins" (Ibid., pp. 312, 314).

Similarly too he [**Gregory**] warns his listeners not to suppose that the Godhead overflows Father, Son and Holy Ghost or, again that it is restricted within them, but to recognize the Father, Son and Holy Ghost as one God, by speaking as follows, in the *Oration On the Nativity*: Let these things be now the subject of my philosophizing about God, for now is not the time to go beyond them, when not 'theology', but the 'economy' is our theme. Now when I say 'God', I mean the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, the Godhead being neither diffused beyond them lest we import an assembly of 'Gods', nor confined within them lest we be condemned for penury of Godhead: either judaizing on account of the single sovereignty or paganizing on account of the plurality; for a like evil exists in both things, even if it is found in opposites (CD vol. 54, pp. 354, 356).

2.3.22. From Oration 39 (*In Sancta Lumina*) (see Patr. Graec. vol. 36, cols. 336–60; using Moreschini ed. [Sourc. Chrét. 358], pp. 150–96)

In the oration *On the Lights*, he [**Gregory**] said at one point: But when I say 'God', be illumined by one light and by three; by three in properties or hypostases, if anyone loves to call them that, or in *prosōpa* (for we are not disputing at all over names, so long as the words come to the same thought); but by one in the concept of the substance or Godhead (CD vol. 32, p. 48).

He [Gregory] also said in the oration *On the Lights*: “We have one God: the Father from whom is all; one Lord Jesus Christ, through whom is all” [1 Cor 8:6]; and one Holy Ghost, in whom is all; ‘from whom’, ‘through whom’ and ‘in whom’ not dividing off natures (for neither the prepositions ‘from’, ‘through’ and ‘in’, nor the positions of the names could change) but characterizing the properties of a single unconfused nature. And this is evident from what are brought together again into one, if what is in the same apostle is not read carelessly by anyone: “From Him and through Him and in Him are all things: to Him be glory for ever and ever, Amen” [Rom 11:36] (Ibid., pp. 204, 206).

For when we hear him [Gregory] saying this, as was said in the oration *Against the Arians*: one nature in three spiritual, perfect and individually subsisting properties, divided in number and undivided in Godhead; and this in the oration *On the Lights*: But when I say ‘God’, be illumined by one light and by three; by three in properties or hypostases, if anyone loves to call them that, or in *prosōpa* (for we are not disputing at all over names, so long as the words come to the same thought) (CD vol. 35, p. 88).

For Gregory the Theologian said in his oration *On the Lights*: An isolated statement is not a law of the Church, since one swallow does not make a spring, nor one line a geometer nor one voyage a sailor (Ibid., p. 324).

For he [Gregory] casts a flash of intellectual light on our minds in the oration *On the Lights* and thunders, when he speaks these divine words: But when I say ‘God’, be illumined by one light and by three; by three in properties or hypostases, if anyone loves to call them that, or in *prosōpa* (for we are not disputing at all over names, so long as the words come to the same thought); but by one in the concept of the substance or Godhead. For it is indivisibly divided, so to put it, and joined separably. For one in three the Godhead; and one the three in whom the Godhead or, to speak more exactly, who the Godhead is. And again: So one God in three, and one the three, as we said. But these, or this, being so, it was right, indeed, that worship should not be confined only to those above but that there should be some worshippers below, so that all should be filled with God’s praise since all are also God’s; and because of this was man honoured with God’s hand and image (CD vol. 54, p. 362).

2.3.23. From Oration 40 (*In Sanctum Baptisma*) (see Patr. Graec. vol. 36, cols. 360–425; using Moreschini ed. [Sourc. Chrét. 358], pp. 198–310)

Indeed he who is styled **the Theologian** says in his *On Baptism*: ‘Each of them viewed separately, is God; the three known together are God: the former because of the consubstantiality (Syr. ܕܡܝܬܐ ܕܡܝܬܐ), the latter because of the *monarchia* (CD vol. 29, pp. 40, 42).

He [Gregory] wrote in similar terms to these in the oration *On Baptism*, as follows: The word knows a three-fold generation. One from bodies, one from baptism, one from resurrection. Of these, the first is nocturnal, servile and involving passion. The second is of the day, is at liberty and is free from passions; it severs all the covering derived from generation and restores to heavenly life. The third is more fearful and briefer, gathering all creation in a flash to stand before its fashioner and to render an account of its service and behaviour here, as to whether it has only followed the flesh or journeyed with the Spirit and revered the grace of re-fashioning. All these generations my Christ appears as having honoured through himself: the first in the primal, vitalizing in-breathing; the second in incarnation and the baptism with which he was baptized; the third in the resurrection which he initiated, deigning to become also “first-born from the dead” as he became “first-born amongst many brothers” [Col 1:18; Rom 8:29]. It does not belong to the present moment to philosophize about two of these generations, then, (the first and the last, I mean) but let us philosophize about the middle one, the one that now presses upon us, which gives its name to the day of Lights. And a few lines later: When I take the three together in speculation, I see one lamp, for I cannot sunder or measure the united light. Do you fear generation, lest

the impassible God (Syr. ܐܠܗܐ ܕܥܡ ܕܡܠܝܚܐ) should suffer? I fear creation, lest I destroy God through insult and through iniquitous severance, when I either cut the Son off from the Father or the Spirit's substance from the Son (CD vol. 32, p. 394).

See, besides these passages, how he [Gregory] sets down again, in the *Oration on Baptism*, the same precise instruction, for the benefit of those to be perfected in divine baptism, as if he were anointing novice contestants in a match and entrusting them, as it were, with invincible weaponry. He says: This I give you as companion and patron of your whole life: one Godhead and power found singly in three and embracing three dividedly; not disparate in substances or in natures, neither increasing nor diminishing by degrees of great and small, everywhere equal, the same everywhere, like the one beauty and grandeur of the sky; endless continuity of three without end; each of them viewed separately is God; the three of them conceived of together are God: the former because of the consubstantiality, the latter because of the single sovereignty (CD vol. 54, pp. 358, 360).

2.3.24. From Oration 42 (*Supremum Vale*) (see Patr. Graec. vol. 36, cols. 457–92; using Bernardi ed. [Sourc. Chrét. 384], pp. 48–114)

For he [Gregory] declared here that the Spirit is not one of the things belonging with the substance by saying the following: 'But if a substance, and not one of the things belonging with the substance, he will be thought of either as a creature or as God'. But in the discourse entitled *On the Arrival of the Bishops*, having said that the unbeginning, the beginning and the with the beginning are the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, he ruled that the unbeginning (that is, the Father) does not possess unbeginningness (Syr. ܕܥܡ ܕܡܠܝܚܐ) as his nature, neither do the beginning (the Son) nor the with the beginning (the Holy Ghost) possess their appellations as their nature; for belonging with the nature, these are not natures (CD vol. 29, pp. 26, 28).

Likewise in the oration *On the Arrival of the Bishops* he [Gregory] wrote as follows: But let me get back to the subject! Indeed let 'ingenerate', 'generate' and 'proceeding' be said and understood, if someone enjoys creating names. For we are not afraid of things incorporeal being thought of corporeally, as the despoilers of the Godhead have decided. A creature should be called 'God's creature' (for this is a great thing for us) but not 'God'. Or I shall admit that God is a creature, when I too become God in the full sense of the word. It stands thus: if God, not a creature—for a creature belongs along with us who are not gods. On the other hand: if a creature, not God—for it began, and of what began in time there was when it was not. That which has prior to itself the state of non-existence, does not exist in the full sense of the word. How can what does not, in the full sense, exist, be God (Ibid., p. 66)?

He [Gregory] taught the same sort of thing about the Holy Ghost, and following that arrived at the doctrine of names indicative of the hypostases, saying: The name of the unbeginning is 'Father', of the beginning 'Son' and of the with the beginning 'Holy Ghost' (Ibid., p. 76).

But **Gregory the Theologian**, too, in the oration *On the Arrival of the Bishops*, declared: But as for the names: to the unbeginning belongs 'Father', to the beginning 'Son' and to the with the beginning 'Holy Ghost', but to the three belongs as their nature one Godhead. The Father is the unity from whom come the others and towards whom they ascend, not to be merged but to be joined together, neither time separating them nor will, nor power. For these have caused us to be a plurality, with each in conflict with itself and with its fellow; whereas those who have a simple nature and the same being also have oneness in the full sense (Ibid., p. 110).

Gregory, too, distinguished for his polished theology and thereby appropriately styled 'the Theologian', gives us a philosophical exposition of the matter in his *Farewell Oration*: To the contentious shifts of argument now this way now that, and the counter-balances, let us,

then, bid adieu, neither Sabellianizing with the one over against the three (and dissolving the division by a mischievous confusion) nor Arianizing with the three over against the one (and overthrowing the one by a pernicious division). For it is not our aim to exchange one evil for another, but to avoid missing the good. These are the Evil one's games, who adds his wicked weight to our affairs. But we tread the middle and royal road, wherein stand the virtues, as folk clever in these matters hold. We believe in the Father and in the Son and in the Holy Ghost, consubstantial and equal in glory, in whom baptism too has its fulfilment, in the names and the realities (you who are initiated are aware of this), denial of godlessness and confession of the Godhead; and thus are we perfected, recognizing the one in the substance and the indivisibility of the worship, but the three in the hypostases or, as some prefer, the *prosōpa*. For people who dispute this point shall not scheme to prate as if religion for us consists in names and not in realities (Ibid., pp. 304, 306).

Moreover, in the oration *On the Arrival of the Bishops* he [Gregory] uses the same theological expressions, and says: To the contentious shifts of argument now this way now that, and the counter-balances, let us, then, bid adieu, neither Sabellianizing with the one over against the three (and dissolving the division by a mischievous confusion) nor Arianizing with the three over against the one (and overthrowing the one by a pernicious division). For it is not our aim to exchange one evil for another, but to avoid missing the good (CD vol. 32, p. 76).

The same doctor [Gregory] gave teaching similar to this also in the *Farewell Address to the Bishops*, saying: 'What, then, do hypostases mean to you, or *prosōpa* to you, for I put the question (Ibid., p. 294)?

He wrote, then, in the fourth chapter of his deceitful book as follows: The Theologian, then, wrote in the oration *On the Arrival of the Bishops* throughout demonstrating his aim, that the properties are not natures but belong with the nature (CD vol. 54, p. 112).

What, then, do you say, you who introduce three hypostases? Do you say this, thinking three substances? I am fully persuaded that you would loudly protest against those who do so think (Ibid., p. 376).

2.3.25. From Oration 44 (*In Novam Dominicam*) (see Patr. Graec. vol. 36, cols. 608–21)

And, contending for their error, they quote in confirmation what he [Gregory] said in the oration *On New Sunday* as follows: "Flesh hardening he becomes poor that by his poverty we might become rich" (CD vol. 35, p. 312).

2.3.26. From Oration 45 (*In Sanctum Pascha*) (see Patr. Graec. vol. 36, cols. 624–64)

Moreover, it is now time we showed how **the Theologian**, again by the expression 'unbeginning', indicates to us that non-temporality and infinity which is a natural property of the Godhead's substance. He writes in thundering tones as follows in the oration *On Easter*: God, then, is infinite and hard to contemplate. The only thing that can be grasped about him at all is his infinity—even if one thinks that by his being a simple nature he is either wholly incomprehensible or totally comprehensible; for let us further enquire what it means for him to be simple in nature. He does not have simplicity as his nature any more than compounds do the sole fact of their being composite. Now the infinite is contemplated in both directions, beginning and end (the infinite is what transcends, and does not lie within, these) and whenever the intellect surveys the deep past, having nowhere to stand, no mental imagery about God to lean on, it names the infinite and endless here, 'unbeginning'. When it looks at what lies below and is subsequent, it names him 'immortal' and 'imperishable'; but when it brings all together, 'eternal'. For eternity is neither time nor a part of time, for it is also not susceptible to measurement. But what time measured by the sun's course is to us,

eternity is to eternal things, eternity, which is measured along with existents like a temporal movement and interval (CD vol. 29, pp. 62, 64).

As for the names indicative of these things, we find some of them set down in Holy Scripture; since God, because of his love for mankind, reveals himself through them in the measure he knows beneficial to us, in order that he may draw us to him (as **the Theologian** puts it) by what is understood, for what is totally beyond understanding, is beyond hope and beyond endeavour. By being uncomprehended he is wonderful, and being wonderful he is loved the more (Ibid., pp. 72, 74).

In the other *Oration On Easter* (whose beginning is: “On my watch will I stand”, says marvellous Habakkuk [2:1]) he [**Gregory**] repeats the words in which he also philosophized in the *Oration on the Nativity*, and, as one who devotes himself to exact theology and to the offering of his fruits to God, he brightens the feast and makes it more festive, gladdening the devout and making them share as much as possible in the knowledge of God, by teachings like those: Let these things be now the subject of my philosophizing about God, for now is not the time to go beyond them, when not ‘theology’, but the ‘economy’ is our theme. Now when I say ‘God’, I mean the ‘Father, Son and Holy Ghost, the Godhead being neither diffused beyond them lest we import an assembly of ‘Gods’, nor confined within them lest we be condemned for penury of Godhead: either paganizing on account of the abundance or Judaizing on account of the single sovereignty; for a like evil exists in both things, even if it is found in opposites (CD vol. 54, p. 358).

2.4. Quotations from the Works of St. Gregory of Nyssa (ca. 330–395)⁶

2.4.1. From *Ad Eustathium de Sancta Trinitate* (see Patr. Graec. vol. 32, cols. 683–96; using Gregory of Nyssa, *Opera* vol. 3.1 [ed. Mueller], pp. 3–16; and note Clav. Patr. Graec. 3137)

Let this cunning fellow and expositor of deep notions tell us! What, too, are all the names which are to be found, by means of which the divine nature abides as it is, without indications (CD vol. 29, p. 346)?

2.4.2. From *Contra Eunomium Libri* (see Patr. Graec. vol. 45, cols. 248–464; using Gregory of Nyssa, *Opera* I and II [ed. Jaeger] vol. 1, pp. 3–409; vol. 2, pp. 3–311; and note Clav. Patr. Graec. 3135)

But wise **Gregory**, his brother, speaks as follows in his *Refutation of Eunomius* (which begins: To want to help everybody was not, apparently): This, then, is what the imitator of Paul does, having seen that the error of those who teach ‘dissimilarity’ is strengthened through the word ‘ingenerate’ (Syr. ܐܠܗܐ ܠܗܝܬܐ) (in the evil, heretical usage of the term). He advised that we should safeguard in our souls the truly religious idea of ‘ingenerate’ but that the word should not be an object of special concern, because it becomes a resource of sin to those who are perishing. For the title of ‘Father’ in one sense is enough to produce for us the sense of ‘ingenerate’. For having heard ‘Father’ we at once understand the one who is the cause of everything’s existence, who, had he owned a cause transcending himself, would not be called ‘Father’ in the full sense of the word, because ‘Father’ (in the full sense) would have been attributed to the cause found to be prior. And similarly in the fifth of his books against impious Eunomius (the beginning goes: Because, he says, the word ‘Lord’ he writes as follows: for the things remain what they are by nature, but the mind, when it handles existing things, reveals its ideas by whatever words it discovers. Just as Peter’s substance was not altered along with the alteration of name, so no other visible object is altered by variations of name. This is the reason we say that the term ‘ingenerate’ was applied by us to the truly primal Father, the cause of all, no damage at all accruing to the meaning of the subject if we indicate it with a different, equivalent word. For it is permissible, instead of saying ‘ingenerate’, to call him ‘First Cause’ or ‘Father of the Only-begotten’ or ‘Causeless Existent’ (Ibid., p. 70).

Now if he says that these, being what they are, are insufficient to confirm the truth of the statements, let one, who (as he [Gregory] claims) speaks nothing but what the Fathers spoke, bend his ears to this wise teacher, and hear again the kinds of thing he said to impious Eunomius (who had written cognate, blasphemous nonsense) in the fifth book (the beginning goes: Because, he says, the word 'Lord'): But Peter and Paul, he says, were named by men, and therefore there was a possibility of their names being changed. But what existent is not named by men? I summon you, Eunomius, as a witness to the argument. For if you make changes of name a proof that things have been named by men, you must thereby agree that every name has been imposed on existents by us, because the same names of objects have not prevailed amongst everybody. For just as Paul was once Saul and Peter was Simon [Acts 13:9; Matt 17:18], so land, sky, air, ocean and all the parts of creation are not named alike by everybody, but one way by the Hebrews, another way by us and with different names by each nation. If, then, Eunomius has a valid objection to establish, I mean that Peter and Paul got new names because their names were given them by men, our argument (constructed from similar premisses and stating that everything has been given its name by us) must be confirmed, because the names of everything vary with different nations. Now if everything is of this kind, 'generate' and 'ingenerate' can be no different. For these also get fresh names. We have an idea about some object and reformulate it as a name. We say what has been thought in different words at different times, not creating the realities but indicating them by the names we call them (Ibid., p.86).

Saint Gregory, his brother, spoke in his book *Against Eunomius* the impious and witless (its beginning runs: There is a limit to the labours of those who fight in contests) as follows: If, then, the meaning of 'substance' is one thing and the term 'generation' is established to mean something else, their sophistical tricks have collapsed all of a sudden, like earthenware pots, thrown together and shattering one another. For it will no longer be open to them to carry over the ingenerate-generate distinction to the substance of Father and Son and simultaneously transfer the mutual conflict of the names to the realities. Likewise in the fifth book of the same treatise *Against Eunomius* (its beginning goes: Because, he says, the word 'Lord' he spoke as follows: But if he asserts a difference of substance between generacy and ingeneracy like that between fire and water, and imagines the names as having the same mutual relation as his examples have, the awfulness of his blasphemy will be evident even if we stay silent. For fire and water have mutually destructive natures and when one happens to be in the other it is destroyed by the force of the more powerful. If, therefore, he teaches this sort of remoteness between the Ingenerate's nature and the Only-begotten's, he must consequently concede that this destructive contrariety too resides in the difference between the substances; so that their nature must thereby be incompatible and unshared, and one would be consumed by the other or both mutually if they should come together. How, then, can the Son be 'in the Father' without being destroyed? How can the Father, while 'in the Son', hold out perpetually and remain unconsumed, if (as Eunomius says) the property of the fire in respect to water is also preserved in the relationship of generate to ingenerate? But neither does the argument perceive any communion between earth and air; for earth is firm, stable, hard, with a downward tendency and heavy. Air, though, has a nature founded on the opposites. In the same way white or black are included in colour-contraries and I agree that a circle is not identical with a triangle for each is, by the condition of its shape, what the other is not. I cannot, though, discover what he sees the opposition between God the Father and God the Only-begotten Son to reside in. A single goodness, wisdom, justice, intelligence, power, incorruptibility, and all other terms of sublime meaning are used of each alike. In a certain sense the power of each resides in the other; for the Father effects everything through the Son, and the Only-begotten, being the Father's power, effects everything in him (Ibid., pp. 160, 162).

Saint Gregory, Bishop of Nyssa, wrote in similar vein in his first book *Against Eunomius* (its beginning runs: There is a limit to the labours of contestants): But I say we ought to pay close attention to the question whether it is the natural relationship which introduces the employment of these names. For he must be saying this: that affinity of substance enters with affinity of names. For he will not be saying that the mere names on their own, separated from a comprehension of their meanings, have any mutual relationship and affinity; no, we distinguish affinity and alien-ness of appellations by the meanings signified by the words. Therefore, if he acknowledges a natural relationship between Father and Son, let us leave the appellations and scrutinize the force of the things indicated. And again: So if, as Eunomius says, the appellations prove affinity, and the affinity is perceptible in the realities conceived of as individual and not in the mere verbal expressions of the names (if it be not rash so to refer to the Son and the Father) who can deny that the champion of blasphemy too has been drawn over to the advocacy of true religion of his own accord seeing that he demolishes his arguments himself and preaches commonness of substance as divine doctrine? For the argument about this he involuntarily tossed out on the side of truth is no cheat: he would not have been called 'Son', if the natural meaning of the terms had not corroborated the appellation (Ibid., pp. 178, 180).

Gregory, Bishop of Nyssa, Basil's brother is seen to have written in the fifth book *Against Eunomius* (its beginning is: Because, he says, the word 'Lord') as follows: For when we say 'this one was begotten' or 'was not begotten', we are stamped with a two-fold conception by the statement: by the demonstrative part of the sentence we look at the substrate; by 'was begotten' or 'was not begotten' we learn what is viewed as pertaining to the substrate. So that we understand one thing concerning the being but another thing concerning what is viewed as pertaining to the being. Besides, along with each term used of the divine nature (e.g., 'just', 'incorruptible', 'immortal', 'ingenerate' and any other expression) 'is' has to be understood. Even if the word happens not to accompany the statement, all the same the speaker's and listener's minds must complete the term by 'is'; so that the title lands in a vacuum unless the 'is' be supplied. For instance (for it is better to present the argument using an example) when David says: "God the righteous judge, mighty and patient" [Ps 7:11], unless 'is' were understood along with each term used, the itemizing of titles unsupported by any substrate would be thought vacuous and baseless. But when 'is' is understood along with each term, the expressions altogether gain significance as they are viewed belonging with that which is (Ibid., pp. 206, 208).

Gregory too, the wise doctor's brother, shall confirm that this is so by consideration of God the Father. He wrote as follows in the thirty seventh chapter of the *Refutation of Eunomius* the impious (its beginning is: To want to help everybody was not, apparently): This, then, is what the imitator of Paul too does: having seen that the error of those who teach dissimilarity through the word 'ingenerate' is strengthened by its evil, heretical usage, he advised that we should safeguard in our soul the truly religious idea of 'ingenerate', but that the word should not be an object of special concern, because it becomes food for sin to those who are perishing. For the name "Father" is, by its meaning, enough to produce for us the sense of 'ingenerate'. For having heard "Father" we at once understand the one who is the cause of everything's existence who, had he owned another cause transcending himself, would not be called 'Father' in the full sense of the word, because the appellation 'Father' (in the full sense) would have been attributed to the cause found to be prior. But if he is the cause of all and "all is from" him, as the Apostle says [cf. Rom 11:36], obviously nothing can be found to pre-exist his being. And this is ingenerate existence. And again: But we despise this puerile, superficial attack of theirs and will manfully acknowledge what is presented by them as an absurdity: that the name 'Father' is identical in meaning with 'ingenerate'; that 'ingenerate' reveals the Father as not being from anything; and that

the Father introduces connectedly along with himself, through the relationship, the idea of the Only-begotten (Ibid., p. 216).

Gregory of Nyssa, very cleverly demolished the same mischievous attack by writing as follows in his fifth book *Against Eunomius* (its beginning goes: Because, he says, the word 'Lord'): If the Son's substance is called "Spirit" and God also is called Spirit (for this is also how the Gospel states it [John 4:24]) the Father's substance must be called Spirit too. But their argument that things with dissimilar names have dissimilar natures has as its logical consequence that things with similar names are not mutually alien in nature either. So because, according to their argument, the substance of Son and Father is termed 'Spirit', the fact of there being no difference in substance is hereby given clear proof. And a few lines later: For if God is called 'Spirit' in the Gospel and the substance of the Only-begotten is made out by Eunomius to be Spirit, there being no difference between the terms, what are indicated by the terms cannot differ in nature from one another either. And again after other matters: What, then, are the titles of the substances by which he has learned of a difference in nature between Father and Son? He mentions fire and water, air and earth, cold and hot, white and black, triangle and circle. He scores a victory with his examples; he has got much the better of me in the argument. For I will not gainsay the argument that names which have nothing in common disclose along with themselves a difference of natures. But this acute and quick mind of his fails to see just this: that here the Father is termed 'God', the Son is termed 'God' and 'just', 'incorruptible' and all the terms belonging to the doctrine of God' are applied equally to both Father and Son. In which case, if a divergence of titles indicates a difference of natures; commonness of names must disclose commonness of substance. If we must agree that the divine substance is known by means of names, it would be appropriate to apply the lofty, God-befitting words to the nature rather than the terms 'generate' and 'ingenerate' (Ibid., p. 266).

But let us pass to the wise teaching of his namesake; he [**Gregory of Nyssa**], too, indeed, impelled by the same grace says: Every name whatsoever you use belongs with the being and is not the being. And again: All the things existing within the creation are considered with the aid of the meaning of names. One who says 'sky' has brought the mind of his auditor to the created thing signified by this term, and one who mentions man or any other living thing by name immediately impresses his auditor with the appearance of the living thing. And again: Only the uncreated nature believed in the Father, Son and Holy Ghost transcends every nameable meaning. Therefore, when the Word referred to "the name" in handing over the Faith, he did not add what it was (for how could a name be found for a reality "above every name"?) [Phil 2:9] but gave power so that our mind, being stirred by piety, should be able to discover what the name, revelatory of the transcendent nature, is, which we should attach in like manner to the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, whether it be 'the Good', or 'the Incorruptible', whatever name each man thinks fitting to be taken for the manifesting of the immortal nature (Ibid., p. 344).

For **Gregory** also who adorned the throne of **Nyssa**, says this in the second book *Against Eunomius* the abominable: I ask the readers not to be irritated by the exactitude of the examination which unwillingly extends the discourse to a large size. For it is not on unimportant matters that we are in jeopardy, so that, if we pass by things that need more studied contemplation, we should suffer little damage, but we are endangered on the chief article of our hope. For it is set before us either we should be Christians, not deluded by heretical perdition, or that we should be utterly swept away into Jewish and pagan opinions. And at the beginning of the third book of the same treatise he says as follows: But it is now time to examine more studiously what was said by Eunomius himself and by our father in connexion with the Apostle Peter's words. But if a careful contemplation

lengthens the discourse to a large extent, the right-thinking listener will completely pardon the fact, not blaming us but the one who caused it (Ibid., p. 362).

For we find our teachers did this too, and, out of many, we show wise **Gregory of Nyssa** who in the fourth chapter of his *Refutation of Eunomius* (which begins: It is not possible, it seems, to want to help everybody) says as follows: I omit all such as being an empty multitude of things which introduce nothing useful. But if any defence of heretical opinion is made by him, towards this I consider it would be as well for me to devote more effort. For this is how the leader of divine doctrines acted in his own discourse, he who, though there were many points capable of broadening the argument, runs through only the essentials and shortens most of the subject-matter, selecting from all the statements in that book of impiety, the main points of the blasphemies (CD vol. 32, p. 66).

Saint Gregory teaches us this again in the second chapter of the *Refutation* just mentioned, writing as follows: It has occurred to me to say these things on considering one who shared his good things unsparingly, with everybody, Basil, I mean, the man of God, the mouth of blessing, who often in the abundance of spiritual treasures pours out the grace of wisdom without investigation even on souls who devise evil, even on Eunomius ungrateful to those who have taken pains to benefit him. For he, because of his soul's immeasurable disease with which it sickened as regards the faith, was considered pitiable by all participants in the Church (for who is so lacking in compassion as not to pity the perishing?) but him alone did he move to undertake the cure, him alone who in the abundance of his philanthropy ventures upon an impossible cure; who, pained by the loss of the man, due to his natural sympathy towards those in misery, devised, as an antidote to the evil, lethal poisons, a refutation of heresy having as its aim to save and restore him thereby to the Church. But he, as if mentally distraught by madness, rages against the physician, fights and battles with, and counts an enemy him who battles to draw him from the gulf of evil. And he babbles in this way not simply casually before just anyone, but he has erected a written monument to his own madness, and having obtained in a long period, as much leisure as he desired, he travailed with the discourse longer than the large, big-bodied animals, in all the intervening time (Ibid., pp. 68, 70).

Wise **Gregory**, who occupied with sanctity the throne of Nyssa, is seen to have said as follows in the 29th chapter of the *Refutation of Eunomius* (whose beginning is: To want to help everybody was not, apparently): If, therefore, the concept of the energy indicates the substance, one nature of the two will be seen, energy and substance being found in the same equal marks and properties. If, however, the concepts of substance and energy are not the same but the meaning of each is different, how can proofs of the points in question be given by things alien and foreign? It is just as if, when the substance of manhood is being inquired into and it is being discussed whether man is a laughing animal or an animal capable of grammar, someone should take, as proof of the former subject, the construction of a house or ship which a builder or shipwright has effected (Ibid., p. 146).

Led by the same Spirit, wise **Gregory of Nyssa**, too, wrote in the first book *Against Eunomius* (whose beginning runs: There is a limit to him who "strives lawfully" [1 Tim 2:5b]): But I say, we ought to pay close attention to the question whether it is the natural relationship which introduces the employment of these names. For he must be saying this: that affinity of substance enters along with affinity of names. For he is not saying that mere names on their own, separated from the meaning of the objects indicated have any mutual relationship and affinity; no, we distinguish affinity and alien-ness of appellations by the meanings signified by the words. Therefore, if he acknowledges a natural relationship between Father and Son, let us leave the appellations and scrutinize the force of the things indicated. And in the second book *Against Eunomius*: In the same way here too (when offspring and creature are mentioned together) in passing from the expressions to the

meanings we do not envisage each of the names as containing the same understanding. And again in the book *Against the same wicked Eunomius' Statements* (whose beginning runs: The faith of Christians): For one who says 'sky' has brought the minds of his auditor to the created thing signified by this term, and one who mentions man or any other living thing by name immediately impresses his auditor with the appearance of the living thing. All the other things, too, are likewise depicted, through the names imposed on them, in the heart of one who has received through the ear the appellation imposed on the reality (Ibid., pp. 208, 210).

For wise **Gregory of Nyssa** answered Eunomius, who made similar thoughtless pronouncements: Every argument, so long as it is asserted by authority without proof, is old wives' prattle, having no power to prove thereby the point at issue when no support for the statements made is introduced either from the divine words or from human reasonings (Ibid., pp. 234, 236).

Gregory, too, Basil's brother, taught these sacred doctrines and taking up the same contests against Eunomius the intoxicated, wrote in his fifth book (its beginning runs, Because, he says, the word 'Lord'), as follows: Anyone, then, undertaking to give a definition of the existence of the one who is good and is ingenerate, would be useless if he spoke of the things viewed in him and said nothing of the substance itself which he had undertaken to explain with a definition. For existing ingenerately is one of the things viewed in "Him who is" [Exod 3:11], whereas the concept of existing is one thing and that of how it exists, another (Ibid., p. 492).

Here we shall move the examination on to words akin to those divinely inspired words of Saint Basil. For the wise instructor, his brother **Gregory**, wrote in the first book *Against Eunomius* as follows: I will take up and repeat the sentence of his which I set down at the beginning. 'we do not refuse', he says, 'also to call the Son, since he is begotten, "offspring", the begotten substance itself and the title "Son" laying claim to such a relationship of terms'. So now let the critical hearer of these words remember this: by using 'begotten substance' of the Only-begotten he grants, by logical sequence, that we should use 'unbegotten substance' of the Father, so that, therefore, neither ingeneracy nor generacy will be understood as substance; but substance, on the one hand, and the fact that it was begotten or not begotten, on the other hand, are to be considered individually by means of the properties viewed in the substance. But let us consider the reasoning on this point more studiously. He says that a substance has been begotten, and that the name of the substance which has been begotten is 'Son'. However, here the argument from our side rebuts the opposing argument on two grounds: first, for the impudence of its knavery; secondly for the feebleness of its attack on us. For he is acting with malicious deceit in speaking of the generacy of the substance, in order to procure the mutual opposition of the substances sundered by generacy and ingeneracy into a difference of natures. The feebleness of the attempt is rebutted by the very means whereby the plot is set up. For one who says the substance has been begotten clearly defines generacy as being something other than substance, so as not to permit the meaning of generacy to be adapted to the concept of substance. For he has not done in this part the very thing he designed in many passages so that he could say that generacy is the substance itself; but here he acknowledges that the substance has been begotten, so that the hearers have a distinct idea of each word. For different ideas are created for the hearer of 'has been begotten' and by the term 'substance'. The argument will become clearer to us by illustrations. The Lord said in the Gospel that when her labour is at hand a woman is in pain but afterwards rejoices in her happiness "that a man has been born into the world" (John 16:21). So, just as in this passage we have learned from the Gospel two distinct ideas: first, we have understood a generation by birth; secondly, the one who has come into existence by generation (for a man is not generation but by generation the man

exists); so also here; since Eunomius has acknowledged that the substance was begotten, we have learned by the word ‘begotten’ the fact of being derived from something and by the word ‘substance’ we have understood a substrate possessing a derived hypostasis. If, then, the meaning of ‘substance’ is one thing and the term ‘generation’ is established to mean something else, their sophistical tricks have collapsed all of a sudden, like earthenware pots thrown together and shattering one another. For it will no longer be open to them to carry over the ingenerate-generate distinction to the substance of Father and Son and simultaneously transfer the mutual conflict of the names to the realities. For with Eunomius having agreed that the substance was begotten (as the Gospel illustration too explains this sort of notion, an illustration by which, on learning that a man has been begotten we do not understand man and generation as meaning the same thing but have received the notion proper to each term) the heresy which teaches the otherness of substances through such words absolutely has no longer any room (Ibid., pp. 508, 510, 512).

So they then acted corruptly in that document and produced a proof-text from **Gregory** (the one time sainted bishop of **Nyssa**, who illuminated the whole world under the Sun with the radiance of his words) when he caught Eunomius the impious in the toils of his arguments in the third book he wrote against that wicked man, as follows: ‘So just as in this passage we have learned from the Gospel two distinct ideas: first, we have understood a generation by birth; secondly, the one who has come into existence by generation (for a man is not generation but by generation the man exists); so also here; since Eunomius has acknowledged that the substance was begotten, we have learned by the word ‘begotten’ the fact of being derived from something and by the word “substance” we have understood a substrate possessing a derived hypostasis. And again: ‘For with Eunomius having agreed that the substance was begotten (as the Gospel illustration too explains this sort of notion, an illustration by which, on learning that a man has been begotten we do not understand man and generation as meaning the same thing but have received the notion proper to each term) the heresy which teaches the otherness of substances through such words absolutely has no longer any room’ (Ibid., p. 518).

For on such things too we have the same wise **Gregory** who instructs us by his defence of his brother, Basil the great, against Eunomius, the master and teacher of this writer and says as follows in the eighth chapter of his *Refutation of Eunomius* the impious (its beginning runs: To want to help everybody was not, apparently): Therefore, the sequence of insulting and abusing is prevented from its further courses by patience. So that if anybody pays back insult with insult and abuse with abuse, he must increase the outrage by nourishing it with things similar. Therefore, leaving aside all the intervening argument, which consists of insults, mockery, abuse and cavils, I shall hurry the discussion on to the examination of doctrines. But if anyone says I am refraining from abuse owing to a lack of requital in kind, let him observe himself how much proneness there is towards evil, slipping without occasion into sin of its own accord. And a few lines later: But I recollect that divine utterance which spoke prophetically those prophetic things about him, where he compares him with abusive women who load the modest with their own obscenities (Ibid, pp. 520, 522).

And so, when he [**Gregory**] begins the second of that pair earlier pair, he says: The first things in the contests with Eunomius have indeed already been accomplished sufficiently with God’s help in the previous labours; whereas near the beginning of the first of those ten he wrote: So because Eunomius, though already twice overthrown in the previous discussion, does not yet permit truth to have its victory over falsehood but again struggles by literary production in the accustomed wrestling-booth of falsehood for a third time against true religion, strengthening himself for contests on behalf of error, the word of truth must now stand up through us for the overthrow of falsehood (Ibid., pp. 538, 540).

For the same **Saint Gregory of Nyssa**, whom we are presently discussing, said, in the seventh chapter of his *Refutation of Eunomius* (whose beginning goes: To want to help everybody was not, apparently): But I will reserve the discussion of doctrines to its due time. But now for the present let us observe what truth the man, who makes the accusation at the beginning that he is hated by unbelievers for speaking the truth, uses. For it will not perhaps be beside the point to learn through his extra-doctrinal discussions his attitude to truth and use this as an example in dealing with the doctrinal also. “For he who is faithful in little will also be faithful in much, and he who is unrighteous in little will also be unrighteous in much” (Luke 16:10) (Ibid., pp. 544, 546).

Gregory, wise in things divine, brother of Basil the Great and bishop of Nyssa, will confirm this in the second book *Against Eunomius*: ‘Therefore he indicates by the word the fearful manifestations of the judge at the end of the ages, when He will be seen no longer in “the form of the slave” but seated in grandeur on the throne of empire, worshipped by all the angels round him (Phil 2:7, 10). For this reason, He who came once for all into the world and was made “first born of the dead” (Col 1:15) of his “brothers” and “of all Creation” (Col. 1:15, 18; Rom 8:29) when he comes again into the world, He who (as prophecy says) “will judge the world in righteousness” (Acts 17:31) does not reject the title “first-born” which he accepted once for all on our behalf’ (Ibid., p. 534).

The point will become clearer if the father’s proof-text itself comes forward in evidence. He says, then: Similarly, he [**Gregory**] says these things also, expressing them in almost the same words, in the third book *Against Eunomius* (whose beginning goes: ‘But concerning the statement of the Apostle Peter, it is time to examine more studiously what was said’): ‘So that these things seem not to exist in the two on their own with any division; but by juncture with the Godhead, the temporal nature, being re-formed in accordance with the stronger nature, receives the Godhead’s power, as one might say that the mixture makes into sea a drop of vinegar mingled with the ocean, so that the natural operation of the latter mixture moisture no longer remains in the boundlessness of what contains it’ (Ibid., p. 528).

Likewise Severus says, indeed, at the beginning of the tenth chapter of the same third book: But **Gregory of Nyssa**, wise in things divine, will confirm that he recognizes the immortal and uncreated nature, God the Father’s eternal and Only-begotten Word, as unchangeable and immutable in the same divine substance, and that he voluntarily took on the change involved in the passibility of the flesh which he united to him hypostatically. For he [**Gregory**] wrote in the fourth book *Against Eunomius* the impious: ‘So believing the immortal, impassible and uncreated nature to have been made in the passibility of the Creation and therein understanding change, how can we be condemned for saying that “he emptied himself” (Phil 2:8) by those who noise abroad their own argument in opposition to our doctrines?’ (Ibid., pp. 528, 530).

Listen to the same wise **Gregory**, who speaks as follows in the first book *Against Eunomius* the impious and explains the point to us: But let us consider the reasoning on this point more studiously. He says that a substance has been begotten, and that the name of the substance which has been begotten is ‘Son’ (CD vol. 35, p. 12).

Did not the doctor very wisely and very opportunely use the example for the clear demonstration of the point at issue, and consider it? Because, in combating Eunomius, he [**Gregory**] says, as follows, in the first book: For he has not done in this part the very thing he designed in many passages so that he could say that generacy (Syr. ܠܗܘܠܐ) is the substance itself; but here he acknowledges that the substance has been begotten, so that the hearers have a distinct idea of each word. For different ideas are created for the hearer of ‘generation’ and by the term ‘substance’. The argument will become clearer to us by illustrations. The Lord said in the Gospel that when her labour is at hand a woman is in pain but afterwards rejoices “in her happiness that a man has been born into the world” [John 16:21]. So, just as in

follow God, indeed that what do not exist will be the causes of those that exist and that what do not subsist by their own nature will bound the nature of what subsists and that the power completing and making all Creation will be bounded by what does not, according to its own principle, exist. Such are the doctrines of the new theologian! (Ibid., p. 138).

Listen to the master of mysteries himself, who clearly explains these things to us through his plain words. For he [Gregory] says about Eunomius in the first book *Against Eunomius* (whose beginning is: There is a limit to him who “strives lawfully” [cf. Tim 2:5]): I will take up and repeat the sentence of his which I set down at the beginning. ‘We do not refuse’, he says, ‘also to call the Son, since he is begotten, “offspring”, the begotten substance itself and the title “Son” laying claim to such a relationship of terms’. So now let the critical hearer of these words remember this: by using ‘begotten substance’ of the Only-begotten he grants, by logical sequence, that we should use ‘unbegotten substance’ of the Father, so that, therefore, neither ingeneracy nor generacy will be understood as substance; but substance, on the one hand, and the fact that it was begotten or not begotten, on the other hand, are to be considered individually by means of the properties viewed in the substance (Ibid., pp. 194, 196).

For the same master of mysteries says, a little after the words set down earlier, as follows: for he is acting with malicious deceit in speaking of the generacy of the substance, in order to procure the mutual opposition of the substances sundered by generacy and ingeneracy into a difference of natures. The feebleness of the attempt is rebutted by the very means whereby the plot is set up. For one who says the substance has been begotten clearly defines generacy as being something other than substance, so as not to permit the meaning of generacy to be adapted to the concept of substance. For he has not done in this part the very thing he designed in many passages so that he could say that generacy is the substance itself; but here he acknowledges that the substance has been begotten, so that the hearers have a distinct idea of each word. For different ideas are created for the hearer of ‘has been begotten’ and by the term ‘substance’. The argument will become clearer to us by illustrations. The Lord said in the Gospel that when her labour is at hand a woman is in pain but afterwards rejoices in “her happiness that a man has been born into the world” [John 16:21]. So, just as in this passage we have learned from the Gospel two distinct ideas: first, we have understood a generation by birth; secondly, the one who has come into existence by generation (for a man is not generation but by generation the man exists); so also here, since Eunomius has acknowledged that the substance was begotten, we have learned by the word ‘begotten’ the fact of being derived from something and by the word ‘substance’ we have understood a substrate possessing a derived hypostasis (Ibid., pp. 204, 206).

But let us, please, look at the harshness of the noble and truth-loving writer’s grand criticisms of us. He wrote, then, immediately after his words just examined, about wise Gregory, as follows: For he says, “in between those words quoted by these admirable accusers, some which the agents of sacrilege have disregarded with a pricking conscience: ‘If, then, the meaning of “substance” is one thing and the term “generation” is established to mean something else, their sophistical tricks have collapsed all of a sudden, like earthenware pots thrown together and shattering one another. For it will no longer be open to them to carry over the ingenerate-generate distinction to the substance of Son and Father and simultaneously transfer the mutual conflict of the names to the realities”. . . . For as the same wise father says of Eunomius: “The caviller’s trivial accusation becomes important advocacy of the defendant’s superiority” (Ibid., pp. 226, 228).

He [Damian] said, then: These words, which rebut their insanity and free the doctor [Gregory] from their calumny, they have left out. The doctor to explain them to us in a different way, teaches again a little later: ‘But because the substance of Adam and of

Abel is characterized by the same properties, we must necessarily profess that there is one substance in the two but that those viewed in the same nature are different. For Adam and Abel, the two of them, are one in the concept of nature but have a mutual, unconfused distinction in the properties viewed in each of them' (Ibid., pp. 248, 250).

But please let us examine 'generation' and see the real opinion of the doctor on the divine generation. He [Gregory] says, then, a little after the words we set down previously, as follows: 'But because, amongst men, the term "father" has various conjoined meanings, to which the immortal nature is a stranger, we must leave aside all the material ideas entering in beside the corporeal meaning of "father" and have the impress of a God-befitting thought which signifies only genuine relationship with God the Father. So, because along with human fatherhood one always conceives not only of all that the flesh gives to be apprehended in the notion of a human father, but also a temporal idea, it would be as well to rid divine generation of the temporal idea as well as of the corporeal taint; so that with the material property being everywhere cleansed away, the transcendent generation may be pure not only of any idea of passion but also of any of temporality' (Ibid., p. 250).

Therefore he [Gregory] writes in the first book *Against Eunomius*, after the words just now examined, as follows: So what we have been guided to learn of human nature (the same thing which has been proved by a train of argument) this, I think, is what ought to be taken as our guide to the exalted conception of divine doctrines as well. For having shaken off every carnal and material conception from the divine and exalted doctrines we shall have, through the conception that remains, secure guidance to the exalted and unapproachable, when that conception is purified of such things (Ibid., p. 264).

Taking up these words and pouring scorn upon them, the doctor, after a few lines, says: He repudiates a commonness of substance by a twofold argument and says: either there are two parallel ingenerate first principles, one of which we name 'Father' and the other 'Son', saying that "He who" is has been begotten by "Him who is" [Exod 3:11; Rev 1:8]; or, one and the same substance is understood as belonging to both, a substance which receives the names in turn, and is Father and becomes Son, being produced from itself by generation. And again: He says we conceive of two ingenerate substances. How can someone who accuses us of merging and muddling everything by professing a single substance, say this (Ibid., pp. 360, 362)?

What will he who affirms that a hypostasis is a collection of properties and indicative marks, and not the substrate they are collected to belong with, devise against these words? For we have now heard the doctor [Gregory] saying: for one who says 'man' has effected a vague understanding in the ear by the indefiniteness of the meaning, so that the nature is signified by the term whereas the reality itself, which subsists and is signified properly, is not indicated by the term. But one who says 'Paul' has shown that the nature subsists in the reality which is signified by the name. This then is the hypostasis: not the indefinite thought of the substance, which as a result of the generality of the object indicated, obtains no stability; but that thought which presents and delimits the common and unbounded in some reality, by means of the properties appearing on it. And again: For our mind must rest upon some substrate and have the impress of its clear marks and thus have imagination of the one loved. For if we had not conceived of the fatherhood or considered the one for whom this property was set aside, how could we have taken in the idea of God the Father (Ibid., pp. 376, 378)?

Gregory, his brother, wrote similar things to this in the fifth book of the treatise *Against Eunomius* (its beginning is: But because, he says, the word 'Lord') as follows: For when we say 'this one was begotten' or 'was not begotten', we are stamped with a twofold conception by the statement: by the demonstrative part of the sentence we look at the substrate; by 'was begotten' or 'was not begotten' we learn what is viewed as pertaining to the substrate.

So that we understand one thing concerning the being, but another thing concerning what is viewed as pertaining to the being. Besides, along with each term used of the divine nature (e.g., ‘just’, ‘incorruptible’, ‘immortal’, ‘ingenerate’ and any other expression) ‘is’ has to be understood. Even if the word happens not to accompany the statement, all the same the speaker’s and the listener’s minds must complete the term by ‘is’; so that the title lands in a vacuum unless the ‘is’ be supplied. For instance (for it is better to present the argument using an example) when David says: “God the righteous judge, mighty and patient” [Ps 7:11], unless ‘is’ were understood along with each term used, the itemizing of titles unsupported by any substrate would be thought vacuous and baseless. But when ‘is’ is understood along with each term, the expressions altogether gain significance as they are viewed belonging with that which is. So just as by saying ‘he is judge’ we have conceived of as belonging with him a certain activity by means of judgement, yet we have cast our mind on the substrate by ‘is’, clearly being taught hereby not to suppose the concept of being the same as the activity; so also, as a result of saying ‘is generate’ or ‘is ingenerate’ we divide our understanding into a twofold conception, by ‘is’ conceiving of the substrate, but by ‘generate’ or ‘ingenerate’ apprehending either what belongs or does not belong to the substrate (Ibid., pp. 378, 380).

Only Eunomius, it would seem, who wrote this sort of riddle and concealed his mischief in a morass of darkness, could understand the obscurity of these phrases, Eunomius of whom wise **Gregory of Nyssa** says the following in the 23rd chapter of the *Refutation* of him (which begins: To want to help everybody was not, apparently): I suppose, then, that not even the writer himself would be able to say in simple terms what he meant when he wrote this. The meaning of what is said is so befouled in the mire of the diction that no one can easily recognize the intention for the mud of the explanation. For one would suppose that ‘come out to as great a difference as the works come out to’ belongs to a pagan word-twister, who talks nonsense to deceive the audience (Ibid., pp. 398, 400).

For wise **Gregory of Nyssa** wrote in the second book *Against Eunomius* the profane (its beginning is: But it is time that the explanation of the offspring’s nature): But let us leave this aside and, so far as possible, let care for the prior issues mollify our hearts which leap up with faith’s zeal against these great blasphemers. For how can we not be moved to hot indignation, when our God, our Lord, our Life-giver and our Saviour, is insulted by these little men? For had he been abusing my fleshly father or been at enmity with a benefactor of mine, could I have calmly borne his rage against my loved-ones? But if the Lord of my soul who caused it to subsist when it did not exist, and redeemed it when it was in bondage, who caused it to taste the present, and prepared for it a future life; who invites us into the kingdom, and counsels how we may flee the condemnation of Hell (to speak thus far of small things and not of things befitting the glory of our common Lord); who is worshipped by all the Creation of heavenly, earthly and sub-terrestrial beings; before whom stand numberless myriads of ministers in Heaven, and before whom bows whatever is governed by understanding and has a yearning for good; if he is exposed to abuse by men for whom it is not enough to make the lot of the Rebel only their own but who account it loss not to cast others too into the same pit with themselves through their writing, so that their descendants may not lack guides to destruction: will anyone censure anger at that (CD vol. 54, pp. 6, 8)?

See how **Gregory**, brother to the God-clad father Basil expounds this when he says the following in the 39th chapter of his *Refutation of Eunomius* (its beginning is: To want to help everybody was not apparently): But we ourselves shall in charity correct the error of his opinion by saying what we know of the matter. Names mean various things with us, Eunomius, and yield a different meaning in application to the transcendent power. For in all else, too, divine, is parted from human, nature by a large interval and experience discloses

no such thing here as great as that which is thought on in similitudes and suppositions. Likewise also, even if there be a homonymity of things human with the eternal in what is signified by the names, nevertheless what are meant by the names are parted in proportion to the remoteness of the natures (Ibid., p. 30).

For by ‘concept’, as has been said, they are characterizing the nature, as **Gregory of Nyssa** has shown by saying ‘for the concept of “man” characterizes a man and that of “horse” a horse (Ibid., p. 52).

Wise **Gregory** too, Basil’s brother, taught us similar (indeed, to speak more truly, the very same) things in his book *Against Eunomius* (whose beginning is: There is a limit to the labours of those who “strive lawfully” in contests [see 1 Tim 2:5b]) writing as follows: So now let the critical hearer of those words remember this: by using ‘begotten substance’ of the Only-begotten he grants, by logical sequence, that we should use ‘unbegotten substance’ of the Father, so that, therefore, neither ingeneracy nor generacy will be understood as substance; but substance, on the one hand, and the fact it was begotten or not begotten, on the other hand, are to be considered individually by means of the properties viewed in the substance. And later: For one who says the substance has been begotten clearly defines generacy as being something other than substance, so as not to permit the meaning of generacy to be adapted to the concept of substance. For he has not done in this part the very thing he designed in many passages so that he could say that generacy is the substance itself; but here he acknowledges that the substance has been begotten so that the hearers have a distinct idea of each word. For different ideas are created for the hearer of ‘has been begotten’ and by the term ‘substance’. And again: If, then, the meaning of ‘substance’ is one thing and the term ‘generation’ is established to mean something else, their sophistical tricks have collapsed all of a sudden, like earthenware pots thrown together and shattering one another. For it will no longer be open to them to carry over the ingenerate-generate distinction to the substance of Son and Father and simultaneously transfer the mutual conflict of the names to the realities (Ibid., pp. 122, 124).

Similarly also in the second book (whose beginning is: But it is time that the explanation of the offspring’s nature) he [**Gregory**] rebuts the miscreant out of his own words, proving that generacy is not a substance and saying as follows: What does he mean when he says these things? For having distinguished the two terms from each other and made a corresponding verbal division in what they signify, he sets down each of them on its own and properly: one term ‘generation’; the other term ‘substance’. ‘The substance’, he says, ‘clearly being something other than generation, admits of generation’. For if generation were a substance (which is what he always rules so that the two terms may be mutually equivalent in meaning), he would not have said, ‘the substance admits of generation’; for that would have been the same as saying, ‘the substance admits of substance’ or ‘the generation admits of generation’, if substance were generation. Therefore, he understands generation as one thing and the substance admitting of generation as another; for what is received is not the same as the recipient (Ibid., pp. 124, 126).

Let us investigate again also his [**Gregory’s**] very wise words on this point in the 35th chapter of his *Refutation of the same Eunomius* (whose beginning is: To want to help everybody was not apparently), where he explains the issue more clearly and says as follows: For let us grant that it is allowable, according to the argument of our opponents, that ingeneracy is a substance and, again, likewise, admissible that generacy is a substance. In that case if anyone adheres to the meaning of the words, precisely the Manichean doctrine will be constructed by this path, because it pleased the Manichees to teach, by an opposition of natures, an opposition between evil and good, light and darkness, and all such things. And, I think, anyone who has not traversed the exposition in a superficial way will readily agree that what I am saying is true. But let us examine the point as

follows. In each of the subjects are seen fitting indications whereby the property of the underlying nature is recognized, whether you are studying the differences between animals or anything else; for a tree and an animal are not characterized by the same things, nor are man's signifying marks common to animals as against irrational nature; nor again, indeed, do the same things indicate life and death, but, as has been said, in all, generally, there is a pure and simple separation of subjects, unconfused, as it is, by any sharing of the indication appearing on them. This is the arrangement, by reference to which the argument of our opponents will be examined. They call ingeneracy a substance and likewise make generacy a substance. Now just as the indications of man and stone are different and not the same (for you would not give the same definition when defining what each of them is), so they will necessarily concede that the ingenerate God is recognized by certain marks whereas the generate God by different ones. In which case let us observe all the properties of ingenerate God which we have learned from divine Scripture to say about him and understand devoutly. What, then, are they? No Christian man, I think, is unaware that God is good, kindly, holy, just, pure, invisible, immortal, incapable of corruption change and alteration, powerful, wise, benefactor, Lord and judge, and all such things. Why, indeed, should we prolong discussion by dwelling on these undisputed matters? If, then, we perceive these things in the ingenerate nature, but 'being generate' is opposite in conception to 'not being generate', those who define ingeneracy and generacy as being 'substance' must, of necessity, assert that, according to the contrariety obtaining between 'ingeneracy' and 'generacy', the indicative marks of the begotten substance will also be contrary to those seen in the ingenerate nature. For if they say they are the same owing to the sameness in what appear on them, the otherness of the nature of the subjects will no longer be preserved; for we must necessarily suppose that the indications of things which are different are also different, whereas things which are alike in concept of substance are, it is clear, characterized by the same marks (Ibid., pp. 126, 128, 130).

It is this that wise **Gregory of Nyssa** teaches us when he subtly exposed Eunomius' hidden, satanic and blasphemous abuse in the 15th chapter of his *Refutation* of the impious fellow (its beginning is: To want to help everybody was not apparently), as follows: But it will not perhaps be inopportune to investigate each of these by argument, to see what he means when he attributes to the Father's substance alone the 'highest and fullest sense', not permitting the substance of Son or Holy Ghost to be high or in the full sense. For I think this is a device for totally denying the Only-begotten's and the Spirit's substance, by covertly contriving this verbal trick to make them seem to exist only in name, and the true acknowledgement of their subsistence to be negated by such a contrivance. And one can without difficulty discern that this is so, if one spends a little more time on the argument. It is not the part of one who thinks that the Only-begotten and the Holy Ghost truly exist in their own hypostases, to be over-particular about the acknowledgement of the names whereby he thinks he should honour the God over all; otherwise, it would be most insane, having assented to the reality, to be over-particular about the words. But as it is, by having attributed to the Father's substance alone the 'highest and fullest sense', he has conceded, by silence over the others, that he thinks they do not subsist in the full sense. For how could he say that anything to which 'being in the full sense', is not attributed, truly exists? For in the case of what do not have 'in the full sense' attributed to them, we must necessarily assent to their contraries; for what does not 'exist' in the full sense, is entirely non-existent, in which case the claim of 'not being in the full sense' is proof of total non-existence. And after other things: but there is no doubt of this argument's being advocacy of Jewish teaching professed by those who make only the Father's substance subsist. It alone they affirm exists in the full sense, whereas they reckon that of Son and Spirit among the non-existent. For anything which does not exist in the full sense is spoken

of as ‘existing’ only by a linguistic custom, just as someone seen in a portrait is named ‘a man’ whereas the one called ‘a man’ in the full sense is not the likeness but the archetype of the likeness; and the picture is ‘a man’ only in name, and therefore cannot be called in the full sense what it is called, because it is not by nature that which is named. And hence, then, if only the father’s substance is called ‘substance’ in the full sense, whereas that of Son and Spirit is not called that at all, what else is this but a clear denial of the saving message? Therefore, let them run from the Church to the Jewish synagogues, because they will not grant that the Son exists in the full sense and claim that he does not exist at all; for what is ‘not in the full sense’ is equivalent to ‘what does not exist’. And again: But if he professes the Son as subsisting as a substantial force in some way or other (for we will not still dispute over this), why does he again tear up what he has conceded, by claiming that he who is acknowledged as existing does not exist in the full sense, which is equivalent (as we have said) to his not existing at all? For just as someone to whom the name does not fully apply cannot be a man, and in the absence of a man’s properties the whole concept of his substance is negated as well, so too in the case of any reality, which does not have existence attributed to it completely and in the full sense, a partial admission of its being is no proof of its existence. However, this claim about its ‘not existing in the full sense’ is a device for the total abolition of its basis (Ibid., pp. 184, 186, 188, 190).

As wise **Gregory**, Basil the Great’s brother, instructs us in the 37th chapter of his *Refutation of Eunomius* (its beginning is: To want to help everybody was not apparently) by saying: For having heard ‘Father’ we at once understand the one who is the cause of everything’s existence, who, had he owned another cause transcending himself, would not be called ‘Father’ in the full sense of the word, because the appellation ‘Father’ (in the full sense) would have been attributed to the cause found to be prior. But if he is the cause of all and “all is from Him” [Rom 11:36]. as the Apostle says, obviously nothing can be found to pre-exist his being. And again, in the 38th chapter: And, here then, if there is another Father, conceived of in thought as prior to the Lord’s Father, those who pride themselves upon their inexpressible wisdom must demonstrate the point and then we shall agree that the idea of the ingenerate cannot be understood from the title ‘Father’. But if the primal Father has no prior cause underlying his subsistence, and the Only-begotten’s hypostasis is always also understood immediately ‘Father’ is heard, why do they terrify us with these technical tangles of sophisms (Ibid., pp. 200, 202)?

Therefore, on his having made these so wretched and irrational charges, he may be very justly and opportunely answered in the words wise **Gregory** wrote in reply to Eunomius, our author’s stay and mentor (and like him a misrepresenter and accuser of the fathers) in the 34th chapter of his *Refutation* (whose beginning is: To want to help everybody): But what is the necessity thrusting his teaching into such suppositions? From what words of his has this been constructed so that the absurdity should be forced to crop up? For if he were alleging anything professed by us and then there were forthcoming, whether by sophistry or with some sort of force, a proof for such a cavil, he might perhaps have had occasion for alleging such a thing for the slandering of our doctrines. But if there are not and will not be in the Church any such words, and none is convicted of saying them, none is proved to have heard them, and no necessity constructing this absurdity by way of some consequence is to be found. I do not understand what purpose this shadow-battle of his has. It is as if a mentally sick lunatic without a combatant were to fancy that someone was wrestling with him, and then, having made the effort to fling himself down, thinks that he has beaten his opponent. The clever writer has suffered some such fate, fabricating fancies unknown to us, and fighting the shadows he has formed with the imprint of his own notions (Ibid., pp. 276, 278).

For **Gregory of Nyssa**, as has been said, clearly testified that the property, or *prosōpon*, is one thing in its own concept, and the substance another thing, in the *Discourses against Eunomius*, when he said: ‘Clearly the teaching of true religion will be confirmed by the opponents’ claim, because they do not think ingeneracy is the same as substance but that it is viewed on the substrate, whereas the substrate is, in its own concept, something other than they’ (Ibid., p. 290).

What a torpor this is, says wise **Gregory of Nyssa** to Eunomius, what a stupor this is, that these tipsy toppers suppose the ceiling is turning into the floor and that they have the ground over their heads! They cry out in protest that even the ground is unsteady, that the walls have run away, that the whole world is revolving and that nothing they can see is still! Perhaps, then, the author was writing with his soul in such turmoil that we ought to pity him for what he wrote rather than despise him (Ibid., pp. 292, 294).

For the doctor [**Gregory**], opposing thoroughly impious Eunomius, quoted a little phrase of Eunomius’ in the eighth book (whose beginning is: But let us hold on to the previously established points) and wrote: ‘Generation’, he says, ‘is separate from the ingenerate but joined to the Son’s substance’. Does this not suffice to prove the ignorance of the author’s mind? Who does not know that what can be separated from something and joined to something is first conceived of on its own, and in this way is joined to something else or separated from what it is joined to, for ‘joining’ is not predicated of a single item on its own. So because he called generation ‘separate from’ the Father ‘but joined to the son’s substance’, it is wholly necessary that what can be separated and joined should be seen entirely properly and on its own, for what does not exist and does not subsist is neither separated from anything nor joined to anything. But because he says ‘generation is joined to the Son’s substance’, he must view each of them on its own; for if he supposed the one was the same as the other, he would not have termed the identity ‘joining’, it being clear to everybody that the signification of ‘joining’ is not observable in the single item on its own but that the term indicates relationship with something else. In which case the substance seen on its own is one thing and the generation which is joined to this substance but separate, according to what he says, from the Father’s, is something other than it. But if generation is seen on its own by our opponents, it will be acknowledged, even by our adversaries, that the Only-begotten’s substance is something other than it. For what is joined to something is not the same as what it is joined to, and what is not the same must be other. So, if the concept of substance and that of generation are different, the heresy will be cancelled by the very things he says. For then the Only-begotten’s substance will not vary from the Father’s substance through the difference between ingeneracy and generacy, for it has been proved by our opponents themselves that generation is something other than substance, so that there will be no necessity for a relationship to exist between what are viewed in the substance and the one joined with it; but if generation exists on its own and again substance is understood on its own, an unique concept, with no participation with the other, will apply to each of them. For were someone to follow Eunomius in the examination of the thought now proposed by him, and return the attack, it would be possible for an equivalent argument to be applied to the Father too. For it will be legitimate to imitate his express words, as follows: by ingeneracy’s being separate from the Son but joined to the Father’s substance, the Son does indeed exist by generation and owes his being to the ingenerate, for he is begotten; for ingeneracy is not prior to the Father’s subsistence nor is the Father prior to his own ingeneracy, for he who does not have his existence by being begotten has existed without being begotten. Equally then, if, when someone says ‘ingeneracy is joined to the Father’s substance’, the argument follows in terms like those he has inferred of the Son, clearly the teaching of true religion will be confirmed by the opponents’ claim: because they do not think ingeneracy or generacy is

Besides this, the wise words of the other **Gregory** (I mean **of Nyssa**) will teach us reverence and awe over divine doctrines, for when contending against detestable Eunomius and seeing him brazenly aspire to things not to be ventured upon, he said in the 30th chapter of his *Refutation of Eunomius* (its beginning is: To want to help everybody was not, apparently) the following, after first setting down the blasphemer's words, 'The kind of similarity to be sought', he says: by whom does he say it is to be sought? What command, what scriptural law has made the search necessary? Does not wisdom clearly forbid search into matters too profound and enquiry into matters too difficult and being wise in inessentials? Paul says and testifies in the Lord to everybody who is on our side that we should "not think things higher than we ought to think" [cf. Rom 3:12], not because he despised wisdom but because he rejects our over-much extending ourselves through

contemplating an enquiry into things incomprehensible. Isiah, more clearly than the rest, proclaims the impossibility of such an investigation, by calling his generation ineffable. Indeed, all the words of the divinely inspired Scripture which figuratively teach us “the mystery of godliness” [1 Tim 3:16] lay down the law that we ought not to enquire about things incomprehensible. For what the divine teaching says is, as it were, a limit of our duties. So, by what necessity has he sought ‘the kind of similarity’, there being no saint who has counselled any concern for such things? For had it occurred to the prophets or patriarchs or the Lord’s disciples to give any consideration to these matters, it would not have been absurd for us too to be zealous for the same things in a like search for a similitude; although even so it would have been superfluous to search again into what has been searched into already, and we should have been right to stick by what was known before. But if the object of their concern seemed beyond even their comprehension and thus the search itself vain (their incapacity for the object of their search indicating its incomprehensibility), solicitude, therefore, in these matters is superfluous and useless in both cases, whether the object desired was sought by saints or unsought. For if anything useful had come about from this search, the saints, who exhort us to “enquire even into the deep things of God through the Spirit” [cf. 1 Cor 2:10], would not have disregarded these essentials. To whom after them, then, will be revealed what is too high for prophetic revelation and knowledge by the apostles? But I do know the necessity which constrains them to ask after such things. For, in my judgement, there is no other cause for such an investigation except their desire to convert the contentious to them by the outlandishness of their teaching. For had they held to the wonted doctrines of the fathers, in accordance with the teachings of the Gospel and the Apostles, they would have had no occasion for being known more than other people (Ibid., pp. 418, 420, 422).

For the same doctor [Gregory] taught this too, when he wrote as follows, in the first book *Against Eunomius* (its beginning is: There is a limit to the labours of those who “strive lawfully” [2 Tim 2:5b]): But if anybody were to demand an explanation and description of the divine substance, we should not deny that we are ignoramuses in such wisdom, and profess only so much: that it is impossible for the infinite in nature to be comprehended by any design of words, for prophecy calls out that there is no limit to divine grandeur, clearly proclaiming: “There is no bound to the glory of his greatness” [cf. Ephes 3:19]. But if the things belonging with him are infinite, much more is what he himself is in substance uncomprehended by boundary in any part. So, if an explanation by names and words limits the subject in meaning and the infinite cannot be limited, nobody can rightly find fault with our ignorance in not attempting what cannot be ventured upon. For by what name shall I comprehend the incomprehensible? What word shall I use to express the ineffable? So since God is too exalted and too sublime for signification by names, we have learned to honour what is beyond speech and understanding by silence, even if someone, thinking beyond what he ought to think, waxes hot against this soberness of speech, ridiculing this ignorance of ours with regard to things incomprehensible (I mean the absence of configuration, the infinity, the absence of size and volume in Father, Son and Holy Ghost), and recognizes difference by way of dissimilarity and produces this in rebuttal of our ignorance. And again: And therefore, we fix in ourselves the doctrine which has been made a laughing-stock, professing that we are too inferior in knowledge for things which transcend knowledge, and saying that we truly “worship what we know” [John 44:22]. Yet we do know the sublimity of the glory of him we worship, reckoning the incomparability of the grandeur by our incapacity to comprehend it by our reasonings (Ibid., pp. 424, 426).

2.4.3. From *De Vita Gregori Thaumaturgi* (see Patr. Graec. vol. 46, cols. 893–957; using Gregory of Nyssa, *Opera* vols. 10.1.4, pp. 3–57, with vol. 3.4 [using Heil ed.], and note Clav. Patr. Graec. 3184)

Gregory the Great, who took his name from miracles and wonders, also teaches in his book *On the Faith, by sections* (whose beginning is: Enemies and strangers to the apostolic profession), as follows: But we call the Trinity ‘one Godhead’, ‘one lordship’ and ‘one holiness’, because the Father is the Lord’s *Beginning*, since he begat him eternally, and the Lord is the *Exemplar* of the Spirit; for thus is both the Father ‘Lord’ and the Son ‘God’ and of God it is said “God is Spirit” [John 1:1–2; 4:24; cf. 13:15]. And again: for this is why the Holy Trinity is believed and worshipped: one God, in accordance with what is attested by divine Scripture, although we have everywhere in the divine Scriptures, numberless teachings which further testify to the apostolic and churchly faith (Ibid., pp. 338, 340).

2.4.4. From *Oratio Catechetica Magna* (see Patr. Graec. vol. 45, cols. 9–105; using Gregory of Nyssa, *Opera* vol. 3.4 [Using Muhlenberg ed.], and note Clav. Patr. Graec. 3150)

Observe closely what he [**Gregory**] said: Therefore, when there is a discussion with a pagan, it would be as well to produce this beginning to the argument: whether he supposes that God exists or is swept into the doctrine of atheists. So, if he says there is no god he will be led on from the skilful and wise arrangements in the world to the acknowledgement thereby of the existence of a certain power, therein viewed, set over all. But if he has no doubt that God exists but proceeds with his suppositions into a plurality of Godheads, let us use this sort of order of argument with him. Which of these does he think God is: perfect or defective? When he rightly testifies to the perfection of the divine nature, let us require him to concede the fact that through all the things viewed in the Godhead he is perfect, so that God is not to be seen as a mixture of opposites, of perfect and defective. You see that even those sick with the insanity of heathendom admit that God is perfect and thereby the master of mysteries attempts to direct them, even against their will, towards disavowing polytheism. But this becomes even clearer through the words you subsequently quoted: For if he concedes that perfection in all aspects is to be confessed as belonging with the subject, but says that the perfect things which are characterized by the same attributes are many, it will be entirely necessary for him either to point out the property in those things which are distinguished by no difference but viewed with the same attributes; or if the mind apprehends nothing by way of property, not to suppose a division in those things by way of distinction (CD vol. 35, p. 72).

2.4.5. From *Refutatio Confessionis Eunomii* (see Patr. Graec. vol. 45, cols. 465–572; using Gregory of Nyssa, *Opera* vol. 2 [using Jaeger ed.] and note Clav. Patr. Graec. 3136)

Wise **Gregory**, bishop of **Nyssa**, will bear witness that this is all measureless madness. He writes as follows in his discourse *Against Eunomius’ Statement*, who uttered similar senseless nonsense (its beginning goes: The faith of Christians): ‘He is not’, he says, ‘separated or divided into a plurality in the substance wherein he is one, nor does he become different at different times nor does he change from being what he is, nor is he transformed from one substance into three hypostases, for he is completely and entirely one, remaining likewise by the same respects unique’. The intelligent listener should first separate, from the passage quoted, the apparently sensible things and the empty verbiage thoughtlessly tossed into the discourse. Afterwards he should take notice of the meaning of the residue of statement to see if it harmonizes with the Christian religion. The first words of the passage are completely devoid of any meaning, good or bad. For what meaning ‘not divided into a plurality in the substance wherein he is one, nor does he become different at different times nor does he change from being what he is’ has, not even he will say, and I think none of his supporters can find any shadow of meaning in these statements either.

‘He is not divided in the substance wherein he is one’. Does he say of him that he is not divided from his own substance or of the substance that it is not divided from him? This meaningless sentence is an empty verbal noise, a random concoction. Why should we waste time in track of this senseless verbiage? For how can someone be separated from his own substance and remain in being? Or how can someone’s substance be parted from him and looked at separately? Or how is it possible for someone having left his being to become someone else, while becoming outside himself? But, he says, ‘he is not transformed from one substance into three hypostases, for he is completely and entirely one, remaining likewise by the same respects unique’. To my mind, then, the parts that are senseless in this statement will be obvious to everybody, even before our argument. Let the man who thinks there is some sense or meaning in this statement oppose it; for one who knows how to weigh the force of an argument will disdain involving himself with the baseless things. For what force does it have against our teaching to say ‘he is not divided or separated into a plurality in the substance wherein he is one, nor does he become different at different times nor does he change from being what he is, nor is he transformed from one substance into three hypostases’, things not said or believed by Christians nor logically deducible from our confessions? For whoever said, or heard anybody state in God’s Church, that the Father is separated or divided from his substance, or has become different at different times by becoming outside himself or is transformed into three hypostases? Eunomius says these things to himself, without entering into controversy with us; instead he babbles his own nonsense, mixing a good deal of senselessness into the blasphemy of these statements. We, for our part, say that it is equally blasphemous and godless to call the Lord of the Creation a creature as to think the Father is separated or sundered in his being, or leaves himself or is transformed into three hypostases like clay or wax transformed into various patterns (CD vol. 29, pp. 112, 114, 116).

But let us pass on to the wise teaching of his namesake; he too, indeed, impelled by the same grace says: Every name whatsoever you use belongs with the being and is not the being. And again: All the things existing within the creation are considered with the aid of the meaning of names. One who says ‘sky’ has brought the mind of his auditor to the created thing signified by this term, and one who mentions man or any other living thing by name immediately impresses his auditor with the appearance of the living thing. And again: Only the uncreated nature believed in of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost transcends every nameable meaning. Therefore, when the Word referred to “the name” in handing over the Faith, He did not add what it was (for how could a name be found for a reality “above every name”?) [Phil 2:9] but gave power so that our mind, being stirred by piety, should be able to discover what the name, revelatory of the transcendent nature, is, which we should attach in like manner to the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, whether it be ‘the Good’, or ‘the Incorruptible’, whatever name each man thinks fitting to be taken for the manifesting of the immortal nature (Ibid., p. 344).

But let us, also, examine the other statements of the doctor. For we know he [Gregory] says that from all names by means of which God is known; and again: And such things he shows to be notions which demonstrate the transcendent power by means of these names. And what does he think all the names by means of which God is known are? Or the things whereby the notions which demonstrate the transcendent power are known? Are they substances or hypostases? Let this cunning fellow and expositor of deep notions tell us! What too are all the names which are to be found, by means of which the divine nature abides as it is, without indications (Ibid., p. 346)?

And again in the book *Against the same wicked Eunomius’ Statement* (whose beginning runs: The faith of the Christians): For one who says ‘sky’ has brought the mind of his auditor to the created thing signified by this term, and one who mentions man or any other

see, the positing of two *prosopa*, not mere names which are spoken of apart from realities (Ibid., p. 350).

2.5.3. From *De Incomprehensibili Dei Natura* (see Patr. Graec. vol. 48, cols. 701–48; using Malingery ed., vol. 1 [Sourc. Chrét. 28 bis], pp. 278–80, with Clav. Patr. Graec. 4318)

The ecumenical doctor, **John**, too, who occupied the archiepiscopal throne of the Imperial City, indicates this more plainly, writing, as he did, in the fifth sermon *On the Incomprehensible*, as follows: For it is clear from the addition that the Son is God. For if the name ‘God’ belonged to the Father alone and could not signify any other hypostasis, but only the first and unbegotten, as if it were significant of him and him alone, the addition of “Father” would be superfluous; for it would suffice to say “one God” and we should understand who the one spoken of was. But because the name ‘God’ is common to Father and Son, by saying “one God” Paul would not have indicated whom he was speaking of. Which is why he needed the appellation “Father” to show that he was speaking about the primal and unbegotten hypostasis, because the appellation ‘God’ does not suffice to indicate him, since it is common to him and to the Son [cf. 1 Cor 8:6]. For some of the names are common, some proper: the common to show the invariableness of the substance, the proper to characterize the properties of the hypostases. ‘Father’ and ‘Son’, then, are proper to each hypostasis, whereas ‘God’ and ‘Lord’ are common. Since, then, he put the common name “one God”, he needed also the proper name in order to indicate whom he was speaking of, lest we should fall into Sabellius’s madness (CD vol. 54. pp. 162, 164).

2.5.4. From Ps. Iohannes Chrysostomus, *De Sancta Trinitate Seu de Fide* (see Patr. Graec. vol. 60, cols. 767–72, with Clav. Patr. Graec 4206)

In chapter 47 of his Book III, Peter returns to the theme that the fathers unite in teaching the truth affirmed at the end of his last chapter 46. Therefore, he adduces a series of quotations from a number of fathers including the following two short passages from St. John Chrysostom’s *De Sancta Trinitate seu de Fide*:

Therefore, receive again Saint **John**, too, who was archbishop of the Imperial City but adorned all the churches everywhere with his divinely inspired teachings. He took aim and with a single shot brought down your false opinion. For he wrote in his exposition *On the Holy Trinity* (its beginning is: A teacher of the Church resembles a physician), as follows: First, then, is faith in God, who is a reality, impalpable, incomprehensible, invisible, not to be investigated, inquired into or subject to judgement, a reality honoured by silence and adored by the intellect. Faith begins with the Father, and arrives at the Son and is perfected in the Spirit (Ibid., p. 370).

For see how **John**, who pours forth streams of variegated and faultless teaching, forges the same unaltered chain as his precursors, by saying: Faith in God begins with the Father, and arrives at the Son and is perfected in the Spirit. First, then, he says, is faith in God, who is a reality, impalpable, incomprehensible, invisible, not to be investigated, inquired into or subject to judgement, a reality honoured by silence and adored by the intellect (Ibid., p. 378).

2.6. *Quotations from the Works of St. Cyril of Alexandria (d. 444)*⁸

In presenting these quotations in his surviving *magnum opus*, Peter introduces St. Cyril of Alexandria with such wonder-inducing appellations as ‘Sacred Cyril, the scales of orthodox doctrines’; ‘The very teacher who . . . indeed rather was a teacher of the whole world, renowned Cyril’; ‘Proven Cyril, guide to exactitude in divine doctrines’; ‘sound Cyril, who throughout his life championed true religion’; ‘Expert Cyril, the accurate teacher of divine doctrines’; ‘The light of the Christ-loving Alexandrians’ and ‘Wise Cyril, rich fountain of exact doctrines’.

The translation of these quotations is already published and may be found in (Ebied 2016a, pp. 33–94).

2.7. Quotations from the Works of St. Severus of Antioch (d. 538)⁹

It is clear from these quotations from St. Severus of Antioch that Peter of Callinicus was well acquainted with the various seminal works of this great Father. Thus, in support of his argument against Damian of Alexandria, he made full use of these works by quoting extensively from them in the extant chapters of his Syriac work, *Contra Damianum*, although actually only less than half of this enormous polemic has survived. The value of these quotations lies in the fact that from them we could glean an insight into Severus's theology, doctrine and teaching, otherwise not well known, with regard to the issues raised by Peter in the Tritheist controversy.

- In presenting these quotations in his surviving *magnum opus*, Peter refers to St. Severus of Antioch, in more than one place, as 'Cyril's peer, proven Severus, who always followed Saint Cyril'. Furthermore, he (Peter) introduces St. Severus throughout these quotations with such wonderful appellations as he 'who illumined the world from the East; 'proven Severus, champion of the truth'; 'Severus, preserver and exact expositor of Patristic teaching (Syr. ܐܕܐ ܐܚܝܪܐܝܬܐ)'; 'God-clad Severus, the expert destroyer of heretical practices'; and 'Severus, the proven teacher of truth'.
- The translation of these quotations is already published and may be found in (Ebied 2016b, pp. 65–123).

2.8. Quotations from the Works of St. Theodosius of Alexandria (d. 566)¹⁰

From *De Trinitate* (using Van Roey and Allen eds., *Monophysite Texts of the Sixth Century* [Orient. Lovan. Analect. 56], pp. 148–84 [trans. pp. 222–51], with Clav. Patr. Graec 7137)

And see how his peer, the accurate guardian of the fathers' doctrines, holy **Theodosius**, in his often quoted *On the Trinity* testified to this fact, writing as follows: These points being thus distinguished and explained, it is clear that the words 'substance' and 'nature' are applied sometimes by the holy Fathers to the generic and common meaning, sometimes to a single hypostasis perceived and considered on its own (CD vol. 29., p. 24).

So, lest anyone should think we do violence to the doctor's meaning, we shall produce a trustworthy witness, holy **Theodosius**, who wrote as follows in his discourse *On Theology* on the point: If they decline, then, to confess each of the hypostases, regarded on its own, as God (a refusal no one of sound mind will venture upon) let them hearken to the assembly of the 318 holy fathers, which taught us to confess 'God of God, light of light, very God of very God.' Indeed he who is styled the Theologian says in the discourse *On Baptism*: 'Each of them viewed separately, is God; the three known together are God: the former because of the consubstantiality, the latter because of the monarchia'. In the discourse *Against the Arians* he says: 'We worship the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost: God the Son and God (if you are not obdurate) the Holy Ghost' (Ibid., pp. 40, 42).

He [**Theodosius**] said: So much for these people! Gregory, styled the Theologian, on the other hand, is seen to have called the Holy Ghost 'a substance'; by this addition he introduced nothing into the meaning but simply was at pains to prove that the Spirit is substance so that no one should think him an unhypostatic energy (Syr. ܐܡܪܐ ܐܚܝܪܐܝܬܐ) or the accident of a substance, but should acknowledge him as something existing in his own right, as a vital force and hypostasis. It is pertinent that you should hear his teaching in the discourse *On the Holy Ghost*: 'The Holy Ghost', he says, 'must be presumed to be either an individually existing thing or something viewed in something else: what experts in such matter call respectively "substance" and "accident". If the Holy Ghost is an "accident", he must be an energy of God. What else, who else, could he be (for it is better thus, and avoids

composition)? If he is an energy, then clearly he is put into operation, does not operate himself and ceases as soon as he has been activated. This is the kind of thing an energy is. How, then, does he act, say such and such things, set apart, is grieved, is vexed (all things clearly, that belong to one who moves, not to a movement)? But if he is a substance, and not one of the things belonging with the substance, he will be thought of either as a creature or as God. For not even the inventors of goat-stags can think up what is half-way or anything sharing, or composed of, both. But if he is a creature, why do we believe in him or how are we perfected in him? For our believing in something and our believing about it are not the same. The former belongs to the Godhead, the second to everything'. Therefore, adhering to the words of fathers proficient in the mysteries and considering John the great teacher of true religion, who states (speaking of the hypostasis of the Only begotten Son of God) that: 'the Word is a hypostatic substance'; and considering, too, his predecessor Gregory, known for his discourses on God, who says of the Holy Ghost: 'But if he is a substance, and not one of the things alongside the substance', and showing that we are using the expressions of Fathers whose orthodoxy is pre-evident, we added in the address previously set forth: 'we acknowledge also to each of the hypostases (recognized for the being of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost) a substance, nature, life, light and truth, and whatever is predicated of the one Godhead by theologians' (Ibid., pp. 42, 44).

Let us in confirmation of what has been said, now recollect our previous detailed examination and show that the theologian recognizes each of the hypostases of the Holy Trinity viewed individually, as nature, like the rest of the Church's doctors. **Saint Theodosius** shall testify again to this when he speaks as follows in the same discourse *On Theology*: Gregory who was bishop of Nazianzus but who enlightened everyone under the sun by his teachings, shall teach clearly that the Father, too, has been called 'nature'; he speaks as follows in the oration *On Orderliness in Discussion*: 'Do not scrutinize the Father's nature, the Only-begotten's substance, the Spirit's glory and power: the single Godhead and radiance in the three, the nature undivided, the confession, glory and hope of believers' (Ibid., pp. 44, 46).

The distinguished **Theodosius**, too, who follows him on every point, wrote, in his discourse *On Theology*, giving us the following teaching: Though, then, there are in the divinely inspired Scripture many names by which the Godhead is signified, our Lord Jesus Christ passed them all by and declared, in the summary of our faith which he was handing on to his disciples: "Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost" [Matt 28:19]. By these appellations he was not introducing to us any three, particular, Gods. Indeed, through Moses, speaker of things sacred, he said: "Hear, O Israel, the Lord your God is one Lord" [Deut 6:4]. No, he teaches a clear and unconfused distinction of the *prosōpa*, so that we may recognize that the Father is not the Son or the Spirit, neither is the Son the Spirit or the Father, nor the Holy Ghost the Son or the Father. But recognizing each one by the distinct marks of the hypostasis, we will also repudiate that pernicious confusion which Sabellius the Libyan began, and reject that severing of the Godhead, which is not far off it in absurdity and which most impious Arius introduced (Ibid., p. 308).

It remains for us to point to famous **Theodosius's** view on this subject and in this way finally reach the plainly expressed teaching now under examination, by our God-clad father Severus. He, who truly rose up like an apostle, in our times, as head of the orthodox Church, wrote, then, in the discourse *On Theology* he composed against the polytheists, as follows: Now the holy and consubstantial Trinity is in its hypostases, separate and unconfused, but of one substance, nature, indivisible Godhead, sovereignty, glory eternity, power, activity, knowledge, adoration and the other attributes which God has by nature. Now the property of the Father is fatherhood and existing ingenerately; the property of

the Son is sonship and being begotten by the Father; and the property of the Holy Ghost is the fact that he was not begotten but proceeds, without beginning and eternally, from the Father. For by means of these properties the unconfusedness of the three *prosōpa* (i.e., *hypostases*) is characterized and signified. Whereas all the other things, as we have said before, which characterize the Godhead, are common to them, are co-equal in honour and indivisible, and prove that we have put our faith in one God, who exists and is known in one substance and three hypostases (CD vol. 32, pp. 220, 222).

Thus, in the second chapter I quoted careful readers the same Theologian, cited by the thoroughly distinguished **Theodosius**, saying in his oration *On Athanasius*, as follows: ‘For when we say “one substance” and “three hypostases” with true religion (for the first indicates the nature of the Godhead, the second properties of the three)’ (Ibid., p. 370).

In that case, why, similarly, should we not reckon the characteristic properties of the Godhead the same as the Godhead, because, with the famous **Theodosius** declaring: We worship and glorify one God in one substance and nature but in three hypostases, we acknowledge and believe the one substance and nature of the Godhead to be nothing other than God himself? For he wrote in his discourse *On Theology* as follows: So these things were said by us in proof of the fact that we worship and acknowledge one God, in one substance and nature but in three hypostases. And again: So, as has often been said, bidding farewell to deductions like this we have learned to believe one God in one substance and nature, but in three hypostases or *prosōpa*, not dividing the one Godhead or merging the three hypostases for the evil involved in both is equal even though it is to be found in opposites (Ibid., p. 402).

In addition to what has already been shown, famous **Theodosius**, he who in altogether priestly fashion headed all the orthodox churches everywhere, testified that the substance is nothing else but the three hypostases since it is seen in them, by saying in his careful discourse *On Theology*, the following: Whereas all the things, as we have said already, which characterize the Godhead are common to them and co-equal in honour and inseparable, and prove that we have put our faith in one God, who exists and is known in one substance and three hypostases. And again: So let all these things be said by us in proof that we worship and glorify one God, in one substance and nature but in three hypostases. And after other things: So, as has often been said, bidding farewell to deductions like this we have learned to believe in one God, in one substance and nature, but in three hypostases or *prosōpa* (CD vol. 54, pp. 282, 284).

What then! Does not **Theodosius**, the celebrated, in whose days the execrable heresy of the polytheists came to life again, as it were, from the underworld, and seethed up for the destruction of many, does not he, too, with all the Church’s pillars before him, instruct in the same straight and undeviating path, and light up with the brilliant beams of exact theology the whole wide world as it were, and clearly say: that the one God worshipped with true religion by all Christians and the one Godhead and substance is Father, Son and Holy Ghost, i.e., three hypostases? See what he wrote in the discourse *On the Trinity* which he composed by divine inspiration against the heathen nonsense of the polyusiasts (Syr. ܡܫܝܚܐ ܕܡܪܝܡ). But I think, he says, it is very absurd for certain persons to attempt to leave out a definite number and to arrive at an indefinite. For if, by their indefinite usage, certain persons speak clearly merely of ‘substances’ or ‘natures’, but covertly on their own limit them to three, they are to know that this tacit attempt on their part has been denied them, and specially through Gregory the Theologian’s statement, which we have clearly set down and which addresses his fellow believers, as follows: ‘What, then, do you say, you who introduce three hypostases? Do you say this, thinking three substances? I am fully persuaded that you would loudly protest against those who do so think’ (Ibid., pp. 374, 376).

And later: ‘Those divided not in natures but in properties are three’. But if they do not limit them to three, one of two things will be necessary: either they will introduce more hypostases into the profession of Father, Son and Holy Ghost whom alone the Lord prescribed we should worship as one God; or, by the deficiency of one hypostasis (or, they say, ‘substance’ or ‘nature’) they will be convicted of scheming to defraud the Holy Trinity. And later: So much for the words of holy Severus! Now, if they are minded to discern the words of Dionysius, too, with greater caution, they will have no stumbling-block there at all. For that blessed minister of Christ’s mysteries by saying: ‘But humaneness especially, because in one of its hypostases it truly participated in our whole condition by summoning to itself anew and raising up the lowliness of our humanity of which Jesus the simple was, in an ineffable way, composed, and by the eternal’s also accepting temporal measure and by what supersubstantially (Syr. ܠܚܕܐ ܕܚܕܐ) transcends the rank of all nature’s coming, along with the unchanging constancy and unconfusedness of its own condition, to be within our nature’—by saying this, Dionysius did not, as they are saying, subject the Godhead, or substance, recognized in the three holy hypostases (i.e., the three hypostases themselves), to incarnation, through the hypostasis of the Only-begotten (Ibid., pp. 376, 378).

For accurate **Theodosius** proved this by the divinely inspired words of Basil the Great, when he wrote in his *Discourse on Theology* in the following manner: Hence, bidding farewell to those who readily weave cobwebs of objections and speedily perfect thoughtless thoughts, and to the easy impious absurdities into which they slip especially from ignorance of the divine words, deceiving themselves rather than those they address, we ourselves will, so far as we can, collect and set down what we have received from our store-house (meaning from the divinely inspired learning of the God-clad fathers) thinking that what comes from them will suffice right-thinking people for secure knowledge of the issue. For as to the man who does not follow the intention of the holy fathers at all points and does not reckon their word more powerful and more exact than his own notions, Saint Basil ruled that he deserves censure for his presumption, in the *Letter* he sent to the *Canoness on the Trinity*, where he wrote as follows: ‘For not following the fathers and not considering their word more accurate than our own understanding deserves censure, because it is full of presumption’. Therefore, we too will be right to import no addition and make no substraction in the Fathers’ teaching (Ibid., pp. 384, 386).

3. Reflections

By far the great bulk of work in the discipline of Patristics has been to make available critical editions and solid translations of the Fathers and Mothers of the earlier Church. Scholars find it hard to proceed with research and debate if they do not have confident accessibility to primary sources, and as years go by better editions of Patristic authors are being made, with the textual apparatus to show variant readings. Up-to-date processes of text editing began in earnest in 1947 under the Flemish Benedictine scholar-Abbot Eligius Dekkers (1915–1998) with the *Clavis Patrum* series, which he helped further develop further into the fine critical texts of the vast new *Corpus Christianorum*, with its Latin, Greek and Oriental component series (published by Brepols in Turnhout, Belgium). Not only do these series surpass the old *Patrologiae*, but other mostly post-War translation series have also depended on knowledge of the best manuscripts, viz. *Texte und Untersuchungen* (Germany), *Sources Chrétiennes* (France), The Library of Christian Classics (Britain), Ancient Christian Writers (USA), Texts and Studies in Eastern Christianity (The Netherlands), etc., and these have involved more and more inter-faith and international collaboration. In Australia, there has developed a solid tradition of engagement in this work, both in the translating/editing of Christian works (Robert Hill, Graeme Clarke and Pauline Allen standing out) and of ancient historical and philosophical texts important for understanding early Christian

life and thought (especially noting Elizabeth and Michael Jeffreys, and Roger Scott on Byzantine annals, and Harold Tarrant on Proclus).

The work of fine translating is crucial, very painstaking, ideally subject to constant revision, and is a refined work of art in itself. In Patristics this is nowhere truer than in the most difficult linguistic arena of all, to do with the way developing doctrinal positions in the highly inflective Greek language were translated into the more concrete Semitic tongues, especially into the most widespread one developing out of Aramaic, called Syriac (whose speakers lie behind the ancient bearing of the Christian faith even as far as China). In its ‘classical’ form and its use in the expression of doctrinal positions, Syriac is a language only a small body of scholars have mastered, and it is surely worth displaying its significance in this special issue of Australian Patristics, let alone convey a key example of “translation dynamics in early Christian literature’ (Berti et al. 2025). In the offerings above, however, it has not been our purpose to comment on the intricacies of Peter of Callicinus’s mind as he gauges his choice of high-theological terms from one language to another. That would take a book. It is not to probe the issues of theological debate: that would take perhaps more than two books (!), because older Fathers are quoted who were involved in different debates in their times. The intent is a humbler, if hopefully very valuable one, to produce a kind of florilegium of revised, very basically annotated and specially organized passages from Syriac translations of the Church Fathers that above all (but certainly not exclusively) impinge on the largely Greek-expressed (highly neglected) Tritheist debate. The passages above have been extracted and collated in a way never done before out of obscure places (in huge works not accessible to those unfamiliar with the special issues of the sixth-century theological ‘skirmishes’). The pressure to have access to this kind of work is strong, and it is very much in response to requests to make this material visible and usable that I have spent time and effort on it.

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Notes

- ¹ Not 578 as is usually given for the date of his assumption of the See of Antioch (cf. Wright 1966, p. 113). See (Van Roey 1961, p. 183).
- ² Herewith revising (Ebied 1977, 1982, 2010); and for a detailed discussion of Peter’s writings, see (Ebied et al. 1994, pp. xiv–xxxvi).
- ³ On Athanasius, see (Brock et al. 2011, pp. 46–47).
- ⁴ On Basil, see (ibid., p. 64).
- ⁵ On Gregory of Nazianzus, see (ibid., pp. 181–88).
- ⁶ On Gregory of Nessa, see (ibid., p. 182).
- ⁷ On St. John Chrysostom, see (ibid., pp. 229–30).
- ⁸ On St. Cyril of Alexandria, see (ibid., p. 109).
- ⁹ On St. Severus of Antioch, see (ibid., pp. 368–69).
- ¹⁰ On St. Theodosius of Alexandria, see (ibid., pp. 407–8).

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