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**The topic of the universal in the thought of the Cappadocian
Fathers and in the Arian debate of the 4th century AD: philosophical
and theological perspectives**

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ABSTRACT

Nella tesi si dimostra come il tema dell'universale si sia manifestato principalmente nelle controversie ariane del quarto secolo e nei lavori dei padri cappadoci, come anche nella filosofia antica e nella tradizione orientale cristiana filosofica e teologica. Parlando dell'"universale", intendo realtà universali di ogni tipo (incluse le proprietà comuni a molti individui come i principi trascendentali applicati ai tipi di essere ad essi partecipanti, i legami della gerarchia dell'essere tra cui la moltitudine degli individui ecc.) e non solo i termini di κοινόν e καθόλου o la nozione di un universale inteso nel senso tecnico normativo dal punto di vista dell'uso del termine nel discorso storico e filosofico.

Nella tesi possono essere individuati tre temi principali. In primo luogo, il tema della partecipazione. Distinguo tre paradigmi della partecipazione rispetto al problema dell'universale caratteristici della filosofia antica: il paradigma platonico, aristotelico e neoplatonico. Dimostro che il paradigma platonico trova espressione in Origene, Ario e Gregorio di Nissa, quello aristotelico in Origene e Gregorio di Nissa e quello neoplatonico, come propongo, in Ario. In secondo luogo si tratta il tema dell'applicazione della divisione genera-species all'essere intelligente. Ricostruisco la storia intellettuale della seconda tappa delle controversie ariane per cui, in risposta alla dottrina di Vasilio di Cesarea sul fatto che la comunanza dell'identità della Trinità sarebbe analoga alla comunanza dell'aspetto rispetto agli individui, Eunomio, al fine di confutare questa dottrina, avrebbe insistito che la divisione genera-species non sia applicabile all'essere immateriale. Ricercò le origini di questo concetto nel platonismo antico e cristiano. In terzo luogo, si affronta il tema della gerarchia dell'essere. Secondo la mia visione nella dottrina di Gregorio di Nissa questo tema ha un ruolo fondamentale. Dimostro che Gregorio di Nissa prese in prestito l'ordine dei componenti della gerarchia dell'essere dal cosiddetto albero di Porfirio, nello sviluppare questo argomento vi introdusse elementi platonici, aristotelici e stoici e cambiò l'ordine dei componenti in relazione all'ordine biblico della creazione. Inoltre analizzo lo sviluppo del tema della gerarchia dell'essere nel conseguente pensiero orientale cristiano e l'influenza di Gregorio di Nissa in questo senso. Mi soffermo inoltre sul tema dell'individuazione attraverso la convergenza delle proprietà nel pensiero di Vasilio di Cesarea e studio lo stato delle proprietà comuni nell'ambito del concetto di individuazione.

This dissertation has demonstrated how the topic of the universal was manifested mainly in the Arian controversy of the fourth century and the works of the Cappadocian Fathers, as well as in the Ancient philosophy and the previous and late Eastern Christian philosophical and theological tradition. By speaking of the “universal,” I mean the universal realities of any type (including the properties common to many individuals such as transcendental principles applied to the types of beings participating in them, the links in the hierarchy of beings encompassing the multitude of individuals, etc.), and not only the terms of κοινόν and καθόλου or the notion of a universal understood in the normative technical sense from the viewpoint of the use of the term in the historical and philosophical discourse. The dissertation focuses on three main topics. Firstly, it is the topic of participation. In a wider context of analyzing the role of universals, I distinguish three paradigms of participation, typically used in classical philosophy: the Platonic, the Aristotelian, and the Neoplatonic paradigms. It is demonstrated how the Platonic paradigm found its expression in Origen, Arius, and Gregory of Nyssa; the Aristotelian paradigm – in Origen and Gregory of Nyssa, and the Neoplatonic paradigm, as I am suggesting, in Arius. Secondly, the dissertation addresses the topic of applicability of individuals / species division to rational beings. From that perspective, I reconstruct the intellectual history of the second phase of the Arian controversy. In response to the doctrine of Basil of Caesarea that commonness in the Persons of the Holy Trinity was similar to the commonness of the species in respect to their constituent individuals, and attempting to refute this doctrine, Eunomius insisted that individuals / species division was inapplicable to immaterial beings. I trace the origins of this concept in the Platonism of Antiquity and in Christian Platonism. Thirdly, the dissertation analyzes the topic of the hierarchy of beings. In my opinion, this topic played a paramount role in the teaching of Gregory of Nyssa. I demonstrate that Gregory of Nyssa adopted the order of the levels in his hierarchy of beings from the so-called Tree of Porphyry, in the process introducing some Platonic, Aristotelian, and Stoic elements, and changing the order of the levels in accordance with the Scriptural order of creation. I also trace how the topic of the hierarchy of beings evolved in the subsequent Eastern Christian thought, and what was the impact of Gregory of Nyssa in this regard. In addition, I address the topic of individuation through the convergence of properties in Basil of Caesarea, and discuss the status of general properties in his concept of individuation.

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Bibliography

Introduction

In the first centuries after its emergence, the Eastern Christian civilization developed a rich intellectual tradition which made a significant impact on the subsequent periods. On the one hand, the Eastern Christian philosophical thought of the first centuries A.D. addressed problems common for the history of philosophy (the problem of universals, the psychophysical problem, the topic of the ontological hierarchy of beings, etc.), while, on the other hand, it dealt with fairly narrow issues specific for the Early Christian thought (Trinitarian doctrine, Christology, Pneumatology, etc.).

The presence of circle of specific subjects playing a particularly important role in Christian thought resulted in the emergence of the phenomenon of dogmatic (in a technical sense of the word) thinking within the Christian civilization. From the viewpoint of that paradigm, religious and philosophical doctrines which developed over the course of numerous and intense debates, received their authorized formulations in the conciliar decrees and became largely “dogmatized” in the process. In the course of this dogmatization, certain trends and traditions which had existed in the Eastern Christian philosophical tradition, went out of sight or entirely disappeared; other traditions remained on the surface and were actively elaborated.

At the same time, Eastern Christian philosophical thought was in close contact with the non-Christian classical philosophical tradition, often rhetorically denying it and arguing with it, yet, at the same time, taking the most important concepts from it, which the representatives of the Christian philosophical thought in different ways reshaped for their own purposes. Thus, many Christian thinkers and intellectual movements (including the ecclesiastical parties) borrowed certain provisions both from the previous Christian intellectual tradition and from the philosophical doctrines of Antiquity. The struggle and interaction of these movements in Early Christianity resulted in the formation of intellectual discourse which would become fundamental for the further development of Christian civilization.

Keeping this in mind, it should be pointed out that the relevance of the present study is tied with the need to clarify the diversity of intellectual trends which were followed in the early period of the Eastern Christian philosophical tradition, particularly in the fourth century, in their relation to various trends of the classical non-Christian philosophical tradition and regardless of their belonging to the dogmatically established trend.

For doing this, I chose the topic of the universal which, on the one hand, could reveal the continuity of Eastern Christian thought in its relation to the classical philosophical tradition and

which therefore could be considered one of the paradigmatic themes for understanding the specific nature of the Eastern Christian intellectual discourse in the history of philosophy. On the other hand, this topic as applied to the Eastern Christian intellectual tradition has remained largely unexplored in the academic literature, at least under the angle with which it is addressed in this study, namely, the subject of the universal in the Cappadocian Fathers and in the Arian controversy of the fourth century.

By speaking of the “universal,” I mean the universal realities of any type (including the properties common to many individuals such as transcendental principles applied to the types of beings participating in them, the links in the hierarchy of beings encompassing the multitude of individuals, etc.), and not only the terms of κοινόν and καθόλου or the notion of a universal understood in the normative technical sense from the viewpoint of the use of the term in the historical and philosophical discourse.

It seems that the philosophical language of the Eastern Christian tradition was significantly influenced by the paradigms of understanding the concept of participation in its relationship with the notion of the universal – the Platonic and Aristotelian paradigms as well as the Neoplatonic paradigm, which was formed on their basis. These paradigms surfaced in the Eastern Christian philosophical tradition in various ways and were used differently in respect to the same subjects by the classical authors as well as by Early and Late Byzantine Christian authors. This consideration leads to the fact that even within the Orthodox Eastern Christian intellectual tradition we may find inconsistencies between the Early Christian authors and the authors of the later periods due to their use of different philosophical paradigms of participation for describing the connection of the man with the transcendental principle, which almost entirely escaped the attention of scholars. In this study, these paradigms of participation will be identified in their relation to the problems of the universal in the Early Christian thought. In the final chapter a brief overview of how these paradigms were reshaped in respect to the subject of the hierarchy of beings in the subsequent Eastern Christian tradition, will be provided.

In addition to the topic of the hierarchy of beings, other key topics addressed in this dissertation are associated with the applicability of the Aristotelian categories (first of all, the second category of substance), and with the topic of individuation. Each of these topics is essential for understanding the specific nature of the Eastern Christian philosophical tradition, both of the fourth century and in general.

The sources for this study include the writings of authors from Early Antiquity to the Late Byzantine period, generally written in the Old Greek language. During the work on the dissertation, the critical editions of primary sources were used. In the absence of critical editions, the Database *Thesaurus linguae graecae*, *Digital Library of Greek Literature*, and for the

Eastern Christian writers, the texts collected in J. P. Migne, *Patrologiae Cursus Completus. Series Graeca* were employed.

*Chapter 1, “Paradigms of Participation in the context of the Topic of Universals
in the Classical Philosophical Tradition”*

For the first time in philosophy the concept of “participation” as a term seems to have appeared in Plato. The present author will not touch upon all the meanings which the concept of participation entails in Plato, and will only mention several points, important for the following analysis.

For expressing the idea of connection between things and Platonic ideas, Plato used the notions of μέθεξις, μετοχή, μετάληψις, the terms κοινωνία η κοινωνέω with similar meaning, the verb μεταλαμβάνειν,¹ and their derivatives.² In his later dialogues Plato used the notions of “image”, “likeness,” and “imitation” (εικών, ὁμοίωμα, μίμησις) for describing the relations between things and ideas. The Platonic concept was possibly influenced by Anaxagoras³ who said that everything had a part in everything (πάντα παντὸς μοῖραν μετέχει), while the Mind remained unmixed.⁴ In *Phaedo* in particular, but also in some other dialogues, Plato spoke about participation of the individual in ideas. According to this understanding of participation, paradigmatic for philosophical and theological thought of the later periods, “something according to participation” meant the opposite to “something according to being;” for instance, a being different from the One participated in it, otherwise it would have been the One itself.⁵ This opposition of the participating and the participated is expressed in *Sophist*, where “something according to participation” was opposed to “something according to its nature” (κατὰ τὴν αὐτοῦ φύσιν).⁶ In a very general sense, in this paradigm, *participation* pointed to the fact that some being had a certain quality (in this case the unity) to a lesser degree, than the being personifying

¹ In Greek the notion μετέχειν (the verb is derived from the noun μέθεξις) describes the state of participation, while the notion μεταλαμβάνειν describes the process of achieving that state; κοινωνεῖν also has connotations of transitivity and described the common possession of something, while μετέχειν has connotations of single directedness in relation to participation and describes the participation of something in something else rather than the common possession of something by several beings.

² There are too many relevant fragments in Plato’s works to be listed here. Cf. the corresponding meanings of the notions in the index of platonic terms: E. DES PLACES, *Lexique de la langue philosophique et religieuse de Platon*, Paris 1964, s. v. μετέχειν (pp. 340–341), μετοχή (p. 342), μεταλαμβάνειν (p. 338), κοινωνία (pp. 292–294), κοινωνός (p. 294). In general about the concept of participation in Plato see in particular: A. HENAMAS, *Participation and Predication in Plato’s later Thought*, “Review of Metaphysics”, 36 (1982); N. FUJISAWA, *Ἐχειν, μετέχειν, and Idioms of Paradeigmatism in Plato’s Theory of Forms*, “Phronesis”, 19 (1974); F.-G. HERRMAN, *Μετέχειν, μεταλαμβάνειν and the Problem of Participation in Plato’s Ontology*, “Philosophical Inquiry”, 15 (2003), fasc. 3-4; Ch. BIGGER, *Participation: A Platonic Inquiry*, Baton Rouge, La.: Louisiana State University Press 1968.

³ Cf.: F.-G. HERRMAN, *Μετέχειν, μεταλαμβάνειν*, pp. 42–48.

⁴ SIMPL. *In Phys.* 164, 24 and 25 = DK 59B6, 12.

⁵ PLATO. *Parm.* 158a.

⁶ PLATO. *Soph.* 250a-c, cf.: F. ADEMOLLO, *Plato’s Conception of the Forms: Some Remarks*, in R. Chiaradonna, G. Galluzzo (eds.) *Universals in Ancient Philosophy*, Pisa 2013, pp. 73–74.

this quality, or the quality as such (in this case – the One), and the participated quality acted as the transcendental cause for the participating entity. In this relation the concept of participation had a double function in the texts of Plato: causal and explanatory (since the participated entity was also the object of knowledge).⁷ This understanding may be called a normative Platonic understanding of causality; it was subsequently used by Plotinus,⁸ Proclus, and others. In his dialogues, Plato used the concept of “the participating one” (μετέχοντα),⁹ in particular, for pointing at the being which participated in ideas (qualities *per se*). In this respect this concept would play an important role in the future, and in Christian thought in particular.

Nevertheless, in the first part of *Parmenides*, Plato expressed something which might have been considered a critical attitude toward the concept of participation of individual beings in ideas (130e–131c). From the viewpoint of this critique, the notion of participation possessed the material connotations typical for the teaching of Anaxagoras.¹⁰ Here the participation was understood in the sense of material presence of the participated in the participating. In the critique in *Parmenides* 131a–e, participation was described as possession of a part of the participated. In this respect Plato formulated (131b7–9) his famous likening of participation to canvas as having different parts. This understanding would also be manifested in later periods, in particular, in Christian thought.

Aristotle’s criticism of Plato included the Platonic concept of participation of things in ideas,¹¹ following the critique of this concept presented in *Parmenides* by Plato himself. However, Aristotle slightly changed the meaning of that concept. Elaborating on the notions of genus, species, difference of species, etc., in his logical writings, Aristotle spoke about participation (μετέχως), implying the logical relations between genus’ and species’ predicables of different grades of commonality: less general participated in more general, while the latter did not participate in the former. Thus, according to Aristotle, individuals participated in their species and genus. Thus, “according to causality” meant to Aristotle the same as “according to being,” or “nature.” From the viewpoint of this paradigm, the participation of A in B meant that B was a being, immanent in relation to A, and not transcendental, as we see in the Platonic paradigm of participation. Unlike Plato, who could speak of greater and lesser degrees of participation, Aristotle’s view did not imply any measurement of participation.

⁷ S. STRANGE, *Plotinus’ Account of Participation in Ennead VI.4-5*, “Journal of the History of Philosophy” 30 (1992), fasc. 4, p. 486.

⁸ See for example: PLOT. *Enn.* 5, 5, 13.

⁹ See the index of passages in: L. BRANDWOOD, *Word Index to Plato*, Leeds 1976, s. v. μετέχοντα (p. 575).

¹⁰ Cf.: F.-G. HERRMAN, Μετέχειν, μεταλαμβάνειν, pp. 46–48.

¹¹ ARIST. *Met.* A 6, 987b10–14; A 9, 990b27–991a8, 991a22ff, cp. 1079a25ff. On the subject of participation in Aristotle see.: M. PHILIPPE, *La participation dans la philosophie d’Aristote*, “Revue Thomiste” 49 (1949), pp. 254-277.

In *Topica* Aristotle wrote:

You must see whether it is necessary or possible for the genus to participate (μετέχειν) in that which has been placed in the genus. (The definition (ὅρος) of ‘participation’ is ‘admitting the logos of that which is participated.’) (τὸ ἐπιδέχεσθαι τὸν τοῦ μετεχομένου λόγον). It is obvious, therefore, that the species participate in the genera, whereas the genera do not participate in the species ; for the species admits the logos of the genus, whereas the genus does not admit the logos of the species.¹²

Nor is the differentia generally held to participate in the genus; for everything which participates in the genus is either a species or an individual (ἄτομον), but the differentia is neither a species nor an individual.¹³

Aristotle used the concept of participation to illustrate one of the theses of classical logic (founded by himself), according to which everything which belonged to a genus, also belonged to the species and the individual, but not the other way around.¹⁴ Therefore, participation of the individual in its genus and species in this conceptual framework meant that it participated in its “logos of substance” (λόγος τῆς οὐσίας), or “secondary substance.”¹⁵

Thus, if the Platonic paradigm of participation assumed that the participated element acted as a universal-before-things (if this element is participated in by many things in the same respect, and not by a single thing), the Aristotelian paradigm of participation assumed that the participated was a universal-in-things. Such a universal was not a transcendental idea, but the substance of the thing (or the second substance in the terms of the *Categories*), embedded into the thing itself, and not an idea transcendental to it.

In addition to the Platonic and the Aristotelian paradigms of participation mentioned above, the texts of Antiquity employed this concept in a “neutral” sense, which did not imply the

¹² ARIST. *Top.* 121a10-15.

¹³ Ibid. 122b20-22. Cf. 133a1ff, 134b17ff; *Met.* 1030a13–14, 1037b18–22; *Eth. Eud.* 1217a27-29.

¹⁴ The same idea expressed in *Categories* in the language of predication: «Whenever one thing is predicated of another as of a subject, all things said of what is predicated will be said of the subject also. For example, man - is predicated of the individual man, and animal of man; so animal will be predicated of the individual man also - for the individual man is both a man and an animal... man is said of a subject, the individual man, and the name is of course predicated (since you will be predicating man of the individual man), and also the definition of man will be predicated of the individual man (since the individual man is also a man)» (IDEM. *Cat.* 1b10-14, 2a23-25).

¹⁵ See: IDEM. *Cat.* 1a1-12, 2a14ff.

connotations distinctive for the two above paradigms. We may see such a usage for example in Galen¹⁶ and the Stoics.^{17 18}

The Middle Platonic writings commonly show the understanding of the concept of participation in the Platonic sense. It is found, for instance, in Alcinous, who mentioned participation of forms and matter in ideas.¹⁹

Plotinus in general follows what the present author calls the normative Platonic understanding of causality. He speaks of participation (μετάληψις, μέθεξις), pointing to the fact that something has some nature or quality due to a reality, distinct from itself, which is a transcendental cause for this nature or quality.²⁰ For instance:

And Socrates did not in his own person give being human to the non-human but humanity gave being human to Socrates: the particular human is so by participation (μεταλήψει) in humanity.²¹

In the 4th *Ennead*, VI Plotinus says that something is extensive in the material world, because it participates in something in the immaterial world, which is not extensive. In this respect Plotinus elaborates the concept of participation in the following way:

If then anything is going to participate in anything, it is clear that it will not be participating in itself: otherwise it will not be a participant, but [just] itself (Εἰ οὖν τι μεταλήπεται τινος, δῆλον ὅτι οὐχ αὐτοῦ μεταλήπεται ἢ οὐ μετείληφός ἔσται, ἀλλ' αὐτὸ ἔσται).²²

Here the understanding of participation which I call Platonic is employed. It assumes that the participation of a being in something points to the connection of this being to that, in which it participates as a transcendental cause of its quality or nature.

Plotinus went on to elaborate this understanding in greater detail, giving an example of how the extensive (and hence, divisible) participates in the non-extensive. He says that the participated (non-extensive) is completely different in relation to the participating (extensive),

¹⁶ GALEN. *De meth. med.* 10, 28.

¹⁷ See: HIEROC. *Eth.* 4, 6-8.

¹⁸ Cf.: J. BARNES (transl., comm.), *Porphyry. Introductio*, Oxford 2003, p. 138.

¹⁹ ALBINUS. *Epit.* 10, 7, 11-13 (Louis).

²⁰ See: PLOT. *Enn.* 1, 6, 1, 12-14; 5, 9, 2, 15; 5, 9, 5, 36-38; 6, 4, 13; 6, 3, 9, 27-30. Cf.: S. STRANGE, *Plotinus' Account of Participation in Ennead VI.4-5*, "Journal of the History of Philosophy" 30 (1992), fasc. 4, pp. 484-486.

²¹ PLOT. *Enn.* 6, 3, 9, 27-30.

²² PLOT. *Enn.* 6, 4, 13, 6-8.

and this participated is in some sense present (πάρειμι) in the participating as a whole without parts.²³ The understanding of this presence by Plotinus is certainly far away from the material connotations which would assume some kind of division of the participated in the participating.²⁴ This presence is such that the participated does not belong to that in which it participates:

But it belongs to no thing which wishes to belong to it, but, as far as it can, approaches whatever it itself wishes, not by its coming to belong to that, nor again to anything else, but by the desire of that for it. There is nothing, therefore, surprising in its being in all things (ἐν πᾶσιν εἶναι) in this way, because it is also in none of them in such a way as to belong to them.²⁵

Yet, Plotinus speaks about this “transcendental participated” in that it is present in the participating by its own power.²⁶

Besides the “transcendental participated” which corresponded to universal-before-things, Plotinus mentioned the forms in matter, which were immanent to things and corresponded to universal-in-things. These forms in matter were different from the “transcendental participated” ideas and had a relation of correspondence to them.²⁷

The Aristotelian attitude to the concept of participation was further developed in the commentaries to Aristotle belonging to the Peripatetic and Neoplatonic traditions, such as Alexander of Aphrodisias,²⁸ Aspasius,²⁹ Porphyry, etc.³⁰ Porphyry developed this paradigm in his work *Isagoge*, which was very important and widely popular in Late Antiquity, including the Christian philosophical tradition.

Porphyry wrote *Isagoge* as a manual of Aristotelian logic for the students of the Platonic school. Porphyry described the different and the common among the five predicables, which he

²³ PLOT. *Enn.* 6, 4, 13, 18-19. Cf. 6, 6, 14, which talks about the participation of things in numbers in terms of presence (παρουσία) of numbers in things. Using the language of presence Plotinus makes an evident allusion to Plato’s *Parmenides*.

²⁴ See: PLOT. *Enn.* 6, 4, 7, 3ff.

²⁵ PLOT. *Enn.* 6, 4, 3, 15-19. Cf. 6, 4, 16, 7-13.

²⁶ PLOT. *Enn.* 6, 4, 3.

²⁷ See PLOT. *Enn.* 6, 5, 6, cf. 6, 5, 11, 31-34. See S. STRANGE, *Plotinus’ Account of Participation*, pp. 493-494. The interpretation of Adamson (P. ADAMSON, *One of a Kind: Plotinus and Porphyry on Unique Instantiation*, in R. Chiaradonna, G. Galluzzo (ed.), *Universals in Ancient Philosophy*, p. 333) assumes that it is impossible to speak about the existence of universals immanent to things in the proper sense because of the divisive nature of matter. I prefer the interpretation of Stephen Strange which assumes that speaking about universal-forms immanent to things, is permissible.

²⁸ ALEX. APHR. *In Top.*, in *Alexandri Aphrodisiensis in Aristotelis topicorum libros octo commentaria*, ed. M. Wallies (Commentaria in Aristotelem Graeca 2.2), Berlin 1891, pp. 301, 9-10; 393, 25-394, 7.

²⁹ ASP. *Eth Nic.*, in *Aspasii in ethica Nicomachea quae supersunt commentaria*, ed. G. Heylbut (Commentaria in Aristotelem Graeca 19.1), Berlin 1889, p. 16, 21.

³⁰ See also for example: APOL. DYS., in APOLLONIUS DYSCOLUS. *De pronomibus*, ed. R. Schneider, Grammatici Graeci, vol. 2.1, Leipzig 1878, p. 6, 24-25.

called “sounds”, φωναί (genus, species, difference of species, its own attribute and the accident) – these problems were touched upon by Aristotle in his *Topics*. Describing the difference of the genus and the accident Porphyry wrote:

A genus differs from an accident (συμβεβηκός) in that a genus is prior to its species whereas accidents are posterior to the species—for even if an inseparable (ἀχώριστον) accident is taken, nevertheless that of which it is an accident is prior to the accident. What participates (τὰ μετέχοντα) in a genus participates equally, what participates in an accident does not—for participation in accidents admits augmentation and diminution (ἐπίτασιν καὶ ἄνεσιν), whereas participation in a genus does not. Accidents subsist (ὑφίσταται) principally on individuals (τῶν ἀτόμων), whereas genera and species are prior by nature to individual substances (τῶν ἀτόμων οὐσιῶν). Genera are predicated of the items under them in answer to ‘What is it?’ (τῷ τί ἐστι), accidents in answer to ‘What sort of so-and-so is it?’ (τῷ ποῖόν τι) or to ‘What is it like?’ (ἢ πῶς ἔχον).³¹ For, asked what sort of item an Ethiopian is, you will say black; asked what Socrates is like, you will say that he is sitting down or walking about.³²

Describing the difference of species and accidents, Porphyry notes:

Participating in species occurs equally, in accidents—even inseparable ones—not equally. For one Ethiopian compared to another may have a skin-colour either diminished or augmented in blackness.³³

Porphyry followed the Aristotelian logical discourse, where participation of the individual in the universal, or the participation of less general in more general, that is, participation of individuals in species and species in genera was described. He also used a “neutral” discourse of participation when he spoke about participation of the individual in the accident. Porphyry noted that everything participating in species and genus, that is, in that which answered the question “what is it?” (it was substance in the Aristotelian discourse)³⁴ participated in them in equal measure; whereas as far as participation in the accident was concerned, it answered the

³¹ Cf. ARIST. *Cat.* 1b25-2a10.

³² PORPH. *Isag.* 10, 17, 3-13.

³³ IDEM., XXI: 14-17.

³⁴ See for example: ARIST. *Met.* Z 1.

questions: “what is it like?” or “in which state?” (it was quality in the Aristotelian discourse)³⁵; notably, that might have taken place in different measure. Porphyry built upon the thesis of *Categories*, according to which the category of substance did not allow for a greater or a lesser degree, while a quality might be present in a thing to a greater or lesser degree.³⁶ However in his works Aristotle seems not to use the language of participation, whereas in *Isagoge* Porphyry used exactly that language. Some ambiguity of Porphyry’s discussion of participation in *Isagoge* becomes clear: on the one hand, it was the Aristotelian philosophical language that was used in Porphyry when he spoke about participation of the individual in its substance; but on the other hand, when Porphyry discussed participation of the individual in the accident, he did not use the discourse of Aristotle but something resembling the Platonic discourse which assumed the opposition of participation and nature.

Discussing participation of individuals in species and genus, Porphyry used language, according to which the hierarchy of species and genera which constituted the human nature, united all people who belonged to this hierarchy by virtue of their human nature and made them all a single human being. In this case Porphyry proceeded from the assumption that an individual represented the principle of division and general represented the principle of unity; therefore, the higher the position in the hierarchy of genera and species was, the more clearly the unity was expressed and the less clearly the division was manifested. This was described by Porphyry in the second chapter of *Isagoge* devoted to species:

So, when we are descending to the most special items, it is necessary to divide and to proceed through a plurality (διὰ πλῆθους), and when we are ascending to the most general items, it is necessary to bring the plurality together into One (συναρπεῖν εἰς ἓν). For species—and still more, genera—are that which gather (συναγωγόν) the many items into a single nature (εἰς μίαν φύσιν); whereas the particulars or singulars, in contrary fashion, always divide (διαιρεῖ) the one into a plurality. For by participating in the species (τοῦ εἴδους μετουσίᾳ) the many men are one man, and by the particulars the one and common (ὁ εἷς καὶ κοινός) man is several — for the singular is always divisive whereas the common is collective and unificatory.³⁷

³⁵ See: Ibid.

³⁶ IDEM. *Cat.* 2b26-27; 3b33-4a9; 10b25-28.

³⁷ PORPH. *Isag.* 6, 16-23 (Busse). Cf. also: DEXIPP. *In Cat.* 3.3: 67, 17–30 (Busse).

This important fragment was analyzed by Jonathan Barnes in his extensive commentary on *Isagoge*. Barnes showed³⁸ that various concepts of the preceding philosophical heritage were reflected in the text, primarily, the Platonic and Peripatetic traditions. The present author may add that the latter tradition seems to be of the greatest importance.

Thus, the connection of the division into genera and species with the notions of plurality (moving along the hierarchy of genera and species in the direction of more universality) can be found in Alexander of Aphrodisias;³⁹ in the latter aspect it may be traced to Platonic *Phaedrus*.⁴⁰ The notions of συλληπτικός,⁴¹ συναίρειν,⁴² and συναγωγός⁴³ are also reminiscent of the Platonic context.

The Aristotelian line of argumentation finds its expression in this fragment when it speaks about participation of individuals in the species, constituting the nature of these individuals. This corresponds to the Aristotelian paradigm of participation identified above.⁴⁴ Although Jonathan Barnes,⁴⁵ Alain de Libera,⁴⁶ and Bruno Maioli⁴⁷ considered the Platonic line to be more conspicuous in this fragment, the present author thinks that it corresponds to the general Aristotelian attitude of Porphyry's *Isagoge* by virtue of the Aristotelian paradigm of participation in the fragment, while the Platonic terminology is rather of rhetorical nature. That is why it seems that the Aristotelian line of understanding participation is pursued in the above fragment, while the Platonic terminology is used without its specific Platonic content.⁴⁸

³⁸ J. BARNES, *Porphyry. Introduction*, pp. 137-141.

³⁹ ALEX. APHR. *In Top.* 1, 15-18.

⁴⁰ See: "For a human being must understand a general conception formed by collecting into a unity by means of reason the many perceptions of the senses (δεῖ γὰρ ἄνθρωπον συνιέναι κατ' εἶδος λεγόμενον, ἐκ πολλῶν ἰὸν αἰσθήσεων εἰς ἓν λογισμῶ συναϊρούμενον)" (249b6-c1).

⁴¹ See: NICOMACH. *Introd.* 2, 19, 1, in *Nicomachi Geraseni Pythagorei introductionis arithmeticae libri ii*, ed. R. Hoche, Leipzig 1866; IANBL.(?). *Arithm.* 9, 14-15.

⁴² Cf.: PLATO. *Phaed.* 249b; PLOT. *Enn* 6, 7, 7, 20-21.

⁴³ Cf.: PLATO. *Tim.* 31bc; ALBINUS. *Epit.* 27: 167, 32-33 (Louis); PLOT. *Enn.* 6, 4, 40, 12.

⁴⁴ *Pace* Bruno Maioli thinks that the notion of participation has Platonic connotations here, see: PORFIRIO. *Isagoge*, trans. B. Maioli, Padua 1969 (Studium Sapientiae 9), p. 38.

⁴⁵ J. BARNES, *Porphyry. Introduction*, pp. 136-137.

⁴⁶ PORPHYRE, *Isagoge*, texte grec et latin, traduction par A. de Libera et A.-P. Segonds, Introduction et notes par A. de Libera, Paris 1998, p. 52; A. De Libera, *L'Art des généralités—théories de l'abstraction*, Paris 1999, p. 142, n. 126.

⁴⁷ PORFIRIO. *Isagoge*, trans. B. Maioli, *Ibid.*

⁴⁸ Jonathan Barnes states that we see here "a brief burst" of Plotinus' metaphysics in *Isagoge*. In this respect Barnes refers to par. 36 and 11 of Porphyry's *Sententia*, where Porphyry followed Plotinus while speaking about the principles of unification and multiplication/division. Barnes thus wrote, "The *Sentences* are paraphrases of, or ruminations upon, Plotinus. In the present paragraph of the *Introduction* we have a brief burst of Plotinian metaphysics" (J. BARNES, *Porphyry. Introduction*, p. 137). It is probably appropriate to quote these fragments, "The incorporeal substances, when they descend, are partitioned and pluralized into the individuals by a deficiency of power; when they ascend, they are unified and return to togetherness by an abundance of power" (*Sent.* 11, transl. by Barnes in: J. Barnes, *Porphyry. Introduction*, p. 136). "What is really existent is said to be many not by having different places or different measures of mass, nor by being a heap, nor by circumscriptions and distinctions which divide it into parts, but rather by being divided as to plurality by an otherness (ἕτερότης) which is immaterial and massless and non-plural; that is why it is also one — and not like one body or something one by place or by mass, but one plurality of items (καθ' ὃ ἐν ἕτερον)" (*Sent.* 36, transl. by Barnes in: J. Barnes, *Porphyry. Introduction*, pp. 136-137). In these fragments of *Sententia*,

As Jonathan Barnes showed,⁴⁹ the notion of the “general human being,” used by Porphyry in the discussed fragment and appearing two more times in *Isagoge*,⁵⁰ also has a certain history. Barnes was right to indicate that this notion was identical to the expression “human being, speaking in general” from the Porphyry’s *Commentary to Categories*.⁵¹ The notion of the general human being belongs to the Peripatetic tradition. It can be found in Alexander of Aphrodisias, where this notion denoted a human being as such:

If you take the form (εἶδος) of man without the material circumstances you have the common man (τὸν κοινὸν ἄνθρωπον) — for the mutual differences among singular men depend on their matter, since their forms, in virtue of which they are men, show no differences.⁵²

However it seems, that the distinctive features of Porphyry’s thought in relation to the concept of human being in general consisted in his idea that the general human being, that is the species of a human being, in some sense acquired the wholeness through the participation of individuals in it, while the Alexander’s teaching of the “general human being” did not imply that.

Another point which should be mentioned concerning Porphyry and his *Isagoge* is the concept of Porphyry’s so-called Tree. In his *Isagoge* Porphyry constructed his famous Tree of divisions according to genus and species with “substance” at its summit, while the lowest limit of the Tree was a human individual:

Most general (γενικώτατον) is that above which there will be no other superordinate genus; most special (ειδικώτατον), that after which there will be no other subordinate species; and between the most general and the most special are other items which are at the same time both genera and species (but

multiplication/division and unification are discussed in the context of descending of the incorporeal into the corporeal world, and the opposition of incorporeal and corporeal. In the discussed fragment of *Isagoge*, as well as in the whole treatise, the relation between incorporeal and corporeal is not discussed (in the beginning of the book Porphyry explicitly stated that in his treatise he would avoid discussing incorporeal beings, see: *Isagoge*, in *Porphyrii isagoge et in Aristotelis categorias commentarium*, ed. A. Busse, p. 1, 9–11). Therefore, in my opinion Barnes is incorrect in establishing a correlation between this fragment of *Isagoge* and par. 11 and 36 of *Sententia* and making conclusion about its Neoplatonic background.

⁴⁹ J. BARNES, *Porphyry. Introduction*, pp. 137-141.

⁵⁰ See: «...Such items are called individuals because each is constituted of proper features the assemblage of which will never be found the same in anything else—the proper features of Socrates will never be found in any other of the particulars. On the other hand, the proper features of man (I mean, of the common (τὸ κοινὸν) man) will be found the same in several items—or rather, in all particular men in so far as they are men.» (*Isagoge* 2: 7, 21-27 (Busse)), а также: *Isagoge* 3: 11, 14-16 (Busse).

⁵¹ Ibid. 90, 32-33 («...ὁ κοινῆ κατηγορούμενος ἄνθρωπος...»); 122, 34 (Busse).

⁵² *Alexandri Aphrodisiensis praeter commentaria scripta minora*, ed. I. Bruns (Commentaria in Aristotelem Graeca, suppl. 2.1), Berlin 1887, p. 85, 15-18.

taken in relation now to one thing and now to another). What I mean should become clear in the case of a single type of predication. Substance (ἡ οὐσία) is itself a genus. Under it is body, and under body animate body, under which is animal; under animal is rational animal, under which is man; and under man are Socrates and Plato and particular men. Of these items, substance is the most general (τὸ γενικώτατον) and is only a genus, while man is the most special and is only a species. Body is a species of substance and a genus of animate body.⁵³

This tree in *Isagoge* does not claim any ontological status. This is testified to by the general approach of Porphyry in the treatise: the philosopher refused to pose and answer the question concerning the status of the predicabilia under consideration, whether they exist only in the mind or independently.⁵⁴ Keeping in mind Porphyry's Tree and the paradigm of participation employed by Porphyry in *Isagoge*, we can say that the discourse of *Isagoge* implied that an individual participated in the hierarchy of genus and species and in the "substance," understood as the highest genus of this hierarchy.

Later Neoplatonists to some extent transformed the Platonic doctrine of participation by introducing the notion of the unparticipable (ἀμέθεκτος), which resulted in the emergence of the Neoplatonic triad of participation: participating – participated – unparticipable. This triad was extensively used by Proclus,⁵⁵ although it seems that the concept of unparticipable was introduced into the active vocabulary of Late Antique philosophy due to Iamblichus. At least in the commentary on *Timaeus*, Proclus quoted Iamblichus' discourse on the universal super-cosmic soul, which was higher than all souls existing inside the cosmos and which was the unparticipable monad for them. According to Iamblichus, this universal Soul was different from the individual souls in which individual bodies participated.⁵⁶ The participated intelligible, immanent for individual souls, was different from the intelligible which was unparticipable. As Richard Wallis stated,⁵⁷ the distinction of Iamblichus between the unparticipable universal Soul and the participated individual souls was related to Iamblichus' polemics with the teaching of Plotinus, according to which the universal soul was the cause of all individual souls and of the World Soul.⁵⁸ If we compare the views of Iamblichus and Plato, it becomes evident that Iamblichus disagreed with the assumption of Plato's teaching that the universal Soul and the

⁵³ PORPH. *Isagoge*: 4, 15-27 (Busse).

⁵⁴ See: PORPH. *Isagoge* 1: 1, 8-12 (Busse).

⁵⁵ See esp.: PROCLUS. *Inst. theol.* 23-24.

⁵⁶ PROCLUS. *In Tim.* 2: 105, 16-28 (Diehl); cf. 313, 19-24.

⁵⁷ R. WALLIS, *Neoplatonism*, London 1972, pp. 126-127.

⁵⁸ PLOT. *Enn.* 4, 3, 2, 5ff, cf. 6, 8, 3, 6-21; 6, 2, 20.

intelligible reality were in a certain sense immanent to the material world. Therefore, as Wallis thinks, Iamblichus began to teach that the universal Soul was unparticipable, meaning that it was transcendental for individual souls. Then the concept of the unparticipable was adopted and developed by Proclus.⁵⁹ Dodds⁶⁰ discussed the necessity for solving a problem already described in Plato's *Parmenides*, namely, the possibility of understanding the participation of things in ideas in a material sense. According to such an understanding, ideas were immanent to things and they were divided into parts by the things participating in them. Therefore, to be indivisible an idea had to be understood as transcendental and unparticipable. In the situation of participation of things in ideas, the participated was the universal, immanent to things.⁶¹ The transcendental idea,⁶² different from the immanent universal in things, secured the inner unity of this universal and the things united by it, and was related to it as a monad to the members of the series.

⁵⁹ In general in the system of Proclus the unparticipable is the One, and then downward: Being as it is, Life as it is, Mind as it is and Soul as it is. Each of them is a progenitor of the series of participated beings (the One is the beginning of the series of henads; unparticipable Being – series of participated being etc.) We can say that in the framework of the doctrine of Proclus this teaching of the unparticipable, especially his teaching about the hierarchy of the unparticipable, secures the stability and the ontological static character of being in his system; this static character manifests itself in the fact that the participating entity does not change its ontological status through participation, but accomplishes the wholeness of its nature and the awareness of a greater proximity to the One. See: A. LLOYD, *Possession and division in Proclus*, H. J. Blumenthal & A. C. Lloyd (eds.), *Soul and the Structure of Being in Late Neoplatonism: Syrianus, Proclus, and Simplicius: Papers and Discussions of a Colloquium Held at Liverpool, 15-16 April 1982*, Liverpool University Press 1982, esp. p. 25ff. See also: L. SIORVANES, *Proclus on Transcendence*, "Documenti e studi sulla tradizione filosofica medievale", 9 (1998).

⁶⁰ E. DODDS, *Commentary*, in PROCLUS, *The Elements of Theology*, A revised text with transl., introd. and comm. by E. R. Dodds, Oxford 1963, pp. 210-211.

⁶¹ See: PROCLUS. *In Parm.* 1069, 23ff. (Cousin).

⁶² Discussing this unparticipable element, Dodds called it a universal (E. DODDS, *Commentary*, p. 211; Riccardo Chiaradonna used the same term: R. CHIARADONNA, *Porphyry and Iamblichus on Universals and Synonymous Predication*, "Documenti e studi sulla tradizione filosofica medievale", 18 (2007), p. 230; R. CHIARADONNA, *Alexander, Boethus and the Other Peripatetics: The Theory of Universals in the Aristotelian Commentators*," in R. Chiaradonna, G. Galluzzo (eds.), *Universals in Ancient Philosophy*, p. 302). Christof Helmig insists that these unparticipable elements, being simple and indefinable are rather the causes of universals and not universals themselves (Ch. HELMIG, *Forms and Concepts – Concept Formation in the Platonic Tradition. A study on Proclus and his Predecessors*, De Gruyter 2012, p. 210; cf. the position of P. Adamson (P. ADAMSON, *One of a Kind: Plotinus and Porphyry on Unique Instantiation*," R. Chiaradonna, G. Galluzzo (eds.), *Universals in Ancient Philosophy*, p. 331), who notes that the teaching of Neoplatonists about the transcendental ideas, existing "before many" means that it is correct to apply the notion of "general" (κοινόν) to them, but it is not quite correct to apply the notion of "universal" (καθόλου) which is applicable to "general," existing in the human mind as a result of comprehending the forms in things by it, as well as to those forms which are immanent to things. Therefore, Helmig suggests to speak not about the three kinds of universals in Neoplatonist writers – corresponding to transcendental ideas, ideas in matter, and abstract universals in soul – as it is usually done – but about the three levels of manifestation of the Platonic ideas: in their transcendental, psychic, and intra-material aspects (Ibid.; see also my review of the book: D. BIRIUKOV, Review on: *Christof Helmig. Forms and Concepts – Concept Formation in the Platonic Tradition. A study on Proclus and his Predecessors. De Gruyter, 2012*, "Universa. Recensioni di filosofia". Anno 3, Vol. 1 (2014)).

Chapter 2 “The Scientific knowledge and universals in Clement of Alexandria”

In his epistemology Clement of Alexandria combines the Middle Platonist and the Aristotelian elements. The subject of universals in Clement’s epistemology emerges in the context of his doctrine of scientific knowledge (ἐπιστημονική θεωρία), which Clement elaborates in detail in the eighth book of *Stromateis*¹.

According to Clement, scientific knowledge is achieved through demonstration (ἀπόδειξις),² which is the speech bringing the problem under discussion to unprovable principles (ἀρχαί), usually taken for granted. Demonstration is based on real, observable, conventional, and exactly known premises.³ Through demonstration it is shown whether the thing exists, what it is (what is its substance), and by virtue of what it is.⁴ In the sixth chapter of the eighth book of *Stromateis* Clement uses Aristotelian and scholastic Middle Platonist conceptual framework speaking about induction (ἐπαγωγή), definition (ὄρος), division (διαίρεσις), and demonstration as a path to acquiring knowledge.⁵⁻⁶ Induction indicates whether something exists or not; this procedure also ensures the ascension from a singular sensible experience to universals (ἀρχὴ τῆς ἐπαγωγῆς ἢ αἴσθησις, πέρασ δὲ τὸ καθόλου) whereby the single perceived by the senses, is

¹ *Strom.* 8, I, 1, 3ff. Generally speaking, according to Clement, the arguments and analysis should be based on the unprovable principles taken by faith (*Strom.* 7, XVI, 95, 5-6; 8, VI, 18, 4-5; cf. ARIST. *Anal. pr.* 64b32-36; *Anal. post.* 71b20-23 etc.). These universal unprovable principles include, in addition to the tenets of the Christian faith, the sensible reality and the self-evident rational positions (*Strom.* 8, III, 7, 3-4; IV, 14, 3). Accordingly, Clement admits two principles which in their combination may give us knowledge: the senses and the reason (*Strom.* 2, IV, 13, 2). However, Clement argues that the sensible data also give us only hypotheses; faith may overcome the hypothetical knowledge and reach the truth (*Strom.* 2, IV, 13, 3). According to Clement, scientific evidence seeks to proof what is doubtful on the basis of the obvious and indisputable (*Strom.* 2, XI, 48, 1). Following the distinction between two kinds of faith – one based on knowledge and another based on opinion, Clement distinguishes two corresponding kinds of evidence: ἐπιστημονικῆς and δοξαστικῆς, and the according gnosis (γνώσις) and prognosis (πρόγνωσις) (*Strom.* 2, XI, 48, 2; cf. 2, XI, 49, 2; 8, III, 5, 2-3; 8, III, 7, 8). S. Lilla (S. LILLA, *Clement of Alexandria: A Study in Christian Platonism and Gnosticism*, Oxford 1971, pp. 133-134) associates this distinction of Clement with the Aristotelian distinction between the scientific and the dialectical (rhetorical or *epicheirema*) syllogisms (ARIST. *Top.* 100a27-30, cf. *Anal. pr.* 27a1, 46a9-10; *Top.* 162a15-16; *Rhet.* 1355a8-9)). Clement thinks that scientific knowledge (ἡ ἐπιστήμη ἐπιστητικῆ) assumes a condition in which the acquired knowledge cannot be rejected and cannot be changed, as opposed to ignorance which implies illusory and fluid visions (*Strom.* 2, XVII, 76, 1). In addition to scientific knowledge, Clement identifies the following types of knowledge which are close to it: knowledge from experience (ἐμπειρία), aimed at studying sensible things; knowledge of the whole through distinguishing *eidoses* (Clement calls it εἰδησις); mental reasoning (νόησις), aimed at what is known is only by the mind; juxtaposition (σύνεσις), aimed at studying mutual correspondence of parts, correspondence between things, bringing things to the same definition, and, finally, gnosis (γνώσις) which is the knowledge of the essence (*Strom.* 2, XVII, 76, 2-3).

² *Strom.* 8, III, 5, 1ff.

³ Cf. M. HAVRDA, *Galenus Christianus? The Doctrine of Demonstration in Stromata VIII and the Question of its Source*, “Vigiliae Christianae” 65 (2011), pp. 343-375.

⁴ *Strom.* 8, VI, 17, 8, 2-4.

⁵ Cf. ALBINUS, *Epit.* 5, 1, 1ff.: 156, 25-34 (Louis).

⁶ See A. ZHYRKOVA, *Reconstructing Clement of Alexandria’s Doctrine of Categories*, in J. Finamore, R. Berchman (eds.), *Conversations Platonic and Neoplatonic: Intellect, Soul, and Nature*, Sankt Augustin 2010, pp. 145-148; R. Witt, *Albinus and the History of Middle Platonism*, Amsterdam 1971, pp. 37-38.

brought to the universal.⁷ Witt⁸ draws a parallel between this notion in Clement and the epistemology and the theory of the formation of universals in Ascalon of Antioch.⁹ Definition and division reveal the substance of things, that is, they show *what* the thing is (τὸ τί ἦν εἶναι)¹⁰ and what the individual is.¹¹ Clement distinguishes between definition as description of particular features and definition as indication of the cause (αἰτία) of the thing. According to Clement there are four kinds of causes: matter (ὕλη), mover (κινουῦν), *eidos* (εἶδος), and purpose (τέλος).¹² At the same time, Clement recognizes the status of definition provided by means of particular features to be lower than the status of definition through causes.

Clement of Alexandria pays special attention to the procedure of dividing into species (*diairesis*) for the purpose of acquiring knowledge. Step by step division leads to the simple and indivisible which clarifies what is being examined. In this context, Clement addresses the subject of categories and states that species are characterized by identity and difference,¹³ and each of them in the process of division falls under some of the following ten categories (which, however, are not the genera for these species): substance, quantity, quality, relation, position, possession, “where,” “when,” action, and enduring.¹⁴ Next, explaining the principle of demonstration, Clement develops the theory which classifies things and thoughts according to categories. He distinguishes between things (τὰ ὑποκείμενα πράγματα), thoughts (ἃ νοήματα), and names (τὰ ὀνόματα). Thoughts are the imprints and likenesses of things, while names are the symbols of thoughts, and as such relate to things.¹⁵ The commonness of human thinking about the same things and the capacity of people to understand each other are caused by the fact that things impose identical imprints on human souls. However, names of things (that is, words) may vary depending on the language.¹⁶

Sharing the Aristotelian premise that science is inapplicable to the individual, but may only be about the general,¹⁷ Clement states that an indefinitely large number of individual things and names can be arranged according to some general elements (τὰ καθολικὰ στοιχεῖα). Consequently, according to Clement, the names are reduced to twenty-four letters of the

⁷ *Strom.* 8, VI, 17, 7, 1.

⁸ R. WITT, *Albinus*, p. 38.

⁹ See SEXT. EMP. *Adv. math.* 11, 250; CICERO. *Luc.* 30; *Top.* 30.

¹⁰ Cf. *Met.* 1007a; 1016ab; 1117b; 1022a; 1029b-1030a, etc.

¹¹ *Strom.* 8, VI, 17, 4, 1-4.

¹² *Strom.* 8, VI, 18, 1, 1-2, 1.

¹³ Cf. PLATO. *Soph.* 254d14-e1.

¹⁴ *Strom.* 8, VI, 20-21; 8, VIII, 23-24.

¹⁵ M. Havrda (M. HAVRDA, *Categories in Stromata VIII*, pp. 202–203, 222) finds parallels between the terminology employed by Clement and Boethius of Sidon (in DEXIPPUS: *In Cat.* 4, 4, 7, 1-2: 9, 22-10, 2) and Aspasius (in BOETHUIS: *In De Int.* 41, 16-19); cf. ARIST. *De Int.* 1.16a3-15.

¹⁶ *Strom.* 8, VIII, 23.

¹⁷ Cf. ARIST. *Met.* B4 999a26-29.

alphabet,¹⁸ while things, if we want to study them, can be made subjects to the universals (εἰς τὰ καθόλου).¹⁹ Clement correlates these universals with the ten Aristotelian categories which he understands as ways of saying (τὰ λεγόμενα).²⁰ Clement calls these categories the elements of things in matter following the principles (στοιχεῖα τῶν ὄντων φημὲν τῶν ἐν ὕλῃ καὶ μετὰ τὰς ἀρχάς); the elements can be comprehended by the reason (λόγῳ) as opposed to immaterial beings (τὰ ἄυλα) which can be captured by the mind (νοῶ).²¹ According to M. Havrda,²² Clement speaks about categories as elements (στοιχεῖον) of things, implying that categories are the most elementary general species for subsuming the material things. As far as the “principles” which Clement mentions here are concerned, A. Zhirkova believes that these are the universal principles of demonstration, referred to or implied in *Stromateis*²³, which should be understood in the epistemological sense as allowing us to build up the notion of material things,²⁴ while M. Havrda points to Galen’s distinction between the “elements” as the final point of genera-species division²⁵ and the “principles” which clarify them as qualityless substrate and pure qualities.²⁶

Keeping in mind the Clement’s opposition of immaterial beings (τὰ ἄυλα) comprehended by mind, and categories understood as elements of things in the matter, as well as Clement’s words that definitions are not the definitions of ideas,²⁷ M. Havrda, although, in our opinion, without sufficient grounds, sees here the traces of the theory of universals²⁸ typical for the scholastic Platonism of Clement’s time, which are formulated in the eighth book of *Stromateis*, where Clement makes a distinction between the forms in things and the rationally comprehended forms as the basis for knowing them.²⁹ According to the hypothesis of M. Havrda, Clement adopted this doctrine through Galen’s tradition.³⁰ In contrast to this position, in the eighth book of *Stromateis* A. Zhirkova sees the theory of universals (universal categories), building on the principle of generalizing sensible experience, which goes back to Antiochus of Ascalon.³¹

We should also note that, as it was pointed to by A. Zhirkova,³² the description of the categories proposed by Clement as elements of things “in matter,” is close to the interpretation of

¹⁸ Cf. PLATO. *Phil.* 18b3-d2.

¹⁹ *Strom.* 8, VIII, 23, 2-3.

²⁰ *Strom.* 8, VIII, 23.

²¹ *Strom.* 8, VIII, 23, 6.

²² M. HAVRDA, *Categories*, p. 206.

²³ *Strom.* 2, IX, 5, 1-6, 1; 2, IV, 13, 4, 1-3; 8, II-IV.

²⁴ A. ZHYRKOVA, *Reconstructing Clement of Alexandria’s Doctrine of Categories*, p. 151.

²⁵ GALEN. *In Nat. hom* 15, 30, 7ff.

²⁶ M. HAVRDA, *Categories in Stromata VIII*, pp. 206-207.

²⁷ *Strom.* 8, VI, 19, 2.

²⁸ M. HAVRDA, *Categories*, p. 208, cf. 220, 222.

²⁹ ALBINUS. *Epit.* 4, 7.

³⁰ M. HAVRDA, *Categories*, pp. 222-225.

³¹ A. ZHYRKOVA, *Reconstructing Clement of Alexandria’s Doctrine of Categories*, p. 152.

³² A. ZHYRKOVA, *Reconstructing Clement of Alexandria’s Doctrine of Categories*, p. 150; cp. A. ZHYRKOVA, *The Doctrine of Categories in Neoplatonism*, in A. Kijewska, *Being or Good? Metamorphoses of Neoplatonism*, Lublin 2004, p. 85 and n. 2

the Aristotelian categories, widespread in the Middle Platonism³³ (and subsequently in the Neoplatonic tradition) and, in particular, in Philo of Alexandria.³⁴ According to that interpretation, the Aristotelian categories were understood as assertions which may be related only to the material world, but not to the intelligible reality (since the human speech itself is capable of expressing only the realities of the sensible world). It may be also pointed out that this understanding of Clement's doctrine of categories corresponds with his words that ideas in the intelligible world are the models for genera and species in the sensible world,³⁵ which implies that genera and species belong to the sensible reality (that is, the genus and species are the equivalents of the category of the (second) nature within the Aristotelian categories), as well as with Clement's position that definitions are not applicable to ideas³⁶ (the definition is an essential feature of the Aristotelian understanding of the category of the second nature) and with Clement's words from *Stromateis* 5, XII, 81, 5 that God is inexpressible in words not being a genus, species, an indivisible (an individual), a distinction, or property (πῶς γὰρ ἂν εἶη ῥητὸν ὃ μήτε γένος ἐστὶ μήτε διαφορὰ μήτε εἶδος μήτε ἄτομον μήτε ἀριθμός, ἀλλὰ μηδὲ συμβεβηκός). With reference to Alcinous (Albinus),³⁷ Jaap Mansfeld rightly correlates the doctrine of Clement that God is not the subject of genera-species division with the Middle Platonist teaching.³⁸ This understanding of the status of the Aristotelian categories and, accordingly, the scope of the genera-species discourse diverges from the later Orthodox theology (that is, from the Nicean theology), according to which the Aristotelian individual-and-species discourse may be applied to the Holy Trinity.³⁹

Further we should turn to another aspect of universals in Clement – the question of how Clement understands the status of the Logos-Son-Monad in relation to the subject of archetypes in the intelligible world for the things of the sensible world, and his interpretation of Plato's *Parmenides*.

Status of the Logos and the Archetypes for the Things of the Sensible World

Clement addresses the topic of the archetypes of things belonging to the sensible world, in the intelligible world in the context of his exegesis of the Book of Genesis. According to

³³ Cf. ALBINUS. *Epit.* 4, 8: 156, 21ff.; 10, 4: 165, 5ff. (Louis).

³⁴ *De dec.* 30-31, esp. 30: "categories are in the nature (ἐν τῇ φύσει)."

³⁵ *Strom.* 5, XIV, 93, 4 - 94, 2.

³⁶ *Strom.* 8, V, 19, 2.

³⁷ ALBINUS. *Epit.* 10: 165, 12 (Louis).

³⁸ J. MANSFELD, *Substance, Being and Division in Middle Platonist and Later Aristotelian Contexts (Excurs)*, in Idem., *Heresiography in context: Hippolytus' Elenchos as a source for Greek philosophy*, Brill 1992, p. 84, cf. 80.

³⁹ It seems that the understanding of applicability of genera-species discourse similar to that shared by Clement would later be developed by Eunomius, the leader of the Neoarian (anti-Nicean) party.

Clement, first verses of the Book of Genesis about the creation of heaven, formless earth, and light⁴⁰ are in fact about the intelligible world contained in the Monad. This world is the archetype (ἀρχέτυπος) or paradigm (παράδειγμα) for the sensible world. According to Clement, ideas in the intelligible world are models for the species in the material world; in this respect Clement recognizes the rightness of Plato's teaching. God created the sensible sky, the earth, and the light when He created the firmament⁴¹ which signified the entire sensible world.⁴² As C. Lilla has shown,⁴³ Clement follows Philo of Alexandria in his exegesis of the Book of Genesis,⁴⁴ as well as in the doctrine, according to which the intelligible world is the archetype for sensible world,⁴⁵ shared by Philo and by the Middle Platonists.⁴⁶ However, it seems more likely that in his doctrine of the intelligible and the sensible worlds Clement relied directly on Plato⁴⁷ to whom he also referred.⁴⁸

The dependence of Clement on Plato's *Parmenides*, noted by a number of scholars⁴⁹ is important in the context of our discussion. Clement's reasoning is based on the first hypothesis of *Parmenides* (137cd), when he describes God as One, nameless, and limitless in *Stromateis* 5,

⁴⁰ *Gen.* 1:1-5.

⁴¹ Cf. *Gen.* 1:6.

⁴² *Strom.* 5, XIV, 93, 4 - 94, 2; cf. *Protr.* 1, VI, 4 which says that Christians had been born in God (that is, in the divine plan) before the creation of the world (πρὸ τῆς τοῦ κόσμου καταβολῆς) (cf. *Eph.* 1: 4).

⁴³ S. LILLA, *Clement of Alexandria*, pp. 191-192.

⁴⁴ PHILO. *De opif.* 29; 36.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 16; 36; 129; *Her.* 280; *De ebriel.* 133; *De confus. ling.* 172.

⁴⁶ Cf. PLUTARCH. *Is. et Os.*, 373A; *De an. procr. in Tim.* 113C; ALBINUS. *Epit.* 12, 1.

⁴⁷ Cf. PLATO. *Timaeus* 28ac, 29ab, 30cd, 31a, 48e.

⁴⁸ *Strom.* 5, XIV, 94, 2.

⁴⁹ Indeed, Plato seems to be a great authority for Clement. Unlike other ancient philosophers and philosophical schools, Clement almost never criticises Plato. Quotations and paraphrases of Plato as well as allusions to Plato can be often found in Clement's writings. Clement pays particular attention to the dialogues *Theaetetus* (especially, to 176b which speaks about likening to God, ὁμοίωσις τῷ θεῷ), *The Republic*, *Laws*, *Phaedo*, *Phaedrus*, *Timaeus*, *Statesman*, *Gorgias*, *Symposium*, and *Sophist*; less frequent are Clement's references to *Protagoras*, *Philebus*, *Parmenides*, and the so-called *Seventh Letter*. It should also be noted that scholars view Clement as a representative of the Christian trend of Middle Platonism. This is justified in the sense that the principles of reading Plato and using certain passages from Plato's dialogues among the representatives of this trend (in addition to Clement including Justin Martyr, Tatian, and Origen) are close to the principles current in the classic Middle Platonism, as it was shown by J. Danielou and G. Andersen (J. DANIELOU, *Message évangélique et culture hellénistique aux IIe et IIIe siècles*, Paris 1961, pp. 103-122; G. ANDERSEN, *Justin und mittlere Platonismus*, "Zeitschrift für die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft" 44 (1952)). Clement typically uses key passages from Plato (for his time) to confirm the truth of the Christian doctrine, since he believes that Moses was one of the sources of Plato. Thus, *Timaeus* 28c and the *Seventh Letter* 341c were popular texts applied for the doctrine of the incomprehensibility of God both in the Middle Platonism and in Clement; *Timaeus* 28c was used in the context of the doctrine of God the Creator; the *Second Letter* 312e was used in the discussion of the supremacy of God and the doctrine of the Trinity; *Laws* 715e-716a were applied in the ethical context; *Timaeus* 51a - in the context of the doctrine of creation; *Theaetetus* 176ab - in the context of the doctrine of striving to God, etc. On Clement's Platonism see: G. BUTTERWORTH, *Clement of Alexandria's Protreptikos and the Phaedrus of Plato*, "Classical Quarterly" 10 (1916); R. CASEY, *Clement of Alexandria and the Beginnings of Christian Platonism*, "Harvard Theological Review" 18 (1925); A. OUTLER, *The 'Platonism' of Clement of Alexandria*, "The Journal of Religion" 20 (1940), fasc. 3; J. WYTZES, *The Twofold Way I. Platonic Influences in the Works of Clement of Alexandria*, "Vigiliae Christianae", 11 (1957), fasc. 4; J. WYTZES, *The Twofold Way I. Platonic Influences in the Works of Clement of Alexandria*, "Vigiliae Christianae", 14 (1960), fasc. 3; D. WYRWA, *Die christliche Platonaneignung in den Stromateis des Clemens von Alexandrien*, Berlin 1983.

XII, 81, 6 in the sense that God has no beginning nor end,⁵⁰ and similarly to Plato states that the One is not the whole; It is formless, and we cannot say that It has parts.⁵¹ This passage is probably the earliest evidence of the theological interpretation of the *Parmenides*' first hypothesis, which was based on the application of the notion of limitlessness (ἄπειρον) to God.⁵² From the historical and philosophical perspective, by calling the One limitless Clement anticipates the intuition of Neoplatonism and can be considered to be a precursor of Plotinus in his interpretation of the One.⁵³

J. Whittaker points to the similarity between *Stromateis* 5, XII, 81, 6 and a passage from the *Handbook of Platonism* 10, 4 (165, 5-17) of Alcinous, and proposes that both passages were inspired by the first hypothesis of *Parmenides* (despite the fact that Alcinous does not discuss the subject of the One and the Limitless). Whittaker suggests that both authors rely on some Middle Platonist commentary on the *Parmenides*, which was of theological kind.⁵⁴

In turn, A. Choufrine⁵⁵ argues that Clement's logic (as well as his possible Middle Platonist source) in the interpretation of the One is not quite the same as Plato's, since on the basis of the first hypothesis Clement departs from the logic of Plato, deriving the limitlessness of the One from the notion that It has no parts and is indivisible. Clement also does not use Plato's premise that limits are parts of that whose limits they are (*Parmenides* 137c), and therefore says that the One is limitless not in the sense that it is impossible to reach its end, but as indivisible (οὐ κατὰ τὸ ἀδιεξίτητον νοούμενον, ἀλλὰ κατὰ τὸ ἀδιάστατον), that is, in a stronger sense.

In his doctrine of the Monad and the Son⁵⁶ Clement continues to use the philosophical language which goes back to Plato's *Parmenides*. According to Clement, "The [Son] does not simply become one as one, nor many as a part, but [becomes] one like all ... (οὐ γίνεται ἀτεχνῶς ἓν ὡς ἓν, οὐδὲ πολλὰ ὡς μέρη ὁ υἱός, ἀλλ' ὡς πάντα ἓν. ἓνθεν καὶ πάντα). ... Thus, to believe in Him and through Him is to become monadic, being unshakably unified in Him; but to not believe is... to be divided into parts..."⁵⁷ This statement corresponds to the three hypotheses of Plato's *Parmenides*, namely, to the first hypothesis (the One as one), the second hypothesis (the One as many) (*Parmenides* 143c), and the fourth and eighth hypotheses (Many as many) (*Ibid.*,

⁵⁰ E. OSBORN, *The Philosophy of Clement of Alexandria*, Cambridge 1957, pp. 27–29.

⁵¹ J. WHITTAKER, *Philological Comments on the Neoplatonic Notion of Infinity*, in R. Harris (ed.), *The Significance of Neoplatonism*, Norfolk VA 1976, p. 157; Idem., *Ἀρητος καὶ ἀκατονόμοτος*, in *Platonismus und Christentum. Festschrift für Heinrich Dörrie*, Münster 1983.

⁵² See: E. MÜHLENBERG, *Die Unendlichkeit Gottes bei Gregor von Nyssa*, Göttingen 1966, Ss. 75-76; J. WHITTAKER, *Philological Comments on the Neoplatonic Notion of Infinity*.

⁵³ A. CHOUFRINE, *Gnosis, Theophany, Theosis: Studies in Clement of Alexandria's Appropriation of His Background* (Patristic Studies 5), New York 2002, pp. 163-165.

⁵⁴ J. WHITTAKER, *Philological Comments*, p. 158.

⁵⁵ A. CHOUFRINE, *Gnosis, Theophany, Theosis*, pp. 174-177.

⁵⁶ Cf. R. MORTLEY, *Connaissance religieuse et herméneutique chez Clément d'Alexandrie*, Leiden 1973, pp. 70–73; H. HÄGG, *Clement of Alexandria and the Beginnings of Christian Apophaticism: knowing the unknowable*, Oxford 2006, pp. 214-216.

⁵⁷ *Strom.* 4, XXV, 156, 2; 157, 2.

158c, 165bc). As noted by A. Choufrine, “Clement thus seems to assume that the audience he addresses knows the *Parmenides* well enough to understand his belief that the infinity of the monad is to be construed in terms not of the First, Fourth or Eighth, but of the Second Hypothesis”.⁵⁸ Having analyzed a number of passages from *Stromateis*,⁵⁹ A. Choufrine comes to the conclusion that, “for Clement there are two grades of infinity in God (corresponding to the monad and “the One”), the difference between which is technical enough for him to inscribe them without reservations into Plato’s scheme”.⁶⁰ Limitlessness corresponding to the Monad is limitlessness which Clement denies in respect to the One – limitlessness in the sense of inability to reach its end (*Strom.* 5 XII 81.6).

The notion that Clement shared the so-called theory of the two stages in the existence of the Logos has received certain popularity among the scholars. There are two versions of this theory. According to the first, moderate, version, the position of Clement is similar to the earlier doctrine of the Apologists: the Logos was first in the Father, and then the same Logos was born for creating the world on the basis of the ideas-paradigms.⁶¹ Supporters of the other, more radical, understanding of the theory of two stages in the existence of the Logos in Clement rely on the testimony of Photius of Constantinople who accused Clement of upholding the doctrine that Father had two Logoi and only one of them appeared to the people, citing the following passage from the *Hypotipos*, “The Son is also called the Logos homonymously with the paternal Logos, but it was not Him who became flesh, nor the Logos of the Father, but some power of God which was the outflow of the Logos Himself, who became the mind and visited the hearts of men (Λέγεται μὲν καὶ ὁ Υἱὸς λόγος, ὁμωνύμως τῷ πατρικῷ λόγῳ, ἀλλ' οὐ νυν οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ σὰρξ γενόμενος · οὐδὲ μὴν ὁ πατρῷος λόγος, ἀλλὰ δύναμις τις τοῦ Θεοῦ οἷον ἀπόρροια τοῦ λόγου αὐτοῦ, νοῦς γενόμενος τὰς τῶν ἀνθρώπων καρδίας διαπεφοίτηκε).”⁶² Placing this testimony against the passages of *Stromateis* where Clement correlates the world of ideas to the Son-Monad, such scholars as G. Wolfson and S. Lilla suggest that according to Clement, the Logos in the Father (identical with the “thought” of the Father) and Logos who was generated by the Father and who created the world are two different Logoi. In Clement G. Wolfson distinguishes, on the one hand, the Logos as the thought of the Father and, on the other hand, the Logos who was generated by the Father and received individual being; it is this Logos who became incarnated and enlightens the minds of the faithful.⁶³ In fact, S. Lilla also identifies the

⁵⁸ A. CHOUFRINE, *Gnosis, Theophany, Theosis*, p. 176.

⁵⁹ *Strom.* 4, XXV, 156, 2; 157, 2; 5, XII, 71, 2 - 82, 1.

⁶⁰ A. CHOUFRINE, *Gnosis, Theophany, Theosis*, p. 176.

⁶¹ R. CASEY, *Clement of Alexandria*, p. 47.

⁶² PHOTIUS, *Biblioth.* 109, 89A.

⁶³ H. WOLFSON, *The Philosophy of the Church Fathers: Faith, Trinity, Incarnation*, Cambridge 1976, p.

third stage of the existence of the Logos, understanding the Logos in Clement similarly to the World Soul in Platonism as the principle governing the whole in the world and ensuring the harmony between the constituent parts of the world.⁶⁴ In the recent studies, the theory based on the testimony of Photius and distinguishing the Logos in the Father and the Logos produced the Father in Clement, has been criticized. Thus, M. Edwards rightly points out that the quote cited by Photius and its interpretation in terms of two different Logoi is contrary to the passages of *Stromateis* where the Son is identified with the divine power which governs the world (such as 7, II, 9, 1), or with the power of the Father (such as 7, II, 7, 7). The testimony of Photius also contradicts the passage where Clement speaks of the Son as Father's Logos who rules the world and has taken upon Himself the economy of salvation (7, II, 5, 5-6). M. Edwards juxtaposes the quote from Photius with the passage of *Stromateis*, which says that the Word of the Father (the Son) is not "the word uttered" (λόγος προφορικός), but the Divine Wisdom (5, I, 6, 3), and suggests that the text of Clement speaks not about the Son of God, but about the λόγος προφορικός. Accordingly, Photius must have accredited Clement with the erroneous teaching, being guided by the theological language of the Apologists and understanding the expression as applied to the Son, while in fact in this passage Clement just as in *Stromateis* 5, I, 6, 3 wanted to warn his readers against identifying a rational word uttered by man, which abides in the human heart, with the Logos of the Father who gives Christians this rational word.⁶⁵ Thus, the question of whether the Son is understood in the teaching of Clement as being transcendent in relation to the created world, or merely as immanent, containing the *logoi*-archetypes of the sensible world is actively discussed in the literature and seems to be a very important problem. The more so that we can often come across the notion that God the Father in the doctrine of Clement is transcendent to the world, while the Son, the Logos, is immanent to the world.⁶⁶

The question on the status of the Son according to Clement, also rises in connection with the Platonic discourse according to which the Son is discussed in the context of multiplicity, that is, when it said of the Son that He "is [becomes] One like all."⁶⁷ Some scholars understand this multiplicity literally in the sense of the second hypothesis of Plato's *Parmenides* as multiplicity in general,⁶⁸ while other scholars correlate it either with the Son in His relation to the world He

⁶⁴ S. LILLA, *Clement of Alexandria*, p. 200.

⁶⁵ Challenging the position of G. Wolfson and C. Lilla, H. Hägg offers a less convincing explanation of the quote from Photius compared to M. Edwards'. According to H. Hägg, on the one hand, Clement distinguished between the Own Mind of the Father and the Logos (of the Son) Who became incarnated (Hägg understands that in the quotation from Photius, Clement knew that the word λόγος could be used in different meanings); on the other hand, Clement also claims that when the Son gives rationality to the man, His own rationality is not becoming reduced in the process (H. HÄGG, *Clement of Alexandria*, pp. 189-194).

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 215.

⁶⁷ *Strom.* 4, XXV, 156, 2, see above.

⁶⁸ R. MORTLY, *From Word to Silence. T. 2. The Way of Negation, Christian and Greek*, Bonn 1986, p. 43; H. HÄGG, *Clement of Alexandria*, pp. 216-217, 227-228.

created,⁶⁹ or argue (and this solution seems to be the most correct) that Clement speaks about a monad-like quality as something which is acquired by the faithful who have believed in the Son.⁷⁰ This phrase may be interpreted in the sense of the existence of the faithful in their unity with the Son, and of the Son's unity with the faithful.⁷¹ This understanding is confirmed by the passage from the *Exhortation to the Gentiles* 88 which discusses the Monad (the Son) in the context of Son's unity with the faithful, "Being many, let us hasten to unite in one love in accordance with the union of the Monad's substance (κατὰ τὴν τῆς μοναδικῆς οὐσίας ἔνωσιν). Therefore, acting in a good manner, let us strive for the unity, exploring the good Monad. Unity-out-of-many becomes one, forming divine harmony and harmonious sounding in polyphony, following one chorist and mentor – the Word, resting in the truth itself."

This being said, Clement also pursues another way of treating monadology, namely, that the Monad (the Son) is discussed as the principle of all things, containing intelligible archetypes of everything created.⁷² We should keep in mind that duality in naming divinity is typical for Clement, when he calls the divinity by a certain name, and at the same time says that the divinity supercedes that name. Thus, although Clement often attributes the Son to the realm of the intelligible,⁷³ he also says that the Son is beyond the intelligible world.⁷⁴ The same can be found in respect to God the Father; according to Clement, the Father is "both the One and beyond the One, and above the very Monad (ἐν δὲ ὁ θεὸς καὶ ἐπέκεινα τοῦ ἑνὸς καὶ ὑπὲρ αὐτὴν μονάδα)."⁷⁵ However, Clement speaks about the Son as being one with the Father.⁷⁶

Thus, in the writings of Clement we should distinguish three kinds of statements concerning the Son-Logos, and only in one of them the intelligible archetypes-*logoi* of the material world correspond to the Son. Thus, the first type of statements discuss the Son without referring to the created world, in the way He is in the bosom of the Father (Son as the One); in this context, there is no question about the Son as containing *logoi*-archetypes of the sensible world. The second type of statements refers to the Son in his relation to the created world; in this case the Son is described as containing intelligible archetypes of beings. The third type of statements refer to the Son in the Incarnation, when He forms a unity with the faithful (the Son (= Monad) in the context of the second hypothesis of Plato's *Parmenides*). At the same time, we

⁶⁹ B. BUCUR, *Angelomorphic Pneumatology. Clement of Alexandria and Other Early Christian Witnesses*, Brill 2009, p. 29.

⁷⁰ *Strom.* 4, 157, 2, see above.

⁷¹ A. CHOUFRINE, *Gnosis, Theophany, Theosis*, p. 195.

⁷² *Strom.* 5, XIV, 93, 4–94, 2.

⁷³ *Strom.* 5, III, 16, 3; 5. XI, 73, 3; 7, I, 2, 2; 7, VII, 40, 1; cp. 4, XXV, 162, 5.

⁷⁴ *Strom.* 5, VI, 38, 6.

⁷⁵ *Paed.* 1, 71, 2.

⁷⁶ *Paed.* 1, 8, 62, 3–4; *Exc.* 8.1: "Nothing [from the existing beings] is hated by God [the Father], as well as by the Logos; for both are One, the God (οὐδὲν ἄρα μισεῖται ὑπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ, ἀλλ' οὐδὲ ὑπὸ τοῦ λόγου· ἐν γὰρ ἅμφω, ὁ θεός)."

cannot say that the presence of different discourses applied to the Son-Logos in Clement entails a doctrine of different *logoi*, it is simply different discourses applied to one and the same Logos. The understanding that the Son corresponds to plurality as He is, without distinguishing between these discourses in Clement, I believe, should be considered unfounded.

Chapter 3, “Paradigms of Participation in the context of the Topic of Universals in Origen”

Now we should turn to the paradigms of participation associated with the topic of universals in Christian authors.

The Platonic topic of participation appears in passing in the context of discussion of the ontological status and the fate of the soul after death in the *Dialogue with Trypho the Jew* by Justin the Philosopher who writes:

The soul assuredly is or has life. If, then, it is life, it would cause something else, and not itself, to live, even as motion would move something else than itself. Now, that the soul lives, no one would deny. But if it lives, it lives not as being life, but as participating in life; but that which participates in anything, is different from that in which it does participate (ἕτερον δέ τι τὸ μετέχον τινὸς ἐκείνου οὐ μετέχει). Now the soul participates in life, since God wills it to live.¹

Justin says that the human soul lives not because it is life as such, but because it participates in life given to human being by God. This life, according to the Platonic paradigm of participation, is understood as a transcendental universal cause of existence for all living things. Here Justin formulated virtually the same understanding of the concept of participation, which was proclaimed by Plotinus in *Enneads* VI, 4, 13, 6-8²: the participating entity is different from the participated entity; otherwise the situation of participation would not have taken place.

Paradoxically, the development of the Platonic concept of participation in Christian literature was influenced by the Holy Scripture. Generally speaking, when Scripture speaks of participation and community, it usually uses the term κοινωνός, and less often – the verbs μετέχω and μετοχή as well as their derivatives. The Apostles Paul and Peter discuss the participation of Christians in Christ – in his Passion and his glory – in their Epistles.³ The Epistle to the Hebrews mentions the Christians as participants in the Holy Spirit (...μετόχους

¹ JUST. *Tryph.* 6.1.3-9, in GOODSPEED E.J. (ed.), *Die ältesten Apologeten*, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht 1915.

² See above.

³ See: 2 Cor. 1:7; Fil. 3:10; Heb. 4:14; 1 Pet. 4:13; 1 Pet. 5:1, and also the study: D. POWERS, *Salvation through Participation. An Examination of the Notion of the Believers' Corporate Unity with Christ in Early Christian Soteriology*, Leuven–Paris–Sterling 2001.

γενηθέντας πνεύματος αγίου)⁴. However the key text for the later re-elaboration of the subject of participation in philosophy is the following fragment from the Second Epistle of Apostle Peter:

Ὡς πάντα ἡμῖν τῆς θείας δυνάμεως αὐτοῦ τὰ πρὸς ζωὴν καὶ εὐσέβειαν δεδωρημένης διὰ τῆς ἐπιγνώσεως τοῦ καλέσαντος ἡμᾶς ἰδίᾳ δόξῃ καὶ ἀρετῇ, δι' ὧν τὰ τίμια καὶ μέγιστα ἡμῖν ἐπαγγέλματα δεδώρηται, ἵνα διὰ τούτων γένησθε θείας κοινωνοὶ φύσεως.

His divine power has given us everything we need for a godly life through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature, having escaped the corruption in the world caused by evil desires.⁵

In his book on 2 Pet. 1:3-4 and its historical context,⁶ James Starr showed that the expression “participation in the divine nature” in the Epistle of Peter meant the same as participation in the nature of Christ. The essence of this participation was the acquisition of, or participation in, the qualities of God, which were listed in 2 Pet. 1:1-3: divine glory, virtue, and power. Norman Russel⁷ assumed the influence of the Platonic doctrine in this fragment of 2 Peter, but I doubt such an influence. Exploring the meaning of the passage from 2 Peter mentioned above, John Kaufman made an interesting suggestion that a human being participated in the divine perfection by expressing its virtues, and implying a philosophical concept of participation of the individual in the universal.

⁴ Heb. 6:4; cf.: 2 Cor. 13:13.

⁵ 2 Peter 1:3–4. The historical and philosophical context of 2 Peter 1:4 is discussed in: J. STARR, *Sharers in Divine Nature: 2 Peter 1:4 in its Hellenistic Context*, Stockholm 2000; S. FINLAN, *Second Peters Notion of Divine Participation*, in S. Finlan, V. Kharlamov (eds.), *Theosis. Deification in Christian Theology*, Eugene, Oregon 2006, pp. 32-50; see also: J. KAUFMAN, *Becoming Divine, Becoming Human. Deification Themes in Irenaeus of Lyons*, Oslo 2009 (PhD thesis), pp. 215-224; D. KEATING, *The Appropriation of Divine Life in Cyril of Alexandria*, Oxford 2004, pp. 148-150. Too superficial and in many respects inaccurate article by N. Russel is devoted to the exegesis of this fragment in the Byzantine literature: N. RUSSEL, "Partakers of the Divine Nature" (2 Peter 1:4) in the Byzantine Tradition, in *ΚΑΘΗΓΗΤΡΙΑ: Essays presented to Joan Hussey on her 80-th Birthday*, Camberley 1988, pp. 51-67; he demonstrates a more suspended view in his book: N. RUSSEL, *The Doctrine of Deification in the Greek Patristic Tradition*, Oxford 2004, pp. 151-152, 181-184, 200-203 etc. Jeffrey Finch, in his dissertation named *Sanctity as participation in the divine nature according to the ante-Nicene eastern fathers, considered in the light of Palamism* (Diss., the Caspersen School of Graduate Studies at Drew University 2002) leaves the history of 2 Peter 1:3-4 in the early Christian literature almost untouched..

⁶ J. STARR, *Sharers in Divine Nature*, p. 45.

⁷ N. RUSSEL, *Partakers of the Divine Nature*,

http://www.myriobiblos.gr/texts/english/Russell_partakers.html, between notes 3 and 4.

It seems that Origen,⁸ who used this fragment for his description of *theosis*, was the first Patristic author who incorporated the words from 2 Pet. 1: 3–4 about participation in the divine nature into the theological and philosophical context. In Origen this theme is built into a consistent, so to speak, philosophy of participation.⁹ In general the Platonic paradigm of participation was constitutive for Origen's teaching, being one of cornerstones of Origen's theological doctrine. However, as we shall see, the employment of the theme of participation by Origen allowed for the deviations from the Platonic paradigm and included the Aristotelian and the "neutral" trends. The Platonic paradigm of participation was reworked in Origen in the context of two major discourses inside which several subdivisions can be identified.

First of all, this is manifested in Origen's concept of participation by nature when Origen discussed participation of beings of the created world in God due to their natural qualities, or the participation of beings of the material world in principles and *logoi*, contained in the world of the Mind due to their natural qualities (we have already seen such a version of the theme of natural participation in Christian literature before Origen in Justin the Philosopher). Generally speaking, this trend, appearing in Origen, and more fully elaborated in the later Patristic authors, entailed that beings of the same nature participated in the transcendental participated principle(s), which granted them their natural abilities acting as a universal-before-things. The method of participation was different for beings of different natures, and depended upon the place of the natural perfections owned by the beings of each particular nature in the order and hierarchy of perfections.

In the first case Origen said that the Son was divine due to the participation (*μετοχή*) in the divinity of the Father.¹⁰ Origen described not only the relation of the Son to the Father but also the relation of the Spirit to the Son using the language of participation. The Spirit needs the cooperation of the Son in respect to being, wisdom, understanding, justice, and all of the perfections; He has all these according to participation (*κατὰ μετοχήν*), understood here in the Platonic sense, in that which belongs to Christ¹¹. According to Origen, although the Son accepted the divinity and the divine attributes from the Father, they belonged to Him in the

⁸ Cf. N. RUSSEL, *The Doctrine of Deification*, p. 151; KAUFMAN J. *Becoming Divine, Becoming Human*, p. 215.

⁹ Concerning the concept of participation in the doctrine of Origen see esp.: D. BALAS, *The Idea of Participation in the Structure of Origen's Thought. Christian Transposition of a Theme of the Platonic tradition*, in *Origeniana. Premier colloque international des études origéniennes (Montserrat, 18-21 Septembre 1973)*, Bari 1975 (Quaderni di Vetera Christianorum, 12), pp. 257-275 (I was mostly influenced by this article in my interpretation of the doctrine of Origen presented below). See also: A. BUENO, «Plenitud» y «Participación». *Nociones estructurantes de la doctrina teológica de Orígenes de Alejandría*, "Augustinianum" 50 (2010), pp. 27-60; N. RUSSEL, *The Doctrine of Deification*, pp. 147-152; J. RIUS-CAMPS, *Comunicabilidad de la naturaleza de Dios segun Orígenes*, "Orientalia Christianae Periodica", 34 (1968), pp. 5-37; 36 (1972), pp. 201-247; 38 (1972), pp. 430-453; IDEM., *El dinamismo trinitario en la divinización de los seres racionales segun Orígenes*, Rome 1970.

¹⁰ ORIGEN. *In Joan.* II, 2, 17, 4-6 (Blanc).

¹¹ ORIGEN. *In Joan.* II, 10, 76, 1-7 (Blanc).

essential and not in the accidental way. It is testified to by Origen's application of divine names with the prefix *αὐτο-* to the Son,¹² as well as Origen's statement that it was wrong to say that the Son participated in the righteousness, but rather that He was righteousness Himself, in which righteous people participated,¹³ or if human beings became God according to participation (*κατὰ μετουσίαν*), Christ was God according to substance (*κατ' οὐσίαν*).¹⁴ This opposition, formulated in the latter case as "according to substance/according to participation" will be adopted by the later Patristic authors. Keeping all this in mind, we may agree with David Balas¹⁵ that in the case of the discourse of participation being used in the Trinitarian context, the measure of participation, which would depend on the will of the participating beings, that is, the Son and the Holy Spirit, was not discussed. The participation of the Son in the Father and the Spirit in the Son is constant and unchangeable.

In the second case, when the concept of participation was used for describing the individual, dynamic unity of human beings with God, it was supposed that participation depended on the disposition of the will of the participating beings.¹⁶ In this context, Origen and the subsequent Christian authors used 2 Pet. 1: 3-4 in their discussion of individual participation. The allusion to this fragment could be skillfully inserted into the general Platonic discourse of participation. We can see it in Origen's *De principiis* IV, 4, 9, where both the "individual" and the "natural" discourses take place.

This fragment has survived in the Latin translation, but the initial terminology of participation is quite evident:

Every one who participates in anything, is unquestionably of one essence and nature with him who participates in the same thing. For example, as all eyes participate in the light, so accordingly all eyes which participate in the light are of one nature; but although every eye participates in the light, yet, inasmuch as one sees more clearly, and another more obscurely, every eye does not equally share in the light. And again, all hearing receives voice or sound,

¹² CM.: D. BALAS. *The idea of participation*, p. 263.

¹³ ORIGEN. *Contra Celcus* VI, 64. Cf.: *De Princ.* II, 6, 6.

¹⁴ ORIGEN. *In Ps. in catenae*, Ps. 135: PG 12, 1656A.

¹⁵ D. BALAS. *The idea of participation*, p. 271.

¹⁶ In opposition to the "natural" participation David Balas calls this participation "supernatural", see: D. BALAS. *The idea of participation*, p. 266-270. N. Russel follows Balas in this respect (N. RUSSEL, *The Doctrine of Deification*, p. 147; he calls this kind of participation dynamical). In general, my distinction between the natural and the individual discourses of participation in Origen is close to the distinction made by David Balas, who spoke of natural and supernatural levels of participation in Origen. The difference in my understanding of this distinction, is that I distinguish the individual level instead of the supernatural. This difference seems more adequate because it is more universal. The discourse of individual participation encompasses the participation in the context of relations between the Persons of the Holy Trinity as well as participation of deified people in God, described as supernatural by Balas.

and therefore all hearing is of one nature; but each one hears more rapidly or more slowly, according as the quality of his hearing is clear and sound. Let us pass now from these sensuous illustrations to the consideration of intellectual things. Every mind which participates in intellectual light ought undoubtedly to be of one nature with every mind which participates in a similar manner in intellectual light. If the heavenly virtues, then, participate in intellectual light, i.e., in divine nature, because they participate in wisdom and holiness, and if human souls, have participated in the same light and wisdom, and thus are mutually of one nature and of one essence—then, since the heavenly virtues are incorruptible and immortal, the essence of the human soul will also be immortal and incorruptible. And not only so, but because the nature of Father, and Son, and Holy Spirit, in whose intellectual light alone all created things participate, is incorruptible and eternal, it is altogether consistent and necessary that every substance which participates in that eternal nature should last for ever, and be incorruptible and eternal, so that the eternity of divine goodness may be understood also in this respect, that they who obtain its benefits are also eternal.¹⁷

First, Origen used the examples of participation of the eye in light and the hearing in sound. He said that the same way of participating in something, if it could be applied to different beings, presupposed that those beings were of the same nature. And individuals of the same nature might have their typical method of participation either naturally, that is, in the good way, or unnaturally, that is, in the bad way. The discourse of participation, used in these examples, was neither Platonic, nor Aristotelian – it was neutral.

¹⁷ ORIGEN. *De Princ.* IV, 4, 9 (36): 422-424: 337-368 (Crouzel, Simonetti). The Latin text: “Omnis, qui participat alicuius, cum eo, qui eiusdem rei particeps est, sine dubio unius substantiae est uniusque naturae. Vt puta omnes oculi lucis participant, et ideo omnes oculi, qui de luce participant, unius naturae sunt ; sed licet omnis oculus de luce participet, tamen quoniam alius acutius, alius obtusius uidet, non omnis oculus aequaliter de luce participat. Et rursus omnis auditus uocem uel sonum recipit, et ideo omnis auditus unius naturae est; uerum pro qualitate puri et sinceri auditus unusquisque uel uelocius audit uel tardius. Transeamus ergo ab his sensibilibus exemplis ad intellectualium contemplationem. Omnis mens, quae de intellectuali luce participat, cum omni mente, quae simili modo de intellectuali luce participat, unius sine dubio debet esse naturae. Si ergo caelestes uirtutes intellectualis lucis, id est diuinae naturae, per hoc quod sapientiae et sanctificationis participant, participium sumunt, et humana anima eiusdem lucis et sapientiae participium sumit, erunt et ista unius naturae secum inuicem uniusque substantiae; incorruptae autem sunt et inmortales caelestes uirtutes : incorrupta sine dubio et immortalis erit etiam animae humanae substantia. Non solum autem, sed quoniam ipsa patris et filii et spiritus sancti natura, cuius solius intellectualis lucis uniuersa creatura participium trahit, incorrupta est et aeterna, ualde et consequens et necessarium est etiam omnem substantiam, quae aeternae illius naturae participium trahit, perdurare etiam ipsam semper et incorruptibilem et aeternam, ut diuinae bonitatis aeternitas etiam in eo intellegatur, dum aeterni sunt et hi, qui eius beneficia consequuntur.”

Then Origen turned to formulating his specific teaching, and spoke of human minds and heavenly powers, participating (in the Platonic sense) in the light of the Mind, thus participating in the divine nature. The allusion to 2 Pet. 1:3-4 is evident here.¹⁸ Thus, according to Origen, the human minds and the heavenly powers were of the same nature and substance.¹⁹⁻²⁰ This means that the human soul is incorruptible and eternal, able to participate in the divine nature which is understood by Origen as the nature of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, that is, the nature of the Holy Trinity. When Origen spoke about “divine nature” here, or the nature of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, he clearly understood the notion of nature in the context of causality. For Origen if beings participated in the divine nature, that nature was the cause of the acquisition of qualities, typical for it, by the beings participating in it. This brings the concept of participation in the divine nature in the way it was used by Origen, closer to the understanding probably implied in 2 Pet. 1:4 (see above).

Now I will turn to Origen’s teaching of the natural participation in more detail. In this respect the following fragments of *De principiis* should be cited:

God the Father bestows upon all, existence; and participation in Christ, in respect of His being the word of reason, renders them rational beings. From which it follows that they are deserving either of praise or blame, because capable of virtue and vice. On this account, therefore, is the grace of the Holy Ghost present, that those beings which are not holy in their essence may be rendered holy by participating in it. Seeing, then, that firstly, they derive their existence from God the Father; secondly, their rational nature from the Word; thirdly, their holiness from the Holy Spirit.²¹

That the working of the Father and the Son operates both in saints and in sinners, is manifest from this, that all who are rational beings are partakers of the word, i.e., of reason, and by this means bear certain seeds, implanted within them, of wisdom and justice, which is Christ. Now, in Him who truly exists, and who said by Moses, "I Am Who I Am" (Ex. 3:14), all things, whatever

¹⁸ Norman Russel (N. RUSSEL, *The Doctrine of Deification*, p. 151, n. 62) listed the fragments where Origen quoted 2 Pet. 1:4 in his discussion of participation in the divine nature: *De princ.* IV, 4, 4 and in *In Rom.* 4, 9, PG 14, 997C; *Contra Celsus* 3, 37; *In Lev.* 4, 4, GCS, T. 6, p. 319, 16-17. The fragment of *De Princ.* IV, 4, 9 quoted above was omitted from this list, but it is evident that when Origen spoke about participation in the divine nature, he was alluding to 2 Pet. 1:4. In his book, N. Russel (p.148) mentioned this passage and its discussion of the participation in the divine nature, but did not connect it to the interpretation of 2 Pet. 1:4.

¹⁹ In respect to such discourse of participation, Norman Russel spoke about the “horizontal” dimension of participation in the doctrine of Origen (N. RUSSEL, *The Doctrine of Deification*, p. 148).

²⁰ Here I will not go into the details of the “Origenist myth” about the fallen minds.

²¹ ORIGEN. *De princ.* I, 3, 8: 272-283, in ORIGÈNE. *Traité des principes*, p. 162.

they are, participate; which participation in God the Father is shared both by just men and sinners, by rational and irrational beings, and by all things universally which exist. The Apostle Paul also shows truly that all have a share in Christ, when he says, "Say not in your heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (i.e., to bring Christ down from above); or who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.) But what says the Scripture? The word is near you, even in your mouth, and in your heart" (Rom. 10:6-8). By which he means that Christ is in the heart of all, in respect of His being the word or reason, by participating in which they are rational beings.²²

According to Origen, created beings participated in God with their substantial qualities because of their very existence (the Platonic connotations are evident here). And there was some definite order of participation of beings in God: all created beings participated in God the Father – the source of all beings – according to their existence; rational beings, in addition to participating in God the Father according to existence, also participated in the Son as the Logos – the source of all reason. This theological and philosophical discourse presumed that the Hypostases of the Holy Trinity acted as universal participated causes²³ for beings. This participation of everything in God the Father and of the rational beings in the Son-Logos did not depend on the state of the participating individuals: both people worthy of praise and worthy of punishment participated in the Son due to their rational capacities. Therefore this doctrine implied (but was not expressed quite explicitly), that natural participation of all beings in God the Father according to existence and participation of rational beings in the Logos according to rational capacities could be “more” or “less.” The theological language used by Origen in the fragment also contained the instrument to describe participation in God in dynamic terms. Typical for the saints, it presupposed that participation in God could be “more” or “less” for the participating individual.²⁴ Such participation of saints in God was described by Origen as participation in the third Person of the Holy Trinity, the Holy Spirit.

If we compare the discourses of participation from the fragments of *De principiis* I, 3, 6 and I, 3, 8 on the one hand, and from the fragment of *De principiis* IV, 4, 9, on the other hand, we can see the static character of the natural participation of created beings in God (participation according to existence and rational capacity) was presumed in the first case, while in the second case we can see a different discourse of natural participation with some deviation from

²² ORIGEN. *De Princ.* I, 3, 6: 155–171, in ORIGÈNE. *Traité des principes*, p. 154.

²³ They are universal precisely as causes, viewed in relation to the plurality of the caused, for which this causality is common.

²⁴ See also: *De princ.* II, 6, 3. Cf. D. BALAS, *The Idea of Participation*, p. 271.

understanding natural participation in a static sense. According to that discourse, although the individuals of the same nature participated in the participated entity in the same way, in reality such natural participation in the divine nature, acting as a universal principle, was possible in different measure; the measure of participation depended on whether the mode of participation was actualized in each particular instance naturally or not.

This divergence of discourses of participation can be explained by the fact that in *De principiis* IV, 4, 9 Origen was discussing individual participation in God in terms of natural causation. Origen meant that it was *inherent in nature* of all human beings to participate in God in the sense of *personal* unification with God in *theosis* (I call this individual participation in God). However, this natural capacity might or might not be actualized in a natural way. If natural actualization of this capacity did not occur, the human being would still have existence and intellect, yet outside of personal unification with God.

Thus, we may say that in the context of the discourse of participation, present in the fragments of *De principiis* I, 3, 6 and I, 3, 8, it is assumed that natural participation in God was present in the same measure for all beings according to existence, and for rational beings according to their intellectual capacity, while individual participation in God in *theosis* could be actualized for the rational beings in varying degrees. The discourse of participation from *De principiis* IV, 4, 9 suggests that the concept of the same measure of participation referred to the capacity of every being belonging to the human nature – individual participation in God in *theosis* – and not the natural participation in God.

From these examples we may realize that Origen used different language for describing individual participation of rational beings in God in *theosis*. In *De principiis* I, 3, 6 and 3, 8, where Origen discussed the order of the ways of participation, individual participation was described in accordance with the logic of this order in the language of participation in the Holy Spirit, while in *De principiis* IV, 4, 9, where Origen did not elaborate on the theme of the order of participation, he used the language of participation in the divine substance, alluding to 2 Pet. 1:3-4.

Speaking about Origen's doctrine of participation, it is necessary to touch upon the theme of participation of all beings in the Son-Logos-Wisdom. Just as Clement of Alexandria, Origen described God the Father in terms of unity and simplicity, while the Son was characterized by plurality,²⁵ since He was the Beginning of the plurality of created things.²⁶

²⁵ Here the line which can be traced to Plato's Parmenides, possibly through Clement. Concerning the teaching of Clement in this respect see especially: A. CHOUFRINE, *Gnosis, Theophany, Theosis*, pp. 167-179.

²⁶ See: "Now God is altogether one and simple (ἓν καὶ ἀπλοῦν); but our Saviour, for many reasons, since God set Him forth a propitiation (Rom. 3:25) and a first fruits of the whole creation, is made many things, or perhaps all these things; the whole creation, so far as capable of redemption, stands in need of Him (cf. Rom. 8:21)" (*In Joan.* I, 22).

Following Philo²⁷ and Clement of Alexandria,²⁸ Origen developed a doctrine on the Logos-Wisdom Who contained in Himself the intelligible principles and *logoi* of beings, in which the beings of the created world participate.²⁹ According to these *logoi*, God created beings of the created world with the help of the Logos-Wisdom.³⁰ Creation always has its prototype in the Divine Wisdom.³¹ According to Origen, there were *logoi* for species and genera of beings³² – we may say that such *logoi* correlate with universals-before-things as well as the individual things.³³ The relation between the *logoi* of beings and the Logos-Word was that of parts to the whole and of the species to the genus.³⁴

Thus, Logos-Wisdom is participated in differently, first of all, by all created beings,³⁵ second of all, by beings with rational capacity (even if they do not live in accordance with reason),³⁶ and third of all, by truly rational righteous and holy people.³⁷

In the first case Origen's discussion assumed that Logos-Wisdom in some way contained universals-before-things, and in the second case – that Logos was a universal participated principle for rational beings.

Speaking about human beings as having rational capacity, Origen emphasized two meanings of *logos* entailing two meanings of participation: in one sense all people participate in *logos* (with lowercase l) since they all have a natural capacity to think due to their participation in Logos-Wisdom; in the other sense those people who reached spiritual perfection, participate in Logos (with capital L):

But the logos in man, in which we have said that our whole race participated in, is spoken of in two senses; first, in that of the filling up of ideas

²⁷ Cf. for ex. PHILO. *De opif.* 16; 36; 129; *Her.* 280; *De Plant.* 50; *De ebriel.* 133; *De confus. ling.* 172. In general about the teaching of Philo on *logoi* in the historical-philosophical context see: R. RADICE, *Logos tra stoicismo e platonismo. Il problema di Filone*, in R. Radice, A. Valvo (ed.), *Dal logos dei greci e dei romani al Logos di Dio Ricordando Marta Sordi*. (Temi metafisici e problemi del pensiero antico. Studi e testi 122), Milano 2011, p. 131-145.

²⁸ See: CLEM. *Strom.* 5, XIV, 93-94; 4, XXV, 155-157.

²⁹ On this subject in Origen in relation to the previous tradition see esp.: I. RAMELLI, *Cristo-Logos in Origene Ascendenze medioplatoniche e filoniane, passaggi in Clemente e Bardesane, e anti-subordinazionismo*, in R. Radice, A. Valvo (ed.), *Dal logos dei greci*, pp. 295-318. Cf.: A. BUENO, «Plenitud» y «Participación», pp. 54-55.

³⁰ ORIGEN. *De Princ.* I, 3, 6; I, 4, 4-5; *In Joan.* XIX, 22, 147; I, 19, 109-115; I, 34, 243-246; *Contra Cesus* V, 39. Cf. also the words of Origen that all living beings are such because they participate in Life as it is (*In Joan.* Fr. 2, GCS, T. 4, p. 485, 24-26). Here Origen practically repeats the similar statement by Justin the Philosopher (*Tryph.* 6, 1, 3-9, see above).

³¹ ORIGEN. *De Princ.* I, 4, 4-5.

³² *In Joan.* I, 19, 114, cf. *De Princ.* I, 2, 2; I, 4, 5; I, 7, 1; III, 6, 4.

³³ ORIGEN. *De Princ.* I, 2, 2.

³⁴ ORIGEN. *Contra Cesus* V, 19, cf. *In Joan.* I, 34, 244.

³⁵ ORIGEN. *In Joan.* I, 34, 244; XIX, 22, 147

³⁶ ORIGEN. *In Joan.* I, 37, 269-270, cp. I, 34, 246.

³⁷ ORIGEN. *Contra Cesus* VI, 64; *In Joan.* I, 37, 268 (Blanc).

which takes place, prodigies³⁸ excepted, in every one who passes beyond the age of boyhood, but secondly, in that of the consummation, which takes place only in the perfect.³⁹

Although it was mentioned only in passing, here we may see the Aristotelian paradigm of participation, rare for Origen: it is assumed that all people participate in the capacity of reasoning, constitutive for the human nature. It is apparently understood in this fragment not as a transcendental capacity for human individuals, but as something inherent in every participating human. Therefore we can affirm that the Aristotelian paradigm is used here, since *logos* is understood in the sense of a universal-in-things.

In sum, two major discourses of participation can be discerned in Origen: natural participation and individual participation.

Natural participation can be subdivided into four types:

N^1 : the order of natural participation of species uniting created beings in the Persons of the Holy Trinity; according to this order all beings participate in God the Father according to existence, and rational beings participate in the Son according to their rational capacity; God the Father and God the Son act as universal participated causes for the plurality of beings.

N^2 : all created beings naturally participate in the *logoi* contained in the Logos-Wisdom, although the way the rational beings participate in the Logos differ from the way other beings participate in the Logos; this discourse assumes that Logos-Wisdom in some way contains universals-before-things.

N^3 : all rational beings have a natural capacity to unite with God; this discourse presumes that the divine nature, common for the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, acts as a universal participated principle in relation to the natural ability of rational beings to unite with God.

N^4 : all people naturally participate in the capacity of reasoning, constitutive for the human nature. The Aristotelian paradigm is used here, which assumes the presence of universal-in-things (*logos*) in rational beings.

Individual participation can be subdivided into two types in Origen;

I^1 , associated with the subject of relations between the Persons of the Holy Trinity: the Son participates in the divinity of the Father, and the Holy Spirit participates in the qualities of the Son.

I^2 , associated with the subject of unification of righteous people to God. This type may be subdivided into two:

³⁸ In the sense of mentally retarded.

³⁹ ORIGEN. *In Joan.* I, 37, 273, 1-5 (Blanc).

I^{2a} : individual unification of a rational being with God is described using the language of participation in the Holy Spirit. In respect to natural participation this correlates with N^1 .

I^{2b} : individual unification of a rational being with God is described using the language of the divine substance with the allusion to 2 Pet. 1:3–4. In respect to natural participation this correlates with N^3 .

These observations may help us to clarify the concept of David Balas concerning the doctrine of participation in Origen. According to Balas, in general terms Origen's concept of participation presumes that the lower level of being has a certain kind of perfection, being dependant in this relation on the higher level of being, which fully possesses this perfection and is its source.⁴⁰ It seems that such an understanding is commonplace in the study of Origen.⁴¹ Such an understanding of participation corresponds to the Platonic paradigm of participation mentioned above. However, as we have seen, although the Platonic paradigm is dominant in Origen, there are also manifestations of a paradigm which can be called Aristotelian as well as an understanding of participation in the neutral sense.

A new trend in the development of the theme of participation in Christian theology emerged during the Arian controversy and was associated with the use of the concept of "unparticipable" by the representatives of the Arian party. I will discuss it in the next part of my work.

⁴⁰ D. BALAS. *The idea of participation*, p. 270.

⁴¹ See for example: N. RUSSEL, *The Doctrine of Deification*, pp. 147-148. This does not contradict the horizontal dimension of participation, emphasized by N. Russel (p. 148, see note 19 above), since it points not to the relation between the participating and the participated, but to the relation between the participants themselves: it is connected to the idea, that the same way of participation of different beings in the participated indicates that they have the same nature.

Chapter 4, "Participation and universals in the doctrine of Arius"

4.1. The doctrine of Arius

The Arian controversy was triggered by Arius'¹ interpretation of the passage from the Book of Proverbs, "The Lord created me the beginning of his ways" (Prov. 8, 23 according to the Septuagint), when Arius started to preach the doctrine of the created nature of the Son-Logos that "there was when the Son did not exist." This doctrine became a stumbling block for many Christians. When the controversy around the teaching of Arius began to spread among the population of Alexandria, Bishop Alexander received a complaint about Arius. At first, Alexander did not take the allegation seriously and took a neutral position, considering this issue to be one of the topics which could be discussed in the Church and which might be a subject of public debate.² However, when Arius accused Alexander of Sabellianism because of his words, "Holy Trinity is the One in the Trinity," arguing in opposition to Alexander that "there was when the Son did not exist," Alexander decidedly sided with those who condemned the teachings of Arius and forbade him to preach his doctrine.³ Arius, who was very popular in Alexandria, did not comply with the prohibitions of Alexander, forcing Alexander to convene a council of bishops under his jurisdiction from Egypt and Libya (318) and excommunicate Arius and the bishops who followed him, subsequently announcing his decision to all Churches in the Encyclical Letter.⁴ Probably at that same time⁵ Arius composed a treatise named *Thalia* ("Feast")⁶ which is a crucial source on his doctrine. The disciplinary action against Arius on the

¹ Arius was born ca. 256; by his origin he was a Libyan. Arius attended the theological school of Lucian in Antioch, but since the beginning of the fourth century lived in Alexandria. He became a presbyteros there and was once even a candidate for the episcopal see of Alexandria, but declined the offer in favor of his future enemy and opponent Alexander of Alexandria (PHILOSTORGIUS 1.3; EPIPH. *Panar.* 69, 1-6; SOZOM. *Hist.* 1, 15; THEOD. *Hist.* 1, 2).

² SOZOM. *Hist.* 1, 15.

³ SOCR. *Hist.* 1, 5.

⁴ IBID., 1, 6.

⁵ See: W. LÖHR, *Arius Reconsidered (Part 2)*, "Zeitschrift für Antikes Christentum", 10 (2006), pp. 556-557.

⁶ Arius composed *Thalia* in order to popularize his views and this is why the work is written in verse (for the analysis of the poetic meter, see M. WEST, *The Metre of Arius' "Thalia"*, "The Journal of Theological Studies", 33 (1982), pp. 98-105). The most important primary sources for the doctrine of Arius are the following passages from the treatises by Athanasius of Alexandria, which preserved the fragments of *Thalia: De syn.* 12 and *Contra Arianos* 1, 5 - 6, 9. The fragments of *Thalia* are published in G. BARDY, *Recherches sur Saint Lucien d'Antioche et son école*, Paris 1936, pp. 217-295 as well as in the above article by Martin West; the fragments from the edition of Martin West (with English translation) can also be found in W. LÖHR, *Arius Reconsidered (Part 2)*, pp. 134-146. On the sources of Arius' doctrine, see the Letter of Arius to Bishop Eusebius of

part of Alexander of Alexandria became the reason for spreading the debate over the entire Christian East and led to the Church-wide scale of the Arian controversy. Arius and his associates went to the East; Arius settled in Caesarea of Palestine where he met a positive attitude on the part of a famous church historian and intellectual Eusebius, the Bishop of Caesarea. Arius wrote a letter to Eusebius of Nicomedia, asking him as a “co-Lucianist,” that is, as his classmate in the school of Lucian, to join the fight. In the letter Arius argued with Alexander and explained his doctrine. Arius accused Alexander of proclaiming that “The Son coexists with God in an ungenerated way; He is always generated and is ungeneratedly generated (ἀγεννητογενής).” Arius set out his own doctrine in the following way:

The Son is not unbegotten and in no sense He is a part of the Unbegotten, and He did not originate from anything pre-existent, but by the will and the counsel [of God] before the times and before the ages He was perfect God, the Only-begotten, immutable. However, He was not in existence before He was begotten, or created, or defined, or established, since He did not exist before the birth.⁷

In the passage Arius rejects the (incorrectly understood) doctrine of Alexander of Alexandria⁸ that “being unbegotten” refers not only to God the Father, but also to the Son, and insists that “being unbegotten” refers only to the Father, while the Son was either begotten or created. However, as can be seen from this quotation, according to Arius the Son is “the perfect God.” However, He is God not in the ontological sense, but according to honor, that is, in

Nicomedia: THEOD. *Hist.* 1, 5, as well as the Letter of Arius to Alexander of Alexandria: *De syn.* 15; *Ad ep. Aeg. et Lib.* 16 = EPIPH. *Panar.* 69, 7.

⁷ THEOD. *Hist.* 1, 5.

⁸ Alexander of Alexandria denied that taught about non-generation of the Son (see his Epistle to Bishop Alexander of Constantinople, “That is why we believe that the Son is always from the Father; for He is the brightness of His glory, and the image of His hypostasis (Heb. 1: 3). But let no one take the word ‘always’ in the sense of being unbegotten as people with damaged senses of the soul think: ‘He was not,’ ‘not always,’ ‘not before the ages’ is not the same as being unbegotten. Human mind is incapable of inventing any words for designating unbegottenness” (THEOD. *Hist.* 1, 4). Alexander’s own doctrine was that the Father always generates the Son: “The Only Begotten Son of the Father has the immutable sonship... We believe that the Son is always from the Father” (Ibid.). The doctrine of the eternal timeless generation of the Son by the God the Father was probably adopted by Alexander from Origen; cf. “And who that is capable of entertaining reverential thoughts or feelings regarding God, can suppose or believe that God the Father ever existed, even for a moment of time, without having generated this Wisdom? For in that case he must say either that God was unable to generate Wisdom before He produced her, so that He afterwards called into being her who formerly did not exist, or that He possessed the power indeed, but – what cannot be said of God without impiety – was unwilling to use it; both of which suppositions, it is patent to all, are alike absurd and impious” (*De princ.* I, 2, 2). However, as opposed to Bishop Alexander, Origen believed that God always produced not only the Son, but also the cosmos.

comparison with other created beings.⁹ Arius defended the voluntaristic understanding of the origin of the Son: the Son was not “begotten” by God, but was created by His volition; even more so, created as well as all created beings “from nothing.” There is no contradiction in the words of Arius that on the one hand the Son originated “from before the time,” and on the other hand that “He was not before he was begotten,” since Arius must have followed the views expressed in *Timaeus* 38b that physical time depended on the motion of the celestial bodies,¹⁰ which as Christopher Stead noted¹¹ were easily reconcilable with the Scripture (Gen. 1:14). The words, “...He was begotten or created” manifest an important point in the entire history of the Arian controversy. Two Greek words, γεννητός (from γεννάω, “originate,” “give birth”) and γενητός (from γίγνομαι, “emerge,” “become”) can be understood both synonymously and not synonymously. The general Arian trend when it came to the Son was to identify γεννητός and γενητός, implying the createdness of the Son and His generation in time (that is, if the Son “is begotten,” He is “created”).¹² The representatives of the anti-Arian party as a rule distinguished between these notions, using γεννητός to refer to timeless generation of the Son by God the Father and not allowing for the application of this notion to the created world, while γενητός was used to indicate the created nature of the world created by God, but not applying it to God the Son.

4.2. *Language of Participation and Universal Realities in God and in the Created Realm in Arius and the Arians*

Arius and his followers formulated several aspects of their doctrine using the language of participation. We can identify several trends in applying the concept of participation by Arius and the Arians.

1) In order to emphasize the created nature of the Son, the Son was described as *participating* in the divinity of the Father which was understood in the sense that the Son did not possess divinity *according to His nature*. There are the following testimonies on the subject

⁹ Probably the Arian doctrine preconditioned the ban on calling Christ “the true God” (see ATHAN. *Contra Arianos* 1, 9), since that expression could be applied only to the Father. Yet, sometimes, for political reasons the Arians could leave this principle aside, see: ATHAN. *Ad ep. Aeg. et Lib.* 5.

¹⁰ It should be noted that R. Gregg and D. Groh followed another point of view regarding the statement of Arius that the Son originated before the time. They believed that it referred to the doctrine of Arius that the Son was chosen by the Father as the Only Begotten before the time according to the foreknowledge of the Father about the immutable good will of Christ (R. GREGG, D. GROH, *The Centrality of Soteriology in Early Arianism*, “*Studia Patristica*”, 15 (1984), p. 313, n. 45). However, the interpretation of C. Stead seems to be more appropriate, taking into account the emphasis on the cosmological function of the Son in the doctrine of Arius.

¹¹ C. STEAD, *The Platonism of Arius*, “*The Journal of Theological Studies*”, 15 (1964), pp. 26-27.

¹² See the old but still relevant article L. PRESTIGE, *ἀγέν[ν]ητος and γεν[ν]ητός and kindred words, in Eusebius and the Early Arians*, “*The Journal of Theological Studies*” 24 (1923), pp. 486-496.

(however, it is not often clear whether Athanasius paraphrased the words of Arius or quoted them): 1a) the words of Arius that although the Son was called God, He was not the true God, but according to the participation in grace (λέγεται θεός, ἀλλ' οὐκ ἀληθινός ἐστιν· ἀλλὰ μετοχῆ χάριτος)¹³; 1b) the words of Arius that the Son-Christ was not the true God, but was made God by participation (οὐκ ἔστιν ἀληθινός θεός ὁ Χριστός, ἀλλὰ μετοχῆ καὶ αὐτὸς ἐθεοποιήθη)¹⁴; 1c) the *Letter to the Bishops of Egypt and Libya* where Athanasius quoted the following words of Arius: οὐδὲ θεός ἀληθινός ἐστιν ὁ Χριστός, ἀλλὰ μετοχῆ καὶ αὐτὸς ὡσπερ καὶ οἱ ἄλλοι πάντες λέγεται θεός.¹⁵ These words seem to make sense only if we understand them in a way that Christ was not the true God, but was called God due to participation (in God), in respect to which He was similar to all the other people.¹⁶

2) The arguments associated with the concept of *non-participation*. Arius claimed that the Son existed by Himself separately from the Father and did not participate in any way in the Father (καὶ διηρημένον ἐστιν πατὴρ υἱὸς καθ' ἑαυτὸν καὶ ἀμέτοχος κατὰ πάντα)¹⁷. A similar thought was expressed by the Arian Bishop Eusebius of Nicomedia in his Letter to Paulinus of Tyre, where Eusebius said that the Son was not from the substance of the Unbegotten (the Father), and did not participate in the nature of the Unbegotten (καθόλου τῆς φύσεως τῆς ἀγεννήτου μὴ μετέχον)¹⁸. According to Arius, the substances of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit did not participate in each other (ἀλλότρια καὶ ἀμέτοχοί εἰσιν ἀλλήλων αἱ οὐσίαι τοῦ πατρὸς καὶ τοῦ υἱοῦ καὶ τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος)¹⁹.

3) The arguments involving the description of the Son as participating in the divine attributes. The doctrine of Arius included a concept that Christ was not the Wisdom, the Logos (Word), and the power of God in the proper sense, and that God had His own inherent Wisdom, Logos, and Power, while the Son was produced by the Divine Wisdom and Logos in order to create the world through Himself, and participated (μετέχει) in the divine Wisdom, Logos, and Power according to grace. In virtue of that participation, the Son was called by the names of Wisdom, Logos (Word), and Power, in fact, being Wisdom, Word, and Power only in name, and

¹³ ATHAN. *Contra Arianos* 1, 6, 1: 115 (Metzler, Savvidis, Lieferung), cf.: *Contra Arianos* 3, 15.

¹⁴ ATHAN. *Contra Arianos* 1, 9, 5: 118 (Metzler, Savvidis, Lieferung).

¹⁵ ATHAN. *Ad ep. Aeg. et Lib.* 12, 4: 52 (Hansen, Metzler, Savvidis).

¹⁶ I understand this statement as implying the principle that all people participate in God (taking the form of “μετοχῆ” as *dativus finalis*). I find meaningless another possible understanding of this statement, according to which all people are called God.

¹⁷ Fr. 3, in M. WEST, *The Metre of Arius' "Thalia"*, p. 102 (cf.: W. LÖHR, *Arius Reconsidered (Part 2)*, pp. 135-136).

¹⁸ ATHANASIUS, *Werke. Herausgegeben im Auftrag der Kirchenväter-Kommission der preussischen akademie der wissenschaften*. Dritter Band. Erster Teil. Urkunden zur Geschichte des Arianischen Streites 318–328, ed. von H.-G. Opitz. Berlin/Leipzig 1934, Urkunde 8, S. 16.

¹⁹ ATHAN. *Contra Arianos* 1, 6, 4: 115 (Metzler, Savvidis, Lieferung).

not in substance.²⁰ Thus, according to Arius, despite the fact that Godhead remained non-participated (in the sense of the words of Arius and Eusebius of Nicomedia concerning non-participatedness of the Father), there were certain participated realities, at least, the Divine Wisdom, Word, and Power.

4) In the extant fragments of Arius we can find some words about the Christians who were “the partakers of wisdom” (τῶν σοφίας μετεχόντων). According to Arius, he took his doctrine from those Christians.²¹ In my opinion, the words of Arius concerning “the partakers of wisdom” are not accidental. Indeed, we may see the correlation between this statement of Arius on the advanced Christians as partakers of Wisdom and the position of his doctrine, according to which the Divine Wisdom was a participated principle in God. This as well as some other elements of Arius’ teaching (I will discuss them later) make it possible to claim with a certain degree of certainty that the doctrine of Arius implied that people just like Christ participate in the Godhead according to their capacity of reason, and some even according to their possession of wisdom. Moreover, according to their rational capacities, people participate in the Logos proper to God and inherent in Him, but according to the capacity to possess wisdom, the people who have it participate in the Wisdom proper to God and inherent in Him.

Thus, the following reasons make it possible to conclude that the doctrine of Arius contained the concept of participation. Firstly, it seems that Arius claimed that all people participated in God. Secondly, it is the doctrine of Arius that Christ participated in the Logos and Wisdom inherent in the Divinity. And thirdly, the statement of Arius, cited by Athanasius, “The Lord [= Christ] is called Logos [= Mind; λόγος] according to Providence because of those who are endowed with reason, and [is called] Wisdom also according to Providence because of those

²⁰ See: ATHAN. *Contra Arianos* 1, 5, 5–6: 114 (Metzler, Savvidis, Lieferung) (δύο γοῶν σοφίας φησὶν εἶναι, μίαν μὲν «τὴν ἰδίαν καὶ συνυπάρχουσαν τῷ θεῷ», τὸν δὲ υἱὸν ἐν αὐτῇ τῇ σοφίᾳ γεγενῆσθαι ταύτης τε μετέχοντα ὠνομάσθαι μόνον σοφίαν καὶ λόγον. «ἢ σοφία γάρ», φησί, «τῇ σοφίᾳ ὑπῆρξε σοφοῦ θεοῦ θελήσει». οὕτω καὶ λόγον ἕτερον εἶναι λέγει παρὰ τὸν υἱὸν ἐν τῷ θεῷ, καὶ τούτου μετέχοντα τὸν υἱὸν ὠνομάσθαι πάλιν κατὰ χάριν λόγον καὶ υἱὸν αὐτόν ... ἢ μὲν μία τοῦ θεοῦ ἐστὶν ἰδία φύσει καὶ αἰδίος· ὁ δὲ Χριστὸς πάλιν οὐκ ἔστιν ἀληθινή δύναμις τοῦ θεοῦ, ἀλλὰ μία τῶν λεγομένων δυνάμεων ἐστὶ); *Contra Arianos* 2, 37, 1: 213-214 (Metzler, Savvidis, Lieferung) (ἄλλον μὲν εἶναι τὸν ἴδιον καὶ φύσει λόγον τοῦ πατρὸς λέγουσιν, ἐν ᾧ καὶ τὸν υἱὸν πεποίηκε, τὸν δὲ ἀληθῶς υἱὸν κατ’ ἐπίνοιαν μόνον λέγεσθαι λόγον ὡς «ἄμπελον» καὶ «ὄδον» καὶ «θύραν» καὶ «ξύλον ζωῆς». σοφίαν τε ὀνόματι λέγεσθαι αὐτόν φασιν, ἄλλην μὲντοι εἶναι σοφίαν τὴν ἰδίαν καὶ ἀληθινήν τοῦ πατρὸς τὴν ἀγεννήτως συνυπάρχουσαν αὐτῷ, ἐν ᾗ καὶ τὸν υἱὸν ποιήσας ὠνόμασε κατὰ μετουσίαν ἐκείνης σοφίαν αὐτόν); *Ad ep. Aeg. et Lib.* 12, 5: 52 (Hansen, Metzler, Savvidis) (οὐκ ἔστιν αὐτὸς ὁ ἐν τῷ πατρὶ φύσει καὶ ἴδιος τῆς οὐσίας αὐτοῦ λόγος καὶ ἡ ἰδία σοφία, ἐν ᾗ καὶ τοῦτον πεποίηκε τὸν κόσμον, ἀλλ’ ἄλλος μὲν ἔστιν ὁ ἐν τῷ πατρὶ ἴδιος αὐτοῦ λόγος καὶ ἄλλη ἢ ἐν τῷ πατρὶ ἰδία αὐτοῦ σοφία, ἐν ᾗ σοφία καὶ τοῦτον τὸν λόγον πεποίηκεν) etc.

²¹ See Fr. 1 v: M. WEST, *The Metre of Arius’ “Thalia”*, pp. 101-102 (W. LÖHR, *Arius Reconsidered (Part 2)*, pp. 134-135); *Contra Arianos* 1, 5, 1.

who have the gift of wisdom,”²² emphasized that the capacities of reason and wisdom were the same in Christ and regular people.

As we have seen, according to Arius all people in some way participate in God²³ while the Father in Himself remains non-participated,²⁴ and that which is participated in God is His own Wisdom and Logos. Thus, the words of Arius about the people who were partakers in wisdom and about Christ who was called the Wisdom and Logos on the one hand due to His participation in the Wisdom and Logos inherent in Godhead, and on the other hand due to the people endowed with reason and wisdom, indicate that the doctrine of Arius implied that not only Christ, but regular people participate in the Logos inherent in the Godhead (this should apply to all people as possessing reason) and in the Wisdom inherent in the Godhead (this should apply only to some people, not simply rational but “wise”).

We should recall that Arius also taught about the Power of Godhead, which is participated in by the Son,²⁵ and that according to the testimony of Athanasius Arius spoke about the Son as one of the powers of the created world mutable in nature, including beetles and caterpillars.²⁶ This highlights the third type of the created reality along with rational and wise beings, and we may conclude that the doctrine of Arius presupposed the presence of three universal realities in the Godhead: Power, Logos (= Mind, Word), and Wisdom, and accordingly, three realms of the created world, the realms of powers, the realm of the rational, and the realm of the wise. Following the logic of the preceding discussion, according to the Arius three realms were present in the created world, participating in the corresponding realities in the Godhead: the divine Power inherent in God was participated in by all created beings (or living, but not rational beings²⁷); the divine Logos inherent in God was participated in by the bearers of reason, while the divine Wisdom inherent in God was participated in by the wise bearers of reason.

²² ἄλλος μὲν ἔστιν ὁ ἐν τῷ πατρὶ ἴδιος αὐτοῦ λόγος καὶ ἄλλη ἢ ἐν τῷ πατρὶ ἰδίᾳ αὐτοῦ σοφία, ἐν ἧ σοφίᾳ καὶ τοῦτον τὸν λόγον πεποίηκεν· αὐτὸς δὲ οὗτος ὁ κύριος κατ’ ἐπίνοιαν λέγεται λόγος διὰ τὰ λογικὰ καὶ κατ’ ἐπίνοιαν λέγεται σοφία διὰ τὰ σοφίζόμενα (ATHAN. *Ad ep. Aeg. et Lib.* 12, 5: 52 (Hansen, Metzler, Savvidis)).

²³ I have mentioned this above, speaking about the first use of participation language in Arius and the Arians.

²⁴ Arius and Eusebius of Nicomedia speak about non-participation of Christ in the Father (see above), but, obviously, by the same token this also implies non-participation of any other created beings in the Father.

²⁵ I have mentioned this above, speaking about the third use of participation language in Arius and the Arians.

²⁶ πολλαὶ δυνάμεις εἰσὶ· καὶ ἡ μὲν μία τοῦ θεοῦ ἐστὶν ἰδίᾳ φύσει καὶ αἰδίῳ· ὁ δὲ Χριστὸς πάλιν οὐκ ἔστιν ἀληθινή δύναμις τοῦ θεοῦ, ἀλλὰ μία τῶν λεγομένων δυνάμεων ἐστὶ καὶ αὐτός, ὣν μία καὶ «ἡ ἀκρις καὶ ἡ κάμψις» οὐ δύναμις μόνον, ἀλλὰ καὶ «μεγάλῃ» προσαγορεύεται· αἱ δ’ ἄλλαι πολλαὶ καὶ ὅμοιαι εἰσὶ τῷ υἱῷ, περὶ ὧν καὶ Δαβὶδ ψάλλει λέγων· «κύριος τῶν δυνάμεων». καὶ τῇ μὲν φύσει, ὥσπερ πάντες, οὕτως καὶ αὐτὸς ὁ λόγος ἐστὶ τρεπτός, τῷ δὲ ἰδίῳ αὐτεξουσίῳ, ἕως βούλεται, μένει καλός· ὅτε μέντοι θέλει, δύναται τρέπεσθαι καὶ αὐτὸς ὥσπερ καὶ ἡμεῖς τρεπτῆς ὡν φύσεως. διὰ τοῦτο γάρ», φησί, «καὶ προγινώσκων ὁ θεὸς ἔσεσθαι καλὸν αὐτὸν προλαβὼν ταύτην αὐτῷ τὴν δόξαν δέδωκεν, ἣν ἂν καὶ ἐκ τῆς ἀρετῆς ἔσχε μετὰ ταῦτα (ATHAN, *Contra Arianos* 5, 7-8: 114-115 (Metzler, Savvidis, Lieferung)).

²⁷ From the quotation in the previous note is not very clear whether Arius considered all beings to belong to the “powers” of the created world or (keeping in mind the references to beetles and caterpillars) only the living (but not rational) beings.

4.3. Paradigms of Participation and Universals in Arius and Origen

If we now view the topic of participation in Arius in the light of the history of philosophy and theology, we may notice that the doctrine of Arius, according to which the Son received that name and was made God by participation, and that He and all the people in general participated in the Godhead, has obvious Platonic connotations and well corresponds to the Platonic paradigm of participation. The same can be said about the doctrine of participation of Christ and most likely ordinary people in the Logos and Wisdom inherent in the Godhead. These themes show several parallels with the doctrine of Origen on participation of the Son in the divinity of the Father,²⁸ which corresponds to the trend *I'* in the above discussion of the discourses of participation in Origen. It might have been Origen who influenced Arius in that respect.²⁹ The difference between Arius and Origen is that for Origen the Son possessed the divinity and the divine qualities of the Father in a substantial, and not circumstantial way, whereas Arius insisted on the opposite.

If my reconstruction of the doctrine of Arius on participation of various realms of the created world in God's own inherent Power, Logos, and Wisdom is correct, there is a certain typological similarity between the doctrines of Arius and Origen. Some types of created beings in both authors participate in the highest principle, which acts (or in which something acts) as a kind of universal-before-things in relation to the beings of the created world. As we have seen, according to one of the arguments involving natural participation in Origen, all beings participated in a God the Father according to their existence, while rational beings participated in the Son according to their rational capacity. In Arius, if my reconstruction of his theory is correct, all beings – or perhaps only the living beings – participate in the Power, inherent in the Godhead; rational beings participate in the Logos or Reason inherent in the Godhead, while wise rational beings participate in the Wisdom inherent in the Godhead. The doctrine of Origen does not lead to a clear understanding what these participated universal-before-things might have been: as I have shown above, Origen both used the discourse of participation of the types of created beings in the Persons of the Trinity, and spoke about all created beings as naturally participating in the *logoi* contained in divine Logos-Wisdom. The doctrine of Arius, however, offers a consistent doctrine of the participated universals-before-things, when Arius speaks about specific participated realities in God – God's own Power, Logos, and Wisdom.

²⁸ ORIGEN, *In Joan.* II, 2, 17, 4-6 (Blanc).

²⁹ Cf R. WILLIAMS, *The Logic of Arianism*, "Journal of Theological Studies", 34 (1983), p. 75.

In that respect the theological systems of Origen and Arius manifest a fundamental difference as far as the status of Christ-the Son is concerned. In Origen the Son-Logos is *participated* in by the created beings and therefore in a sense is a universal-before-things, since all rational beings participate in this Logos who also contains the *logoi* of all things of the created world. However, according to the Arius, the Son was not *participated in* but was Himself *participating*; He did not correspond to any universal, but Himself participated in a universal – the Logos inherent in the Godhead.

There is one more radical difference between the doctrines of Origen and Arius related to the subject of participation – the notion of the non-participated (ἀμέθεκτος), absent from Origen and appearing in Arius probably for the first time in Christian literature. This notion, as it seems, make it possible to speak about the Neoplatonic background of the subject of participation in Arianism, which had not yet surfaced in Origen.

4.4. Neoplatonism of Arius?

As we have seen, according to the Arian doctrine, God, on the one hand, was non-participated as the Father and the Unbegotten, and, on the other hand, He was participated in through His own Power, Logos and Wisdom. In the system of Arius, Christ was also participating being as possibly the entire realm of created beings. The emergence of the concept of non-participatedness in the Arian doctrine make it possible to discern the Neoplatonic triad of participation, *the participating – the participated – the non-participated*. In addition, the participated principles in the Godhead (Power, Wisdom, and Logos), which Arius taught about, can be associated with the participated henads in the philosophical system of Iamblichus.

The concept of non-participation was probably introduced in the philosophical language by Iamblichus. Accordingly, Iamblichus was the leading figure in the formation of the participation triad in the philosophical thought of the Late Antiquity and the likely author of the doctrine of henads, later elaborated in detail by the Neoplatonists Syrianus and Proclus. Iamblichus (ca. 240–ca. 325 A.D.) was an older contemporary of Arius (256–336 A.D.) and theoretically could have had an impact on the conceptual framework used by Arius.³⁰

³⁰ The possible impact of Neoplatonic philosophy on the doctrine of Arius has already been suggested in the literature. Thus, Rowan Williams in his studies (*The Logic of Arianism* and *Arius: Heresy and Tradition*, London 1987, p. 31 etc.) attempted to find the Neoplatonic ground for the formulas used by Arius. These attempts were criticized in the article by Christopher Stead (C. STEAD, *Was Arius a Neoplatonist?*, “*Studia Patristica*”, 32 (1997), pp. 39–51). Arius could have become acquainted with the doctrine of Iamblichus ca. 300 in Syria, when Iamblichus was teaching in Antioch and Apamea. R. Williams (*Arius: Heresy and Tradition*, p. 31) analyzed three expressions of Arius in respect to which or in respect to the associated polemics around which one could speak of Neoplatonic influence. These included, first, the expression “τῆς τοῦ Πατρὸς οὐσίας ἴδιος” as applied to the Son (ATHAN. *Contra Arianos* 1, 10). The context of the expression according to R. Williams,

The concept of non-participation was employed in late Platonism for indicating the cause which, while generating the effects similar to itself, remained unaffected by the process of generation. The One was such non-participated entity in the standard doctrine of the later Platonists, in the way it was formulated by Proclus. There also was an intermediate link between the One and the many, which was represented by the so-called “henads.” Henads are participated entities which, while remaining distinct from the subsequent level of reality, still correlated with it in a certain way. This means that henads were no longer completely transcendental to the multiple as it was the case with the One which was above being.³¹ Originating from the One as from their cause, the henads are similar to the One and thus are unities, yet not the unities in

demonstrated Arius’ knowledge of Porphyry’s *Isagoge* (R. WILLIAMS, *The Logic of Arianism*, pp. 58-62). Second, the expression μέρος ὁμοούσιον (ATHANASIUS, *Werke*, Dritter Band. Erster Teil, Urkunde 8, S. 12) which R. Williams correlated this possible knowledge of Arius with the passage from *De Myst.* III, 21, 150.9 of Iamblichus (R. WILLIAMS, *The Logic of Arianism*, pp. 63-66). Third, the polemical concept of “οὔτε δύο αγέννητα” (ATHAN. *Prim. or. contra Arianos* 14), put forward by the Arians against the Niceans. R. Williams thus suggested the influence of the commentators on Aristotle (Alexander of Aphrodisias and Porphyry) on Christian writers (R. WILLIAMS, *The Logic of Arianism*, pp. 66-81; R. WILLIAMS, *Arius: Heresy and Tradition*, pp. 215-229). I will not dwell on the details of R. Williams’ arguments in favor of the influence of Neoplatonic authors on Arius nor on the debate of Christopher Stead with the arguments of Rowan Williams. I should only note that, in my opinion, both R. Williams, and C. Stead were not completely correct in presenting the philosophical discussion concerning the participation issue. Thus, R. Williams distinguished two meanings of participation in the philosophical tradition of Antiquity: the Platonic paradigm which implied a vertical sense of participation, and a paradigm which I call “Aristotelian,” and which implied a “lateral” or “horizontal” sense of participation as opposed to the vertical sense. Firstly, R. Williams gave an imprecise formulation of the latter type of participation as “the relation between substances which are formally identical,” understanding this in such a way that “for two substances to ‘participate’ in or with each other is for both to belong to one γένος” (R. WILLIAMS, *The Logic of Arianism*, p. 68. C. Stead noted the imprecision of the formulation, see *Was Arius a Neoplatonist?*, pp. 47-48). However, participation in the Aristotelian sense is not a relation between the participated entities, but the relation between the thing and its substance, that is, between the participating and the participated (*Top.* 121a10-15, 122b20-22, see above). Secondly, R. Williams named Alexander of Aphrodisias and Porphyry as the authors who, contrary to Plato’s “vertical” paradigm of participation, introduced a new paradigm of participation in a horizontal sense. According to R. Williams, in elaborating the vertical paradigm, these authors relied on Aristotle’s criticism of standard Platonic understanding of participation (R. WILLIAMS, *The Logic of Arianism*, p. 68; IDEM., *Arius: Heresy and Tradition*, p. 220). However, as we have seen, this new paradigm of participation was introduced by Aristotle, although, indeed, it was later adopted by Alexander of Aphrodisias and Porphyry. Aristotle was the first philosopher who started to speak about participation, bearing in mind participation of an individual in his own substance, whose carrier he was (*Top.* 122b20-22, see above) instead of participation in the idea, transcendent for that individual. Thirdly, R. Williams argued that in the framework of horizontal participation, the very concept of “participation” was understood in a metaphorical sense (R. WILLIAMS, *The Logic of Arianism*, p. 68; IDEM., *Arius: Heresy and Tradition*, p. 217). In his claim R. Williams seems to proceed from the notion that the true meaning of participation is Platonic, and other uses of the term suggest its improper sense. For me it is obvious that the meaning inherent in the Aristotelian (horizontal) sense of participation is as standard and consistent as the Platonic sense, and that the authors who followed this paradigm used the concept of participation in the proper sense. The mistake of Christopher Stead, who criticized the concept of Neoplatonic background behind the Arian doctrine proposed by Rowan Williams, was that he did not recognize the fact that Porphyry might have used any other paradigm of participation apart from the Platonic. Thus, C. Stead denied that Porphyry in his *Isagoge* used the concept of participation in a horizontal (in my terminology, in the Aristotelian) sense (C. STEAD, *Was Arius a Neoplatonist?*, pp. 47-48, cf. 50). However, as I showed above, the Aristotelian paradigm of participation was quite explicitly used in Porphyry’s *Isagoge*.

³¹ S. MESYATS, *Iamblichus’ exegesis of “Parmenides” hypotheses and his doctrine of divine henads*, in E. Afonasin, J. Dillon, and J. Finamore (eds.), *Iamblichus and the Foundations of Late Platonism*, Leiden: Brill 2012, pp. 153-154; cf. PROCLUS. *Inst. theol.* 116.

themselves. Each henad is the unity wrapped in particular quality – the unity of a particular kind of being (the henad of Mind, Soul, Nature, etc.).

In the doctrine of Iamblichus, who lived several generations earlier than Proclus and who seems to be the founder of the Neoplatonic doctrine of henads,³² as far as we can see, the henads play the following role. Iamblichus taught about two Ones. The first One was absolutely transcendent, non-participated, ineffable, and ungraspable, either through affirmations or through negations. The other One, which was the cause of all beings, according to Proclus, was described by negations of the first hypothesis of Plato's *Parmenides*, and these negations in an apophatic way pointed to that whose cause was that One.³³ For example, the statement, "The One is not whole" in some way pointed to the One as the cause of the whole.³⁴ Other negations applied to the One in the framework of the first hypothesis as well pointed to the One as the cause of the negated predicate. Thus, according to the reconstruction of the testimonies about the doctrine of Iamblichus, which can be primarily found in Proclus and Damascus, the henad in the doctrine of Iamblichus was the aspect of the second One as the cause of a certain class of beings, that is, the henad was the unity for a particular type of existence.³⁵ According to Iamblichus, as the aspects of the One the henads were also described by negations of the first hypothesis of *Parmenides*³⁶; the henads were supra-substantial (as belonging to the scope of the first hypothesis) and at the same time they are the causes of beings.³⁷ Iamblichus explained that the first One, which was higher than being and which could not be grasped either by affirmations or by negations, was non-participated; the other One, which could be grasped by negations of the first hypothesis of *Parmenides*, was the cause of being, and constituted the henads in various modes of causality / participation, simultaneously remaining non-participated (that is, unrelated to its effects) and participated (that is, related to its effects) by various kinds of participating beings.³⁸

Thus it seems that the doctrine of Arius manifests the conceptual structure which in some respect is similar to that of Iamblichus. Arius speaks about the Father / the Unbegotten as non-participated in by the Son, intending to emphasize the impossibility to correlate God with the Son-Christ, just as with anything else God created, despite the fact that God was the creative cause of the Son and all beings. This meaning of the concept of non-participation indicating impossibility to correlate the cause with the caused, was originally embedded in the Neoplatonic concept of the non-participated entity. And when Arius used that concept speaking about non-

³² Cf J. DILLON, *Iamblichus and the origin of the doctrine of henads*, "Phronesis" 17 (1972); IDEM, *Appendix B in Platonis Dialogos Commentariorum Fragmenta*, Leiden 1973, pp. 412-416.

³³ PROCLUS, *Theol. Plat.* III, 82, 4-22.

³⁴ PROCLUS, *In Parm.* 1107, 9-20.

³⁵ S. MESYATS, *Iamblichus' exegesis*, p. 165.

³⁶ See in PROCLUS, *In Parm.* 1054, 37 - 1055, 2; 1066, 16-21; 1066, 28-33; *Theol. Plat.* III, 82, 12-18.

³⁷ See in PROCLUS, *In Parm.* 1066, 26-28.

³⁸ S. MESYATS, *Iamblichus' exegesis*, pp. 167-170.

participation of the Son in the Father / the Unbegotten, he implied the connotations similar to those which Iamblichus and later other Neoplatonists had in mind using the concept of non-participation as applied to the highest principle. This aspect shows a fundamental difference between the doctrines of Arius and Origen: the theology of Origen did not know the concept of non-participation, which was consistent with correlation between the Father and the Son and the eternal production of the cosmos by God in the doctrine of Origen. Arius, however, denied any correlation between God / the Father and of the Son / Christ (and even more so, God and the world), and therefore applied the concept of non-participatedness to the Godhead.³⁹

Going back to the comparison of the concepts of participation in Arius and Iamblichus, we should note that the nature of the Power, Logos, and Wisdom inherent in the Godhead is similar in the doctrine of Arius to the nature of henads in Iamblichus. Power, Logos, and Wisdom are the realities in the Godhead which possess distinct qualities, and while remaining transcendental they are the participated principles for the individual realms of being which were participating in them.

We should also note that there is an analogy, albeit not very strict, between the doctrines of Arius and Iamblichus in terms of the nature of transcendence which the highest principle had. According to the testimony of Proclus, the doctrine of Iamblichus concerning the One which was the cause of beings (the second One) entailed the apophatic way of describing its relationship with a multiplicity of beings. The specific nature of the Iamblichian apophatics in respect to the second One was that each negated predicate implicitly indicated that whose cause was the One. Arius spoke of the Godhead in a similar way, “God Himself, because He is as He is, is ineffable for all. ... We name Him Unbegotten due to the one begotten by nature; we praise Him as having no beginning due to the one who has a beginning; we honorably call Him eternal due to the one begotten in time (Αὐτὸς γοῦν ὁ θεὸς καθὼ ἐστὶν ἄρρητος ἅπασιν ὑπάρχει. ... ἀγέννητον δὲ αὐτὸν φάμεν διὰ τὸν τὴν φύσιν γεννητόν· τοῦτον ἀναρχον ἀνυμνοῦμεν διὰ τὸν ἀρχὴν ἔχοντα, αἰδίον δὲ αὐτὸν σέβομεν διὰ τὸν ἐν χρόνοις γεγαότα)»⁴⁰. Apparently, speaking about God in the passage, Arius followed the strategy which in some respects was similar to the strategy of Iamblichus

³⁹ This fundamental difference between the doctrines of Origen and Arius was the reason why Christopher Stead denied the possibility of Neoplatonic influences on Arius, since Neoplatonic authors, similarly to Origen, shared the understanding common among non-Christian thinkers of Antiquity, according to which the cosmos perennially originated from the highest principle: «Origen had placed the Father in an eternal relationship, not only with the Son, but even in principle with the world. Arius asserts the Father’s priority, not only to the world, but to the Son. Accordingly the Son had a real and momentary beginning, even if it is not strictly a beginning in time. But this surely means that Arius stands at the furthest possible remove from the majority, or etemalist, school of Neoplatonic philosophers; from Plotinus, Porphyry, and Iamblichus» (C. STEAD, *Was Arius a Neoplatonist?*, p. 51). In my view, the difference in the fundamental theological and philosophical intuitions between Christian and non-Christian authors of Late Antiquity (including Arius and Iamblichus) does not preclude the use of the technical language taken from the doctrines of non-Christian philosophers by the Christian authors for their own purposes. For this reason I believe that this argument of C. Stead cannot be considered valid.

⁴⁰ ATHAN. *Ad ep. Aeg. et Lib.* 15: 242 (Hansen, Metzler, Savvidis).

when Iamblichus was describing the second One. For Arius, the ineffable God was called in an apophatic manner, but in such a way that the negation in respect to God in some way also pointed to Him and revealed Him. The only reservation we should make is that a clear similarity to the specific Iamblichian apophatic strategy of naming the One is hindered – although not cancelled – by the name of *ἄτδιος* (“eternal”) given to God, which, unlike other names listed by Arius, does not appear in the form of negation as was the case with the first two names, *ἄ-γέννητος* (unbegotten) and *ἄναρχος* (with no beginning).

We can summarize our findings in the following way: 1) Iamblichus introduced the concept of non-participation as applied to the highest principle into the philosophical language. This concept with connotations similar to those used in Platonism appears in the doctrine of Arius. 2) The introduction of this concept by Iamblichus triggered the emergence of the participation triad: *participating–participated–non-participated* in the later Platonism; accordingly, this triad can also be found in Arius. 3) The subject of participation in the doctrine of Iamblichus was associated with his concept of the participated henads (playing the role of universals-before-things) which were the causes of various realms of beings. The theological system of Arius also reveals the entities similar to the Neoplatonic henads. 4) There is a (non-strict) similarity in terms of specific ways of apophatic description of the highest principle in Iamblichus and Arius.

If we keep in mind all the above as well as the fact that Iamblichus was an older contemporary of Arius, and Arius had a reputation of a person “not without the knowledge of dialectics,”⁴¹ we may suggest that Iamblichus might have had an impact on the philosophical and theological language of the Arian doctrine, which among other things is manifested in regard to the subject of participation.

⁴¹ Cp.: SOZOM. *Hist.* 1, 15.

Chapter 5 “Participation and universals in the Eunomian controversies”

5.1. The Eunomian controversies: the context

Next, I turn to the theme of universals and the theme of participation in Gregory of Nyssa’s oeuvre. First I focus on the polemic between Gregory and Eunomius. To do this, preliminary I will touch upon the context of the Eunomian controversies, as well as Eunomius’ and Gregory of Nyssa’ life, thought and their milieu.

In the second half of the fourth century, the Neo-Nicean party whose main representatives were the members of the so-called Cappadocian circle, began to be formed around Basil of Caesarea. This party wanted to restore the status of the Nicean doctrine and the Nicean Creed which were pushed into the background after the Arian reaction, following the First Ecumenical Council. The Neo-Niceans accomplished a fundamental theological and philosophical synthesis based on the doctrine of the divinity of all the Persons of the Trinity. In the process, in their polemics with the Arians (or rather, with the so-called Neo-Arians¹ who denied the divine status of the Son and the Holy Spirit), the Neo-Niceans used more advanced philosophical language than their Nicaean predecessors.

We can identify two important points with regard to the contribution of Basil of Caesarea and his followers from the Cappadocian circle (Gregory of Nazianzus and Gregory of Nyssa) to the development of the Trinitarian doctrine in its relation to the concept of consubstantiality. It was this understanding of the Trinitarian doctrine that has acquired the status of Orthodoxy in the Christian Empire.

First, it was the rethinking of how the concept of “consubstantiality” might be applied to the Persons of the Trinity. According to this new understanding, “consubstantiality” had to be understood in the “horizontal” sense of commonness between the Persons of the Trinity, which should be considered similar to the species common to its constituent individuals,² while in the pre-Cappadocian theology, as we have mentioned, the normative concept was rather a derivative understanding of the commonness between the Father and the Son.³ The Neo-Niceans also

¹ These were the representatives of the next generation of Arian movement after Arius and his immediate followers. As the most prominent neo-Arian thinkers we may mention Aetius and Eunomius, who changed the Arian theology by eliminating the trend related to the apophatic theology.

² Cf., for example, BAS. *Eun.*, PG 29b, 637-640; *Ep.* 236 (228), 6.

³ The predecessors of the Cappadocian Fathers in the anti-Arian polemics, Eustathius of Antioch and Athanasius of Alexandria, might speak about consubstantiality understood in the horizontal sense, but only

referred to the commonness understood in such a way as the “*logos* of substance,”⁴ or the “*logos* of being.”

Secondly, it was the combination of the language of “consubstantiality” and the language of the “three hypostases of the Trinity,” each having a corresponding “hypostatic property.” The language of the three hypostases with their hypostatic properties was borrowed by Basil of Caesarea from the Homoiousians, yet, it ultimately goes back to Origen. By combining the language of “consubstantiality” and the language of the “three hypostases,” Basil updated the terminological framework: he introduced the concepts of “*logos* of substance,” referring to consubstantiality understood in the horizontal sense, and “*tropos* (manner) of existence,”⁵ corresponding to the properties of each hypostasis of the Trinity.⁶ Both of these expressions – the “*logos* of substance” and the “*tropos* of existence” – were to become common in the Byzantine thought for expressing the commonness of being and the manners of individual existence.⁷

One of the main polemicists against the Neo-Niceanism was Eunomius. Eunomius belonged to the ecclesiastical movement called Anomoeanism, or neo-Arianism⁸, which followed the teaching of Arius. Eunomius and his teacher Aetius were the intellectual leaders of this party. They inherited the doctrine proposed during the first phase of the arian controversy (320-340AD) by Arius and his followers, they developed this doctrine and even changed it in some parts. Neo-

concerning individual human beings (Eustathius of Antioch in THEODORET. *Eran.* 100, 6-12 (Ettlinger); Ath. *De Decr.* 53), but not the Persons of the Trinity. J. Zachhuber thinks that Eustathius of Antioch influenced the emergence of the non-derivative Trinitarian doctrine of the Cappadocians since in one fragment (R. LORENZ, *Die Eustathius von Antiochien zugeschriebene Schrift gegen Photin*”, “*Zeitschrift für die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft*” 71 (1980), pp. 122-124) Eustathius deviates from the Nicean derivative language concerning the divinity of the Son, common to the pre-Cappadocian theology, namely, that the name of “God” refers to the divine nature and not to the Persons of the Trinity (see J. ZACHHUBER, *Basil and the Three-Hypostases-Tradition*, “*Zeitschrift für Antikes Christentum*”, 5 (2001), pp. 82–83).

⁴ See, for example, *Eun.*, PG 29b, 520, 556. The explicit language of the “*logos* of substance” was introduced by Aristotle and developed by his commentators (J. ANTON, *The Aristotelian Doctrine of Homonyma in the Categories and Its Platonic Antecedents*”, “*The Journal of the History of Philosophy*” 6 (1968), fasc. 4, pp. 315-326; IDEM., *Ancient Interpretations of Aristotle’s Doctrine of Homonyma*, “*The Journal of the History of Philosophy*”, 7 (1969), fasc. 1, pp. 1-18).

⁵ This expression may have go back to the commentators of Aristotle, see ALEX. APHROD. *In Prior Analytics* 197, 2; *In Topics* 179, 4, 295.6; *In Met.* 725, 6-7. Cf. also ELIAS. *In Isag.* 36, 11, 206, 19; AMMON. *In De Interpr.* 246, 24.

⁶ More precisely, Basil used the concept rather to refer to the manner of origination (that is, in relation to the Son and the Holy Spirit, originating from the Father but not from the hypostasis of the Father), see: BAS. CAES. *De S. Spirit* 18; *C. Sab. et Arium et Anom.*, PG 31, 613A), while other Cappadocians and the later Byzantine authors used this expression in relation to all three Persons of the Trinity, that is, referring to the manner of existence of the Persons. However, in the fourth book of *Against Eunomius* (the problem of its authorship is not resolved but it might have belonged to Basil), this expression was used in the latter sense (PG 29, 681).

⁷ See the overview in P. SHERWOOD, *The Earlier Ambigua of S. Maximus the Confessor and his Refutation of Origenism*, Rome 1955, pp. 155-165.

⁸ The orthodox opponents of Aetius and Eunomius called them Anomeans (BAS., *Eun.*, PG 29, 500, 27), i.e. “heterousians”, however it is not entirely a correct naming, because, first of all, Arius also stated that Christ is not similar to God, and second, in a certain way, – namely, though the will – according to Aetius and Eunomius Christ is similar to God (PHILOSTORGIUS 4, 12; 6, 1). Therefore, in line with some contemporary researches (M. WILES, *Archetypal Heresy: Arianism through the Centuries*, Oxford 1996, pp. 30-31), I will call the movement led by Aetius and Eunomius – Neo-Arianism, and their teaching is “Neo-Arian”.

Arians like their forerunners stated that Christ is not a true God and does not have the same nature as God the Father, instead he possesses a created nature. However, contrary to Arius, whose doctrine settled with apophatic discourse, neo-Arians focused on kataphatic and rationalistic approach. As Ronald Heyne⁹ reasonably mentions, this probably was in part caused by Arius' insistence on God's unknowability, and this is exactly what gave to their opponents the means, which put Arians in a difficulty, i.e. given that divine nature is unknowable and beyond expression it is possible to argue for the plausibility of eternal birth of Son from God and His consubstantiality with God, having said that, the way how Son is born from Father and how He is consubstantial to Father – is beyond human comprehension. Therefore, neo-Arians were in need of formalization of the discourse which operates with the notion of divine nature (essence) and the nature of Son. They persisted that Christians are supposed to know what they worship and what is the essence of worshiped; if a Christian is not capable to determine what is this essence, then he does not know what worships.¹⁰ In line with this, the methodology used in the teaching of neo-Arians, unlike the teaching of the first phase of the Arian controversy, displays the predominance of rationalistic motifs in their doctrine – from the standpoint of emphasis on knowledge and expression of being of God and Christ through the image language. That is to say, Aetius and Eunomius, the chief representatives of neo-Arians, associated the fixed notions “unbegotten” and “begetting” with essence of God and essence of Son (Christ) correspondingly, and based on these tried to justify the points of their system, referring to logical foundations.

Eunomius was born roughly in the twenties of the fourth century; he studied to be a scribe. After his parents' death Eunomius, who was eager to study rhetoric, moved to Constantinople, then to Antioch, from where he was dispatched to Alexandria by Secundus of Ptolemais in order to be a secretary and adjunct of Aetius. After the death of the Emperor Gallus Aetius together with Eunomius returned to Antioch, and befriended with bishop Eudoxius of Antioch.

After the Council of Constantinople in 359 the emperor Constantius sent Aetius into exile. By the Council Eunomius already wrote his "Apology". In the "Apology" of Eunomius, as well as in the treatise of Aetius "Sintagmation", there had been declared a new, rationalist approach in accordance with the arian movement. Shortly after, Constantius changed his attitude towards the Arians and Eunomius became bishop of Cyzicus. Receiving bishopric Eunomius asked Eudoxius to return Aetius from the exile and requested cancellation of his deposition. Due to the fact that Eudoxius did not fulfill this promise, and because of dissatisfaction of the flock about the views of Eunomios, he forsook Cyzicus and founded his own church community.¹¹ During the reign of the Emperor Julian, Aetius tried to reconcile in Constantinople with the church hierarchs,

⁹ R. HEINE, *Perfection in the Virtuous Life*, Philadelphia Patristic Foundation 1975, p. 135.

¹⁰ BAS. CAES. *Ep.* 234, 1.

¹¹ THEOD. *Hist.* 2, 29; PHILOSTORGIUS 6, 13; 7, 5

however, these attempts failed and Aetius with Eunomius began to ordain bishops for their own jurisdiction.¹² At the end of seventieth of the fourth century Eunomius, in the capacity of response to the work “Against Eunomius” by Basil the Great, started to publish the books of his “Apology for the Apology”. After the death of the emperor Valens in 378 Eunomius was summoned to Constantinople, where he presented a creed, whereby the Emperor Theodosius issued a decree regarding his subversion.¹³ Eunomius died roughly in 396.¹⁴

Eunomius’ doctrine, expounded in his *Apology*, implies the opposition of God as the highest principle that has no prior cause for existing, and Christ, God’s product — the very fact of Christ being derived and preconditioned excludes regarding his existence to be of the same kind as that of his initial cause.¹⁵ Since Christ was born, he had a cause of his existence, therefore, according to Eunomius, Christ cannot be called God according to his essence; his essence is creation.¹⁶ Similarly, Christ’s essence is expressed with the notion “offspring” (γέννημα),¹⁷ while God’s essence is denoted as “unbegotten” (ἀγέννητος).¹⁸ For Eunomius, words which denote essence differ from the terms that result from abstracting efforts of the human mind to form the image of an object’s essence; Eunomius called these latter words κατ’ ἐπίνοιαν and thought they might be ignored.¹⁹ Eunomius’ doctrine was opposed by Basil of Caesarea who presented his view in the treatise *Contra Eunomium* (early 360s), where he rejected Eunomius’ position expounded in the *Apology*. Basil of Caesarea maintained that words do not denote any essence, but only features of what is denoted, since essence is neither comprehensible, nor denotable by words. And the way we understand God and express our understanding is only κατ’ ἐπίνοιαν. In his *Apology for the Apology* (the late 380s), written in response to *Contra Eunomium* of Basil of Caesarea, Eunomius advanced more arguments for the theory of ἐπίνοια and his theological doctrine as well.

The methodological framework, upon which Eunomius builds propositions developed in the "Apology" and then in his next treatise is as follows: Eunomius drew a distinction between the two ways of (theological) analysis: first, when conclusions are made based on the knowledge

¹² PHILOSTORGIUS 8, 2.

¹³ Codex Theod. 1, 5, 6 (Nullis haereticus).

¹⁴ About the life of Eunomius and historical outline of the eunomian controversy see: E. CAVALCANTI, *Studi Eunomiani*, Roma 1976, pp. 1-22; R. VAGGIONE, *Eunomius of Cyzicus and the Nicene Revolution*, Oxford 2000; J. NARVAJA, *Teología y piedad en la obra de Eunomio de Cízico*, Rome: Pontificia Università Lateranense Istituto Patristico Augustinianum 2003. On Aetius see: Th. KOPECEK, *A History of Neo-Arianism*, Vol. I, II, The Philadelphia Patristic Foundation 1979, vol. I, pp. 61-132.

¹⁵ EUNOM. *Apol.* VII. The edition of *Apologia: EUNOMIUS. The Extant Works*, ed. and trans. by R. Vaggione, Oxford 1987.

¹⁶ EUNOM. *Apol.* XII.

¹⁷ EUNOM. *Apol.* XII, 6-7.

¹⁸ EUNOM. *Apol.* VII, 11.

¹⁹ EUNOM. *Apol.* VIII.

about essences, or, as Eunomius puts it – "law of nature"²⁰ and, secondly, when judgment about the nature of the subject is done on a basis of knowledge about its activities. Each of these ways, according to Eunomius, leads to the understanding that the Son is neither essentially like nor consubstantial with God. It works in the first case, because the essence of God is that He is *unbegotten*, i.e. He does not have a cause and origin for Himself, but the essence of Son is *begetting*, i.e. he has a beginning and a cause, and thus "unbegotten" and "begetting" cannot be the same essence or possess essences similar to each other. The second way – from activities to essences, – according to Eunomius demonstrates unlikeness and inconstituality of the Son with the Father owing to the fact that, since the Son is a creature of God, and the Spirit of the Son, therefore it follows that the Spirit cannot be of the same essence with the Son, nor the Son with God, and what is more they cannot have even similar essences.

The second apology of Eunomius, named "Apology for the Apology"²¹ was written as a response to the work of Basil of Caesarea "Refutation of the Apology of the Impious Eunomius", which Basil wrote as a disproof of Eunomius' "Apology." Unfortunately, the second apology of Eunomius preserved only in the fragments and in expositions by others. The main (although not a single one) source in this respect is the works of Gregory of Nyssa: "Contra Eunomium" and "Refutation of Eunomius"²², written as a confutation of the claims made in "Apology for the Apology". As much as can be reconstructed based on the retelling and the surviving fragments, the first part of the first book of the second apology of Eunomios is devoted to the publishing story of his first apology. In the second part of the first book Eunomius defends the point of the first apology (7, 3-15), which consists in the idea that the actual name of God's essence is *unbegotten*, and in general, it deals with the theme of *ousia* and its application to the Father, the Son and the Spirit, as well as talks about the nature of angels. In addition, in the first book of "Apology for the Apology" Eunomius develops the concept about the ways of knowledge: from entities to activities and vice versa. The second book of "Apology for the Apology" dedicated to critique of St. Basil's statement that all names applied to God are human thinking i.e. the fruit of human consciousness. Eunomius opposes to this teaching an idea, according to which all divine names have the same meaning, and he also develops a concept that human language is given by God. Also in this book he discusses a question, already elaborated by Aetius in "Sintagmatione"

²⁰ EUNOM. *Apol.* XX, 13.

²¹ Gregory of Nyssa (*Eun.* 1, 226, 2, 10-11; 2, 3, 6-16 and 4, 19 (Jaeger)) and Photius (*Bibl.* 138; data available for Photius probably goes back to Gregory of Nyssa) both mention that "Apology for the Apology" consists of three books, however the historian Philostorgius who was a part of eunomian community (and when was young even met Eunomius), mentions five books. Most likely, Eunomius wrote five books in response to Basil the Great, but Gregory responded only to three of them (EUNOMIUS. *The Extant Works*, pp. 79-81). Eunomius started to issue books of his second apology roughly two decades after appearance of Basil's treatise; first books began to appear near the time of Basil's death, i.e. in the very beginning of the seventieth of the fourth century.

²² The edition: *Gregorii Nysseni opera*, Libri I et II (Vulgo I et XIIb), ed. W. Jaeger. Leiden 1960.

that unbegotten is not deprivation. The third book of "Apology for the Apology" is dealing with the discussion on the nature of the Son and the theme of incarnation.

As had been noted above, among contemporaries of Eunomius the author who led a polemic with concepts of his "Apology for the Apology" was Gregory of Nyssa.

Gregory was born about 335 in a Christian family. His sister Macrina together with elder brother Basil (future bishop of Caesarea) made significant influenced on Gregory. Their father tried to give good education to the children, but, unlike Basil, Gregory for the sake of studying was not able to do trips to the centers of education,²³ he studied first at the elementary school, and then in schools of rhetoric. Based on writings of Gregory, one can say that he studied not just philosophy and rhetoric, but also medicine and classical literature as well. In 357 Gregory was made a reader. In 372 Basil the Great, being guided by ecclesiastical and political motives, made Gregory a bishop of a small town of Nyssa.

During the reign of the emperor Valens Gregory was persecuted. At the end of 375 during the omiyskom counsel Gregory was deposed in absentia and his chair was occupied by another person.²⁴ Within three years, Gregory led the wandering life until the time when after Valens' death in 378, his exile was revoked by the Emperor Gratian.²⁵ Soon after, Gregory returned to Nyssa, where he had to struggle with omiams and eunomians.²⁶ In April, 380 Gregory went to Sebaste to participate in the election of the bishop, where he unexpectedly was elected as a bishop of Sebaste.²⁷ However, after new elections in Sebaste Gregory forsook his cathedra and returned to Nyssa, where on request of his brother Peter he wrote first two books of his treatise "Contra Eunomium". Gregory took an active part in the II Ecumenical Council. After the Counsel, according to the decree of the emperor Theodosius, Gregory was one of three bishops who were declared to be guardians of orthodoxy in Ponte. Towards the end of the eightieth of the fourth century Gregory withdrew from duties associated with church policy. He lived in a monastery in Nyssa,²⁸ where he led ascetic life, and was engaged in literary work. The exact date of his death is unknown.

In his writings against Arius Gregory of Nyssa continues and develops the polemics started by his brother Basil of Caesarea. Gregory's oeuvre against Arius consists of four treatises, but it is also divided into separate books (this division was made after the death of Gregory).²⁹

²³ GREG. NYSS. *Ep.* 13.

²⁴ BAS. CAES. *epp.* 237, 239.

²⁵ GREG. NYSS. *Ep.* 6, 6-11.

²⁶ GREG. NYSS. *Ep.* 19, 11.

²⁷ GREG. NYSS. *Ep.* 19, 5.

²⁸ GREG. NYSS. *Ep.* 6, 10; 18, 5; 21, 2.

²⁹ According to the codices of Bavarian version, the corpus consists of twelve books, but according to the majority of codices of Livinian version, it is divided into thirteen books (the fifth book of the Bavarian version includes two books in Livinian version).

The work of Gregory "Contra Eunomium" consists of three books. Shortly after the issue of Eunomius' "Apology for the Apology" its copy came to Gregory, however not for a long while, that is why Gregory did not have enough time to get familiar with this treatise or made his own copy. Nevertheless, Gregory managed to make critical notes on the first book of Eunomius' work, what he then revised and issued. This is the first treatise written by Gregory against Eunomius after the death of Basil, on request of his brother Peter, approximately in 380. This work is the first book of Gregory's "Contra Eunomium" according to Migne addition.³⁰ In its first part Gregory defends the memory about Basil, the second part is devoted to the refutation of Eunomius triadology. Then Gregory issues the second treatise, which is a continuation of the first, and refutes the second book of "Apology for the Apology". It constitutes the second part of the twelfth book of "Contra Eunomium" according to Migne' edition.³¹ In the treatise Gregory discusses the status and significance of the names of "begotten" and "unbegotten", raises questions related to the theory of names and comprehension of the nature of language. Later on, in 382-383 years, Gregory issued another treatise devoted to the refutation of the third book "Apology for the Apology", published by Eunomius, probably after the first two. This treatise deals with issues related to Christology and triadology and also polemicizes about biblical quotations, which were the textual ground for the Arians. This treatise is books from third to the first half of the twelfth according to Migne's edition.³² The fourth treatise of Gregory of Nyssa, dedicated to the controversy with Eunomius – an independent from the rest – is a refutation of "The Confession of Faith", which was presented to the emperor Theodosius by Eunomius at the Council of Constantinople in 383, this treatise is the second book of anti-Eunomian corpus of Gregory published by Migne.³³

5.2. Description of a Human Being through the "Concurrence of Properties" in Basil of Caesarea and its Theological and Philosophical Context

1. The writings, important for the history of the Patristic thought and for the history of philosophy as a whole contain some key texts which are important for several lines of further development of thought. I would like to focus on one of these texts from the writings of Basil of Caesarea. This passage can be found in the beginning of the second book of Basil's *Contra*

³⁰ PG 45, 372-464.

³¹ PG 45, 909-968.

³² PG 45, 572-908.

³³ PG 45, 464-572.

Eunomium.³⁴ Arguing with the doctrinal positions of the *Apology*,³⁵ written by the Neo-Arian (Anomoean) leader Eunomius who insisted on a rigid relationship between the name of an individual and his substance, Basil comes to distinguishing between the general substance and the particular properties, united by the name:

Καίτοι τίς ἂν τῷ λόγῳ τούτῳ σωφρονῶν πρόσθοιτο, ὅτι ὧν τὰ ὀνόματα ἔστι διάφορα, τούτων παρηλλάχθαι καὶ τὰς οὐσίας ἀνάγκη; Πέτρου γὰρ καὶ Παύλου, καὶ ἀπαξᾶπλῶς ἀνθρώπων πάντων προσηγορίαι μὲν διάφοροι, οὐσία δὲ πάντων μία. Διόπερ ἐν τοῖς πλείστοις οἱ αὐτοὶ ἀλλήλοις ἐσμέν· τοῖς δὲ ιδιώμασι μόνοις τοῖς περὶ ἕκαστον θεωρουμένοις ἕτερος ἑτέρου διενηνόχαμεν. Ὅθεν καὶ αἱ προσηγορίαι οὐχὶ τῶν οὐσιῶν εἰσι σημαντικαί, ἀλλὰ τῶν ιδιοτήτων, αἱ τὸν καθ' ἓνα χαρακτηρίζουσιν. Ὅταν οὖν ἀκούωμεν Πέτρον, οὐ τὴν οὐσίαν αὐτοῦ νοοῦμεν ἐκ τοῦ ὀνόματος (οὐσίαν δὲ λέγω νῦν τὸ ὑλικὸν ὑποκείμενον, ὅπερ οὐδαμῶς σημαίνει τοῦνομα), ἀλλὰ τῶν ιδιωμάτων ἃ περὶ αὐτὸν θεωρεῖται τὴν ἔννοιαν ἐντυπούμεθα. Εὐθὺς γὰρ ἐκ τῆς φωνῆς ταύτης νοοῦμεν τὸν τοῦ Ἰωῶνᾶ, τὸν ἐκ τῆς Βηθσαιῶν, τὸν ἀδελφὸν Ἀνδρέου, τὸν ἀπὸ ἀλιέων εἰς τὴν διακονίαν τῆς ἀποστολῆς προσκληθέντα, τὸν διὰ πίστεως ὑπεροχὴν ἐφ' ἑαυτὸν τὴν οἰκοδομὴν τῆς Ἐκκλησίας δεξάμενον· ὧν οὐδὲν ἐστὶν οὐσία, ὡς ἡ ὑπόστασις νοουμένη. Ὡστε τὸ ὄνομα τὸν χαρακτῆρα μὲν ἡμῖν ἀφορίζει τὸν Πέτρου· αὐτὴν δὲ οὐδαμοῦ παρίστησι τὴν οὐσίαν. Πάλιν ἀκούσαντες Παῦλον, ἑτέρων ιδιωμάτων συνδρομὴν ἐνοήσαμεν· τὸν Ταρσέα, τὸν Ἑβραῖον, τὸν κατὰ νόμον Φαρισαῖον, τὸν μαθητὴν Γαμαλιήλ, τὸν κατὰ ζῆλον διώκτην τῶν Ἐκκλησιῶν τοῦ Θεοῦ, τὸν ἐκ τῆς φοβερᾶς ὀπτασίας εἰς τὴν ἐπίγνωσιν ἐναχθέντα, τὸν ἀπόστολον τῶν ἐθνῶν. Ταῦτα γὰρ πάντα ἐκ μιᾶς φωνῆς τῆς Παῦλος περιορίζεται. Καίτοιγε, εἴπερ ἀληθὲς ἦν, ὅτι ὧν τὰ ὀνόματα διενήνοχεν, ἐναντίως ἔχουσιν αἱ οὐσίαι, ἐχρῆν δῆπου καὶ Παῦλον καὶ Πέτρον καὶ ἀπαξᾶπλῶς ἀνθρώπους ἅπαντας ἑτερουσίους ἀλλήλοις εἶναι. Ἐπεὶ δὲ τοῦτο οὐδεὶς οὕτως ἀμαθῆς καὶ τῆς κοινῆς φύσεως ἀνεπίσκεπτος, ὥστ' ἂν εἰπεῖν προαχθῆναι· Ἐκ πηλοῦ γὰρ, φησὶ, διήρτισαι σὺ, ὡς κἀγώ· οὐδὲν ἕτερον τοῦ

³⁴ Concerning the date of the *Eun.*, there is an agreement that it was written in the beginning of the theological activity of Basil, that is, in the first half of the 360s. The most cautious scholars attribute the treatise to the period between 360 and 366. The exact date of the treatise is based on the date of two letters of Basil (*Ep.* 20 and 223), which contain references to it (S. HILDEBRAND, *A Reconsideration of the Development of Basil's Trinitarian Theology: the Dating of Ep. 9 and 'Eun.'*, "Vigiliae Christianae", 58 (2004), pp. 390-403).

³⁵ The *Apology* of Eunomius was probably written by the time of the Council of Constantinople, held in December, 359, and was read at the Council in response to the accusations made by the representatives of the Homoiousian party (Th. KOPECEK, *A History of Neo-Arianism*, vol. 2, pp. 305-306).

λόγου ἢ τὸ ὁμοούσιον πάντων ἀνθρώπων ἀποσημαίνοντος· ψευδῆς ὁ τῆς διαφορᾶ τῶν ὀνομάτων τὸ τῆς οὐσίας διάφορον ἔπεσθαι σοφιζόμενος.

But what sane person would agree with this logic that there must be a difference of substances for those things whose names are distinct? For the designations of Peter and Paul and of all people in general are different, but there is a single substance for all of them. For this reason, in most respects we are the same as one another, but it is only due to the distinguishing marks considered in connection with each one of us that we are different, each from the other. Hence the designations do not signify the substances, but rather the distinctive features that characterize the individual. So whenever we hear 'Peter,' the name does not cause us to think of his substance - now by 'substance' I mean the material substrate which the name itself cannot ever signify - but rather the notion of the distinguishing marks that are considered in connection with him is impressed upon our mind. For as soon as we hear the sound of this designation, we immediately think of the son of Jonah, the man from Bethsaida, the brother of Andrew, the one summoned from the fishermen to the ministry of the apostolate, the one who because of the superiority of his faith was charged with the building up of the church. None of these is his substance, understood as hypostasis. Hence the name (τὸ ὄνομα) determines for us the character of Peter. It cannot ever communicate the substance itself. Likewise, when we hear 'Paul,' we think of a concurrence of other distinguishing marks: the man from Tarsus, the Hebrew, as to the law a Pharisee, the disciple of Gamaliel, the zealous persecutor of the churches of God, the man who was brought to knowledge by a terrifying vision, the Apostle to the Gentiles. All these things are encompassed by the single term Paul. Moreover, if it were true that the substances of things whose names differ are opposed, then Paul and Peter and all people in general must be different in substance from one another. But there is no one so stupid and so inattentive to the common nature that he would be led to say this - after all, the passage: *You have been formed from clay, as also have* [Jb 33:6] signals nothing other than that all human beings are of the same substance. This being the case, whoever

evasively argues that difference in substance follows upon difference in names is a liar³⁶.

Further Basil went on to say the relationship between the names of the Divine Persons and their common substance needed to be understood in the same way as the relationship between Peter and Paul and their common substance. A. Choufrine has shown³⁷ that it was this passage that Gregory of Nyssa used in the so-called *Letter 38* of Basil of Caesarea. The *Letter*, currently attributed by most scholars to Gregory of Nyssa,³⁸ reinforced and developed the analogy invented by Basil, and illustrated the notion of generality and differences between the hypostases of the Holy Trinity, drawing on the example of human individuals.³⁹

Let us identify the scope of problems discussed in the passage. They include the relationship between the general and the particular, the problem of human cognition and the object of cognitive activities, the status of naming, as well as description and representation of a human individual. This article analyzes the position of Basil of Caesarea concerning these problems as well as some other philosophical and theological topics against a wide philosophical, theological and ecclesiastical background of the fragment quoted above.

2. The principle of individuation is one of the most important problems addressed in the passage. Basil solves it through the use of the concept of concurrence (συνδρομή) of properties. We should have a closer look at Basil's argument and first turn to the doctrine of the Stoics.

When the head of the Skeptic Academy Arkesilaos made a stand against the Stoics, one of the stumbling blocks was the so-called *Treatise on Growth* (περὶ αὐξήσεως λόγος), composed by Epicharmus Comicus.⁴⁰ The *Treatise* called into question the sameness of an individual who was undergoing the process of quantitative changes, for example, during food intake. In contrast to the understanding of a human being as a whole which was identical to the sum of its parts and

³⁶ *Eun.*, PG 29b, 577c–580b, SC 305, 18–22 Sesboüé/Durand, trans. by Mark DelCogliano and Andrew Radde-Gallwitz, in: SAINT BASIL OF CAESAREA, *Against Eunomius*, The fathers of the Church; v. 122, Washington 2011, pp. 134–136, slightly revised.

³⁷ A. CHOUFRINE, *The Development of St. Basil's Idea of "Hypostasis"*, "Studi sull'Oriente Cristiano", 7 (2003), fasc. 2, pp. 22–24.

³⁸ See, for example, the conclusions of R. Hübner and P. Fedwick in R. HÜBNER, *Gregor von Nyssa als Verfasser der sog. Ep. 38 des Basilius: Zum unterschiedlichen Verständnis der ousia bei den kappadokischen Brüdern*, in J. Fontaine, Ch. Kannengiesser (eds.), *Epektasis: Mélanges patristiques offerts au cardinal Jean Daniélou*, Paris 1972, pp. 463–490; P. FEDWICK, *Commentary of Gregory of Nyssa on the 38th Letter of Basil of Caesarea*, "Orientalia Christiana Periodica", 44 (1978), fasc. 1, pp. 31–51. There is no doubt that the so-called "Letter 38" was written by Gregory of Nyssa later than *Against Eunomius* of Basil of Caesarea.

³⁹ *Ep.* 38, 3; PG 32, 328cd. The notion of a certain specific quality set in accordance with hypostasis, which was used in the *Letter 38* and implied in the above passage of Basil of Caesarea (who in this case did not use the concept of hypostasis in the technical Nicene sense), goes back to the Homoiousians (Basil Ancyra and George Laodicean), see EPIPH. *Panar.* 73, 16, PG 42, 432–433.

⁴⁰ DK 23 B 2; *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker*, eds. H. Diels, W. Kranz, vol. 1, Berlin: Wiedmann 1960, Ss. 195–197.

whose principle of individuation was the amount of matter,⁴¹ the Stoic Chrysippus proposed a concept which for the first time as David Sedley noted,⁴² made an attempt to answer the question of what made it possible for a person to carry his or her identity throughout the flow of time. Specific Stoic position on the issue was shaped by two factors: firstly, by the obvious identity of a human individual throughout his life, and secondly, by the Stoic epistemology which rejected the skepticism of the followers of the Academy and proclaimed that every true sage was capable of receiving unmistakable “comprehensive impressions.”⁴³

Insisting on the capacity to know the individuals, the Stoics argued that each thing was unique, and no two indistinguishable things existed (at least, for a sage). In this regard, in a human being Chrysippus distinguished between the underlying substrate which was in constant change, and the constant qualities – the general quality and the particular *individual quality* (ἰδίως ποιόν), peculiar for each human being and serving as his substantial characteristic. This quality made it possible for an individual human being to maintain sameness and stability during the lifetime in spite of the flow of time.⁴⁴ According to Chrysippus, it could be formalized and expressed in the language. We should note that the notion of the particular quality in the Stoic system was developed for safeguarding the individuality of human beings, and not of individual things in general.⁴⁵

Although according to the Stoics the particular quality of an individual human “remained from birth to death,” it nevertheless had a capacity to increase and decrease.⁴⁶ Thus, having established the differentiation of the levels of being in the description of an individual and having distinguished between the substrate and the special unique quality of an individual accessible for knowledge, Chrysippus proposed an original solution for his time: an individual was unconfused yet indivisible unity of ever-moving material substrate and the particular individual quality, stable over the lifetime. It is important that the Stoics insisted that the particular quality could not be the same for several individuals (this followed from the general

⁴¹ The doctrine of Heraclitus presents here an obvious philosophical context (see DK 22 B 91; *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker*, S. 171). The doctrine of the constant transiency of humanity as far as his material component is concerned, can be also found in Plato (*Symp.* 207de). Plato mentions Epicharmus as a philosopher who, along with Protagoras, Heraclitus, Empedocles, and Homer taught on the constant flux of the material world (*Theaet.* 152e). Despite this reference, Plato was accused by Alcimus of stealing ideas from Epicharmus (see *DIOG. LAERT.* 3, 9-10). However, the problem of finding the principle of identity for the humans as material beings, implicit in the comedy of Epicharmus, was not a central issue in philosophical inquiries of Plato or Aristotle. Only in the controversy between the Stoics and the Academy, the problem of the human identity became the main issue of the philosophical research (D. SEDLEY, *The Stoic Criterion of Identity*, “Phronesis” 27 (1982), p. 255).

⁴² *Ibid.*, 261.

⁴³ *CIC. Academica* 2, 41, 77-78; *DIOG. LAERT.* 6, 162, 177.

⁴⁴ See *Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta*, vol. II, fr. 395, 762.

⁴⁵ D. SEDLEY, *The Stoic Criterion*, p. 272, n. 16.

⁴⁶ See *PLUT. De comm. not.* 44, 1083d; *POSID. Fr.* 96: LS 28D (A. LONG., D. SEDLEY, *The Hellenistic Philosophers*, Vol. 1, 2, Cambridge 1987, vol. 2, p. 171).

principle of the Stoic philosophy, namely, that no two things, indistinguishable from each other may exist), and *vice versa* – one individual cannot have two particular qualities.⁴⁷

This doctrine of the general quality and particular qualities was reflected in the Stoic teaching on the parts of speech. According to Diogenes Laertius, Chrysippus distinguished between the proper name (ὄνομα) and the appellative name (προσηγορία). Chrysippus' student Diogenes of Babylon gave them the following definition, “The appellative name (προσηγορία) is the part of speech denoting general quality (κοινήν ποιότητα), for example, “man” or “horse.” The proper name (ὄνομα) is the part of speech, indicating particular quality (ιδίαν ποιότητα), for example, Diogenes or Socrates.”⁴⁸

Such a distinction between the proper names and the appellative names was used by the Alexandrian grammarians. At the same time, sources indicate that there were two traditions of defining ὄνομα and προσηγορία. If Apollonius Dyscolus and the subsequent tradition correlated⁴⁹ them with particular and general *qualities* of the denotation of utterance, Dionysius of Thrace and his grammatical tradition⁵⁰ correlated them with general and particular *substances*, which can be associated with the Aristotelization of the Alexandrian grammar.⁵¹

Based on the evidence of some of the later sources, it can be assumed that the Stoics could understand the particular quality as a combination of qualities. The surviving testimony of Dexippus on the principle of individuation of individuals belonging to the same substance, is as following:

Οἱ μὲν οὖν λύοντες τὴν ἀπορίαν ταύτην κατὰ τὸ ἰδίως ποιόν, τοῦτ' ἔστιν ὅτι ὁ μὲν φέρε γρυπότητι ἢ ξανθότητι ἢ ἄλλῃ συνδρομῇ ποιοτήτων ἀφώρισται, ἄλλος δὲ σιμότητι ἢ φαλακρότητι ἢ γλαυκότητι, καὶ πάλιν ἕτερος ἑτέραις, οὐ καλῶς μοι δοκοῦσι λύειν·

⁴⁷ Although Plutarch criticized the Stoics that according to their doctrine, “two particular qualities may appear in one substance, and... one and the same substance that has one particular quality then takes over another [particular quality] and keeps both” (PLUT. *De communibus notitiis*, 36, 1077d), this conclusion in no way would have been shared by the Stoics, but was ascribed to them by Plutarch, allegedly as a result of their belief in the world fire, when Zeus and the Providence come close and coexist in the same ethereal substance. In fact, the Stoic concept that Providence has the same relation to Zeus as the soul relates to the person, mentioned by Plutarch in the same passage, contradicts his opinion (D. SEDLEY, “*The Stoic Criterion*”, 267).

⁴⁸ DIOG. LAERT. 7, 58 = Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta, vol. III, fr. 22.

⁴⁹ See, for example, *Apollonii Dyscoli de constructione libri quattuor*, ed. G. Uhlig (Grammatici Graeci 2.2), Leipzig 1910, pp. 142, 1 - 143, 3; *Scholia in Dionysii Thracis Artem grammaticam*, ed. A. Hilgard, (Grammatici Graeci 3.1), Leipzig 1901, pp. 358, 28-32; 524, 9-10.

⁵⁰ *Dionysii Thracis Ars grammatica*, ed. G. Uhlig, Grammatici Graeci 1.1, Leipzig 1883, pp. 33, 6-34, 2; *Georgii Choerobosci Prolegomena et scholia in Theodosii Alexandrini canones isagogicos de flexione nominum et verborum*, ed. A. Hilgard (Grammatici Graeci 4.1), Leipzig 1894, p. 105, 23-25.

⁵¹ Cf. D. ROBERTSON, *A Patristic Theory of Proper Names*, “Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie” 84 (2002), fasc. 3.

<...> Those who solve this difficulty on the basis of the peculiarly qualified – that one individual is distinguished, say, by hookedness of the nose, by blondness, or by some other concurrence of qualities, another by snubness, baldness, or greyness of the eyes, and again another by other qualities – do not seem to me to solve it well.⁵²

A. Long and D. Sedley saw the employment of the Stoic terminology in the use of qualities in the passage and considered the fragment to be a testimony on the Stoic ontology.⁵³ Yet, they pointed out to a strange nature of the fragment, since the substantial status of the particular quality sought by the Stoics, seems to be somewhat in the fragment since these general qualities may change during the life of an individual.⁵⁴

However, there are a number of reasons confirming the suggestion that the fragment of Dexippus, referring to the unfolding of the particular quality through the combination of general qualities, may still reflect the authentic Stoic doctrine. Thus, as A. Lloyd rightly observed, according to the Stoic doctrine of the categories, the particular quality of a person can be viewed as a complex set of qualities.⁵⁵ Lloyd had in mind the normative principle of the Stoic doctrine – viewing the subject from several points of view with the help of four Stoic categories, each one revealed by the following category. In the run of this process of consideration, the subject was being identified progressing from a lesser certainty to a greater certainty, and from the point of view of non-relativity (corresponding to the category of the substrate) to the point of view which revealed all kinds of relationships between the subject and the world (corresponding to the category of relation).

It remains unclear whether it is possible to assume that the Stoic tradition made its way from the understanding of the particular quality as capable of increase or decrease (that is, of change) to the description of the particular quality through a set of qualities. However, we may definitely see a clear difference in emphasis – in the latter case much more emphasis is put on the epistemological function of the particular quality of an individual and the possibility of determining the particular quality in the process of knowledge.

⁵² DEX. *In Cat.* 30, 23-26, greek text in: A. LONG, D. SEDLEY, *The Hellenistic Philosophers*, vol. 2, pp. 173-174 (LS 28J), trans. by A. Long and D. Sedley in *The Hellenistic Philosophers*, vol. 1, p. 169, slightly revised.

⁵³ Long and Sedley published the fragment in the section of the *Ontology* (Ibid., pp. 166-185).

⁵⁴ Ibid., vol. 1, 174; vol. 2, 174-175.

⁵⁵ A. LLOYD, *Grammar and Metaphysics in the Stoya*, in A. Long (ed.), *Problems in Stoicism*, London 1971, p. 66.

In the Platonic School, the concept of “concurrency” (συνδρομή) emerged, on the one hand, in the skeptical “New Academy” for expressing the need to have a multitude of true notions in order to obtain a single true notion of a sensible thing (including an individual human being). For example, according to Carneades, our notion of Socrates would be true if each of the notions related to Socrates and converged into a singularity really pointed to something typical for Socrates.⁵⁶ On the other hand, this topic is relevant to the method of defining material things through aggregation (τὸ ἄθροισμα) of qualities, which goes back to Plato⁵⁷ and can be found, for example, in Albinus.⁵⁸ In Plotinus, the topic of concurrency appears in the *Enneads* VI 3. 8. 20, 26, where the philosopher says that the sensual substance is the accumulation (συμφόρησις) or mixture (μίγμα) of qualities. Typically, speaking about substance as a combination of qualities Plotinus along with the entire Platonic tradition intends to show that the sensual singular substance is a “quasi substance,” a substance not in the proper sense of the word, but only an imitation of the true intelligible substance.⁵⁹

However, the notion of the concurrency of properties in Basil of Caesarea may well be related to the treatment of same topic by Porphyry, since among other philosophers of the Platonic tradition it was Porphyry who applied the topic of concurrency (aggregation) of qualities in his logical writings for describing a human individual.

In his logical treatises Porphyry at least twice mentioned individuation of singularities through the aggregation of qualities. He dwelled on the subject in greater length in the *Isagoge* and more briefly in his *Short Commentary on Aristotle's Categories*. Thus he argues in the *Isagoge*:

Socrates is said to be an individual, and so are *this* white thing, and *this* person approaching, and the son of Sophroniscus⁶⁰ (should Socrates be his only son). Such items are called individuals because each is constituted of proper features the assemblage of which will never be found the same in anything else—the proper features of Socrates will never be found in any other of the particulars.

⁵⁶ SEX. EMP. *Adv. Math.* 176-179.

⁵⁷ *Theaet.* 157b-c; cf.: *ibid.*, 209c; *Phil.* 14a, 15b.

⁵⁸ ALBINUS. *Epit.* 4, 7.

⁵⁹ See *Enn.* 6, 3, 8, 30-37. Cf. 6, 3, 15, 32-36.

⁶⁰ With respect to the words, “... and this approaching, and the son of Sophroniscus” I am following the reading of J. Barnes (J. BARNES, *Porphyry. Introduction*, p. 8), whereas the reading in the classic edition of A. Busse is as follows, “... and this approaching son of Sophroniscus.” For more detail, see F. ADEMOLLO, *Sophoniscus' Son is Approaching: Porphyry, Isagoge 7.20-1*, “The Classical Quarterly”, 54 (2004), fasc. 1, pp. 322-325. In addition to the textual arguments in favor of his reading, Barnes points to an important example in a work of Aristotle (*Anal. Pr.* 43a35-6), which probably was the source of Porphyry.

ἄτομον δὲ λέγεται ὁ Σωκράτης καὶ τουτὶ τὸ λευκὸν καὶ οὐτοσί ὁ
προσιῶν Σωφρονίσκου υἱός, εἰ μόνος αὐτῷ εἶη Σωκράτης υἱός. ἄτομα οὖν
λέγεται τὰ τοιαῦτα, ὅτι ἐξ ἰδιοτήτων συνέστηκεν ἕκαστον, ὧν τὸ ἄθροισμα
οὐκ ἂν ἐπ' ἄλλου ποτὲ τὸ αὐτὸ γένοιτο· αἱ γὰρ Σωκράτους ἰδιότητες οὐκ ἂν
ἐπ' ἄλλου τινὸς τῶν κατὰ μέρος γένοιτο ἂν αἱ αὐταί⁶¹.

In the treatise *On Aristotle categories*, Porphyry uses the concept of the “concurrency” (συνδρομή) of qualities with similar wording:

Socrates does not differ from Plato in virtue of specific differentiae, but in virtue of a particular concurrence of qualities, in virtue of which, and <not> by specific differentiae, Plato is differentiated from Socrates.

εἰδοποιῶν μὲν γὰρ διαφοραῖς οὐ διενήνοχεν Σωκράτης Πλάτωνος, ἰδιότητι δὲ
συνδρομῆς ποιότητων, καθ' ἣν εἰδοποιῶ διενήνοχεν Πλάτων Σωκράτους⁶².

In his logical treatises Porphyry tried to neutralize the anti-Platonic stance of Aristotle's *Categories* and therefore insisted on understanding the Aristotelian *Categories* as a treatise on the methods of expression and not on the modes of existence of things,⁶³ implying that this treatise described only the reality of the thought or the reality of the logical reasoning.

Relying on his tree of the universals, Porphyry distinguished between the predicates in accordance with the expanse of classes, comprised by the predicates: the highest genus was said of all underlying genera; the lower genera were said of the genera below them, etc. Such a system had a rule: each predicate was said either of something wider than itself or of something identical to it in extension. The lowest class of predicates which can only be said of themselves, is the class of “singularities” (τὸ ἄτομον).⁶⁴ Thus, Porphyry made a claim, impossible for Aristotle, that the singularity itself was a predicate.⁶⁵ According to Aristotle, individual qualities of a thing were within the subject, but were not said of the subject.⁶⁶ Porphyry, however, accepted that the single could be expressed in the saying in the same way as the higher elements

⁶¹ PORPH. *Isagoge* 7, 19-24 (Busse), trans. by J. Barnes, *Porphyry: Introduction*, 8.

⁶² Idem., *In Cat.* 129, 9-10 (Busse), trans. by S. Strange in PORPHYRY. *On Aristotle's Categories*. Ithaca, New York 1992, p. 140.

⁶³ Ibid., 58, 4-21.

⁶⁴ Idem., *Isagoge* 7, 18-19.

⁶⁵ See A. LLOYD, *The Anatomy of Neoplatonism*, Oxford 1990, pp. 43-44.

⁶⁶ ARISTOT. *Cat.* 1a23-29.

in the genus-species tree. Facing the need to specify a “zero” class, corresponding to the singularity of the species, which would have required a simple pointing with finger, Porphyry proposed to consider the singularity as if from the reverse side for expressing this specificity in thought and language. He suggested looking at the singularity not through the prism of genus-species relationships, but through the unique aggregation of qualities. In order to express these singularities in saying, Porphyry modified the above rule: certain predicates could be said of each of the singularities; the aggregation of predicates was unique for each singularity, and that aggregation constituted a sort of definition for the given singularity.⁶⁷

Going back to the testimony of Dexippus, we can point out that there is evidence that Porphyry could use the Stoic doctrines in his logical writings.⁶⁸ Therefore, it can be assumed, as does R. Chiaradonna,⁶⁹ that Dexippus combined Porphyry’s concept of singularities with the Stoic doctrine of the particular quality, arguing with Porphyry and bearing in mind the influence of the elements of the Stoic doctrine on him, but not willing to criticize Porphyry directly. Dexippus could also have in mind that Aristotle, the author of the *Categories* (the writing which Porphyry comments upon in his *Isagoge*), criticized the way of individuation through the combination of qualities.⁷⁰

3. Among the Christian writers Origen was the predecessor of Basil of Caesarea as far as the description of an individual through the combination of qualities is concerned. R. Sorabji pointed to the passage of Origen,⁷¹ which probably was behind Basil’s idea to use the example that he cited in the fragment under discussion, namely, *On Prayer* 24:

„ὄνομα” τοίνυν ἐστὶ κεφαλαιώδης προσηγορία τῆς ἰδίας ποιότητος τοῦ ὀνομαζομένου παραστατική· οἷόν ἐστι τις ἰδία ποιότης Παύλου τοῦ ἀποστόλου, ἢ μὲν τις τῆς ψυχῆς, καθ’ ἣν τοιάδε ἐστὶν, ἢ δέ τις τοῦ νοῦ, καθ’ ἣν τοιῶνδε ἐστὶ θεωρητικὸς, ἢ δέ τις τοῦ σώματος αὐτοῦ, καθ’ ἣν τοιῶνδε ἐστὶ. τὸ τοίνυν τούτων τῶν ποιότητων ἴδιον καὶ ἀσυντρόχαστον πρὸς ἕτερον (ἄλλος γάρ τις ἀπαράλλακτος Παύλου ἐν τοῖς οὔσιν οὐκ ἔστι) δηλοῦται διὰ τῆς „Παῦλος” ὀνομασίας. ἀλλ’ ἐπὶ ἀνθρώπων, οἷον αἰ ἀλλασσομένων τῶν ἰδίων ποιότητων, ὑγιᾶς κατὰ τὴν γραφὴν ἀλλάσσεται καὶ τὰ ὀνόματα· μεταβαλούσης

⁶⁷ See the discussion in the comments of J. Barnes to the *Isagoge*: J. BARNES, *Porphyry. Introduction*, pp. 150-154.

⁶⁸ The Stoic influence on Porphyry was noted by Simplicius in his Commentary on the *Categories* (2, 8-9). Explicit Stoic connotations can be traced in the passage of Porphyry, which Simplicius cited in the same work (*Ibid.*, 48, 11-16).

⁶⁹ R. CHIARADONNA, *La teoria dell'individuo in Porfirio e l'IAION PIOION stoico*, “Elenchos: Rivista di studi sul pensiero antico”, 21 (2000), fasc. 2, pp. 317-328.

⁷⁰ ARIST. *Met.* 1040a8-15; this was indicated by J. Barnes (*J. BARNES, Porphyry. Introduction*, p. 153).

⁷¹ R. SORABJI, *The Philosophy of Commentators, 200–600 AD: A Sourcebook*, vol. 3, Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press 2005, pp. 226-227.

γὰρ τῆς τοῦ „Ἀβράμ” ποιότητος, ἐκλήθη „Ἀβραάμ,” καὶ τῆς τοῦ Σίμωνος, ὁ „Πέτρος” ὠνομάσθη, καὶ τῆς τοῦ διώκοντος τὸν Ἰησοῦν „Σαοῦλ,” προσηγορεύθη ὁ „Παῦλος.”

A proper name then is a concise appellative that presents the distinctive quality of what is named, for example, there is a distinctive quality of the Apostle Paul, one for his soul by which it is the way it is, one for his intellect by which it can contemplate the kinds of thing it does, one for his body by which it is the way it is. The unique feature which is unconformable with anyone else, since there is no one else in existence indistinguishable from Paul, is displayed through the naming of Paul. But with humans, names can validly be changed according to scripture⁷², as if the unique qualities were being changed. For example, when the quality of Abram changed he was called Abraham, when Simon's changed he was named Peter, and when Saul's changed, the enemy of Jesus, he was addressed as Paul.⁷³

The Stoic inspiration of the passage is obvious. Origen used the Stoic notion of ἰδίᾳ ποιότης (“particular quality”) in the spirit of its technical use by the Stoics as the unifying principle of multiplicity, bound by the inner unity.⁷⁴ In addition, following the Stoic tradition which we have seen in Diogenes of Babylon, Origen juxtaposed the names and the quality, although he did not follow the Stoic distinction between the ὄνομα and the προσηγορία.

Thus, Origen reproduced the idea of the Stoics, according to which the name of an individual was in accordance with his individual quality, distinguishing him from other people.⁷⁵ As we have noted, according to Chrysippus, two particular qualities corresponding to the proper names could not coexist in the single substance of a given individual. Chrysippus illustrated this point using the example of certain Dion whose special quality was having all his members, and Theon whose special quality was missing a leg. If Dion loses his feet, he would become Theon, while the former Theon would disappear.⁷⁶

⁷² κατὰ τὴν γραφήν. In respect of understanding of these words I follow to the treatment of William A. Curtis' translation of *On Prayer* (CCEL); in Sorabji's translation: "...in their spelling".

⁷³ PG 11, 492bc, trans. R. SORABJI, *The Philosophy of Commentators, 200–600 AD: A Sourcebook*, vol. 3, p. 227.

⁷⁴ See *Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta*, vol. II, fr. 391.

⁷⁵ Origen was strongly influenced by the understanding of names in the magical sense, which was quite widespread in the Middle Platonism. See J. DILLON, *The Magical Power of Names in Origen and Late Platonism*, in R. Hanson, H. Crouzel (eds.), *Origeniana Tertia*, Rome: Edizioni dell'Ateneo 1985, pp. 203–216. Yet here, due to the general Stoic context we need to speak about the influence of the Stoic ontological and semantic doctrine.

⁷⁶ «Chrysippus <...> in his work *On the Growing*, creates a freak of the following kind. Having first established that it is impossible for two particular qualities (ἰδίως ποιούς) to occupy the same substance (οὐσία) jointly, he says: 'For the sake of argument, let one man be thought of as whole-limbed, the other as minus one

This example confirms the fact that the Stoic doctrine postulated unequivocal correspondence between the particular quality and the name of an individual. Origen followed the reasoning similar to that of Chrysippus: the substantial change in the qualities resulted in the change of the name for the individual. In Origen's model, the instrument that safeguarded the self-identity of an individual was the "particular quality" which could also be changed. The difference in the language of Chrysippus and Origen is that speaking about human individuals, Chrysippus spoke about "substances" which had particular qualities, and Origen did not.⁷⁷

It should also be noted that our passage from of the *Contra Eunomium* by Basil of Caesarea quite clearly shows the Stoic overtones. This is evident when Basil writes about the general substance of people as a material substrate (τὸ ὑλικὸν ὑποκείμενον) in addition to the argument about human individuals as carriers of various qualities. The presence of the Stoic overtones in Basil's doctrine of substance was pointed to by R. Hübner. He noted that for the both ontological orders, distinguished by Basil (for the created and the uncreated), Basil used the Stoic model as far as substance was concerned; in the case of the uncreated realm he used the created realm as an analogy.⁷⁸ One can agree with R. Hübner, provided that this was just one of

foot. Let the whole-limbed one be called Dion, the defective one Theon. Then let one of Dion's feet be amputated.' The 'question arises which one of them has perished, and his claim is that Theon is the stronger candidate. These are the words of a paradox-monger rather than of a speaker of truth. For how can it be that Theon, who has had no part chopped off, has been snatched away, while Dion, whose foot has been amputated, has not perished? 'Necessarily', says Chrysippus. 'For Dion, the one whose foot has been cut off, has collapsed into the defective substance of Theon, and two particular qualities cannot occupy the same substrate. Therefore it is necessary that Dion remains while Theon has perished (Χρύσιππος γοῦν ὁ δοκιμώτατος τῶν παρ' αὐτοῖς ἐν τοῖς περὶ Ἀὑξανομένου τερατεύεται τι τοιοῦτον· προκατασκευάσας ὅτι δύο ἰδίως ποιούς ἐπὶ τῆς αὐτῆς οὐσίας ἀμήχανον συστήναι, φησὶν· „Ἐστω θεωρίας ἔνεκα τὸν μὲν τινα ὀλόκληρον, τὸν δὲ χωρὶς ἐπινοεῖσθαι τοῦ ἐτέρου ποδός, καλεῖσθαι δὲ τὸν μὲν ὀλόκληρον Δίωνα, τὸν δὲ ἀτελῆ Θεώνα, κάπειτα ἀποτέμνεσθαι Δίωνος τὸν ἕτερον τοῖν ποδοῖν.” Ζητουμένου δὴ πότερος ἐφθαρται, τὸν Θεώνα φάσκειν οικειότερον εἶναι. τοῦτο δὲ παραδοξολογοῦντος μᾶλλον ἐστὶν ἢ ἀληθεύοντος. πῶς γὰρ ὁ μὲν οὐδὲν ἀκρωτηριασθεὶς μέρος, ὁ Θεών, ἀνήρπασται, ὁ δ' ἀποκοπεῖς τὸν πόδα Δίωιν οὐχὶ διεφθαρται; „Δεόντως, φησὶν, ἀναδεδράμηκε γὰρ ὁ ἐκτιμηθεὶς τὸν πόδα Δίωιν ἐπὶ τὴν ἀτελῆ τοῦ Θεώωνος οὐσίαν, καὶ δύο ἰδίως ποιοὶ περὶ τὸ αὐτὸ ὑποκείμενον οὐ δύνανται εἶναι. τοιγαροῦν τὸν μὲν Δίωνα μένειν ἀναγκαῖον, τὸν δὲ Θεώνα διεφθάρθαι.”)» (PHILO. *De aetern. mun.* 48–49 (= *Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta*, vol. II, fr. 397), trans. by David Sedley, in: D. SEDLEY, *The Stoic Criterion*, pp. 267–268, slightly revised).

John Bowin argued that in this case, in his polemics with the Academics Chrysippus challenged exactly the premises of the *Treatise on Growth* from the comedy of Epicharmus (J. BOWIN, *Chrysippus' Puzzle about Identity*, "Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy" 24 (2003), pp. 244–246). In turn, David Sedley has shown that the reasoning of Chrysippus presented by Philo suggested that one-legged Theon was a part of Dion who had all his members, that is, the name of Theon designated the body of Dion minus one Dion's leg (D. SEDLEY, "The Stoic Criterion", p. 269).

⁷⁷ The opponent of Basil Eunomius followed a similar logic, according to which the name uniquely corresponded to the property, that is, to a particular substance (Eunomius did not distinguish between the "substance" and the "property"). In his *Apology* he argued that the Son and the Father could not be of the same substance since the same substance could not be simultaneously begotten and unbegotten, and if the Son becomes of the same substance as the Father, he would become unbegotten and consequently, the Father would cease to beget, that is, both would lose their properties (*Apol.* XIV, in EUNOMIUS. *The Extant Works*, p. 50). Thus, the participation in the substance, according to Eunomius, involved the participation in name (cf. *Apol.* IX, X–XII, in EUNOMIUS. *The Extant Works*, p. 44). However, judging from the terminology used by Eunomius, which is quite common, it is unlikely that he might use the Stoic doctrine in this respect (the influence of the Stoic tradition in Eunomius can rather be seen in his doctrine of language, see below).

⁷⁸ R. HÜBNER, *Gregor von Nyssa als Verfasser der sog. "Ep. 38" des Basiliius*, Paris: Beauchesne 1972, Ss. 478–481. Balas and Robertson also pointed to the Stoic elements in Basil's doctrine of substance, see D.

the trends in Basil's doctrine of substance⁷⁹ along with the Aristotelian trend.⁸⁰ However, Hübner was wrong in claiming that the material substrate (τὸ ὑλικὸν ὑποκείμενον) of all people, mentioned by Basil in the passage under discussion, corresponded to the "general quality" (κοινῶς ποιόν) in the Stoics,⁸¹ since the general quality could not have been viewed by the Stoics in the "generic" terms.

Apparently, Hübner was misled by the words of Basil that all humans were made of clay, and it is this clay that Hübner associated with the "general quality." However in this case Basil simply quoted the Book of Job, understanding clay metaphorically as something that indicated the prime matter *devoid of quality*, and the subject to formation. Basil did not mean that all people were made directly of clay, that is, that clay was really present in each human as a kind of common quality.

Keeping in mind the strategies of Basil, which he pursued in the *Contra Eunomium*, we may argue that Basil's understanding of substance in our passage as the material substrate is based on one of the understandings of "substance" by the Stoics in the sense of the *qualityless* substrate, formed by qualities.⁸² Basil needed this concept to convince his readers by analogy in the idea that the divine substance cannot be comprehended in our thought and expressed in speech – similarly to inexpressible and incomprehensible prime matter as opposed to particular qualities accessible to thought.⁸³ Basil's identification of "substance," understood in this manner, and "hypostasis" in our passage⁸⁴ only shows that Basil refuted the thesis of Eunomius, using the terminology of his opponent.⁸⁵

BALAS, *The Unity of Human Nature in Basil's and Gregory of Nyssa's Polemics against Eunomius*, *Studia Patristica* 14:5 (1976), p. 279 and D. ROBERTSON, *Stoic and Aristotelian Notions of Substance in Basil of Caesarea*, "Vigiliae Christianae" 52 (1998), pp. 396-406.

⁷⁹ A. Choufrine disagrees with this statement of R. Hübner arguing that Basil rejects the divisibility of the divine substance (BAS. CAES. *Eun.* 1, 19, PG 29b, 556A; cf. *Ep.* 361, PG 32, 1101A), while divisibility is inherent in substance understood as substrate (A. CHOUFINE, *The Development of St. Basil's Idea of 'Hypostasis'*, p. 15). However, one may also argue that divisibility of substrate in Basil's understanding is essentially irrelevant to the divine substance, described by analogy with the substrate (as it was noted by R. Hübner) and for certain purposes – in order to indicate that the divine substance was unknowable and inexpressible in speech (see below).

⁸⁰ The formalization of the concept of essence by means of the Aristotelian conceptual framework is manifested in Basil's use of the expression "logos of substance" (λόγος τῆς οὐσίας) or "logos of being" (λόγος τοῦ εἶναι), fundamental for the Aristotelian philosophy (*Eun.* 1, 5, 19, PG 29b, 520, 556), reflected the unity of the hypostases of the Holy Trinity in substance; whereas for indicating the mode of being for each hypostasis in the *Eun.*, Basil used the expression τρόπος τῆς ὑποστάσεως (Ibid. 1, 15; PG 29b, 548a), while in the Homily *Contra Sabellianos et Arium et Anomoes*, Basil used the expression τρόπος τῆς ὑπάρξεως (PG 31, 613a) which later became common for the Byzantine theological language. This expression may go back to the commentators of the logical works of Aristotle (both expressions can be translated as "the mode of existence" or "mode of being"). For the discussion of the balance between the Stoic and Peripatetic elements in Basil's doctrine of substance, see Robertson, "Stoic and Aristotelian Notions of Substance."

⁸¹ R. HÜBNER, *Gregor von Nyssa als Verfasser*, S. 476.

⁸² See *Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta*, vol. I, fr. 493; vol. II, fr. 318, 374, 376, 380.

⁸³ Cf. *Eun.* 2, 5, PG 29b, 580c and 1, 12-13 and 15, PG 29b, 540c-541bc and 548ab.

⁸⁴ «...None of these is his substance, understood as hypostasis (ἡ ὑπόστασις)».

⁸⁵ Cf. the words of Eunomius, which Basil refutes, "...We take it that his hypostasis is the very same as that which is signified by his name, granted that the designation applies properly to the essence (αὐτὴν εἶναι τὴν

Thus the topic of the “concurrency of properties” in the passage under discussion brings us back to a number of various historical and philosophical contexts. On the one hand, this is the Stoic tradition, and more specifically the physical and ontological perspectives of the Stoic tradition. In this regard, the conceptual system of Basil implied that there was material substrate constituting the substance of all human beings, as well as of the whole of the created world,⁸⁶ and it was “shaped” by the qualities of Peter and Paul. On the other hand, these qualities in the way they are described by Basil do not quite resemble the physical qualities (which can only endow matter with forms). In fact, their purpose as a whole was to provide a narrative, an account of each individual, which, as it was rightly noted by P. Kalligas,⁸⁷ was the novelty of Basil’s approach. And in this regard, Basil constantly emphasized the capacity of these properties to be represented in the human mind,⁸⁸ which brings his approach close to that of Porphyry, for whom the properties, individualizing the singularity, possessed an epistemological status.

In addition, the language of Basil brings him closer to Porphyry: for indicating the properties Basil used the terms *ιδίωμα* and *ιδιότητες*, which are close to Porphyry’s usage, while the Stoics traditionally used the terms *ποιόν* or *ποιότης*. Thus, given the likely interpenetration of Stoic and Neoplatonic traditions in the Late Antiquity in respect to the concurrence of qualities, we may argue that Basil also shows a synthetic position.

This duality in the use of different conceptual systems, namely, the ontological framework and the framework of intellectual comprehension, is also reflected in the functions of the concept of *χαρακτήρ* in our passage from the *Contra Eunomius* of Basil: the totality of properties behind each name, which arise in our mind when we hear the name, forms the representation / *χαρακτήρ* of a person. On the one hand, the subject of *χαρακτήρ* / representation, pointing to a certain unity

ὑπόστασιν ἢν σημαίνει τοῦνομα, ἐπαληθευούσης τῆ οὐσία τῆς προσηγορίας” (*Apol.* XII, 9-10 (Vaggione), in EUNOMIUS, *The Extant Works*, 48, slightly revised; for a lengthier citation from Eunomius, see below). Using the term “ὑπόστασις,” in the passage Eunomius followed the terminology typical for the Arian movement (and going back to Origen). This terminology described three hypostases of the Trinity (in such a way that the hypostasis of God is infinitely higher than the hypostasis of Christ which, in turn, is infinitely higher than the Spirit); see the corresponding passage in the *Thalia* of Arius, cited by Athanasius of Alexandria in *De Synodis* 15, PG 26, 708a. Thus, there is no reason to contrast this passage of Basil with the theological language of the so-called *Letter* 38 of Gregory of Nyssa, as A. Choufrine does. Cf. “... [in the *Letter* 38] the proper names, although they do not signify substance - the point in which the author of the letter agrees with Basil - do (contrary to what Basil says [in his *Eun.* 2.4 (PG 29b, 577C-580B)]) signify hypostases)» (A. CHOUFRINE, *The Development of St. Basil’s Idea of ‘Hypostasis’*, p. 23).

⁸⁶ *Eun.* 2, 24, PG 29b, 628C, as well as BALAS, *The Unity of Human Nature*, p. 278.

⁸⁷ P. KALLIGAS, *Basil of Caesarea on the Semantics*, in K. Ierodiakonou (ed.), *Byzantine Philosophy and its Ancient Sources*, Oxford 2002, p. 45.

⁸⁸ Cf. «So whenever we hear ‘Peter,’ the name does not cause us to *think of* his substance (Ὅταν οὖν ἀκούωμεν Πέτρον, οὐ τὴν οὐσίαν αὐτοῦ νοοῦμεν ἐκ τοῦ ὀνόματος). <...> When we hear ‘Paul,’ we *think of* a concurrence of other distinguishing marks (Πάλιν ἀκούσαντες Παῦλον, ἐτέρων ιδιωμάτων συνδρομὴν ἐνοήσαμεν...) <...>».

which occurs in the human soul from a variety of thoughts or representations about something,⁸⁹ appears already in the first book of the *Contra Eunomium*⁹⁰ and can also be seen in the passage under discussion. On the other hand, another function of this concept points to the individuality of a person, to his destiny, to that what “happens” to him,⁹¹ and this function reflects how it would be used in Byzantium in the later times.

One may argue that the topic of the material substance in Basil’s writings was treated from the viewpoints of both Platonic and Stoic traditions. The Platonic tendency in viewing material substance by Basil is manifested in the widely discussed passage from his *Hexaemeron*, where Basil speaks of material substance as of the substrate, composed by and limited by the totality of the intellegible qualities.⁹² This topic was also touched upon by Basil’s brother, Gregory of

⁸⁹ The concept of *χαρακτήρ*, understood as a kind of imprint or impression, arising in the soul from an aggregate of “thoughts” on a certain object, has Stoic connotations. According to Zeno, Cleanthes, and some other Stoics, the impression (*φαντασία*) is the “imprint (*τύπωσις*) in the soul,” similar to an imprint which originates from seal on wax (*Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta*, vol. I, fr. 58; vol. II, fr. 53, 55–60). When Philo speaks about this imprint, he uses the word *χαρακτήρ* and notes that such imprints are perceived by the mind and are stored in memory (PHILO, *Immut.* 43). Von Arnim placed this fragment of Philo in his collection of Stoic fragments (*Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta*, vol. II, fr. 458), however, Philo’s language is already the result of the assimilation of the Stoic ideas. In our case, the possible impact on the language of Basil was made by Philo rather than the Stoics. We should note that both according to the Stoics and to Philo the imprint on the soul might originate only from the objects of sense perception.

⁹⁰ «Now some of the names applied to God are indicative of what is present to God; others, on the contrary, of what is not present. From these two something like an impression (*χαρακτήρ*) of God is made in us, namely, from the denial of what is incongruous with him and from the affirmation of what belongs to him (Ἐν τοῖνυν τοῖς περὶ Θεοῦ λεγομένοις ὀνόμασι, τὰ μὲν τῶν προσόντων τῷ Θεῷ δηλωτικά ἐστί, τὰ δὲ τὸ ἐναντίον, τῶν μὴ προσόντων. Ἐκ δύο γὰρ τούτων οἶονεὶ χαρακτήρ τις ἡμῖν ἐγγίνεται τοῦ Θεοῦ, ἕκ τε τῆς τῶν ἀπεμφαινόντων ἀρνήσεως καὶ ἕκ τῆς τῶν ὑπαρχόντων ὁμολογίας.)» (*Eun.* 1, 10, PG 29b, 533c, trans. by DelCogliano and Radde-Gallwitz, in SAINT BASIL OF CAESAREA, *Against Eunomius*, p. 105).

⁹¹ If we take into account this aspect, the hypothesis of D. Robertson seems to be not very convincing. According to D. Robertson, Basil was influenced by the *Syntax* of Apollonius Dyscolus where the concept of *χαρακτήρ* was associated with the name of the subject of discourse, inflected for cases for avoiding homonymy (D. ROBERTSON, *A Patristic Theory*, p. 19).

⁹² «If we were to wish to discover the essence of each of the beings which are offered for our contemplation, or come under our senses, we should be drawn away into long digressions, and the solution of the problem would require more words than I possess, to examine fully the matter (Ἡ περὶ τῆς οὐσίας ἔρευνα ἐκάστου τῶν ὄντων, ἢ τῶν κατὰ θεωρίαν ὑποπιπτόντων ἡμῖν, ἢ τῶν προκειμένων ἡμῶν τῇ αἰσθήσει, μακρὸν καὶ ἀπηρητημένον λόγον ἐπεισάγει τῇ ἐξηγήσει, ὡς πλείονας ἐν τῇ περὶ τοῦ προβλήματος τούτου σκέψει καταναλίσκεσθαι λόγους τῶν λοιπῶν, ὅσα ἐνδέχεται ῥηθῆναι περὶ ἐκάστου τῶν ζητούμενων). <...> In the same way, as concerns the earth, let us resolve not to torment ourselves by trying to find out its essence, not to tire our reason by seeking for the substance which it conceals. Do not let us seek for any nature devoid of qualities by the conditions of its existence, but let us know that all the phenomena with which we see it clothed regard the conditions of its existence and complete its essence. Try to take away by reason each of the qualities it possesses, and you will arrive at nothing. Take away black, cold, weight, density, the qualities which concern taste, in one word all these which we see in it, and the substrate vanishes (Τὰ αὐτὰ δὲ ταῦτα καὶ περὶ τῆς γῆς συμβουλευόμεν ἑαυτοῖς, μὴ πολυπραγμονεῖν αὐτῆς τὴν οὐσίαν ἥτις ποτέ ἐστί, μηδὲ κατατριβεσθαι τοῖς λογισμοῖς αὐτὸ τὸ ὑποκείμενον ἐκζητοῦντας, μηδὲ ζητεῖν τινα φύσιν ἔρημον ποιότητων, ἅποιον ὑπάρχουσιν τῷ ἑαυτῆς λόγῳ, ἀλλ’ εἶ εἰδέναι, ὅτι πάντα τὰ περὶ αὐτὴν θεωρούμενα εἰς τὸν τοῦ εἶναι κατατέτακται λόγον, συμπληρωτικά τῆς οὐσίας ὑπάρχοντα. Εἰς οὐδὲν γὰρ καταλήξεις, ἐκάστην τῶν ἐνυπαρχουσῶν αὐτῇ ποιότητων ὑπεξαίρεισθαι τῷ λόγῳ πειρώμενος. Ἐὰν γὰρ ἀποστήσης τὸ μέλαν, τὸ ψυχρὸν, τὸ βαρὺ, τὸ πυκνὸν, τὰς κατὰ γεῦσιν ἐνυπαρχούσας αὐτῇ ποιότητας, ἢ εἴ τινες ἄλλαι περὶ αὐτὴν θεωροῦνται, οὐδὲν ἔσται τὸ ὑποκείμενον)» (*Hom. in hex.* 1, 8, PG 29b, 20–21, trans. in NPNF II-8, slightly revised). I do not agree with the opinion of J. Zachhuber (*J. ZACHHUBER, Stoic Substance, Non-Existent Matter? Some Passages in Basil of Caesarea Reconsidered, “Studia Patristica”, 41 (2006), pp. 425-431*) that in our fragment Basil had in mind not that taking away all the qualities from the material substance of earth would leave “nothing,” but that the search for the substance of earth was a futile occupation.

Nyssa in his *Hexameron*⁹³ and in the treatises *On the soul and the resurrection*⁹⁴ and *On the making of man*,⁹⁵ where Gregory emphasized that any material thing was composed of intelligible qualities as if of ideas. A. Armstrong suggested that the position, according to which the material substrate was a set of qualities, was adopted by Basil as a result of reading the *Enneads* of Plotinus. Armstrong argues that Basil must have borrowed his position from the unknown Platonists who commented upon *Timaeus* 52a8 and whom Plotinus criticized in the *Enneads* 2, 4, 11, 10-13.⁹⁶ However, P. O’Cleirigh quite convincingly suggested⁹⁷ that Basil here builds upon the idea expressed in the 4th Book of the *De Principiis* of Origen.⁹⁸

It is possible to agree with R. Sorabji on the Platonic inspiration behind Basil’s understanding of material substance as a substrate composed of the totality of intelligible qualities, developed by Gregory of Nyssa as a part of his theory on matter as the totality of immaterial ideas.⁹⁹ The understanding of the sensible substance in line with the Stoic tradition exactly implies that substance cannot be exhausted by qualities only, since after the removal of intelligible qualities there always remained a certain residue, the qualitless substrate, which cannot be comprehended by the mind and expressed in speech. Thus, in our fragment of the *Contra Eunomium* as well as in other places of this treatise of Basil¹⁰⁰ we may find the understanding of the material substance, based on the Stoic, and not Platonic philosophical tradition.

This conclusion can be correlated to the fact that Basil, unlike Gregory, used the concept of “concurrency” (συνδρομή) as a philosophical *terminus technicus* exclusively when he discussed human individuals, but did not use it for inanimate material things. Yet, if in the Platonic tradition the concept of “concurrency” or “aggregation” of qualities was used indiscriminately in relation to human individuals or inanimate material objects, the Stoic philosophical tradition developed an understanding of the process of individuation through the concurrence of properties, applicable only to the human individuals. Thus, Basil’s use of the concept may also indicate the Stoic background.

⁹³ GREG. NYS. *Apol. in hex.*, PG 44, 69bc.

⁹⁴ Idem., *De an. et res.*, PG 46, 124bd.

⁹⁵ Idem., *De opif. hom.* 24, PG 44, 212d–213b.

⁹⁶ A. ARMSTRONG, *The Theory of the Non-Existence of Matter in Plotinus and the Cappadocians*, “*Studia Patristica*” 5 (1962), p. 427.

⁹⁷ P. O’CLEIRIGH, *Prime Matter in Origen’s World Picture*, “*Studia Patristica*” 16 (1985), pp. 262-263.

⁹⁸ Orig. *De Principiis* 4, 7, 34, in ORIGÈNE, *Traité des principes*, vol. 3, eds. H. Crouzel and M. Simonetti, Sources Chrétiennes 268, Paris 1980, pp. 416-418. It follows from Basil’s use of Origen’s passage that while borrowing the ideas from the *De Principiis*, Basil polemicized with the notion of the uncreated matter.

⁹⁹ R. SORABJI, *Gregory of Nyssa: The Origins of Idealism*, in *Time, Creation and the Continuum. Theories in Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages*, London 1988, pp. 292-293. Richard Sorabji points to an *Enneades* of Plotinus (6, 3, 8) and to Simplicius’ paraphrase of Porphyry’s ideas in *In Aristotelis physicorum libros commentaria* (230, 34–231, 7) being the Platonic parallels to these ideas. In general, R. Sorabji correlated the doctrine of the Cappadocian Fathers with the idealist philosophical position of G. Berkeley.

¹⁰⁰ Cf. *Eun.*, PG 29b, 540c, 541bc.

When Gregory of Nyssa addressed the topic of the concurrence of properties, unlike Basil he did not distinguish between the human individuals and inanimate objects quite in the spirit of the Platonic tradition. Gregory, being inclined to Platonism, might have not accept the ideas which Basil received from the physical and ontological tradition of the Stoic doctrine, including Basil's emphasis on understanding the substance of the created beings as the material substrate. As D. Balas showed,¹⁰¹ when Gregory of Nyssa commented upon our fragment of Basil in his own *Contra Eunomium*, he emphasized the Platonic (with some reservations) understanding of the human nature as a generic substance common to all human beings and existing in the individuals, as opposed to Basil's emphasis on the understanding of a single nature of people in terms of the common substrate. When Gregory cited Basil's passage under discussion and reached the words, "now by 'substance' I mean the material substrate (οὐσίαν δὲ λέγω νῦν τὸ ὑλικὸν ὑποκείμενον)," he quoted the phrase in the way opposite to the original, "now by 'substance' I mean **not** the material substrate (οὐσίαν δὲ λέγω νῦν **οὐ** τὸ ὑλικὸν ὑποκείμενον)."¹⁰² D. Balas pays particular attention to this fact, assuming that Gregory corrected the passage which did not fit his views and the needs of his polemics with Eunomius.

P. Kalligas did not take into account the background of Stoic physics in our passage of Basil and identified the philosophical background of the passage with the Platonic tradition.¹⁰³ This allowed him to speak of the extreme nominalist leanings of Basil, comparable to the nominalism of William of Ockham.¹⁰⁴ We may agree that the discussed conceptual framework of Basil does seem nominalist in some respect, exactly in Ockham's sense, that is, in the sense that for building it just like Ockham Basil needed to establish the hierarchy of genera and species. However, Basil's emphasis on the physical realism, associated with his use of Stoic philosophical tradition makes it difficult to ascribe nominalism to Basil in some other more normative sense, when it is believed that general concepts do not correspond to the objects in reality.

At this point we need to put together the main points of Basil's polemical position in the passage under discussion. For doing that, we should take a closer look to the passage from the *Apology* of Eunomius, which Basil of Caesarea attempted to refute in the passage:

¹⁰¹ D. BALAS, *The Unity of Human Nature*, pp. 278-279.

¹⁰² GREG. NYSS. *Eun.* III, 5, 22, 7-8 (Jaeger).

¹⁰³ P. KALLIGAS, *Basil of Caesaria*, pp. 46-47; the articles of L. Turcescu on the *Letter* 38 of Gregory of Nyssa show the same position, see L. TURCESCU, 'Person' versus 'Individual,' and Other Modern Misreadings of Gregory of Nyssa, "Modern Theology", 18 (2002), fasc. 4, p. 530; IDEM., *The Concept of Divine Persons in Gregory of Nyssa's to His Brothers Peter, on the Difference between Ousia and Hypostasis*, "Greek Orthodox Theological Review" 42 (1997), fasc. 1-2, pp. 74-77.

¹⁰⁴ «...We are led to the conclusion that Basil, in his attempt to rebut Eunomius' naturalist theory of names, extended the ontological theory we find in Porphyry, but which has its roots in the sceptical Academy, towards an extreme nominalist position as concerns the semantics of proper names—a position which stood as the most complete and the most seductive such contribution to philosophical thought, at least until the time of William of Ockham» (P. KALLIGAS, *Basil of Caesaria*, p. 47).

ὅτι δὲ καὶ εἷς υἱὸς (μονογενῆς γάρ), ἐνῆν μὲν τὰς τῶν ἁγίων φωνὰς παραθεμένους δι' ὧν υἱὸν καὶ γέννημα καὶ ποίημα καταγγέλλουσι (ταῖς τῶν ὀνομάτων διαφοραῖς καὶ τὴν τῆς οὐσίας παραλλαγὴν ἐμφαίνοντας) <...> γέννημα τοίνυν φαμὲν τὸν υἱὸν κατὰ τὴν τῶν γραφῶν διδασκαλίαν, οὐχ ἕτερον μὲν τὴν οὐσίαν νοοῦντες, ἕτερον δέ τι παρ' αὐτὴν τὸ σημαινόμενον, ἀλλ' αὐτὴν εἶναι τὴν ὑπόστασιν ἣν σημαίνει τοῦνομα, ἐπαληθευούσης τῆς οὐσίας τῆς προσηγορίας

As for showing that the Son too is one, being only-begotten, we could rid ourselves of all care and trouble in that regard simply by quoting the words of the saints in which they proclaim the Son to be both 'offspring' and 'thing made', since by distinguishing the names they show the difference in essence as well. <...> We call the Son 'offspring', therefore, in accordance with the teaching of the Scriptures¹⁰⁵. We do not understand his essence to be one thing and the meaning of the word which designates it to be something else. Rather, we take it that his hypostasis is the very same as that which is signified by his name, granted that the designation applies properly to the essence¹⁰⁶.

We should recall that Eunomius put emphasis on the difference between God and Christ (the Son) in substance, deriving this, among other things, from the fact that their true names had different and opposing meaning. The names, typical for God and the Son – “Unbegotten” (ἀγέννητος) and “the Begotten One” (γέννημα) – for Eunomius were not the names understood in the magical sense similarly to the Iamblichian names of the gods, as his position is often misunderstood.¹⁰⁷ These names reflect the notions, most appropriate to God and the Son according to the true understanding of their natures, since God has no cause for his existence, while the Son does.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁵ Prov. 8:22; cf. 1 Cor. 1:24.

¹⁰⁶ *Apol.* XII, 1-4, 6-9, trans. by R. Vaggione, in EUNOMIUS, *The Extant Works*, pp. 46-48, slightly revised. Here the fragment of the *Apology* is cited in a lengthier form than it was cited by Basil in his treatise (*Eun.*, PG 29b, 573), since Basil's refutation is built on a wider text of Eunomius than the passage cited.

¹⁰⁷ J. Daniélou based his conclusions on this supposition when he tried to prove the influence of the *Cratylus* exegesis of the Iamblichian school on the theory of names of Eunomius (J. DANIELOU, *Eunome l'arien et l'exégèse néoplatonicienne du Cratyle*, “Revue des études grecques” 69 (1956), pp. 412-432). See the criticism of such an understanding in J. RIST, *Basil's 'Neoplatonism': Its Background and Nature*, in Fedwick P. (ed.), *Basil of Caesarea: Christian, Humanist, Ascetic*, Toronto 1981, pp. 185-188; D. BIRIUKOV, *The Strategies of Naming in Polemic between Eunomius and Basil of Caesarea in Context of Antic Philosophical Tradition*, “*Scrinium. Revue de patrologie, d'hagiographie critique et d'histoire ecclésiastique*”, 4 (2008), p. 119.

¹⁰⁸ EUNOM. *Apol.* VIII, in EUNOMIUS, *The Extant Works*, p. 40.

The difference in the Eunomian understanding of the names of the Holy Trinity from the magical understanding which we may see, for example, in Origen and Iamblichus, is that the conclusion on the importance of the formal aspect of naming, that is, of name's *sound* is derived from the principle of the natural relationship between names and things as opposed to conventional relationship. At the same time, the *meaning* of name do not play any significant role both for Origen and for Iamblichus as far as Iamblichus' teaching on theurgy is concerned.¹⁰⁹ This is reflected in the fact that both Origen and Iamblichus assumed the critical importance of some sacred language; they did not consider it necessary to understand the meaning of the words in this language. Thus, Origen emphasized the power of the Jewish names of God, denying any validity of the name if it is translated into another language,¹¹⁰ and Iamblichus insisted that the names of Eastern gods should be preferred.¹¹¹ Eunomius, however, does not show such magical understanding of names. On the contrary, the crucial names for the Eunomian doctrine of the Father and the Son have unambiguous meaning: for example, the name "Unbegotten" contains the meaning, indicating the specific character of the divine existence as opposed to the created existence. The meaning is defined by the fact that Eunomius constructs the names on the basis of his understanding of the named entities; he extensively demonstrates on the basis of his pre-defined principles why the true name of God was "Unbegotten," and the true name of the Son was "the Begotten One."

In the above passage, Eunomius uses the arguments "from names," according to which the substance of Christ cannot diverge from "the signified" (τὸ σημαϊνόμενον) of his name ("The Begotten one"), corresponding to the result of the mental comprehension of his substance. As its premise, the Eunomian argument "from names" has the idea about the wise men who know the nature of things as well as the names which fit things and correspond to their nature. This concept was widespread in Antiquity and in the Hellenistic period¹¹² and is reflected in the Bible¹¹³. T. Kopecek believes that this case shows the impact of Middle Platonic ideas on Eunomius, since this position is most clearly expressed in Albinus.¹¹⁴ Yet, in our view, the Stoic terminology used by Eunomius speaks rather about the impact of the Stoic conceptual

¹⁰⁹ On Iamblichus in that respect, cf. G. SHAW, *Theurgy and the Soul. The Neoplatonism of Iamblichus* University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press 1995, p. 111.

¹¹⁰ ORIGEN. *C. Celsum* 5, 12; 45, PG 11, 1249c, 1253.

¹¹¹ IAMBL. *De myst.* 7, 5.

¹¹² With regard to the belief in the wise establisher of names in Antiquity, see PLATO, *Crat.* 387d4-5; ALBINUS, *Epit.* 6, 10; AMMON. *In De interpret.* 1, 3, 34-40b. It is noteworthy that many authors of Antiquity advanced the view on names as having been established by God, without speaking about names' correspondence to the named objects' nature, but implying it, see CICERO. *Tusc. disp.* 25, 62, *De rep.* 3, 2; ORIG. *C. Celsum* 5, 30; PHILO. *Leg. Alleg.* 2, 14-15.

¹¹³ Gen. 2:20.

¹¹⁴ ALBINUS. *Epit.* 6, 10-11; Th. KOPECEK, *A History of Neo-Arianism*, vol. 2, pp. 321, 329-332.

framework. Thus, the concept of τὸ σημαϊνόμενον (the signified), used by Eunomius is identical to the notion of the λεκτόν, fundamental to the Stoic system.

The introduction of this concept by the Stoics led to the deeper understanding of language and linguistic processes in comparison to Aristotle. In fact, Aristotle's three-partite structure of language: the signifying (sounds) – the representation (thought) – the object,¹¹⁵ thanks to the concept of “meaning” in the Stoics, was transformed into a four-partite structure: the signifying (sounds) – the signified (semantic objectivity, revealed in the word, or the *lekton*) – the representation (thought) – the object.¹¹⁶ The concept of the “signified” which for the Stoics was an intermediary between the word and the thing¹¹⁷ united the thought and the word, which were disconnected in Aristotle.¹¹⁸ This concept, in turn, became very suitable for the development of the possibility to select and to know the correct names of the things, the nature of which is known. It was popular in the Hellenistic era, but is found among the Stoics,¹¹⁹ and later, as we have seen, in Eunomius, exactly in relation to the notion of τὸ σημαϊνόμενον.¹²⁰ These is the

¹¹⁵ ARIST. *De interpret.* 1, 3.

¹¹⁶ See SEX. EMP. *Adv. Math.* 8, 11-12. In the passage Sextus mentions but does not specifically elaborate upon the third member of the structure, that is, the thought. Specifically on the “signified,” cf.: «signification is the actual state of affairs revealed by an utterance, and which we apprehend as it subsists in accordance with our thought, whereas it is not understood by those whose language is different although they hear the utterance (σημαινόμενον δὲ αὐτὸ τὸ πρᾶγμα τὸ ὑπ' αὐτῆς δηλούμενον καὶ οὗ ἡμεῖς μὲν ἀντιλαμβανόμεθα τῇ ἡμετέρᾳ παρυσιαμένον διανοίᾳ, οἱ δὲ βάρβαροι οὐκ ἐπαίουσι καίπερ τῆς φωνῆς ἀκούοντες)» (Ibid. = Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta, vol. II, fr. 166 = LS 33B, in A. LONG, D. SEDLEY, *The Hellenistic Philosophers*, vol. 2, pp. 195-196). This means that “the signified” differs from the thought in that the thought is not a reality belonging to the language, whereas “the signified” belongs both to the reality of thought and to the reality of language (cf.: «...whereas it is not understood by those whose language is different although they hear the utterance»).

¹¹⁷ Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta, vol. II, fr. 168.

¹¹⁸ The doctrine of Aristotle entailed the isomorphism not between the word and the thought, but between the thing and the thought (A. LLOYD, *Grammar and Metaphysics*, p. 65).

¹¹⁹ See the comments of Long and Sedley on the fragment of DIOG. LAERT. 7, 83 (LS 31C): A. LONG, D. SEDLEY, *The Hellenistic Philosophers*, vol. 2, pp. 187-188, as well as the article A. LONG, *Stoic Linguistics, Plato's Cratylus, and Augustine's De dialectica*, in D. Frede, B. Inwood (eds.), *Language and Learning. Philosophy of Language in the Hellenistic Age*, Toronto 2005, pp. 36-55.

¹²⁰ The fact that Eunomius understood language in terms of the fourfold paradigm which included the notion of “meaning,” is revealed in the following passage of the *Apology*: «...we need not try to conform meanings to names exactly or try to distinguish those of differing expressions, but must rather direct our attention to the concepts inherent in the underlying objects and accommodate the name accordingly (for the natures of objects are not naturally consequent on the verbal expressions: rather, the force of the names is accommodated to the objects in accordance with their proper status (μῆτε πάντα τοῖς ὀνόμασι συνεξομοιοῦν πειρᾶσθαι τὰς σημασίας, μῆτε μὴν παραλλάττειν παρηλλαγμένων, ταῖς δὲ τῶν ὑποκειμένων ἐννοίας προσέχοντας ἀκολουθῶς ἐφαρμόττειν τὰς προσηγορίας (ἐπεὶ μὴδὲ ταῖς φωναῖς πέφυκεν ἀκολουθεῖν τῶν πραγμάτων ἢ φύσις, τοῖς δὲ πράγμασιν ἐφαρμόζεσθαι κατὰ τὴν ἀξίαν ἢ τῶν ὀνομάτων δύναμις)» (*Apol.* XVIII, 4-9, in EUNOMIUS, *The Extant Works*, pp. 54-57). The importance of the concept of “meaning” for Eunomius is also revealed in the passage from the *Eun.* of Gregory of Nyssa, which is dedicated to the refutation of the Eunomius' attempts to refute the passage of Basil discussed in this study: «<...> I do not like to insert in my own work the nauseous stuff our rhetorician utters, or to display his ignorance and folly to contempt in the midst of my own arguments. He goes on with a sort of eulogy upon the class of significant words which express the subject (οὐ γὰρ μοι φίλον τοῖς ἐμοῖς παρεντιθέναι πόνοις τὴν ναυτιώδη φλυαρίαν τοῦ ῥήτορος καὶ τὸ ἀμαθὲς αὐτοῦ καὶ ἀνόητον διὰ μέσου τῶν ἐμῶν λόγων ἐνστηλιτεύεσθαι. ἐπαινον γὰρ τινα διεξέρχεται λόγων τῶν σημαντικῶν τὸ ὑποκείμενον φανερούτων) <...>» (3, 5, 23, 4 – 24, 2: 168 (Jaeger)). Notably, the fact that Eunomius did not identify the linguistic reality with the ontological reality (the tendency of which is embedded in the “magical” understanding of language), follows from his words, «God, whether these sounds are silent, sounding, or have even come into existence, and before anything was created, both was and is unbegotten (ὁ

historical and philosophical background of the teaching of Eunomius on the mandatory relationship between the name and the substance of the Son¹²¹.

Accordingly, in the passage under discussion Basil refuted Eunomius' approach to naming which required the establishment of a rigid connection between the name, the meaning, the thought, and the object, and shifted from Eunomian line of argumentation, involving the use of the *appellative name*, that is, referring the reader to a particular predefined meaning ("The Unbegotten," "The Begotten One"), to the realm of the *proper nouns* ("Peter," "Paul") – the lexical items, by definition not allowing for the use of the concept of the predefined meaning. Avoiding the concept of "meaning," Basil actively used the terminology that referred the reader to mental processes.

Now we can summarize our argument. For refuting the position, presented in the *Apology* of Eunomius, Basil shifted the scope from the realm of theology to the realm of the material world. For doing that he used the conceptual framework of the Stoic physics, accepting the notion of the human substance as general material substrate, formed by the qualities, but not exhausted by them, as opposed to the understanding of the material nature in the Platonic framework, used by Basil in his other works. Basil needed it for putting emphasis on the fact that substance as such, both created and uncreated, was unknowable and could not be expressed in speech, while only qualities (properties) could be known and expressed. Following one of the aspects of the Stoic doctrine or Alexandrian grammarians who developed this topic, as well as the passage from Origen's *De oratione*, Basil highlighted and developed the point that names corresponded not to substances as Eunomius claimed, but to the qualities.

We should note that when Basil says that qualities correspond to the proper names, while the substance common for all humans is the material substrate, he uses the elements of the Stoic doctrine only as a tool for illustrating his own position. When Basil resorted to Stoic conceptual tools, he did not adopt the Stoic system in its entirety, since it was common for the Stoic doctrine not only to perceive substance as qualityless general substrate, but also to have the notion of a singular substance which is a "part" of the underlying substrate.¹²² The use of the Stoic concept of singular substances which are individualized by specific quality accessible for knowledge, would have rather been in favor of the position of Eunomius. Thus in the fragment under discussion Basil focuses on substance as qualityless substrate and on an individual as described

θεός, καὶ σιωπῶντων καὶ φθεγγομένων καὶ γεγενημένων καὶ πρὸ τοῦ γενέσθαι τὰ ὄντα, ἧν τε καὶ ἔστιν ἀγέννητος)» (*Apol.* VIII, 5-7, in EUNOMIUS, *The Extant Works*, pp. 42-43).

¹²¹ In general see: BIRIUKOV, *The Strategies of Naming*.

¹²² On "substance," understood by the Stoics as a singular substance, see PHILO. *De aeternitate mundi* 48-49 (=Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta, vol. II, fr. 397). On the singular substance as a part of substance-prime matter among the Stoics, see *Ibid.*, vol. I, fr. 87 = *Ibid.*, vol. II, fr. 316).

by the aggregation of qualities, but does not mention considering human individuals as singular substances.

While for proving the unequivocal correspondence of name and substance Eunomius used the fourfold division of the language, going back to the Stoics, the position of Basil in terms of the understanding the language can be described as close to the Aristotelian. Indeed, there is nothing in his argument that would indicate the concept of “meaning”; it involved the three-part structure: the word (*the name*) – *the representation (the thought)* – *the object*, typical for the Aristotelian position. To avoid the possibility of the unequivocal indication of the individual, which would be the evidence in favor of the Eunomian argument, Basil had to abandon the Stoic notion of a special substantial quality of a human being, typical for Origen (whom Basil used in support of his argument), as well as Origen’s idea, consistent with the philosophical position of the Stoics, that the change in a specific quality of the Apostles and other Biblical characters would entail the change of their names.¹²³ Thus, probably for avoiding this thorny issue, Basil did not mention the fact of changing Apostle Paul’s name.

The rejection of the Stoic notion of the particular quality entailed the disregard for the very division of qualities into the general and the particular, and in linguistic terms the disregard for the distinction between the ὄνομα and the προσηγορία, which corresponded to these types of qualities according to the Stoics.¹²⁴ Instead, in the process of individualizing a person Basil lists a number of different qualities and unlike the Stoics does not distinguish between them according to types, bringing them into unity through the principle of concurrence (συνδρομή) of properties, borrowed from the Stoic-Platonic framework, that is, through the listing the qualities. The notion of χαρακτήρ played the role of the “particular quality” in Basil. That notion, on the one hand, had psychological connotations: it pointed to a set of representations concerning human individuals – Apostles Peter and Paul (in this case, an echo of ancient philosophical tradition); on the other hand this concept pointed to the individuality of each person and to the specific character of his life, which later becomes a hotly debated topic in Byzantium in the polemics between the Iconophiles and the Iconoclasts.

¹²³ See above, ORIG. *De or.* 24, PG 11, 492bc.

¹²⁴ We would like to draw attention to a strange phrase of Basil in our fragment, «<...> the designations (προσηγορία) of Peter and Paul and of all people in general are different ...». There are many more people than their names, and the difficulties caused by homonymy (that is, in this case by the same names of people) troubled the minds of philosophers already in the time of Democritus (see E. HEITSCH, *Die Entdeckung der Homonymie*, Mainz, Wiesbaden 1972). Later the problems of homonymy were dealt with in the Greek textbooks on grammar, and Basil had to be aware of this. In the view of the subsequent phrase, «... the designations (αἱ προσηγορίαι) do not signify the substances, but rather the distinctive features that characterize the individual», it could mean that Basil was referring to the fact that the sets of properties, but not the names (ὄνομα), were different for each person, and these sets were specified by the concept of προσηγορία. However, if we look at Basil’s use of terms in the entire passage, we may see that he used ὄνομα and προσηγορία synonymously.

The qualities, listed by Basil, included both general and relative properties as well as those properties which uniquely placed the person within the sequence of the events of his life.¹²⁵ The passage of *Contra Eunomium* by Basil of Caesarea is the richest among the cited fragments of various ancient authors, which describe an individual human through the concurrence of properties. In addition to the general properties and the properties of relationships, according to Basil, a person was defined through the full range of what “happened” to him, that is, through his personal *history*.¹²⁶

5.3. *The discussion on application of the principle “greater-lesser” to essence, and problem of universals*

In the first book of “*Contra Eunomium*” Gregory of Nyssa adduces the following extensive quote from Eunomius’ “*Apology for the Apology*”.

The whole account of our doctrines is summed up thus; there is the Supreme and Absolute Being, and another Being existing by reason of the First, but after It though before all others; and a third Being not ranking with either of these, but inferior to the one, as to its cause, to the other, as to the energy which produced it: there must of course be included in this account the energies that follow each Being, and the names germane to these energies. Again, as each Being is absolutely single, and is in fact and thought one, and its energies are bounded by its works, and its works commensurate with its energies, necessarily, of course,

¹²⁵ The fact that Basil also presented a human individual by means of general properties, points to the problems with the argument of Ch. Yannaras who on the basis of the Cappadocian Fathers developed an understanding of “personhood” which he correlated with hypostasis as that which was opposed to commonness and universality, typical for the notion of “substance.” Consequently, according to Yannaras, “personality” or “person” is that which cannot be described by any general qualities which the person possesses (Ch. YANNARAS, *Person und Eros. Eine Gegenüberstellung der Ontologie der griechischen Kirchenväter und der Existenzphilosophie des Westens*, Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht in Göttingen 1982, Ss. 24-26).

¹²⁶ Interestingly, this approach of Basil was carried on by the last Iconoclastic Patriarch John the Grammarian (837–843) who challenged the epistemological position of the Iconophiles on the basis of contextual and narrative identification of name’s denotation. In one of the three surviving fragments, Patriarch John relied upon our passage of Basil). The fragment of Patriarch John the Grammarian runs as follows: “It is impossible to characterise a concrete man by a concept unless with an explanation through words, by means of which one can comprehend and define each being. For the proper accidents of a concrete being by which it has been separated from those belonging to the same species and, in another manner, by which it is communicated to those [who belong to different species], do not contribute in any manner and in any aspect to the perception of sight. For one cannot derive one’s race or mark one’s country, the certain kind of profession one spends time on, the sort of company one keeps, and the rest of the forms of conduct are not known except by means of words, whereas it is impossible to truly distinguish a certain individual by means of some images” (trans. By Vladimir Baranov in IDEM., *Amphilochia 231 of Patriarch Photius as a Possible Source on the Christology of the Byzantine Iconoclasts*, “*Studia Patristica*”, 68 (2013), p. 376, see the Greek text in J. GOUILLARD, *Fragments inédits d’un antirrétique de Jean le Grammarien*, “*Revue des études byzantines*”, 24 (1966), pp. 173-174).

the energies which follow these Beings are relatively greater and less, some being of a higher, some of a lower order; in a word, their difference amounts to that existing between their works: it would in fact not be lawful to say that the same energy produced the angels or stars, and the heavens or man: but a pious mind would conclude that in proportion as some works are superior to and more honourable than others, so does one energy transcend another, because sameness of energy produces sameness of work, and difference of work indicates difference of energy. These things being so, and maintaining an unbroken connexion in their relation to each other, it seems fitting for those who make their investigation according to the order germane to the subject, and who do not insist on mixing and confusing all together, in case of a discussion being raised about Being, to prove what is in course of demonstration, and to settle the points in debate, by the primary energies and those attached to the Beings, and again to explain by the Beings when the energies are in question, yet still to consider the passage from the first to the second the more suitable and in all respects the more efficacious of the two¹²⁷.

M. Barnes¹²⁸ finds the closest match between the triadic structure of Eunomius' teaching represented in the quotation above and the text of the seventh book of "Preparation for the Gospel" written by Eusebius of Caesarea, who also speaks about taxonomy of the three essences, the first of which is unbegotten.¹²⁹ However, Eusebius says nothing about the simplicity of each

¹²⁷ GREG. NYSS. *Eun.* I, 1, 151-154 (Jeager), transl. in GREGORY OF NYSSA, *Against Eunomius*, Translated by W. Moore, H.A. Wilson and H.C. Ogle, Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Second Series, Vol. 5, edited by Philip Schaff and Henry Wace, Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Publishing Co 1893. Πᾶς ὁ τῶν καθ' ἡμᾶς δογμάτων συμπληροῦται λόγος ἕκ τε τῆς ἀνωτάτω καὶ κυριωτάτης οὐσίας καὶ ἕκ τῆς δι' ἐκείνην μὲν οὐσης μετ' ἐκείνην δὲ πάντων τῶν ἄλλων πρωτευούσης καὶ τρίτης γε τῆς μηδεμιᾶ μὲν τούτων συνταττομένης, ἀλλὰ τῇ μὲν διὰ τὴν αἰτίαν, τῇ δὲ διὰ τὴν ἐνέργειαν καθ' ἣν γέγονεν ὑποταττομένης, συμπεριλαμβανομένων δηλαδὴ πρὸς τὴν τοῦ παντὸς λόγου συμπλήρωσιν καὶ τῶν ταῖς οὐσίαις παρεπομένων ἐνεργειῶν καὶ τῶν ταύταις προσφυῶν ὀνομάτων. πάλιν δ' αὖ ἐκάστης τούτων οὐσίας εἰλικρινῶς ἀπλῆς καὶ πάντη μιᾶς οὐσης τε καὶ νοουμένης κατὰ τὴν ἰδίαν ἀξίαν, συμπεριγραφομένων δὲ τοῖς ἔργοις τῶν ἐνεργειῶν, καὶ τῶν ἔργων ταῖς τῶν ἐργασαμένων ἐνεργείαις παραμετρούμενων, ἀνάγκη δὴπου πᾶσα καὶ τὰς ἐκάστη τῶν οὐσιῶν ἐπομένης ἐνεργείας ἐλάττους τε καὶ μείζους εἶναι, καὶ τὰς μὲν πρώτην τὰς δὲ δευτέραν ἐπέχειν τάξιν, συνόλως τε εἰπεῖν πρὸς τοσαύτην ἐξικνεῖσθαι διαφορὰν, πρὸς ὁπόσην ἂν ἐξικνεῖται τὰ ἔργα· ἐπεὶ μηδὲ θεμιτὸν τὴν αὐτὴν ἐνέργειαν εἰπεῖν καθ' ἣν τοὺς ἀγγέλους ἐποίησεν ἢ τοὺς ἀστέρας καὶ τὸν οὐρανὸν ἢ τὸν ἄνθρωπον, ἀλλ' ὅσῳ τὰ ἔργα τῶν ἔργων πρεσβύτερα καὶ τιμώτερα, τοσοῦτῳ καὶ τὴν ἐνέργειαν τῆς ἐνεργείας ἀναβεβηκέναι φαίη ἂν τις εὐσεβῶς διανοούμενος, ἅτε δὴ τῶν αὐτῶν ἐνεργειῶν τὴν ταυτότητα τῶν ἔργων ἀποτελουσῶν, καὶ τῶν παρηλλαγμένων ἔργων παρηλλαγμένης τὰς ἐνεργείας ἐμφαινόντων. οὕτω δὲ τούτων ἐχόντων καὶ τῇ πρὸς ἄλληλα σχέσει τὸν εἰρμόν ἀπαράβατον διατηρούντων, προσήκει δὴπου τοὺς κατὰ τὴν συμφυῆ τοῖς πράγμασι τάξιν τὴν ἐξέτασιν ποιουμένους καὶ μὴ φύρειν ὁμοῦ πάντα καὶ συγγεῖν βιαζομένους, εἰ μὲν περὶ ταῖς οὐσίαις κινητὸ τις ἀμφισβήτησις, ἕκ τῶν πρώτων καὶ προσεχῶν ταῖς οὐσίαις ἐνεργειῶν ποιεῖσθαι τῶν δεικνυμένων τὴν πίστιν καὶ τῶν ἀμφισβητούμενων τὴν διάλυσιν, τὴν δὲ ἐπὶ ταῖς ἐνεργείαις ἀμφιβολίαν διαλύειν ἕκ τῶν οὐσιῶν, ἀρμοδιώτερον γε μὴν καὶ τοῖς πᾶσιν ἀνυσιμωτέραν ἡγεῖσθαι τὴν ἀπὸ τῶν πρώτων ἐπὶ τὰ δευτέρα κἀθοδον.

¹²⁸ M. BARNES, *The Background and Use of Eunomius' Causal Language*, in *Arianism after Arius. Essays on the Development of the Fourth Century Trinitarian Conflict*, Edinburgh 1993, pp. 220-221.

¹²⁹ EUS. *Praep.* VII, 12; 15.

member of the triad, nor touches upon the principle "greater-lesser" which is of a big importance for the neo-arian controversy. Apparently, this is what constitutes the specificity of Eunomius' teaching.

5.3. The principle "greater-lesser" in Eunomius

When Gregory further discusses certain points of the passage given above, he instead of Eunomius' words: "... It is necessary that activities following each of the essences were some lesser, but the others greater" (ἀνάγκη δήπου πᾶσα καὶ τὰς ἐκάστη τῶν οὐσιῶν ἐπομένως ἐνεργείας ἐλάττους τε καὶ μείζους εἶναι), adduces the words: "it is of necessity to believe as if the essence of some is less, and others is more (ἐξ ἀνάγκης ἐλάττους τε καὶ μείζους τὰς οὐσίας οἴεσθαι δεῖν εἶναι)).¹³⁰ That is to say, Gregory of Nyssa, first used Eunomius's text about "greater and lesser" energies where Eunomius expresses the principle put forward by him already in the first "Apology", according to which the nature of things is determined through its activities (see above), but then treats the words of Eunomius as if the latter teaches about applicability of the principle "greater-lesser" to essence. Perhaps it might be explained by the fact that Gregory of Nyssa, on his own admission,¹³¹ was writing his refutation in a hurry, because eunomians did not distribute their books broadly, and he was able to keep a copy of "Apology for the Apology" only for a short while.

Basil of Caesarea also by implication witnesses in favor of the argument that the doctrine of Eunomius did not actually imply an idea of applying greater-lesser principle to essence, in the way how Gregory treats it when he criticizes Eunomius.

While refuting the propositions of the "Apology" in his treatise "Against Eunomius" Basil understands Eunomius's interpretation of John. 14:28 in such a way, so that Eunomius insists that the result of the activities is always less than the subject of the activities (and, therefore, the essence of the Son according to Eunomius is not the same as the essence of the Father).¹³² At the same time Basil writes: "Of course according to your wisdom [i.e. according to Eunomius. – D. B.] it is not possible to say that one essence is more or less than the other. Therefore, according to them and truth as well the considered word "more" does not show any superiority in terms of essence".¹³³ Consequently, Basil also does not admit that Eunomius applied the principle greater-lesser to the category of essence.

¹³⁰ GREG. NYSS. *Eun.* I, 1, 317; I, 1, 282 and 321.

¹³¹ CM.: *Ep.* 19.

¹³² BAS. *Eun.*, PG 29, 565-566.

¹³³ IDEM. *Eun.*, PG 29, 568 (Ὅλως δὲ οὐσία οὐσίας, καὶ κατὰ τὴν ὑμετέραν σοφίαν, μείζων καὶ ἐλάττων οὐ λέγεται. Ὡστε καὶ κατὰ τούτους, καὶ κατ' αὐτὴν τὴν ἀλήθειαν, οὐδενὶ ἂν τρόπῳ τὴν κατ' οὐσίαν ὑπεροχὴν ὁ προκειμένος λόγος τοῦ μείζονος ἐμφαίνοι)

Then what does really Eunomius say in “Apology” and in “Apology for the Apology”? He speaks about superiority (ὑπεροχή) and preeminence of essence of the Father to the Son (and the Spirit).¹³⁴ Most likely it was this concept which served for Gregory as a source to attribute to Eunomius the applicability of the principle “greater-lesser” to the category of essence.

In this regard, Gregory proceeds from the position expressed in Aristotle’s “The Categories”, according to which nature does not allow for a greater or lesser degree. Indeed, Aristotle mentions this in “The Categories” 2b, 26-27 and then in 3b 33ff he explains what he has in mind, namely that it is not possible to speak about the first essence (individual) as pertaining in a greater or lesser degree to the second essence (its species) than the other first essence (another individual) pertains to it or than it itself pertains at some different time.¹³⁵ Based on this proposition of “The Categories”, Gregory, on the one hand accuses Eunomius in ignorance of the basics of dialectic and thus false premises in theology, and on the other hand he develops his own philosophy in respect of the principle “greater-lesser” (to be discussed in details later).

Researchers do not tend to notice an outlined by me inconsistency between the words of Eunomius in the quotation from “Contra Eunomium” I, 1, 151-154, adduced by Gregory of Nyssa, and the way how Gregory understands Eunomius’ position in his treatise subsequently.¹³⁶ David Balas even argues for inconsistency of Eunomius, in what he on the one hand insists on simplicity of each of them, and on the other hand applies the principle of “greater-lesser” to the three essences of the highest triad, that in turn implies complexity and state of compound.¹³⁷ In this case Balas takes after Gregory of Nyssa in his understanding of Eunomius, who criticized Eunomios, and treated him in the spirit of Plotinian doctrine.¹³⁸

¹³⁴ EUNOM. *Apol.* X, 3 Concerning the “Apology of the Apology” see above given quote from GREG. NYS. *Eun.* 1, 1, 151, 4. Eunomius’ approach, involving a taxonomy of beings can be associated with an approach of the disciple of Iamblichus Dexippus. Dexippus in his commentary on “The Categories” of Aristotle, endeavors to challenge the critique offered by Plotinus to the aristotelian “Categories,” and uses for these purposes the appropriate places from “On Aristotle’s Categories” by Porphyry and “Comments on the categories” by Iamblichus. On this basis, contrary to Plotinus’ accent on the principle of a greater reality of intelligible entities and the illusory nature of the material ones, he argues for the descending taxonomy of essences, asserting that the principle of the essence pervades all ranks of reality, from the intelligible to the sensible level, from the supreme being downwards in descending order (DEX. *In Cat.* 40, 25 - 41, 3).

¹³⁵ ARIST. *Cat.* 3b33-4a9.

¹³⁶ See the papers D. BALÁS, *METΟΥΣΙΑ ΘΕΟΥ. Man’s Participation in God’s Perfections according to St. Gregory of Nyssa*, Rome, 1966, pp. 55, 57, 125, 130; A. MEREDITH, *The Divine Simplicity. Eun., 1.223-241*, in “*Eun. I*” en la produccion literaria de Gregorio de Nisa, Pamplona 1988, pp. 345-346; J. ZACHHUBER, *Human Nature in Gregory of Nyssa*, pp. 94-98, where the point that Eunomius applied the principle more-less to essence is taken for granted.

¹³⁷ D. BALAS, *METΟΥΣΙΑ ΘΕΟΥ*, p. 125, n. 31.

¹³⁸ Apparently, it comes from the argument of Gregory. According to this reasoning, simplicity implies incompleteness, i.e. the lack of distinction between the subject and the predicate which partakes to the subject. The quantity which is implied where there is something more and something less, suggests this distinction, and accordingly, quantity is incompatible with simplicity. God’s nature is simple and good, and since it is simple, His goodness is not quantitative, that is, it cannot increase or decrease, which means that the nature of God is unlimited. According to Gregory of Nyssa, when Eunomius introduces a taxonomy in his triad of essences, he

5.4. *The principle greater-lesser: the themes of participation and universals*

As was stated above, there is no trustworthy proofs that Eunomius applied the principle greater-lesser to the category of essence. However, there can be stated that Gregory of Nyssa in the first book of “*Contra Eunomium*” led a polemic with Eunomius taking for granted that Eunomius did this.

Gregory following commonly known propositions of Aristotle’s “*The Categories*”, adopted most likely from Porphyry’s “*Isagoge*”¹³⁹ insists that the principle greater-lesser should not be applied to essence but to quality.

Ἐπεὶ δὲ καὶ σοφὸς εἶναι τὰ τοιαῦτα βούλεται καὶ διαπτύει τοὺς ἄνευ
 λογικῆς ἐντρεχείας ἐπιχειροῦντας τῷ γράφειν, εἰπάτω τοῖς καταφρονουμένοις
 ἡμῖν, ἐκ ποίας σοφίας τὸ μᾶλλον τε καὶ ἥττον τῆς οὐσίας ἐγνώρισε. τις <ὁ>
 λόγος ὁ τὴν τοιαύτην διαφορὰν παραστήσας, ὅτι οὐσία τις ἐτέρας οὐσίας
 μᾶλλον ἔστι; κατ’ αὐτὸ λέγω τὸ σημαινόμενον τῆς οὐσίας· μὴ γὰρ δὴ
 προφερέτω τὰς τῶν ποιοτήτων ἢ τὰς τῶν ιδιωμάτων διαφοράς, ὅσαι περὶ τὴν
 οὐσίαν τῷ λόγῳ τῆς ἐπινοίας καταλαμβάνονται, ἄλλο τι παρὰ τὸ ὑποκείμενον
 οὔσαι

What sort of skill he has detected a greater and a less in essence? What is his method for establishing that one essence is more of an essence than another essence,—taking essence in its plainest meaning, for he must not bring forward

makes the essence of the Son not simple, but with a touch of complexity, and the essence of the Spirit in this case is even more complex. The concept of Eunomius being understood in such a way resembles the approach of Plotinus, under which the simplicity is inherent only in the highest cause, which is at the top of the ontological hierarchy. However the descent of the ontological order involves an increasing complexity and multiplicity. It is Plato who says that only the One is truly simple, while the Mind being as it is, i.e. the one who thinks can be defined through multiplicity and complexity. See *Enn.* 5, 3 (esp. 11–13) and D. O’MEARA, *Plotinus: An Introduction to the Enneads*, Oxford 2005, pp. 43–49.

¹³⁹ I believe that this can be testified by the fact how Gregory actively used “*Isagoge*” in his writings, what is clear from my arguments given in the chapter 7, “*Synthesis of Biblical and Logical-Philosophical Descriptions of the Order of Natural Beings in De opificio hominis 8 by Gregory of Nyssa*”, of this dissertation. At the same time the way how Gregory uses certain propositions typical for the representation of “*The Categories*” in “*Isagoge*” also supports the given hunch. Such is the combination of the discourse of participation of individuals to species and the concept “*more-less*” used by Gregory, what will be discussed in depth later. As has been mentioned earlier this combination of concepts can be found in Porphyry’s “*Isagoge*” (c.m.: *Isagoge* 10: 17.3-13 (Busse)) but not in Aristotle.

those various qualities and properties, which are comprehended in the conception of the essence, and gather round it, but are not the subject itself?¹⁴⁰

Gregory elaborates this topic as talking about the relation between individual and species as well using the language of participation. In this case Gregory takes over Basil the Great¹⁴¹ and uses the discourse of “logos of essence” (λόγος τῆς οὐσίας), which was first introduced by Aristotle and then adopted by his commentators and especially Porphyry.¹⁴² Each entity has its own unchanged logos of essence, which cannot be increased or decreased, and thus it is not possible to participate to the second essence in a greater or lesser degree. Gregory deals with this in the fifteenth chapter of the first book of “Contra Eunomium”:

What disadvantage, on the score of being, as compared with Abraham, had David who lived fourteen generations after? Was any change, so far as humanity goes, effected in the latter? Was he less a human being, because he was later in time? Who would be so foolish as to assert this? The *logos* of their essences (τῆς οὐσίας ὁ λόγος) is the same for both: the lapse of time does not change it. No one would assert that the one was more a man for being first in time, and the other less participates in the [human] nature (μετέχειν τῆς φύσεως) because he sojourned in life later; as if humanity had been exhausted on the first, or as if time had spent its chief power upon the deceased. For it is not in the power of time to define for each one the measures of nature, but nature abides self-contained, preserving herself through succeeding generations: and time has a course of its own, whether surrounding, or flowing by, this nature, which remains firm and motionless within her own limits¹⁴³.

Here in a polemic manner related to the discussion on *greater-lesser* theme, Gregory exemplifies the Aristotelian paradigm of participation, according to which the participation reflects the relation between individuals and the nature (species), which they carry. This implies the existence of human nature as the universal-in-things, i.e. in the human individual. Gregory says that this universal, i.e. human nature, is present in the same way in humanity through the time, although individuals belonging to this nature, are born and die in the course of the time.

¹⁴⁰ *Eun.* I, 180, 1 – 182, 1 (Jaeger), transl. in transl. in GREGORY OF NYSSA, *Against Eunomius*.

¹⁴¹ CM.: BAS. CAES, *Eun.*, PG 29, 556, 14-27.

¹⁴² For the discussion on Porphyry’s use of this discourse, and a list of appropriate citations see: J. ANTON, *Ancient Interpretations of Aristotle’s Doctrine of Homonyma*, “Journal of the History of Philosophy”, VII/1 (1969), pp. 3–6.

¹⁴³ GR. NYSS., *Eun.* I, 1, 173, 2 - 175, 1 (Jaeger), transl. in GREGORY OF NYSSA, *Against Eunomius*.

The combination of theme of participation to the general nature (essence) with the theme of "greater-lesser" refers to Porphyry's "Isagoge".¹⁴⁴ But the argument about inapplicability of the principle "greater-lesser" to the general nature, related to the topic of time, recalls how Aristotle in "The Categories" was talking about the impossibility of the application of this principle to the category of essence, who at the same context deals with the problem of time.¹⁴⁵

It is worth nothing that while talking about possible application of the principle *greater-lesser* to essence, Gregory slightly changes the thesis. Namely, in the case of three supreme essences (The Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit) in the teaching of Eunomius, it is not appropriate to talk about the first and the second essence (individual and species), what is taken for granted in the Aristotelian thought, because he restricts the application of the principle greater-lesser to essence, which Gregory of Nyssa uses here. Eunomius clearly states in the adduced quote (Gregory of Nyssa, *Contra Eunomium* 1, 1, 151-154), the Father, the Son and the Spirit are the essences which are simple and unique in a way, and this determines that the discourse of genus-individual cannot be applied here.

Further in the first book of *Contra Eunomium* Gregory elaborates his theory of the hierarchy of beings and uses the theme of "greater-lesser" and the conceptual framework of "greater-lesser" participation in a significantly modified way compared to how this topic was treated in Porphyry and Aristotle. Gregory introduces the pronounced Platonic context in the subject and writes the following in chapter 22 of the first book:

Now the ultimate division of all being is into the Intelligible and the Sensible (τὸ νοητὸν καὶ τὸ αἰσθητὸν). <...> Reason again divides [the Intelligible] into the uncreate and the created, inferentially comprehending it: the uncreate being that which effects the Creation, the created that which owes its origin and its force (τὴν δύναμιν τοῦ εἶναι) to the uncreate. In the Sensible world, then, is found everything that we comprehend by our organs of bodily sense, and in which the differences of qualities (αἱ τῶν ποιοτήτων διαφοραὶ) involve the idea of more and less, such differences consisting in quantity, quality, and the other properties. But in the Intelligible world—that part of it, I mean, which is created, — the idea of such differences as are perceived in the Sensible cannot find a place: another method (τρόπος), then, is devised for discovering the degrees of greater and less. The fountain, the origin, the supply of every good is regarded as being in the world that is Uncreate Nature (τῆ

¹⁴⁴ *Isagoge* X, 17.3–13, see above.

¹⁴⁵ *Cat.* 3b33–4a9, see above.

ἀκτίστῳ φύσει), and the whole creation inclines to that, and touches and shares (ἐφαπτομένη καὶ μετέχουσα) the Highest Nature (τῆς ὑψηλῆς φύσεως) by virtue of its part (τῆς κοινωνίας) in the First Good: therefore it follows from this participation in the highest blessings varying in degree according to the amount of freedom in the will that each possesses, that the greater and less in this creation is disclosed according to the proportion of this tendency in each. Created intelligible nature stands on the borderline between good and the reverse, so as to be capable of either, and to incline at pleasure to the things of its choice, as we learn from Scripture; so that we can say of it that it is more or less in the heights of excellence only in proportion to its removal from the evil and its approach to the good. Whereas uncreate [intelligible] nature (ἡ ἄκτιστος φύσις) is far removed from such distinctions (διαφορᾶς): it does not possess the good by acquisition, or participate (οὐδὲ κατὰ μετοχήν) only in the goodness of some good which lies above it: by essence (τῆ φύσει) it is good, and is conceived as such: it is a source of good, it is simple, uniform, incomposite <...>. But it has distinction within itself in keeping with the majesty of its own nature, but not conceived of with regard to quantity, as Eunomius supposes: (indeed the man who introduces the notion of less of good into any of the things believed to be in the Holy Trinity must admit thereby some admixture of the opposite quality in that which fails of the good: and it is blasphemous to imagine this in the case either of the Only-begotten, or of the Holy Spirit): we regard it [i.e. the uncreate nature. – *D. B.*] as consummately perfect and incomprehensibly excellent yet as containing clear distinctions within itself which reside in the peculiarities of each of the Persons: as possessing invariableness by virtue of its common attribute of uncreatedness, but differentiated by the unique character of each Person¹⁴⁶.

In the passage Gregory shows how the principle of “greater–lesser” can be applicable to all realms of reality, including the uncreated reality. Gregory speaks about the division of beings into classes, discussing division in greater detail in his other writings.¹⁴⁷ In our passage Gregory distinguishes between intellectual and sensible natures (this distinction points to Platonic intuitions), and between uncreated and created beings belonging to intellectual nature (this point

¹⁴⁶ GR. NYSS., *Eun.* I, 1, 270, 1-277, 13 (Jaeger), transl. in GREGORY OF NYSSA, *Against Eunomius*. Cf. GR. NAZ., *or.* 23, 11: PG 35, 1164A-B.

¹⁴⁷ GR. NYSS. *De hom. op.* VIII, PG 44, 144C–148C; *De an. et res.*: PG 46, 57D–60D. See chapter 7, “Synthesis of Biblical and Logical-Philosophical Descriptions of the Order of Natural Beings in *De opificio hominis* 8 by Gregory of Nyssa” of the thesis.

reveals the fundamental differences of Gregory and Platonism). In his discussion of what belongs to the sensible realm, Gregory states that “greater–lesser” is applicable to qualities and uses the Aristotelian discourse. Moving on to the created intellectual nature (referring to the angelic powers and intellect as a part of the human being), Gregory points out that in this case, “greater” and “lesser” can be applied not to the degree of the presence of qualities, but only used in terms of greater or lesser aspiration to the highest good depending on the disposition of will and consequently to greater or lesser participation in the divine substance. We may see here the presence of the Platonic discourse of participation combined with reference to 2 Pet. 1: 3–4. According to Gregory, the notion of “greater” or “lesser” degree of participation cannot be applied to uncreated nature since uncreated nature is perfect. This conclusion of Gregory can be associated with his position articulated in the same *Contra Eunomium* that the divine nature has its *logos of substance*,¹⁴⁸ and that the Aristotelian concept did not imply qualifications of “greater” or “lesser.”

In the passage Gregory links the topic of “greater–lesser” with the Platonic dichotomy *according to participation / according to nature*: the principle of “greater–lesser” cannot be applied to uncreated nature because the uncreated possesses all good things according to nature and not according to participation, which is the way to appropriate good things for the beings belonging to the created realm. Thus, according to Gregory, the principle of “greater–lesser” is applicable only to the realm of beings which exist according to participation.

In his study on participation in Gregory of Nyssa, David Balas analyzed the same fragment of *Contra Eunomium* and claimed¹⁴⁹ that by contrasting the possession of good according to participation with possession of good according to nature, Gregory followed Basil of Caesarea who wrote in the third book of his *Contra Eunomium* that the angelic powers are sanctified according to participation in the measure of their love of God and strength of desire, while the Holy Spirit being the giver of holiness, possesses holiness according to nature and not according to participation:

The principalities and powers and all such creatures, which have holiness from diligence and attention, are holy by nature. After all, yearning for the good, they receive a measure of holiness proportionate to their love for God. Furthermore, when iron is placed in the middle of fire, while it does not cease to be iron, it is nonetheless inflamed by the intense contact with the fire and admits the entire nature of fire into itself. And so in both outward appearance

¹⁴⁸ Cf. GR. NYSS., *Eun.* I, 1, 373, 1 - 375, 7 (Jaeger).

¹⁴⁹ D. BALAS, *METOYΣIA ΘEOY*, pp. 61-62.

and activity the iron is transformed into fire. Likewise, the holy powers, from their communion (κοινωνίας) with that which is holy by nature, possess a holiness that pervades their whole subsistence, and they become connatural with that which is holy by nature. The holy powers and Holy Spirit differ in this regard: for the latter, holiness is nature, whereas for the former, being made holy comes from participation (ἐκ μετουσίας). Those for whom the good is adventitious and introduced from another possess a nature that can change (τῆς μεταπτωτῆς εἰσι φύσεως). Indeed, *Lucifer who rises at dawn* would neither *have fallen* nor *been cut down to the earth* [Is 14: 12] if by nature (φύσει) he was not capable of admitting that which is worse¹⁵⁰.

However, we have seen¹⁵¹ that the Platonic concept of *according to participation / according to nature* emerged in the Christian literature before Basil in Origen.¹⁵² After Origen it appeared, for example, in Athanasius of Alexandria.¹⁵³ Thus, in my opinion, we cannot claim that Gregory of Nyssa borrowed this concept from Basil. In general, the Patristic writers opposed *by substance* and *by participation* in order to maintain a distinction between the created and the divine when speaking of the uniting of the first to the second, and to emphasize the status of the uncreated as such¹⁵⁴. If we can make any generalizations about what can be found in the works of the Niceans in this regard, it is the following: created beings are deified *by participation in the divine substance*, without becoming God according to their substance, while the Persons of the Trinity are God *by substance*, not *by participation*.

There are both differences and similarities in Gregory's and Basil's thoughts on the subject. Firstly, Basil speaks about participation of the angelic powers in holiness granted by the Holy Spirit, while Gregory speaks about participation of beings belonging to intellectual nature in uncreated divine nature. Secondly, unlike Basil Gregory used the technical terminology which was borrowed from the tradition going back to Aristotle's *Categories*. Gregory developed his

¹⁵⁰ BAS. CAES., *Eun.* III: PG 29, 660.14-35, transl. in: SAINT BASIL OF CAESAREA, *Against Eunomius*, p. 188.

¹⁵¹ See chapter 3, "The paradigms of participation in the context of the topic of universals in Origen".

¹⁵² PG 12, 1656A.

¹⁵³ ATHAN. *Contra gentes* 46, PG 25, 93BC; *Ep. quat. ad Serap.* 2, 4, PG 26, 613C.

¹⁵⁴ About the opposition between *by participation* and *by nature* in Origen, Athanasius of Alexandria and the Cappadocians see D. BALÁS, *METOYΣΙΑ ΘΕΟΥ*, pp. 11-12, 60-62; Idem., *Participation*, in: *The Brill Dictionary of Gregory of Nyssa*, ed. L. F. Mateo-Seco, G. Maspero, Leiden-Boston 2010, pp. 583; J. FINCH, *Sanctity as Participation in the Divine Nature According to the Ante-Nicene Eastern Fathers, Considered in the Light of Palamism*, Drew University 2002 (Ph.D. Dissertation), pp. 244, 308, 351, 380; A. KOLP, *Partakers of the Divine Nature. The Use of II Peter 1:4 by Athanasius*, "Studia Patristica", 17 (1982), pp. 1020-1021; K. NORMAN, *Deification: the Content of Athanasian Soteriology*, Duke University 1980 (PhD Dissertation), p. 189. See also about Cyril of Alexandria: W. BURGHARDT, *The Image of God in Man According to Cyril of Alexandria*, Washington 1957, p. 11.

thought on the basis of the principle of “greater–lesser,” following the strategy of the division of beings. Thirdly, the principle of “greater–lesser” used by Gregory was based on the premise that the common nature (the logos of substance) is characterized by immutability, while volatility was the property of the quality of a thing. In the above passage Basil does not follow this principle; his theological language implies fundamentally mutable nature of anything which exists “according to participation.” Basil’s example of this point is the change in the nature of the angelic power Lucifer resulting from his fall.

Nevertheless, in order to preserve the difference between the created and the divine in the case when the created in a special way participated in the divinity, both Gregory and Basil opposed that which was *according to participation* to that which was *according to nature*, revealing the use of the Platonic paradigm of participation in both authors.

Going back to the discussion of Gregory’s passage (*Contra Eunomium* I, 1, 270, 1 – 277, 13), I should note that the observation of David Balas concerning the influence of the language from Plotinus’ *Ennead* VI, 9 on Gregory’s passage under discussion seems to be quite reasonable. Indeed, just like Gregory, Plotinus says that we “incline” (νεύσαντες) to the One and the Good¹⁵⁵ which is the source and the beginning of everything. Plotinus also tells us that our body participates (μετέχει)¹⁵⁶ in the One and our soul may participate in It;¹⁵⁷ human being as a whole as a living being endowed with reason, is a kind of unity in multiplicity since human being possesses the One according to communion and participation (μεταλήψει ἔχον καὶ μεθέξει τὸ ἓν).¹⁵⁸ However, when speaking about participation in the One, Plotinus did not use the language borrowed from the works on logic in respect to the hierarchy of beings, as did Gregory. Another difference between Plotinus and Gregory pertaining to our discussion, is that Plotinus used the Platonic paradigm¹⁵⁹ in which the One (the Good) was above substance. This was emphasized by Plotinus in *Enneads* VI, 9¹⁶⁰, while Gregory spoke precisely about participation in divine substance.

Thus, the topic of participation in the supreme principle as it unfolded in the first book of *Contra Eunomium* by Gregory of Nyssa contains important points, missing both from Basil of Caesarea and Plotinus. Firstly, Gregory discussed the hierarchy of beings which culminated in the highest, intellectual and uncreated, nature. This nature could be participated in to a greater or lesser extent by the beings belonging to the nature nearest to it in the hierarchy of beings, that is,

¹⁵⁵ PLOT. *Enn.* VI, 9, 9, 11-12.

¹⁵⁶ IBID. VI, 9, 1, 38-39.

¹⁵⁷ IBID. VI, 9, 9, 48.

¹⁵⁸ IBID. VI, 9, 2, 16-24.

¹⁵⁹ See PLATO. *Resp.* 509b9.

¹⁶⁰ PLOT. *Enn.* VI, 9, 11, 41-42.

intelligent and created nature¹⁶¹ through which nature corresponding to the lower level in the hierarchy of beings, that is, created and sensible nature as a component in the composite human being could participate in the highest nature.¹⁶² Secondly, in his discussion of the specific aspects of participation in the supreme nature, Gregory adopted a concept borrowed from the works on logic of his time, which dealt with greater or lesser degree of presence of a particular quality in an individual being, and, accordingly, in the case of Porphyry's *Isagoge*, of greater or lesser participation of the accident in it. In Gregory this notion is transformed into a discourse of greater or lesser participation of beings belonging to intellectual created nature in intellectual uncreated nature.

As I have mentioned above, the topic of participation in the divine nature from our passage is a combination of the Scriptural reference to 2 Pet. 1: 4 and the Platonic discourse of participation, which is expressed in Gregory's use of a typical Platonic concept *according to participation / according to nature*. Gregory believed that only that could participate in the divine nature (2 Pet. 1: 4), which by virtue of its created nature might possess good things only *according to participation* in that which was good *according to nature*. Thus, Gregory's Scriptural reference was placed in a distinct philosophical context.

However, it seems that there is another, not so explicit but quite an important aspect of the philosophical background in which Gregory set his Scriptural reference. This aspect is associated with the meaning behind the concept of the divine nature in the discussed passage.

In my opinion, the whole train of Gregory's thought in *Contra Eunomium* I, 1, 270, 1 – 277, 13 suggests that speaking about (intellectual) uncreated nature (ἡ ἄκτιστος φύσις), participated in by intellectual created beings, Gregory had in mind not the divinity as such, but the common nature of the Persons of the Holy Trinity, and thus a universal. Gregory did not mention it explicitly, but I think that the whole logic of his reasoning suggests precisely that. This conclusion can be confirmed by the following points:

¹⁶¹ The principle of "greater–lesser" in its application to participation of beings belonging to intellectual created nature in the intellectual uncreated nature, in Gregory takes the shape of his famous doctrine of *epektasis*, the endless movement to the infinite divinity. This doctrine can be found, for example, in the same Chapter 22 of the first book of *Eun.* I, 1, 290, 1 - 291, 6 (Jaeger). The question on the Plotinian background of the doctrine of *epektasis* was extensively discussed in the literature (see, for example, K. CORRIGAN, *Ecstasy and Ectasy in Some Early Pagan and Christian Mystical Writings*, in W. Carroll and J. Furlong (eds.), *Greek and Medieval Studies in Honor of Leo Sweeney, S J.*, New-York 1994, pp. 27-38), but one could argue that in explicit and clearly articulated way the topic of infinite participation in the supreme limitless principle is primarily typical for Gregory and not for Plotinus.

¹⁶² In my opinion this is supported by the following words of Gregory from the passage under discussion, "...And the entire creation is turned to it, and by virtue of communication in the first good, touches upon and partakes in the higher nature." These words could have been understood as echoes Plotinian discourse of participation of all beings in the One if, on the one hand, we did not have Gregory's emphasis in the remainder of the quotation that the participation in the divine nature is achieved through exercising free choice of beings belonging to the intellectual nature and, on the other hand, if we did not have Gregory's words later in *Eun.* III, 3, 7, 1 - 8, 6 (Jaeger) that created beings by themselves can in no way participate in the divine nature.

1) Gregory listed several types of natures: sensible, intellectual created, and intellectual uncreated. Gregory's discourse suggests that sensible nature is a kind of species for individual beings which belong to it, while intellectual created nature is also the species for individual beings which belong to it. It is clear that intellectual uncreated nature, standing in the argument of Gregory alongside the sensible and intellectual created natures, must have been the species for the corresponding individuals – the Persons of the Holy Trinity.

2) Speaking about participation in uncreated nature, Gregory built up his argument in such a way that the concept of hypostasis emerged towards the end of the passage. In this way, the notion of uncreated nature, which was discussed throughout the entire passage, was put into the context of the notion of hypostasis, which referred the reader to the conceptual pair of “nature-hypostasis,” well-established by the time when the treatise was composed, with “nature” referring to the common nature of the Persons of the Holy Trinity.

We have seen that prior to Gregory, the notion of participation in the common nature of the Holy Trinity surfaced in Origen also in connection with reference to 2 Pet. 1: 3–4. Origen explicitly said that the divine nature, participated in by the human minds and heavenly powers was “the nature of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit”¹⁶³ (the line N^3 which I identified in my discussion of participation in Origen above). Both in Origen and Gregory, this participation in the common nature of the Persons of the Holy Trinity means that God endows the participating beings with good things which He has according to nature; both authors elaborated this topic in the context of the Platonic philosophical background. In Origen, the combination of the reference to 2 Pet. 1: 3-4 with the Platonic philosophical context within a wider discussion of unification with God seems to appear for the first time in Christian literature, and Gregory might have borrowed it from him.

¹⁶³ *De Princ* IV, 4, 9 (36) (see above). I should mention that Ilaria Ramelli quite clearly showed that Origen's understanding of the relationship between the Persons of the Trinity showed a tendency towards anti-subordinationism (I. RAMELLI, *Origen's Anti-Subordinationism and its Heritage in the Nicene and Cappadocian Line*, “*Vigiliae Christianae*” 65 (2011), pp. 21-49), that is, was close to the “horizontal” paradigm. In arguing that point Ramelli did not consider the fragments of Origen, which might indicate the subordinationist tendency in the Origen's Trinitarian doctrine. In any case, the observations of Ramelli show that Origen's Trinitarian doctrine contained distinct antisubordinationist tendency which seems to fit well Origen's arguments about participation of intellects and the angelic powers in the nature of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit from *De Princ* IV, 4, 9 (36).

Chapter 6, “The specifics of Gregory of Nyssa’s teaching of the universal and the particular, and its philosophical context”

Subsequently, I will touch upon the problem of universals in Gregory of Nyssa in regard of a horizontal (Aristotelian) paradigm of participation, to be more precise in regard of its specific interpretation by Gregory of Nyssa.

The parts of the writings where Gregory allegedly develops a “collective” theory of universals are actively discussed in scholar literature.¹ This theory in terms of Johannes Zachhuber, presupposes “a view that sees universals as collections of its individual instantiations)”². Different scholars suggest various understanding of the historical-philosophical background of the corresponding parts from Gregory’s writings. Hereafter I venture upon expounding my own understanding of this context.

In the treatise “To Ablabius. On not three Gods” Gregory displays a bunch of peculiar ideas, which as many scholars assume are bound with the “collective” understanding of participation.

Namely, as a part of his defense against accusations in tritheism and while using for these purposes elaborated by the Cappadocians analogy between hypostases of the Trinity and human individuals, Gregory speaks about the use of plural case applied to a so-called indivisible nature. It corresponds to the species of the thing; and in line with this he contrasts on the one hand a word usage which is correct in its meaning although is not commonly used in the language, and on the other hand there is a word which is used but not correct in its form. Back to the text, he says that it is not correct to use a word “man” with the meaning of human species in plural, although in a colloquial speech such a wording is absolutely natural. Inversely, the correct use is that where the word “man” is used in a singular. Gregory states that the reason is that since the word “man” points to the species, or to the nature, the use of this word in plural implies the presence of a multitude of natures. The necessary ensuing consequence is that human nature is no longer indivisible, but this seems to be absurd for Gregory of Nyssa.

¹ H. CHERNISS, *The Platonism of Gregory of Nyssa*, “University of California Publications in Classical Philology”, 11 (1930), pp. 1–92, at 33; R. M. HÜBNER, *Die Einheit des Leibes Christi bei Gregor von Nyssa: Untersuchungen zum Ursprung der ‘physischen’ Erloßungslehre*, Leiden 1974, Ss. 83-87; D. BALAS, *Plenitudo humanitatis: The Unity of Human Nature in the Theology of Gregory of Nyssa*, in D. F. Winslow (ed.), *Disciplina Nostra: Essays in Memory of Robert F. Evans*, Cambridge, MA 1979, pp. 119-121; J. ZACHHUBER, *Human Nature in Gregory of Nyssa: Philosophical Background and Theological Significance*, Leiden 2000, pp. 64-70 and passim.

² J. ZACHHUBER, *Gregory of Nyssa on Universals*, “Journal of Theological Studies”, 56 (2005), p. 75.

Φαμὲν τοίνυν πρῶτον μὲν κατάχρησίν τινα συνηθείας εἶναι τὸ τοὺς μὴ διηρημένους τῇ φύσει κατ' αὐτὸ τὸ τῆς φύσεως ὄνομα πληθυντικῶς ὀνομάζειν καὶ λέγειν ὅτι πολλοὶ ἄνθρωποι, ὅπερ ὅμοιον ἐστὶ τῷ λέγειν ὅτι πολλαὶ φύσεις ἀνθρώπιναι.

We say, then, to begin with, that the practice of calling those who are not divided in nature by the very name of their common nature in the plural, and saying they are “many men,” is a customary abuse of language, and that it would be much the same thing to say they are “many human natures”³.

Elaborating his thought Gregory takes an example of *calling upon* a man. Such an action can be either successful or unsuccessful. The bishop of Nyssa says that if the word used for calling upon a certain man has a meaning of a common nature, then such a calling obviously will be unsuccessful. It is only a calling of a personal name of aimed individual (which distinguishes her from another man) what can give a positive result. It is caused by the fact that the personal name points to the subject, individual, while a common naming suggests only a shared nature. In the course of this epistemological reasoning, Gregory allows himself to make certain ontological utterances. A personal name, Gregory says, distinguishes the individual from the many, who partake to the common nature, although the nature of all individuals is the same (i.e. the same human nature, which is actually the only one to be called “man”).

προσκαλούμενοι γάρ τινα, οὐκ ἐκ τῆς φύσεως αὐτὸν ὀνομάζομεν, ὡς ἂν μὴ τινα πλάνην ἢ κοινότης τοῦ ὀνόματος ἐμποιήσειεν, ἐκάστου τῶν ἀκουόντων ἑαυτὸν εἶναι τὸν προσκληθέντα νομίζοντος, ὅτι μὴ τῇ ἰδιαζούσῃ προσηγορίᾳ ἀλλ' ἐκ τοῦ κοινοῦ τῆς φύσεως ὀνόματος ἢ κληῖσις γίνεται· ἀλλὰ τὴν ἰδίως ἐπικειμένην αὐτῷ (τὴν σημαντικὴν λέγω τοῦ ὑποκειμένου) φωνὴν εἰπόντες, οὕτως αὐτὸν τῶν πολλῶν ἀποκρίνομεν, ὥστε πολλοὺς μὲν εἶναι τοὺς μετεσχηκότας τῆς φύσεως, φέρε εἰπεῖν μαθητὰς ἢ ἀποστόλους ἢ μάρτυρας, ἓνα δὲ ἐν πᾶσι τὸν ἄνθρωπον, εἶπερ, καθὼς εἴρηται, οὐχὶ τοῦ καθ' ἕνα, ἀλλὰ τοῦ κοινοῦ τῆς φύσεως ἐστὶν ὁ ἄνθρωπος· ἄνθρωπος γὰρ ὁ Λουκᾶς ἢ ὁ Στέφανος, οὐ μὴν, εἴ τις ἄνθρωπος, πάντως καὶ Λουκᾶς ἐστὶν ἢ Στέφανος.

When we address any one, we do not call him by the name of his nature, in order that no confusion may result from the community of the name, as would happen

³ *Ad Abl.* 40, 5-9 (Jaeger).

if every one of those who hear it were to think that he himself was the person addressed, because the call is made not by the proper appellation but by the common name of their nature: but we separate him from the multitude by using that name which belongs to him as his own;—that, I mean, which signifies the particular subject. Thus there are many who have shared in the nature—many disciples, say, or apostles, or martyrs—but the man in them all is one; since, as has been said, the term “man” does not belong to the nature of the individual as such, but to that which is common. For Luke is a man, or Stephen is a man⁴.

Then Gregory refines the specifics of hypostases and nature on the basis of the categories countability/divisibility and unity. The hypostases are conformed to countability and division (διαμερισμός), but the nature to unity. Gregory calls nature as indivisible monad, although it is present through multitude (i.e. through individuals), it is whole and undivided by those who take part in it:

Ἄλλ' ὁ μὲν τῶν ὑποστάσεων λόγος διὰ τὰς ἐνθεωρουμένας ιδιότητας ἐκάστῳ τὸν διαμερισμὸν ἐπιδέχεται καὶ κατὰ σύνθεσιν ἐν ἀριθμῷ θεωρεῖται· ἡ δὲ φύσις μία ἐστίν, αὐτὴ πρὸς ἑαυτὴν ἠνωμένη καὶ ἀδιάτμητος ἀκριβῶς μονάς, οὐκ αὐξανομένη διὰ προσθήκης, οὐ μειουμένη δι' ὑφαιρέσεως, ἀλλ' ὅπερ ἐστὶν ἐν οὓσα καὶ ἐν διαμένουσα κἂν ἐν πλήθει φαίνεται, ἄσχιστος καὶ συνεχῆς καὶ ὁλόκληρος καὶ τοῖς μετέχουσιν αὐτῆς τοῖς καθ' ἕκαστον οὐ συνδιαρουμένη.

The idea of the hypostases admits of that separation which is made by the peculiar attributes considered in each severally, and when they are combined is presented to us by means of number; yet their nature is one, at union in itself, and an absolutely indivisible monad, not capable of increase by addition or of diminution by subtraction, but in its essence being and continually remaining one, inseparable even though it appear in plurality, continuous, complete, and not divided with the individuals who participate in it⁵.

Later on Gregory gives an example, which is supposed to illustrate what has been said. He states that the words “people”, “army”, “counsel” are such that taken in singular they have a meaning of plural. This statement can be inspected through the word “man”; which itself means

⁴ *Ad Abl.* 40, 10-23 (Jaeger).

⁵ *Ad Abl.* 40, 24 - 41, 7 (Jaeger).

something singular – human nature, although what belongs to the human nature is plural (i.e. human individuals, people). Thus, Gregory sums up that it is better to use the term nature in a correct way, namely not in plural but in singular. And if we cannot use it in such a form in colloquial language, then we must do such differentiation in theological language (and not to speak about three Divine natures).

καὶ ὡςπερ λέγεται λαὸς καὶ δῆμος καὶ στρατεύμα καὶ ἐκκλησία μοναχῶς πάντα, ἕκαστον δὲ τούτων ἐν πλήθει νοεῖται· οὕτω κατὰ τὸν ἀκριβέστερον λόγον καὶ ἄνθρωπος εἷς κυρίως ἂν ῥηθῆι, κἂν οἱ ἐν τῇ φύσει τῇ αὐτῇ δεικνύμενοι πλῆθος ὄσιν, ὡς πολὺ μᾶλλον καλῶς ἔχειν τὴν ἐσφαλμένην ἐφ' ἡμῶν ἐπανορθοῦσθαι συνήθειαν εἰς τὸ μηκέτι τὸ τῆς φύσεως ὄνομα πρὸς πλῆθος ἐκτείνειν ἢ ταύτη δουλεύοντας τὴν ὄδε πλάνην καὶ ἐπὶ τὸ θεῖον δόγμα μεταβιβάζειν.

And as we speak of a people, or a mob, or an army, or an assembly in the singular in every case, while each of these is conceived as being in plurality, so according to the more accurate expression, “man” would be said to be one, even though those who are exhibited to us in the same nature make up a plurality. Thus it would be much better to correct our erroneous habit, so as no longer to extend to a plurality the name of the nature, than by our bondage to habit to transfer to our statements concerning God the error which exists in the above case⁶.

Closer to the end of the treatise Gregory comes back to this theme. He again claims that it is incorrect to use the word nature in respect of many, and supports his argument declaring that nature cannot decrease or increase, although the nature is perceived in many. Countability, which implies the existence in a mode of multitude, is typical only for something individualized, i.e. confined spaciouly etc. Something which is not individualized is neither countable, hence it cannot be represented in a mode of multitude. Such is the relation between the nature of gold (as uncountable and not individualized) and concrete golden coins (as countable and possessing individual features). The same argument is applied to human nature. It consists of many individuals, but “man” in them all is the same and one.

τὸ τῆς φύσεως ὄνομα ἡμαρτημένως ἢ συνήθεια εἰς πλήθους σημασίαν ἀνάγει, οὔτε μειώσεως οὔτε ἀυξήσεως κατὰ τὸν ἀληθῆ λόγον προσγινομένης τῇ φύσει,

⁶ *Ad Abl.* 41, 7-15 (Jaeger).

ὅταν ἐν πλείοσιν ἢ ἐλάττοσι θεωρῆται. μόνα γὰρ κατὰ σύνθεσιν ἀριθμεῖται, ὅσα κατ' ἰδίαν περιγραφὴν θεωρεῖται· ἡ δὲ περιγραφὴ ἐν ἐπιφανείᾳ σώματος καὶ μεγέθει καὶ τόπῳ καὶ τῇ διαφορᾷ τῇ κατὰ τὸ σχῆμα καὶ χρῶμα καταλαμβάνεται· τὸ δὲ ἔξω τούτων θεωρούμενον ἐκφεύγει τὴν διὰ τῶν τοιούτων περιγραφὴν. ὁ δὲ μὴ περιγράφεται οὐκ ἀριθμεῖται, τὸ δὲ μὴ ἀριθμούμενον ἐν πλήθει θεωρηθῆναι οὐ δύναται. ἐπεὶ καὶ τὸν χρυσὸν φάμεν, κἂν εἰς πολλοὺς διακερματίζηται τύπους, ἓνα καὶ εἶναι καὶ λέγεσθαι· πολλὰ δὲ νομίσματα καὶ πολλοὺς στατήρας ὀνομάζομεν, οὐδένα τῆς φύσεως τοῦ χρυσοῦ πλεονασμὸν ἐν τῷ πλήθει τῶν στατήρων εὐρίσκοντες. διὸ καὶ πολλὸς ὁ χρυσὸς λέγεται, ὅταν ἐν ὄγκῳ πλείονι ἢ σκεύεσιν ἢ νομίσμασι θεωρῆται, πολλοὶ δὲ οἱ χρυσοὶ διὰ τὸ πλῆθος τῆς ὕλης οὐκ ὀνομάζονται· εἰ μὴ τις οὕτω λέγοι, χρυσοὺς πολλοὺς, ὡς τοὺς δαρεικοὺς ἢ τοὺς στατήρας, ἐφ' ὧν οὐχ ἡ ὕλη ἀλλὰ τὰ κέρματα τὴν τοῦ πλῆθους σημασίαν ἐδέξατο. κυρίως γὰρ ἔστιν οὐχὶ χρυσοὺς ἀλλὰ χρυσέους τούτους εἰπεῖν. ὥσπερ τοίνυν πολλοὶ μὲν οἱ χρύσειοι στατήρες, χρυσὸς δὲ εἷς, οὕτω καὶ πολλοὶ μὲν οἱ καθ' ἕκαστον ἐν τῇ φύσει τοῦ ἀνθρώπου δεικνύμενοι, οἷον Πέτρος καὶ Ἰάκωβος καὶ Ἰωάννης, εἷς δὲ ἐν τούτοις ὁ ἄνθρωπος.

<...> custom applies the name of a nature to denote multitude erroneously: since according to true reasoning neither diminution nor increase attaches to any nature, when it is contemplated in a larger or smaller number. For it is only those things which are contemplated in their individual circumscription which are enumerated by way of addition. Now this circumscription is noted by bodily appearance, and size, and place, and difference figure and colour, and that which is contemplated apart from these conditions is free from the circumscription which is formed by such categories. That which is not thus circumscribed is not enumerated, and that which is not enumerated cannot be contemplated in multitude. For we say that gold, even though it be cut into many figures, is one, and is so spoken of, but we speak of many coins or many staters, without finding any multiplication of the nature of gold by the number of staters; and for this reason we speak of gold, when it is contemplated in greater bulk, either in plate or in coin, as much, but we do not speak of it as many golds on account of the multitude of the material—except when one says there are many gold pieces (Darics, for instance, or staters), in which case it is not the material, but the pieces of money to which the significance of number applies: indeed, properly, we should not call them gold but golden. As, then, the golden staters are many,

but the gold is one, so too those who are exhibited to us severally in the nature of man, as Peter, James, and John, are many, yet the man in them is one⁷.

Historical and philosophical context of these positions from the treatise of Gregory of Nyssa *Ad Ablabium* has been interpreted in different ways by different scholars. None of the interpretations that I am aware of seems satisfactory. Thus, in his extensive study, *Human Nature in Gregory of Nyssa: Philosophical Background and Theological Significance*,⁸ Johannes Zachhuber tried to prove that in *Ad Ablabium* Gregory manifested his understanding of nature in a collective sense of universals when he was discussing the notion of the total monad. According to J. Zachhuber, the same idea could be found in the so-called *Letter 38*, while Gregory's concept of the whole man who was "in" the human individuals and whose correct expression by means of language was only possible in the singular, referred to the concept of the universal immanent to the things.⁹ J. Zachhuber correlated the understanding of universals in a collective sense, which, according to him, appeared in *Letter 38*, with the concept of the "general man" of Alexander of Aphrodisias.¹⁰ J. Zachhuber also understood this concept in the sense of a collective universal.¹¹ In his study, "*Gregory of Nyssa on Universals*"¹² Richard Cross criticized the theory of Johannes Zachhuber on a collective understanding of universals by Gregory of Nyssa. According to R. Cross, all disputable passages in Gregory were consistent with understanding of universals in immanent sense. R. Cross claimed that in *Ad Ablabium* Gregory not only did *not* follow the collective understanding of universals, but also argued with such an understanding on the part of the Neoplatonists, more precisely, with the understanding of universals appearing, as R. Cross believed, in Porphyry's *Isagoge*. In his response to R. Cross,¹³ J. Zachhuber did not discuss the historical and philosophical theory of R. Cross,¹⁴ instead attempting to reply to R. Cross' objections to his concept of the collective understanding of universals in Gregory expressed in his book, *Human Nature in Gregory of Nyssa*, J. Zachhuber elaborated his argument by clarifying that the collective sense of a universal / species in Gregory of Nyssa was to be understood not simply in the sense of an integral sum of the individuals belonging to a particular species, but in the sense of a "concrete whole." In that respect J. Zachhuber suggested that the specific nature of this collective universal in Gregory was such that

⁷ *Ad Abl.* 53, 6 - 54, 4 (Jaeger).

⁸ J. ZACHHUBER, *Human Nature in Gregory of Nyssa: Philosophical Background and Theological Significance*, Leiden 2000.

⁹ J. ZACHHUBER, *Human Nature in Gregory of Nyssa*, p. 116.

¹⁰ ALEX. APHROD. In *Met.* 426, 19-26 (Havdduck).

¹¹ J. ZACHHUBER, *Human Nature in Gregory of Nyssa*, p. 88.

¹² R. CROSS, *Gregory of Nyssa on Universals*, "Vigiliae Christianae" 56 (2002).

¹³ J. ZACHHUBER, *Gregory of Nyssa on Universals*, "Journal of Theological Studies", 56 (2005).

¹⁴ J. ZACHHUBER, *Gregory of Nyssa on Universals*, p. 78.

the relation between the universal and the individual in it was similar to oneness-in-multiplicity as it was understood by Plotinus when he spoke of the one and the many in the hypostasis of the Mind.¹⁵

As opposed to the previous studies, I believe that specific philosophical doctrine developed by Gregory in his treatise *Ad Ablabium* with some important points discussed in *Letter 38* was based on the tradition of Aristotle's *Categories* and the Neoplatonic commentaries on this treatise.

In this regard, I discern several trends which were essential for the Gregory's specific approach and his use of the philosophical language for describing the problem of the relationship between the general and the particular in *Ad Ablabium* and *Letter 38*. The following trends are manifested in the preceding philosophical tradition of Antiquity associated with the *Categories* and their commentaries: 1) the principle that division corresponds to the particular and individual, while unity corresponds to the species and the natural; 2) the concept of a "general person" as applied to the mankind; 3) the argument on participation of individual in the general, or of individuals in nature; 4) the principle of indivisibility of species by the individuals which participate in it, and 5) the principle of "greater–lesser."

We should start with the last point. When Gregory said in *Ad Ablabium* that the monad (that is, the nature or species) did not increase with addition and did not reduce with subtraction,¹⁶ he expressed in other words the thought from the passage in his *Contra Eunomium* I, 1, 173, 2 – 175, 1 which I discussed above, that human nature was always in the same way present in the mankind, although individual humans belonging to it were born and died in time. The passage reveals a clear Aristotelian context associated with the topic of "greater–lesser" as applied to the category of substance. The same context is manifested in the words of Gregory when he justified the use of the name of nature only in the singular and said that the nature could neither decrease nor increase.¹⁷

The argument of Gregory in *Ad Ablabium* and especially in *Letter 38* is based on the premise that the particular and the individual corresponded to division, while the species and the natural corresponded to unity. Thus, in the so called *Letter 38* Gregory wrote, "it is impossible in any way to think of a severance or a division, so that the Son is considered apart from the Father, or the Spirit is separated from the Son; but there is found in them a certain inexpressible and incomprehensible union and distinction, since neither the difference of the persons breaks the continuity of the nature, nor the common attribute of substance dissolves the individual character of their distinctive marks. But, do not wonder if we say that the same thing is both joined and

¹⁵ J. Zachhuber referred to *Enneads* V, 9, 6, 8-11 and IV, 2, 1, 62-66 as an example.

¹⁶ *Ad Abl.* 40, 24 - 41, 7 (Jaeger), see above.

¹⁷ *Ad Abl.* 53, 6 - 54, 4 (Jaeger), see above.

separated and if, as in a riddle, we contrive something both strange and incredible, a conjoined separation and a separated union”.¹⁸ This premise also appeared in *Ad Ablabium*, where Gregory explained, “The idea of the hypostases admits of that separation which is made by the peculiar attributes considered in each severally, and when they are combined is presented to us by means of number”¹⁹. Here we can see the expression of an important argument of *Isagoge* where the movement along the genera/species hierarchy towards the more particular was associated with the concept of division, while the movement towards the more common was associated with the concept of unity. As Porphyry explained, individual was associated with divisibility, while general was associated with unity. Porphyry spoke about it in the same passage of *Isagoge* where he addressed another important issue for the kind of philosophy Gregory was elaborating in *Ad Ablabium* and *Letter 38* – the subject of “general man” as applied to the human race. The same passage of Porphyry also contained the Aristotelian concept of participation of individuals in their natural species, which, as we have seen, Gregory as well used in *Ad Ablabium*.²⁰ Thus, all these topics may be found in Porphyry in a passage from the second chapter of *Isagoge*, which I have discussed above in the chapter 1, “The paradigms of participation in the context of the topic of universals in Ancient philosophical tradition”, of this dissertation:

So, when we are descending to the most special items, it is necessary to divide and to proceed through a plurality (διὰ πλήθους), and when we are ascending to the most general items, it is necessary to bring the plurality together into One (συναρπεῖν εἰς ἓν). For species—and still more, genera—are that which gather (συναγωγὸν) the many items into a single nature (εἰς μίαν φύσιν); whereas the particulars or singulars, in contrary fashion, always divide (διαρπεῖ) the one into a plurality. For by participating in the species (τοῦ εἶδους μετουσίᾳ) the many men are one man, and by the particulars the one and common (ὁ εἷς καὶ κοινὸς) man is several — for the singular is always divisive whereas the common is collective and unificatory.²¹

18 *Ep.* 38, 4, 81-91, the translation by Sister Agnes Clare Way, C.D.P., in: SAINT BASIL, *Letters*, Vol. 1 (1–185), The Catholic University of America Press 1951, p. 90 (Οὐ γὰρ ἔστιν ἐπινοῆσαι τομὴν ἢ διαίρεσιν κατ’ οὐδένα τρόπον, ὡς ἡ Υἱὸν χωρὶς Πατρὸς νοηθῆναι ἢ τὸ Πνεῦμα τοῦ Υἱοῦ διαζευχθῆναι, ἀλλὰ τις ἄρρητος καὶ ἀκατανόητος ἐν τούτοις καταλαμβάνεται καὶ ἡ κοινωνία καὶ ἡ διάκρισις. οὔτε τῆς τῶν ὑποστάσεων διαφορᾶς τὸ τῆς φύσεως συνεχὲς διασπώσης οὔτε τῆς κατὰ τὴν οὐσίαν κοινότητος τὸ ἰδιάζον τῶν γνωρισμάτων ἀναχεούσης. Μὴ θαυμάσης δὲ εἰ τὸ αὐτὸ καὶ συνημμένον καὶ διακεκριμένον εἶναι φαμεν καὶ τινα ἐπινοοῦμεν, ὥσπερ ἐν αἰνίγματι, καινὴν καὶ παράδοξον διάκρισιν τε συνημμένην καὶ διακεκριμένην συνάφειαν).

19 *Ad Abl.* 40, 24 – 41, 2.

20 *Ad Abl.* 40, 24 - 41, 7 (Jaeger), see above.

21 PORPH. *Isag.*: 6, 16–23 (Busse).

Keeping in mind the fact that Gregory used these three points from a single passage of *Isagoge* while developing his theory of the general and the particular, it can be argued that *Isagoge* and specifically that passage significantly influenced Gregory's elaboration of principles appearing in his *Ad Ablabium, Letter 38*, and other texts of Gregory on the subject.

It seems that Gregory's use of the concept of the monad (μονάς), which was absent from Porphyry's *Isagoge* can be related to Porphyry's concept of the "whole man." Writing about the monad, Gregory must have reformulated the notion of "wholeness" from Porphyry, enriching it by the additional connotations associated with an emphasis on unity and integrity of nature / species.

However, Richard Cross suggested that in this passage of *Isagoge* Porphyry elaborated the collective understanding of universals which implied that species were divided by the individuals. R. Cross believed that Gregory of Nyssa argued precisely with that notion when he proposed that the monad (that is, nature or species for the thing) was *indivisible* by the individuals participating in it.²² I believe R. Cross' understanding of Porphyry is fundamentally wrong. R. Cross did not take into account the fact that the positions expressed by Porphyry in his *Isagoge*, did not claim the ontological status, but were rather logical exercises as Porphyry clearly said in the beginning of his treatise.²³ Therefore, in attributing the collective understanding of universals to Porphyry, R. Cross unjustifiably "ontologized" a purely *logical* discourse. When in his logical framework Porphyry said that the individual divided the unity into multiplicity, this in no way implied that the real unity (species) consisted of multiplicity (individuals). It meant that if we build up a generic hierarchy in our mind, the higher we ascend along the hierarchy of commonness with our mind, the greater degree of unification we will find in the order of the hierarchy, whereas the lower we descend with our mind, the greater degree of division we will find there. This is the exact meaning of Porphyry's words that the individual is associated with divisibility, while the totality is associated with unification. When Gregory borrowed this concept from Porphyry, he followed Porphyry in his statement that the species were characterized by unity, while the individuals were characterized by division and multiplicity, and this is why the individual/species discourse implied "conjoined separation and a separated union".²⁴ Yet, neither in the case of Porphyry nor in the case of Gregory did it mean that in reality the species were divided into parts by the individuals, or the collective understanding of a universal (= species).

Incidentally, R. Cross also noted the words about united division and divided unity in Gregory's *Letter 38*, describing them as paradoxical. However, R. Cross did not realize that

²² R. CROSS, *Gregory of Nyssa on Universals*, p. 376ff.

²³ PORPH. *Isag.* I: 1, 8-12 (Busse).

²⁴ *Ep.* 38, 4, 91.

these words meant the same as what Porphyry discussed in *Isagoge* 2: 6, 16–23 (Busse) (see above), and incorrectly understood them in the sense of the collective meaning of universals.

Thus, when Gregory used this Porphyry's subject, his theological language manifested the elements of the logical discourse. In general, in *Ad Ablabium* and *Letter* 38, Gregory combined epistemological, ontological, and logical discourses.

The ontological sense clearly appears in the words of Gregory concerning *indivisibility* of the monad / nature. R. Cross concluded that exactly on the basis of that statement Gregory argued with Neoplatonists and Porphyry that universal/nature/species should not be understood in a collective sense. Indeed, Porphyry did not mention indivisibility of species by the individuals in his *Isagoge*. Yet, since the arguments presented in *Isagoge* did not claim the ontological status, they did not require such an explanation.

A somewhat similar subject occurs in Dexippus, another commentator on the *Categories* of Aristotle. Discussing the topic of homonyms, Dexippus argued that the common name was not divided by those participating in it, that is, those to whom that name was applied:

τοῦ ἀδιαίρετου τὸ μὲν παρὰ μέρος εἰς χρῆσιν λαμβανόμενον λέγουσιν ὥσπερ τὸν ἵππον καὶ τὴν λύραν, τὸ δὲ ἀθρόως καὶ ἀμερίστως πλείοσιν ὑπάρχειν δυνάμενον ἀδιαίρετον παραλείπουσιν, ὅπερ ἐστὶ τρόπος τῆς ἐπὶ τοῦ ὀνόματος κοινωνίας· αὐτῷ γὰρ τῷ μὴ διαιρεῖσθαι τούτῳ καὶ πάρεστι πᾶσι τοῖς μετέχουσιν αὐτοῦ.

of the indivisible, one type is said to be taken for individual use consecutively, e.g. the horse and the lyre, while that which can be availed of simultaneously and undividedly by many is left as indivisible proper, and it is this latter that is the mode of the commonness of the name; for it is precisely by virtue of its not being divided that it is present to all entities that partake in it²⁵.

I am not claiming that Gregory was influenced by Dexippus when he spoke about indivisibility of the participated monad. Rather, bearing in mind that statement Dexippus it can be argued that the concept stating that the general was not divided by the particular which participated in it, was a part of the tradition of commentaries on the *Categories* of Aristotle in Antiquity, and Gregory might as well have been aware of that tradition.

Thus, I believe that in analyzing historical and philosophical background of the premises appearing in *Ad Ablabium* and *Letter* 38 of Gregory of Nyssa in regard to his discussion of the

²⁵ DEXIPPUS. *In cat.* 1, 12: 19, 11-16 (Busse).

general and particular, there is no need to look for the sources of Gregory's inspiration either in Alexander of Aphrodisias or in Neoplatonic authors as it was done by J. Zachhuber. Instead it can be argued that in his general treatment of these subjects Gregory relied on the Peripatetic philosophical context, manifested, for example, in his use of the principle of "greater–lesser" and the concept of participation of individuals in their natural species. The main a source of the Peripatetic ideas for Gregory was Porphyry's *Isagoge*, which is especially evident in the concepts of "whole man" as well as the association of the individual with "divisibility" and the general with "unity", although Gregory might also have been aware of other writings belonging to the tradition of commentaries on Aristotle's *Categories*.

Chapter 7, “Synthesis of Biblical and Logical-Philosophical Descriptions of the Order of Natural Beings in De opificio hominis 8 by Gregory of Nyssa”

In the eighth chapter of his treatise *De opificio hominis* Gregory of Nyssa addresses the topic of the progressive ascent of nature from the lowest levels (vegetative life) to the most advanced (human beings) in accordance with the hierarchy of natural beings. In this regard, some modern authors, in particular, those who are willing to present Christian creationism and modern biological evolutionism as sympathetic, have suggested the presence of an evolutionary trend in Gregory of Nyssa.¹

This chapter of the thesis analyzes and clarifies the context and background for Gregory of Nyssa’s ordering of natural beings and his dynamic understanding of nature.

7.1. Hierarchies of Beings in Gregory of Nyssa

First, some words should be said about the hierarchy of beings in Gregory of Nyssa in general. Gregory develops a doctrine suggesting the fundamental division (διαίρεσις) of all beings into classes. In his earlier works, *De opificio hominis* and *Dialogus de anima et resurrectione*,² Gregory develops a doctrine according to which beings can be positioned along an ascending ladder of vitality and posited the division of existing beings (τὰ ὄντα) into intellectual beings (τό νοητόν) and corporeal beings (τό σωματικόν). In these early works Gregory leaves questions concerning the division of intellectual beings for later consideration³ and instead speaks here only about the division of corporeal beings.

Later, in his treatise *Against Eunomius*, Gregory makes a distinction also within the intelligent realm and speaks of the division of beings into three natures: first, intellectual

¹ Cf. A. WEISWURM, *The Nature of Human Knowledge according to Gregory of Nyssa*, Diss., Washington, The Catholic University of America Press 1952, p. 10; W. AGAR, *Catholicism and the Progress of Science*, New York 1940, p. 64; E. MESSENGER, *Evolution and Theology*, London 1931, pp. 23-26, 121-144; Idem., *Theology and Evolution*, London-Glasgow 1949, pp. 87-101; G. LADNER, *The Philosophical Anthropology of Saint Gregory of Nyssa*, “Dumbarton Oaks Papers”, 12 (1958), p. 75, n. 66. John Behr speaks about the “evolutionary” dynamics of creation” in Gregory of Nyssa (J. BEHR, *Rational Animal: A Re-reading of Gregory of Nyssa’s De hominis opificio*, “Journal of Early Christian Studies” 7 (1999), fasc. 2, p. 232). See also the discussion in W. MCGARRY, *St. Gregory of Nyssa and Adam’s Body*, “Thought” 10 (1935–1936), pp. 81-94, and E. SUTCLIFFE, *St. Gregory of Nyssa and Paradise*, “The Ecclesiastical Review”, 84 (1931), pp. 337-350.

² GREG. NYSS. *Opif. hom.* 8; *An. et res.*, PG 46, 60AB.

³ According to his own words in *Opif. hom.* 8, PG 44, 145.10–11.

uncreated nature (God), second, intellectual created nature (angels and human souls) which participate in the first nature in accordance with the goodness of will shown by individuals belonging to that nature, and, thirdly, sensible (τό αἰσθητόν) created nature.⁴ In another passage Gregory speaks about the division of beings into uncreated and created, and about the division of created beings into supramundane and sensible.⁵

According to David Balas, “being” (=“that which exists”) is the highest level for the hierarchy of divisions in Gregory of Nyssa.⁶ However, I think that we should distinguish between two strategies for building such a hierarchy which are used by Gregory. According to the first, in which each level divides into more specific classifications after the manner of genera and species, “that which exists” is, indeed, the highest level of the hierarchy of divisions. “That which exists” embraces the (intellectual) uncreated and the created. According to the alternative strategy, which Gregory of Nyssa develops in his *Contra Eunomium* and which he applies alongside the first,⁷ the uncreated intellectual being, the higher nature (ἡ ὑψηλή φύσις⁸), common to the hypostases of the Trinity,⁹ serves as the highest level of the hierarchy, giving existence to created beings.¹⁰ The intellectual created beings long for this being as it is the source of goodness and they participate in it according to the goodness of their will.¹¹

It seems that, according to the first strategy, inasmuch as existing beings are divided into intellectual and corporeal, and intellectual beings are divided into uncreated and created, we should speak only about the epistemological (and not ontological) nature of Gregory’s hierarchy (that is, earlier levels of hierarchy are in no way, except in terms of our knowledge, higher than subsequent ones). It is assumed that “that which exists” — a category which, with its position at the root of the hierarchy, unites and transcends both the uncreated and the created — does not precede the realm of the uncreated in reality, but is the highest level of the hierarchy only in the context of human thought as a result of the analytical capacity of the human mind. This follows from the basic principles of Christian theology; it is also evidenced by Gregory’s references to

⁴ Gregory of Nyssa, *Eun.* 1, 1, 270-277; 1, 1, 295 (Jaeger). We should note that in terms of the relationship between the created intellectual and sensible natures, Gregory of Nyssa, on the one hand, develops a theory of material bodies as a convergence of the intellectual *logoi* (*Hex.* PG 44, 69BC; *An. et res.*, PG 46, 124BD), yet, on the other hand, claims that created intellectual and sensible natures have fundamental differences and possess opposing properties (*Or. cat.* 6).

⁵ GREG. NYSS. *Eun.* 4, 100-101 (Jaeger).

⁶ D. BALAS, *METOYSIA ΘΕΟΥ*, p. 34.

⁷ Gregory of Nyssa employed both strategies simultaneously in his *Eun.* 1, 1, 270-277. The strategy of the division of beings was also formulated in *Opif. hom.* 8, PG 44, 145, 10-11; and in the *Or. cat.* 6, 9-14 (Srawley).

⁸ GREG. NYSS. *Eun.* 1, 1, 274, 3-4 (Jaeger).

⁹ Cf. GREG. NYSS. *Eun.* 1, 1, 274, 1 - 275, 1 and 1, 1, 277, 8-13 (Jaeger).

¹⁰ GREG. NYSS. *Eun.* 1, 1, 271, 7 - 1, 272, 1 (Jaeger); cf. *An. et res.*, PG 46, 72D-73A.

¹¹ GREG. NYSS. *Eun.* 1, 1, 274, 2 - 275, 1 (Jaeger).

the process of human thinking, in which he mentions the division of beings into intellectual and sensible, and the division of intellectual into created and uncreated.¹²

Gregory's development of this strategy of genera-species divisions in relation to corporeal beings (which is, in fact, the natural order of beings in his system) implies the ontological, and not just the epistemological nature of the hierarchy of corporeal beings, as will be seen below.

The second strategy involves a hierarchy that does not correspond to the pattern of genera and species (that is, lower hierarchical levels do not correspond to higher levels as species to their genus or as individuals to their species), but is, instead, a hierarchy in the true ontological sense. Thus the principal source of being stands at the highest level of the hierarchy (the uncreated nature) and gives existence to other kinds of beings, which are ranked in descending order according to their degree of closeness to the source and of their capacity to participate in it (created intellectual and created sensible natures).

7.2. *The context of the topic of the order of natural beings in De opificio hominis 8 of Gregory of Nyssa*

We should now turn to the order of natural beings in the 8th chapter of Gregory's *Opif. hom.* Gregory addresses this topic in relation to the first strategy, in which beings are organized according to the pattern of genera-species divisions with "that which exists" as the first-level category.

Starting the discussion with the questions of why human beings have an upright posture and the purpose of hands, Gregory makes a digression and begins to discuss the ordering of creation in relation to "the philosophy of the soul."¹³ In this discussion Gregory begins by tracing the order of creation as it is described in Genesis,¹⁴ and the correspondence of the order of natural beings to this pattern. Gregory wants to establish the logic of this pattern, followed by the order in which beings endowed with life were created (Gen 1,11–27) and notes that the Biblical ordering, according to which grass is created first, followed by animals (living beings), and then human beings, is evidently connected to the idea that earlier beings form the basis or support for those which follow: grass serves as food for animals, and animals function as support (as well as food) for humans. Gregory connects this order with the ordering of the vital powers of the soul distinguishing, firstly, vegetative and nutritional or natural vital powers belonging to plants,

¹² Cf. "... In the division of beings we come to know (ἐγνωμεν) such differences..." (GREG. NYSS. *Eun.* 1, 1, 295, 1-2); "... But the reason (ὁ λόγος) divides notion [of intellectual beings] into two – the uncreated, and, following it, the created are discerned" (Ibid., 1, 1, 271, 4-5).

¹³ GREG. NYSS. *EUN.* 8, PG 44, 144, 40 - 145, 9.

¹⁴ Cf. GREG. NYSS. *Hex.* PG 44, 72 ff.

secondly, perceptive vital powers belonging to the animal world, and, thirdly, rational vital powers, belonging to humans. Moreover, each of these powers includes those preceding it, so that animals possess both vegetative and perceptive vital powers, while humans possess vegetative, perceptive, and rational powers.¹⁵

After this Gregory goes on to discuss the division of beings in connection with the order of creation:

Γένοιτο δ' ἂν ἡμῖν τοιαύτη τις ἢ τοῦ λόγου διαίρεσις· Τῶν ὄντων τὸ μὲν τι νοητὸν, τὸ δὲ σωματικὸν πάντως ἐστίν. Ἀλλὰ τοῦ μὲν νοητοῦ παρεῖσθω νῦν ἢ πρὸς τὰ οἰκεῖα τομή· οὐ γὰρ τούτων ὁ λόγος. Τοῦ δὲ σωματικοῦ τὸ μὲν ἄμοιρον καθόλου ζωῆς, τὸ δὲ μετέχει ζωτικῆς ἐνεργείας. Πάλιν τοῦ ζωτικοῦ σώματος τὸ μὲν αἰσθήσει συζῆ, τὸ δὲ ἀμοιρεῖ τῆς αἰσθήσεως. Εἶτα τὸ αἰσθητικὸν τέμνεται πάλιν εἰς λογικόν τε καὶ ἄλογον. Διὰ τοῦτο πρῶτον μετὰ τὴν ἄψυχον ὕλην οἷον ὑποβάθραν τινὰ τῆς τῶν ἐμψύχων ιδέας τὴν φυσικὴν ταύτην ζωὴν συστήναι λέγει ὁ νομοθέτης, ἐν τῇ τῶν φυτῶν βλάστη προὔποστᾶσαν· εἶθ' οὕτως ἐπάγει τῶν κατ' αἰσθησιν διοικουμένων τὴν γένεσιν. Καὶ ἐπειδὴ κατὰ τὴν αὐτὴν ἀκολουθίαν τῶν διὰ σαρκὸς τὴν ζωὴν εἰληχότων τὰ μὲν αἰσθητικά, καὶ δίχα τῆς νοερᾶς φύσεως ἐφ' ἑαυτῶν εἶναι δύναται, τὸ δὲ λογικὸν οὐκ ἂν ἐτέρως γένοιτο ἐν σώματι, εἰ μὴ τῷ αἰσθητῷ συγκραθεῖν· διὰ τοῦτο τελευταῖος μετὰ τὰ βλαστήματα καὶ τὰ βοτὰ κατεσκευάσθη ὁ ἄνθρωπος, ὁδῶ τινι πρὸς τὸ τέλειον ἀκολούθως προϊούσης τῆς φύσεως

We might make a division of our subject in some such way as this. Of things existing, part are intellectual, part corporeal. Let us leave alone for the present the division of the intellectual according to its properties, for our argument is not concerned with these. Of the corporeal, part is entirely devoid of life, and part participates in vital energy. Of a living body, again, part has sense conjoined with life, and part is without sense: lastly, that which has sense is again divided into rational and irrational. For this reason the lawgiver¹⁶ says that after inanimate matter (as a sort of foundation for the

¹⁵ G. Ladner sees here the influence of Aristotelian anthropology (G. LADNER, *The Philosophical Anthropology*, p. 70), referring to *De anima* 2, 3, 414a. H. Drobner speaks about the Stoic background of the anthropological views propagated here by Gregory, yet without reference to philosophical sources (H. DROBNER, *Gregory Nyssa as Philosopher: De anima et resurrectione and De hominis opificio*, “Dionysius” 18 (2000), p. 94).

¹⁶ That is, Moses.

form of animate things), this vegetative life was made, and had earlier existence in the growth of plants¹⁷: then he proceeds to introduce the genesis of those creatures which are regulated by sense¹⁸: and since, following the same order, of those things which have obtained life in the flesh, those which have sense can exist by themselves even apart from the intellectual nature, while the rational principle could not be embodied save as blended with the sensitive,—for this reason man was made after the vegetating and the pasturing, as nature advanced in an orderly course to perfection.¹⁹

Speaking about the division of beings, Gregory intends to describe the natural order in relation to corporeal beings. He states that corporeal beings are divided into those living and those devoid of life; living beings are divided into those which possess sensation and those devoid of sensation; beings with sensation are divided into rational and irrational beings. According to Gregory, such a division of natural beings is not arbitrary, but corresponds to the order of creation described in Genesis. At this point Gregory somewhat changes his language and starts to speak in terms of “nature;” he describes the logic of the order of creation as a consistent movement of nature towards perfection.

Having elaborated on the structure of the hierarchy of created beings, Gregory again turns to anthropological issues and links the Biblical passages relating to the components of human beings to the order of creation. In this regard, he cites the Scriptural passages: 1 Thess 5: 28, Lk 10: 27, 1 Cor 3: 3, 1 Cor 2: 14-15 and finishes his thoughts with the following words:

Εἰ οὖν τελευταῖον μετὰ πᾶν ἔμψυχον ἡ Γραφή γεγενῆσθαι λέγει τὸν ἄνθρωπον, οὐδὲν ἕτερον ἢ φιλοσοφεῖ τὰ περὶ ψυχῆς ἡμῶν ὁ νομοθέτης, ἐπ' ἀναγκαίᾳ τινὶ τῆ τάξεως ἀκολουθίᾳ τὸ τέλειον ἐν τελευταίοις βλέπων. Ἐν μὲν γὰρ τῷ λογικῷ καὶ τὰ λοιπὰ περιεῖληπται· ἐν δὲ τῷ αἰσθητικῷ καὶ τὸ φυσικὸν εἶδος πάντως ἐστίν. Ἐκεῖνο δὲ περὶ τὸ ὑλικὸν θεωρεῖται μόνον. Οὐκοῦν εἰκότως, καθάπερ διὰ βαθμῶν ἢ φύσις, τῶν τῆς ζωῆς λέγω ἰδιωμάτων, ἀπὸ τῶν μικροτέρων ἐπὶ τὸ τέλειον ποιεῖται τὴν ἄνοδον

If, therefore, Scripture tells us that man was made last, after every animate thing, the lawgiver is doing nothing else than declaring to us the

¹⁷ Gen. 1, 11-12.

¹⁸ Gen. 1, 20-22.

¹⁹ GREG. NYSS. *Opif. hom.* 8, PG 44, 145, 9 - 145, 31, trans. W. Moore and H. A. Wilson in GREGORY OF NYSSA, *On the Making of Man*, Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, 2d series, vol. 5, Grand Rapids, Mich., Eerdmans 1954, slightly revised by me.

doctrine of the soul, considering that what is perfect comes last, according to a certain necessary sequence in the order of things: for in the rational are included the others also, while in the sensitive there also surely exists the vegetative form, and that again is conceived only in connection with what is material: thus we may suppose that nature makes an ascent as it were by steps — I mean the various properties of life — from the lower to the perfect form.²⁰

Thus, the topic of nature reappears in this passage. After this, in the same chapter, Gregory returns to the issue raised at the beginning of the chapter, and thus writes on the purpose of human hands, “<...> first of all, nature has given them to the body especially for the sake of the word.”²¹ It can be said that Gregory understood nature as a natural dynamic order of beings or as some kind of dynamic principle, thanks to which the created beings as a whole obtain progressive movement in the direction of increasing vitality.²²

Before moving on to a more detailed analysis of the hierarchy of natural beings in *Opif. hom.* 8, it is worth looking at the development of the topic of nature in the 12th chapter of the treatise in order to detect the logic of Gregory’s thought on the hierarchy of beings. Here Gregory emphasizes the connections between different levels of the hierarchy, which are demonstrated by the ways in which the Beautiful (that is, the divine) fills beings at each level in accordance with the capacity of that level to participate in the Beautiful through a higher level; thus the nature which follows mind, is adorned by the beauty of the mind, which it possesses according to the participation of the mind in the divine. Thus, according to Gregory, participation in the true beauty runs proportionally through all created beings, so each level of beings participates in the Beautiful through the preceding level²³ or, in the words of John Behr, “creation becomes theophanic.”²⁴ If this natural participation becomes disrupted, the vector of participation functions in an opposite manner: matter, deprived of participation in the Beautiful through the natural order of beings becomes deformed and ugly, deviating from nature, and that ugliness is transmitted by the same chain to mind.²⁵ Thus, the concept of nature maintains the connotations of the natural dynamic order of beings, expounded by Gregory in *De opificio*

²⁰ GREG. NYSS. *Opif. hom.* 8, PG 44, 148, 17-27, trans. W. Moore and H. A. Wilson, in GREGORY OF NYSSA, *On the Making of Man*. Cf. *Ibid.*, 145, 30-31.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 148, 43-44. Gregory explains the statement that the presence of hands in human beings is connected with the ability of speech, and says that if a person were deprived of hands, he would have to procure food by mouth like animals, and accordingly the human mouth in its structure would not have been adapted for articulate speech.

²² Gregory investigated a similar topic of the ascent of natural species in the measure of participation in the vital power in his *On the soul and the resurrection* 46, yet, without the topic of progressive movement of nature and without the emphasis on the genera-species division as he did in *Opif. hom.* 8.

²³ GREG. NYSS. *Opif. hom.* 12, PG 44, 161, 29-47.

²⁴ J. BEHR, *Rational Animal*, p. 231.

²⁵ GREG. NYSS. *Opif. hom.* 12, PG 44, 161, 47 - 164, 28.

hominis 8, but receives a new, more theologically saturated, meaning associated with a vision of this order's dynamics as a result of theophany.

7.3. *The Historical and philosophical context of the order of natural beings in De opificio hominis 8: Posidonius or Porphyry?*

Next, we should discuss Gregory's order of natural beings in *Opif. hom.* 8 in relation to its historical and philosophical background.

John Behr has identified two strategies followed by Gregory in *Opif. hom.* 8: "to explain the unfolding of creation as it is described in the opening verses of Genesis, and to connect this to the various trichotomic concepts used in Scripture."²⁶ However, we may discern at least one further strategy. D. Balas in his book on participation in God in Gregory of Nyssa mentions the similarity of the hierarchy of beings from *Opif. hom.* 8 to the so-called "Tree of Porphyry" as it is described in *Isag.*²⁷ H. Drobner, likewise, without reference to Balas, notes, in his discussion of Gregory's division of beings, the use of "the Tree of Porphyry," that is, the hierarchy of genera and species mentioned by Porphyry in *Isag.*: "substance" (οὐσία) – "body" (σῶμα) – "animate body" (ἔμψυχον σῶμα) – "living being" (ζῷον) – "rational living being" (ζῷον λογικόν) – "human being" (ἄνθρωπος) – "individual human being."²⁸

Within this structure the upper levels function at the greatest level of generality and the hierarchy becomes more specific as one descends further down.²⁹ At the same time, according to Drobner, it is possible that the influence of Porphyry on Gregory of Nyssa was mediated by Posidonius.³⁰ Thus, keeping in mind Drobner's comparison with the Tree of Porphyry, we may identify at least three strategies used by Gregory in *Opif. hom.* 8 in his discussion of the order of natural beings, the first associated with cosmogony, the second with anthropology, and the third with logic.

²⁶ J. BEHR, *Rational Animal*, p. 227.

²⁷ D. BALAS, *METΟΥΣΙΑ ΘΕΟΥ*, p. 36, n. 93.

²⁸ H. DROBNER, *Gregory Nyssa as Philosopher*, pp. 92-96.

²⁹ "In each type of predication there are some most general items and again other most special (εἶδος) items; and there are other items between the most general and the most special. Most general is that above which there will be no other superordinate genus; most special, that after which there will be no other subordinate species; and between the most general and the most special are other items which are at the same time both genera and species (but taken in relation now to one thing and now to another). What I mean should become clear in the case of a single type of predication. Substance is itself a genus. Under it is body, and under body animate body (ἔμψυχον σῶμα), under which is animal; under animal is rational animal (λογικὸν ζῷον), under which is man; and under man are Socrates and Plato and particular men" (PORPH. *Isag.* 4, 15-27; 10, 3-18 (Busse), trans. J. BARNES, in J. BARNES, *Porphyry. Introduction*, pp. 5-6).

³⁰ H. DROBNER, *Gregory Nyssa as Philosopher*, p. 95.

It should be noted that the relationship of the division of beings from *Opif. hom.* 8 with the Tree of Porphyry has not been thoroughly studied; scholars have been more interested in the connection of the ascending movement of nature in Gregory of Nyssa with the teaching of Posidonius. Thus, G. Ladner in his seminal article on the anthropology of Gregory of Nyssa discusses the nature of the graded ascent of nature from the lesser to the perfect in *De opificio hominis* 8 and connects it with the teaching of Posidonius, indicating that it refers to Posidonius' version of Stoic Monism and Pantheism.³¹ Ladner believed that Posidonius' teaching on man as a binding link and mediator between the animal (living) realm and the divine realm influenced the teaching of Gregory of Nyssa on the order of natural beings. According to Ladner, in his attempts to elaborate on this doctrine, Gregory, as a philosopher, "achieved <...> a real synthesis between the Posidonian-Neoplatonic view of cosmical order and the Christian doctrine of creation *ex nihilo*".³² Relying on E. Skard's suggestion that Galen functioned as a mediator between Posidonius and Nemesius,³³ and bearing in mind the frequent use of Galen's texts by Gregory, Ladner suggests that Galen was the mediator between the teaching of Posidonius and the "bathmos-doctrine" of Gregory (that is, the doctrine of Gregory on the hierarchical levels of nature).³⁴ In his claim that the doctrine of Gregory on the graded ascent of nature is related to the philosophical system of Posidonius, Ladner probably follows the well-known expert on the teaching of Posidonius K. Reinhardt, whom Ladner cites, among other scholars. Reinhardt discussed the problem of Posidonius' influence on subsequent authors and analyzes the different stages represented by organic beings in relation to the idea of the human being as a mediator between the animal realm and the heavenly realm. Among other passages, Reinhardt points to *Opif. hom.* 8 of Gregory of Nyssa, "καθάπερ διὰ βαθμῶν ἢ φύσις... ἀπὸ τῶν μικροτέρων ἐπὶ τὸ τέλειον ποιεῖται τὴν ἄνοδον,"³⁵ noting that this passage demonstrates the presence of these topics in Gregory, although without relation to each other.³⁶

Following Ladner and Reinhardt, D. Balas also suggests that the doctrine of Posidonius was the ultimate source for the doctrine of the ascending order of nature in Gregory as well as of the terminology which he uses for expressing the doctrine (Balas refers to the expression,

³¹ G. LADNER, *The Philosophical Anthropology*, p. 71. Ladner does not cite specific passages of Posidonius, but refers the reader to the studies on Posidonius' doctrine on the stages of nature, including W. JAEGER, *Nemesios von Emesa. Quellenuntersuchungen zum Neuplatonismus und seinen Anfängen bei Poseidonios*, Berlin 1914; K. REINHARDT, *Poseidonios*, Muenchen 1921, pp. 247ff., 343ff.; IDEM., *Kosmos und Sympathie*, Munich 1926), pp. 320ff.; IDEM., *Poseidonios*, in Pauly-Wissowa, *Realencyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft* 43, Stuttgart 1953, cols. 701f., 773ff.

³² G. LADNER, *The Philosophical Anthropology*, p. 72.

³³ E. SKARD, *Nemesiosstudien* 11, "Symbolae Osloenses", 17 (1937), p. 9ff.

³⁴ G. LADNER, *The Philosophical Anthropology*, p. 71, n. 45.

³⁵ PG 44, 148, 25–27; see above.

³⁶ K. REINHARDT, *Poseidonios*, in Pauly-Wissowa, col. 774.

“δύναμις ζωτική”);³⁷ at the same time Balas does not exclude the influence of *Panaetius*.³⁸ Referring to Ladner, John Behr also accepts the influence of Posidonius on Gregory in this respect³⁹ (the views of H. Drobner on the subject will be discussed a little later).

Even if we agree that Gregory’s usage of δύναμις ζωτική depends on Posidonius, the relationship between Gregory and Posidonius in relation to the ascending movement of nature and, even more, to the hierarchy of beings does not seem to be sufficiently justified. Indeed, when K. Reinhardt speaks about Posidonius’ doctrine of the levels of organic beings, with human beings as mediators between the animal and the divine realms, he has in mind the idea of the progressive increase in perfection towards the divine from the animal world to the humans. This, furthermore, implies the idea that animals have three natural abilities – to feel, to move, and to choose good for themselves, while humans, possessing those abilities, also possess the unique ability of reason, due to which the human being can control the above mentioned abilities inherent in the soul.⁴⁰ Outlining this doctrine of Posidonius, K. Reinhardt does not give a clear reference to the source, however we can see, from W. Jaeger’s study of the sources of Nemesius of Emesa,⁴¹ to which Reinhardt refers his readers, that the original source was the following passage from Cicero’s treatise *De natura deorum*:

If we seek to move forward from the first undeveloped levels of being to the furthest and most perfect, we inevitably arrive at the nature of the gods. At the lowest level we observe that nature sustains plants sprung from the earth, and she bestows on them nothing more than her protective nurture and growth. On beasts she has conferred feeling and movement, and a kind of inclination which prompts them to seek what is good for them, and avoid what is baneful. On humans she bestowed something more noble than this, with the additional gift of reason, to enable them to control their mental inclinations, giving them free rein at one time and holding them in check at another...⁴²

Just like Gregory of Nyssa, the passage speaks about a progressive natural hierarchy. However, in my opinion, there is not enough similarity between Cicero’s and Gregory’s

³⁷ See GREG. NYSS. *Opif. hom.* 8, PG 44, 144, 54–55, 59; cf. 176.10. Concerning Posidonius, Balas refers to K. REINHARDT, *Poseidonios von Apameia*, in Pauly-Wissowa 43 (1953), cols. 648, 30–649, 66; C. DE VOGEL, *Greek Philosophy*, Vol. III, Leiden 1959) no. 1176, 251–52; see also F. SANDBACH, *The Stoics*, 2nd ed. London, Indianapolis 1989, p. 130ff.

³⁸ D. BALAS, *METOYΣΙΑ ΘΕΟΥ*, pp. 36–37.

³⁹ J. BEHR, *Rational Animal*, p. 227, n. 17.

⁴⁰ K. REINHARDT, *Poseidonios*, in Pauly-Wissowa, col. 701-702.

⁴¹ W. JAEGER, *Nemesios von Emesa*, Ss. 114-115.

⁴² CICERO. *Nat. deor.* 2, 12, 33-34, trans. P. G. Walsh, in CICERO. *The Nature of the Gods*, Oxford 1997, p. 59).

doctrines to confidently speak about the influence of Posidonius' doctrine on Gregory. Firstly, there is no similarity between the stages in the hierarchy of natural beings in the two authors. Secondly, the description of natural progress by Cicero, as Ladner correctly observes whilst speaking about Posidonius, requires an understanding of the human being as a binding link and mediator between the animal and the divine realms with the gods sitting at the top of the hierarchy. Yet, the motif of the human being as mediator between animal and divine realms is absent in *Opif. hom. 8*'s treatment of the hierarchy of natural beings, and the highest level of the hierarchy in *Opif. hom. 8* is represented, on the one hand, by "that which exists" (from the logical viewpoint of the hierarchy), and, on the other hand, by human beings (from the viewpoint of the order of natural beings). Thirdly, Posidonius does not write about the dynamic aspect of the natural hierarchy, so clearly exposed by Gregory in his description of natural progress. And fourthly, the concept of βαθμός (step, grade) — to which Reinhardt refers when he speaks about the teaching of Posidonius, and on the basis of which he and other scholars infer the influence of Posidonius on Gregory — does not seem to be reliably attested in Posidonius, but only represents Reinhardt's reconstruction of the Greek terminology used by Posidonius on the basis of Cicero's text.

Thus, in my opinion, we should speak about the direct influence not of Posidonius' thought on *Opif. hom. 8* but of Porphyry's and, more precisely, of Porphyry's *Isagoge* which contains a similar hierarchy of beings to that of Gregory, a fact which was pointed out by D. Balas and H. Drobner.

In this regard, it should be noted that Drobner's idea that Porphyry's influence on Gregory might have been mediated by Posidonius⁴³ is redundant (unfortunately, Drobner does not support his suggestion with additional arguments), since the logical framework of Porphyry can be quite clearly seen in Gregory and there is no reason to see Posidonius' doctrine as a mediating link between the Tree of Porphyry⁴⁴ and the hierarchy of beings in Gregory. It is possible that, Drobner's claim rests on references to the teaching of Posidonius as a source of Gregory's passage under discussion in the literature. The statement of D. Balas that the topic of the hierarchy of beings in Gregory of Nyssa looks similar to the Tree of Porphyry and then independently indicated a possible influence of Posidonius and Panaetius on Gregory's doctrine of the ascending order of nature,⁴⁵ seems to be more correct in this regard.

⁴³ H. DROBNER, *Gregory Nyssa as Philosopher*, p. 95.

⁴⁴ D. BALAS, *ΜΕΤΟΥΣΙΑ ΘΕΟΥ*, p. 36, n. 93.

⁴⁵ *IBID.*, p. 37.

7.4. *The Order of Natural Beings in Gregory of Nyssa and the Tree of Porphyry*

While both point out the similarity between the hierarchy of beings in Gregory of Nyssa and the Tree of Porphyry, neither Balas, nor Drobner analyzes how exactly Porphyry's logical framework manifests itself in *Opif. hom.* 8. However, before investigating this in more detail, we should note that the principle of the tree of genera and species may be found in other philosophical texts, the most important of which will be mentioned in the following section.

7.4a. *Genera-Species Division in Authors Prior to Gregory of Nyssa*

Alcinous assigns such a division from top to bottom along with the mandatory accompanying procedure of definition to the realm of dialectic,⁴⁶ giving, as an example, the definition of human substance through the division of substance into animate and inanimate beings, and the animate beings into rational and irrational as well as mortal and immortal.⁴⁷ Philo speaks about the division of beings according to the Stoics, who divided beings into corporeal and incorporeal; corporeal beings into animate and those bereft of soul; animate beings into those which possessed reason and those which did not; rational beings into mortal (humans) and divine; and mortal beings into male and female, while the incorporeal beings represent kinds of proposition.⁴⁸ Seneca also discusses the genera-species division of beings, and his position is quite close to that of Porphyry. Explaining Lucilius on "being," "species," and "genus," Seneca speaks about the division of beings into corporeal and incorporeal, the division of corporeal beings into animate and inanimate, the division of animate beings into animals (living beings) and plants, the division of animals into humans, horses and dogs, and the division of humans first into nations and races, and then into individuals.⁴⁹ Clement of Alexandria speaks about the division of animate beings into mortal and immortal, the division of mortal beings into terrestrial and aquatic, the division of terrestrial beings into flying and walking, and the division of the

⁴⁶ ALBINUS, *Epit.* 5, 1.

⁴⁷ *IBID.*, 5, 3.

⁴⁸ "Some of the beings are corporeal and some are incorporeal (ὅτι τῶν ὄντων τὰ μὲν ἔστι σώματα, τὰ δ' ἄσώματα); some [of the corporeal beings] do not have soul and some are animate; some [of the animate beings] are rational and some are irrational, and some [of the rational beings] are mortal, while some are divine. And out of mortal beings, the mankind is divided into male and female. In turn, the incorporeal beings are divided into the completed and incompleting. The completed includes general and specific questions, requests, vows and all that sorts of things, <...> as well as that which the Stoics call the statements <...> In turn, the incompleting incorporeal is divided in the closest manner into the so-called predicates, accidents, and everything else that is of less importance" (PHILO. *Agr.* 139 = SVF II 182).

⁴⁹ SEN. *Ep.* 58, 8-15.

walking beings into those who possess reason and those who do not. In this way Clement arrives at a definition of human beings as animate, mortal, terrestrial, walking and rational.⁵⁰ Finally, a contemporary and friend of Gregory, Basil of Caesarea, in his treatise *On the Holy Spirit*, also describes a genera-species division of “substance”–“animate being”–“human being”–“male”–“an individual.”⁵¹ Basil wrote this treatise before Gregory wrote *De opificio hominis* and the passage discussing the hierarchy stands largely as a polemic against those who claimed that the Holy Spirit was not “numbered together” with the Father and the Son, but was “numbered under.”

Out of all divisions that we have mentioned, Gregory’s is closest to that of Porphyry, that is, the division into “substance”–“body”–“animate body”–“living being”–“rational living being”–“human being”–“an individual.”⁵²

Speaking about the genera-species divisions in Late Antiquity, we can, following J. Mansfeld, briefly mention some historical and philosophical trends. We can discern a Platonic characteristic in the structure of the genera-species divisions where there is a level which divides into two branches, one of which possesses a privative character with respect to the other (for example, “animate beings”–“inanimate beings,” “mortal beings”–“immortal beings,” etc.). This, generally speaking, involves a hierarchy structured in a tree-like fashion.⁵³ A Stoic influence is displayed when the lowest level of division is represented by individuals and not by species, since the standard Aristotelian procedure of the genera-species division does not involve individual beings.⁵⁴ A Stoic-Platonic trend is displayed when the top of the hierarchy is represented by “that which exists,” or “beings” (τὰ ὄντα, τὸ ὄν), and not by substance (ἡ οὐσία).⁵⁵ An Aristotelian trend is demonstrated when the highest level of genera-species division, which implies the construction of the definition, is represented by substance.⁵⁶

Despite the fact that there are reasons to believe that Gregory’s scheme was directly influenced by that of Porphyry, each of the above trends, that is, the Platonic, the Aristotelian, and the Stoic, can also be seen in Gregory.

⁵⁰ CLEM. *Strom.* 8, VI.

⁵¹ BAS. CAES. *Spir. san.* 17, 41, 1-22 (Pruche).

⁵² We may note that compared to the Seneca’s taxonomy, which is the closest, after that of Porphyry, to Gregory of Nyssa, Porphyry’s system has the level of “rational,” which is crucial for Gregory.

⁵³ J. MANSFELD, *Substance, Being and Division in Middle Platonist and Later Aristotelian Contexts (Excurs)*, in Idem., *Heresiography in Context: Hippolytus' Elenchos as a Source for Greek Philosophy*, Leiden: Brill 1992, pp. 79, 85-86. Mansfeld notes that this procedure of division is criticized by Aristotle in his *De part. an.* A 2-3.

⁵⁴ DIOG. LAERT. 7, 61 (J. MANSFELD, *Substance, Being and Division*, pp. 95-96, cf. p. 80).

⁵⁵ According to J. Mansfeld, this has some parallels with Plato’s *Soph* 246a and possibly *Tim.* 27d (J. MANSFELD, “Substance, Being and Division,” 85, n. 23; 90, n. 34). In the division of beings into the bodily and the bodiless, in addition to the Stoic background (SVF II, 182) J. Mansfeld sees a Platonic background (Ibid., 87) referring the reader to the same passage of *Soph* 246a (cf. CLEM. *Strom.* 8, VI, 20, 2).

⁵⁶ J. MANSFELD, *Substance, Being and Division*, p. 79.

7.4b. *Genera-Species Division in Gregory of Nyssa and Porphyry: Similarities*

After this brief overview of the genera-species divisions in philosophical thought, we now return to the influence of the Tree of Porphyry on the genera-species division of beings in *Opif. hom.* 8. The following points should be made:

Firstly, the very similarity of the levels within the hierarchies of beings in Gregory and Porphyry evidences a degree of influence.

Secondly, in his discussion of the hierarchy of beings, Gregory uses a genera-species discourse, that is, a discourse, according to which the lower levels of a hierarchy are related to the higher as a species is to a genus (or, equivalently, the higher level to the lower level as a genus to a species);⁵⁷ the same is the case in the Tree of Porphyry.

Thirdly, Gregory speaks about the levels of hierarchy also as species (εἶδος),⁵⁸ a usage which corresponds to Porphyry's logical terminology in *Isag.*,⁵⁹ despite the fact that the Bible, which is discussed by Gregory, uses the word γένος when it describes how God created different kinds of plants and animals (the Septuagint).⁶⁰ Thus, in this respect Gregory follows not the Biblical language, but rather logical terminology. Fourthly, the logical language appears in Gregory when he speaks about the genera-species "division" (διαιρέσις; τομή);⁶¹ the same terminology typically appears in Porphyry's *Isagoge*.

7.4c. *Genera-Species Division in Gregory of Nyssa and Porphyry: Differences*

Nevertheless, it should be noted that the position of Drobner, who notes the connection between the genera-species divisions of Gregory and Porphyry, does not seem to be entirely correct. Citing a quote from *Opif. hom.* 8 where Gregory speaks about the division of beings, Drobner writes, «Gregory presents an exact copy of Porphyry's doctrine of the hierarchy of beings as the latter explains in the chapter 2 of his *Isagoge* to Aristotle's *Categories*. This doctrine is more comprehensive than the threefold scheme Gregory first deduced from the biblical text, because it comprises the non-animate substances as well and thus takes every kind

⁵⁷ It can be noted that Gregory of Nyssa also uses the genera-species framework in his treatise *Ad Graec.* 3, 1, 16-31, PG 45, 184C.

⁵⁸ GREG. NYSS. *Opif. hom.* 8, PG 44, 145, 2; 145, 34; 148, 23.

⁵⁹ J. Mansfeld points to the Stoic origin of the terminology (J. MANSFELD, *Substance, Being and Division*, p. 103).

⁶⁰ See Gen. 1:11-27.

⁶¹ GREG. NYSS. *Opif. hom.* 8, PG 44, 145, 10; 12; 17.

of being in the universe into account. There cannot be any doubt as to the fact that Gregory took this philosophical explanation from Porphyry, possibly mediated by Poseidonius <...>⁶². As well as the statement on the possible mediating function of Posidonius, which was discussed above, the claim of Drobner that Gregory uses an *exact* copy of the hierarchy which appears in *Isag. 2*⁶³ is not entirely correct, since the division of beings which appears in Gregory is similar to that Porphyry but is in no way an exact copy of Porphyry's scheme, particularly in the form which appears in *Isag. 2*.

Firstly, the formal, but not the substantial, difference is that the genera-species hierarchy which Porphyry develops in *Isag. 2* is somewhat different in its *structure* to the genera-species hierarchy of beings in Gregory. Porphyry's hierarchy is presented as a listing of successive levels. The structure of the division in Gregory of Nyssa involves two links at each stage of division; as a rule, one of these corresponds to the possession of a certain specific difference, while the other lacks such a difference (for example, the corporeal beings are divided into those participating in life and those devoid of life, etc.). Thus, Porphyry's hierarchy, presented in *Isag. 2*, in structural terms, corresponds to the *chain*, as it is called by Ammonius of Alexandria,⁶⁴ or the *line*, as it is called by Ibn al-Tayyib,⁶⁵ while the structure of the generic divisions presented in Gregory corresponds to a *tree*, since it has a structure which contains branches. The structure in Porphyry receives the form of a tree only when we correlate what Porphyry says about the sequence of the genera-species division in *Isag. 2* with what he says in *Isag. 3* where he discusses the differences. In chapter 3 Porphyry does speak about the structure, implying a pattern of branches, and utilises a Platonic privative framework⁶⁶ also used by Gregory.

Secondly, in Porphyry the category of substance (ἡ οὐσία) is at the top of the hierarchy,⁶⁷ while Gregory places "that which exists" or "being" in this position (Gregory writes about "τῶν ὄντων").⁶⁸ Although these terms are close, their meanings are not identical. In the context of the Tree of Porphyry, "substance" is viewed as an Aristotelian category, thereby inheriting the connotations typical for the concept of categories in an Aristotelian context, while Gregory speaks of "that which exists" without those connotations. When Gregory speaks of τῶν ὄντων as being at the top of the hierarchy, his position is the closest to the Stoic framework, for Gregory simply speaks of "that which exists" in the most general sense. Although both Gregory and the Stoics position this category at the top of their hierarchy of divisions, it does not claim any

⁶² H. DROBNER, *Gregory Nyssa as Philosopher*, p. 95.

⁶³ Balas notes the similarity between the hierarchy of beings in Gregory and the Tree of Porphyry, but without detailed elaboration on the subject (D. BALAS, *METOYΣΙΑ ΘEOY*, p. 36, n. 93).

⁶⁴ AMMON. *In Isag.* 70.13.

⁶⁵ IBN AL-TAYYIB. *In Isag.* 171; J. BARNES, *Porphyry. Introduction*, p. 109.

⁶⁶ See above, the text at n. 54.

⁶⁷ PORPH. *Isag.* 4, 21; 10, 14-15 (Busse).

⁶⁸ GREG. NYSS. *Opif. hom.* 8, PG 44, 145, 10.

ontological primacy (as was noted above, for Gregory it would be impossible to put “that which exists” ontologically higher than the Godhead, even though in the genera-species hierarchy which he is building, the levels of “that which exists” and the “rational” are above the level of “Godhead”) but, reflecting our intention to comprehend all that exists, it instead refers the reader exclusively to an epistemological context. The link between the concept of “that which exists” in Gregory and the Stoic context is confirmed by the usage of the term: in both cases τῶν ὄντων⁶⁹ is understood in the sense of “...out of everything that exists,” and in both cases this category is divided into corporeal and incorporeal beings (ἄσώματα among the Stoics, and νοητόν in Gregory), although Gregory certainly understands the nature of the incorporeal in a completely different manner than the Stoic philosophers. The nature of further divisions along the genera-species hierarchy is understood by Gregory in such a way that they have concrete ontological status, representing the stages of cosmogenesis.

It is worth pointing out another important difference in the schemes of Gregory and Porphyry – the difference in their understanding of the status of the genera-species hierarchy itself. The hierarchy that exists in Porphyry does not claim any ontological status⁷⁰ and serves only didactic purposes. Gregory’s hierarchy of beings, even though it is dependent on Porphyry’s, as was stated, is endowed with ontological status in relation to the levels below the level of the corporeal, that is, in relation to the hierarchy of natural beings.

Thirdly, if Porphyry’s division extends down to individuals, the division of beings in Gregory of Nyssa does not (what goes back to Aristotelian line in the genera-species divisions), but its final level is the “rational,” which corresponds to human beings. This can be related to the fact that for Gregory, unlike Porphyry, the importance lies not in the logical aspect of genera-species divisions, but in the aspect related to the creation of the world. Therefore Gregory does not bring his genera-species divisions to their logical conclusion.

Fourthly, there is also no exact correspondence between the lowest levels of the hierarchy in Gregory and Porphyry. We should recall that Gregory spoke about the division of beings into the intellectual and the corporeal, of corporeal beings into those participating in life and those devoid of life, of beings participating in life (animal, or living beings) into those having senses and those devoid of senses, and of beings which have senses into rational and irrational. This corresponds to the following succession: existing (ὄντα) – corporeal (σωματικόν) – living (ζωτικόν) – sensible (αἰσθητικόν) – rational (λογικόν).

⁶⁹ In this respect it is important that Gregory consistently speaks of τῶν ὄντων or of πάντων τῶν ὄντων (and not of τὸ ὄν or τὰ ὄντα), as the highest level of the divisions (cf. the quote from the Stoics in n. 49). In addition to *Opif. hom.* 8, PG 44, 145, 10, see *Eun.* 1, 1, 270, 1; 1, 1, 295, 1 (Jaeger), *Or. cat.* 6, 10 (Srawley).

⁷⁰ See PORPH. *Isag.* 1, 8-12 (Busse).

Yet, the division which Porphyry describes in *Isag. 2* and which is mentioned by Drobner in relation to that of Gregory, involves a hierarchy of “substance” (οὐσία) – “body” (σῶμα) – “animate body” (ἐμψυχον σῶμα) – “living being” (ζῶον) – “rational living being” (ζῶον λογικόν) – “human being” (ἄνθρωπος) – “individual human being.” It would seem that Gregory’s structure of division as compared to the Tree of Porphyry presented in *Isagoge 2* omits the level of “animate beings” of the Tree, however Gregory does mention this level immediately after the description of his division of beings, “...after inanimate matter (as a sort of foundation for the form of animate things (τῆς τῶν ἐμψύχων ιδέας)), this vegetative life was made <...> , then he proceeds to introduce the genesis of those creatures which are regulated by sense,”⁷¹ and a little later in the same *Opif. hom. 8*, “man was made last, after every animate thing...”.⁷² It follows from these passages that according to Gregory, in his hierarchy of genera-species division “animate beings” were placed after “living beings” and before “rational beings,” and were the same as “beings with senses” (“percipient”).

At the same time, while Porphyry does not mention “percipient” in the context of the division in *Isag. 2* (something which is incorrectly referred to by Drobner in relation to Gregory’s scheme), he discusses this later, in the third chapter, where the structure of the genera-species division is presented as a *tree* with branches. It follows from *Isag. 3* that “percipient” constitutes a specific difference for the genus of “living,” (“animal”)⁷³ which means that “percipient” distinguishes the species of “living” from the genus of “animate.” Porphyry discusses this in the context of his argument about the specificity of species-related differences which, depending on one’s point of view on a species within a genera-species hierarchy – “from bottom up” or “from top to bottom”—might either act as species-defining or to divide a genus into species. Porphyry lists differences of the “living,” including animate, percipient (when the hierarchy is viewed downwards from the “living”), rational and non-rational, mortal and immortal (branches which are formed when the hierarchy is viewed upwards from the “living”). Further Porphyry speaks about the division according to distinctive differences in relation to “substance” (as the top of the hierarchy) and lists those differences, mentioning animation and its absence as well as capacity and incapacity in relation to the percipient, which form the “living” as a result of the division of substance.⁷⁴

⁷¹ GREG. NYSS. *Opif. hom. 8*, PG 44, 145, 18-23, trans. W. Moore and H. A. Wilson, in GREGORY OF NYSSA, *On the Making of Man*.

⁷² Ibid., 148, 17–18, trans. W. Moore and H. A. Wilson, in , in GREGORY OF NYSSA, *On the Making of Man*.

⁷³ It seems that Porphyry followed Aristotle in this regard. Cf., for example, ARISTOT. *Exerc. de gen. an.* 2, 1, 732a.

⁷⁴ PORPH. *Isag. 10*, 3-9; 14-18 (Busse).

Gregory's level of "sensible beings" is also present in the Tree of Porphyry as a species-related distinction, distinguishing the species of "living" within the genus of "animate." Thus, according to the Tree of Porphyry, being sensible ("percipient") is the substantial quality for the level of "living" located beneath the level of "animate beings" and corresponding to the level of "living" in the hierarchy. This is not consistent with Gregory's understanding as he, as we have seen, places "sensible beings" not on the same level as "living beings", as it is in Porphyry, but alongside "animate beings."

In addition, two levels – "living beings" and "animate beings" – are arranged in opposite orders by Gregory and Porphyry: in Gregory "living beings" precede "animate beings" (= "beings having senses"), while in Porphyry "animate" precede "living."

The reason why Gregory changed the order of the genera-species hierarchy, present in the Tree of Porphyry, must have been related to his desire to reconcile the logical and philosophical structure of division, conventional at the time, with the Biblical account, that is, with how the Bible describes the order of the creation of natural beings, and with the logic of this order. Indeed, the Biblical text says that the world of plants was created prior to the world of animals (living beings).⁷⁵ This determines the structure of division of beings in Gregory, according to which living beings precede animate beings. For this reason Gregory diverges from the order of the hierarchy of beings that appears in the Tree of Porphyry.

7.5. Conclusion

It can be concluded that in *Opif. hom.* 8 Gregory of Nyssa intended to achieve a synthesis between Biblical and the school Platonic descriptions of the order of natural beings. These descriptions, taken by themselves, are similar in structure, but diverge in several aspects which were therefore in need of harmonization.

As far as Gregory of Nyssa's understanding of nature is concerned, the very fact that Gregory speaks of "nature" as a *dynamic* principle due to which created beings acquire progressive motion,⁷⁶ an idea that stands in contrast to his philosophical predecessors, may, in

⁷⁵ Cf. Gen. 1:11 and 1:20.

⁷⁶ According to the logic of *Opif. hom.* 8, the source of this dynamic is God who, in this way, created natural beings. This means that creation and progressive (evolutionary) natural development, in this paradigm, coincide. In general, we can note that Gregory of Nyssa has a two-fold doctrine of the order of creation. On the one hand, it implies the instantaneous bringing into being of created beings in their entirety when all things started to exist in their potentiality (*Hex.*, PG 44, 72), on the other hand, it means their actualized progressive development in time, which represents an important aspect of the act of creation. We may say that creation is instantaneous, keeping in mind the boundaries separating created beings from non-being on the one hand, and

my opinion, justify discussion of the evolutionary aspect of Gregory's doctrine. This aspect is also reflected in Gregory's idea that each subsequent level of this dynamic natural order incorporates the preceding levels. Moreover, the concept of nature as a dynamic principle, which Gregory uses, can be traced back to an Aristotelian understanding of nature. Although Ladner, referring to Aristotle's *Hist. an.* 8, 1, 588b, argues that the influence of the Aristotelian doctrine of natural progress on Gregory was indirect,⁷⁷ it can be assumed that Gregory had a direct knowledge of this doctrine, as is demonstrated in *Opif. hom.* 8. It is demonstrated by two facts: firstly that both authors understand nature as passing from the lesser to the more perfect natural species,⁷⁸ and secondly that other Aristotelian motifs can be found in *Opif. hom.*, including Gregory's treatment of the anthropological problems, which indicates that Gregory's interest in Aristotle must have been quite consistent.

Nevertheless, the Aristotelian understanding of the *structure* of the transition between the natural species, is obviously opposite to that of Gregory: according to Aristotle, the boundaries between the stages of the movement of nature are blurred and invisible,⁷⁹ while Gregory, following the Biblical text and the logical discourse of genera-species divisions, focuses on their qualitative difference from each other.

Thus, the concept of the progressive graded movement of nature in Gregory of Nyssa represents a synthesis of anthropological, cosmogonic, logical, and natural philosophic discourses. This concept is partly based on the Biblical account and partly on the ideas borrowed from the Greek logical and philosophical tradition. Gregory changes the logical structure of the hierarchical tree of beings, typical for his time, exactly because of his desire to synthesize the Scriptural teaching about the order of natural beings and the doctrine of the order of beings which was widespread in the ancient philosophical tradition.

from uncreated beings, on the other. Creation possesses development and order when created beings are regarded within their own limits.

⁷⁷ G. LADNER, *The Philosophical Anthropology*, p. 71, n. 47.

⁷⁸ Cf. ARIST. *Hist. an.* 8.1, 588b and *Gen. an.* B 1, 732b-733a.

⁷⁹ "Nature proceeds little by little from things lifeless to animal life in such a way that it is impossible to determine the exact line of demarcation, nor on which side thereof an intermediate form should lie. Thus, next after lifeless things comes the plant, and of plants one will differ from another as to its amount of apparent vitality; and, in a word, the whole genus of plants, whilst it is devoid of life as compared with an animal, is endowed with life as compared with other corporeal entities. Indeed, as we just remarked, there is observed in plants a continuous scale of ascent towards the animal. So, in the sea, there are certain objects concerning which one would be at a loss to determine whether they be animal or vegetable" (ARIST. *Hist. an.* 8, 1, 4-5, 588b, trans. d'A. W. Thompson).

Chapter 8 “Reconstruction of Eunomius’ doctrine of universals and of its theological and philosophical context”

The fact that the Neo-Niceans (the Cappadocian Fathers) introduced the notion of the universal – the concept of the common substance understood in the sense of the common species – into the Trinitarian doctrine in the course of the Arian controversy, is well known, and a large number of studies is dedicated to this issue. However, it seems that the position about the universal, which the Neo-Arians – the direct opponents of the Neo-Nicean authors – adhered to so far has not been discussed in the literature. It is in the polemics with this position that the Neo-Niceans developed their doctrine. In the following I will try to analyze the understanding of the universals by the leader of the Neo-Arian party Eunomius and to point to possible sources of his position in the philosophical doctrines of Late Antiquity. Keeping in mind the specific Eunomian understanding of the universals, I will present the theological debate between the Neo-Niceans and the Neo-Arians as the debate concerning the universals. In my opinion, the positions of the Neo-Nicean and the Neo-Arian parties were opposite to each other not only in terms of the doctrine concerning the status of God the Son, but also in terms of the related views concerning the theory of the universals.

Indeed, in the Neo-Nicean philosophical and theological system, the horizontal structure of commonness extended beyond the Trinitarian doctrine to all beings. Thus, Gregory of Nyssa, the brother of Basil of Caesarea, developed the doctrine on the fundamental division (διαίρεσις) of the beings into classes. In his earlier works, *On the Making of Man* and *On the Soul and Resurrection*,¹ Gregory of Nyssa developed the doctrine on the order of the created beings according to the ascending ladder of vitality and spoke about the division, according to which the beings (τῶν ὄντων) were divided into intellectual beings (τό νοητικόν) and corporeal beings (τό σωματικόν). Gregory left the question concerning the division of intellectual beings for another occasion² and in these treatises spoke only about the division of the corporeal beings. According to him, all corporeal beings were divided into those partaking in life and those devoid of life; the beings partaking in life were divided into beings which possessed sensation and beings which lacked sensation; the beings which had sensation were divided into rational beings and irrational

¹ GREG. NYSS. *Opif. hom.* 8; *De an. e res.* 46.

² According to his own words in *Opif. hom.* 8, PG 44, 145, 10-11.

beings. As a result, says Gregory, the nature makes the path of ascent from insignificant to the perfect as if up the steps consisting of properties.³

Later in his fundamental treatise devoted to refuting Eunomius, Gregory of Nyssa also made the distinction within the intelligent realm and spoke about the division of beings into three natures: first, intellectual and uncreated nature (God), second, intellectual created nature (angels and human souls) which participated in the first nature in accordance with the goodness of will exposed by the individuals belonging to that nature, and, thirdly, sensible (τό αἰσθητόν) created nature.⁴ In another passage Gregory of Nyssa spoke about the division of beings into the uncreated and created, and about the division of the created beings into the supramundane beings and sensible beings.⁵

According to David Balas, “being” is the summit of the hierarchy of divisions in Gregory of Nyssa.⁶ However, I think that we should distinguish between the two strategies of speaking about “horizontal” commonness used by Gregory of Nyssa. According to the first strategy which was built in accordance with the principle of division into genera and species, indeed, “being” was the summit in the hierarchy of divisions. “Being” embraced the (intellectual) uncreated and the created. According to the alternative strategy which Gregory of Nyssa developed in his *Contra Eunomium* and which he applied along with the first strategy,⁷ the uncreated intellectual being, the higher nature (ἡ ὑψηλὴ φύσις⁸), common for the hypostases of the Trinity,⁹ was the summit of the hierarchy, giving existence to the created beings.¹⁰ The intellectual created beings long for it as for a source of goodness and participate in it according to the goodness of their will.¹¹ It seems that the first strategy placed a greater emphasis on the epistemological nature of the dividing process. It is assumed that “being,” that unites and transcends both the uncreated and the created at the summit of the hierarchy structuring the divisions of the types of commonness, does not precede the realm of the uncreated in reality, but is the summit of the hierarchy only in the context of the human thought as a result of the analytical capacity of the human mind. This follows from the basic principles of Christian theology; it is also evidenced by Gregory of Nyssa’s references to the process of human thinking, when he mentions the division

³ David Balas points to the doctrines of Posidonius and Panaetius a possible source for this doctrine of Gregory of Nyssa (D. BALAS, *METOYSIA ΘEOY*, pp. 36–37).

⁴ GREG. NYSS. *Eun.* 1, 1, 270 - 277, 1, 1, 295 (Jaeger).

⁵ GREG. NYSS. *Eun.* 4.100-101 (Jaeger).

⁶ D. BALAS, *METOYSIA ΘEOY*, p. 34.

⁷ Gregory of Nyssa employed both strategies simultaneously in his *Eun.* 1, 270-277.

⁸ GREG. NYSS. *Eun.* 1, 1, 274.3-4 (Jaeger).

⁹ Cf. GREG. NYSS. *Eun.*, 1, 1, 274, 1 - 275, 1 and 1, 1, 277, 8-13 (Jaeger).

¹⁰ GREG. NYSS. *Eun.*, 1, 1, 271, 7 - 1, 272, 1 (Jaeger); cf. *De an. e res.*, PG 46, 72D-73A.

¹¹ GREG. NYSS. *Eun.*, 1, 1, 274, 2 - 275, 1 (Jaeger).

of beings into intellectual and sensible, and the division of intellectual into created and uncreated.¹²

The second strategy involved a hierarchy that did not correspond to the divisions on the basis of genera and species (that is, the lower hierarchical level did not correspond to the higher level as species to genus or as an individual to species), but was a hierarchy in the ontological sense with the principal source of being as its hierarchical summit (the uncreated nature) giving existence to other kinds of beings, located in the descending order with respect to the degree of closeness to it and of the capacity to participate in it (created intellectual and created sensible natures). I will discuss later the historical and philosophical background of horizontal structure of commonness and its division into classes in Gregory of Nyssa.

The opponent of Gregory of Nyssa and the leader of the Neo-Arian party Eunomius¹³ used the doctrine of universals which in a sense was opposite to that of Gregory's. And it was in opposition to the teaching of Eunomius, directly related to his understanding of universals, that Gregory of Nyssa developed the concept of the horizontal structure of commonness in his treatise *Contra Eunomium*. Specifically, Gregory did that to refute the doctrine, ascribed to Eunomius, that substances (of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit) form a hierarchy in such a way that the substance of the Father is "greater" than the substance of the Son, and the substances of the Father and the Son are "greater" than the substance of the Holy Spirit.¹⁴ It is not clear whether Eunomius really taught about the concept of "greater–lesser" as applied to the substances of the Supreme Triad, but, indeed, the Trinitarian doctrine of Eunomius implied the hierarchy of three simple substances, in which the higher substance had a precedence over the lower substance, and each substance was not at the same level with the others, that is, each substance was only one of its kind and none of them shared commonness with anything else.¹⁵

However, the position of Eunomius concerning the problem of universals was not limited to the doctrine of impossibility of any commonness within the Supreme Triad. It appears that Eunomius had quite a developed and comprehensive theory of universals. This conclusion can be drawn on the basis of the Eunomian arguments from the *Apology of Apology* against the Nicean doctrine of consubstantiality of God the Father and the Son, which was paraphrased by Gregory of Nyssa:

¹² Cf. "... In the division of beings we come to know (ἐγνωμεν) such differences..." (GREG. NYSS. *Eun.*, 1, 1, 295, 1-2 (Jaeger)); "... But the reason (ὁ λόγος) and understanding [of intellectual beings] divides into two – the uncreated, and, following it, the created are discerned" (Ibid., 1, 1, 271, 4-5).

¹³ Eunomius expounded his teaching in his *Apology*, written in 359.

¹⁴ See GREG. NYSS. *Eun.*, 1, 282; 317; 321 (Jaeger).

¹⁵ Cf. the citation from Eunomius in GREG. NYSS. *Eun.* 1, 152 (Jaeger).

His supposition that whatever things are united in the idea of their essence must needs exist corporeally and be joined to corruption (for this he says in this part of his work), I shall willingly pass by like some cadaverous odour, since I think every reasonable man will perceive how dead and corrupt such an argument is. For who knows not that the multitude of human souls is countless, yet one essence underlies them all, and the consubstantial substratum in them is alien from bodily corruption? so that even children can plainly see the argument that bodies are corrupted and dissolved, not because they have the same essence one with another, but because of their possessing a compound nature. The idea of the compound (τοῦ συνθέτου) nature is one, that of the common (τοῦ κοινοῦ) nature of their essence is another, so that it is true to say, “corruptible bodies are of one essence,” but the converse statement is not true at all, if it be anything like, “this consubstantial nature is also surely corruptible,” as is shown in the case of the souls which have one essence, while yet corruption does not attach to them in virtue of the community of essence. And the account given of the souls might properly be applied to every intellectual existence (περὶ πάσης νοερᾶς ὑποστάσεως) which we contemplate in creation. For the words brought together by Paul do not signify, as Eunomius will have them do, some mutually divergent natures of the supramundane powers (τῶν ὑπερκοσμίων δυνάμεων)¹⁶; on the contrary, the sense of the names clearly indicates that he is mentioning in his argument, not diversities of natures (φύσεις), but the varied peculiarities of the operations of the heavenly host.¹⁷

According to Eunomius, consubstantiality and possession of common substance could only happen in the corporeal and therefore corruptible realm. Eunomius identified commonness according to substance, that is, consubstantiality, with complexity: all that is consubstantial with something else is complex. In addition, as shown in the above passage, Eunomius developed an original doctrine on the angelic powers, relating to the problem of commonness. This doctrine assumed that the names of the intellectual powers pointed to individual natures which did not share (generic) commonness; in other words, Eunomius claimed that the angelic world was made of individual species, not united by any common genus.

¹⁶ Namely, thrones, dominions, principalities, and powers (Col. 1:16, Eph. 1:21).

¹⁷ GREG. NYSS. *Eun.* III, 5, 61-64 (Jaeger), trans. by B. Moore and H. Wilson, in: *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Series II, vol. 5.*

Thus, the position of Eunomius concerning the universals can be reconstructed as follows: the higher we go up the hierarchy of beings, the lesser we encounter the opportunity for the horizontal (understood similarly to genus or species) commonness of nature for individual beings: commonness is possible for the corporeal beings in the proper sense; commonness is possible to a much lesser extent for the incorporeal beings – intellectual or angelic powers: there is a single species of nature for each angelic name, but there is no general nature regarding the angelic powers as such (this view had its philosophical basis which will be discussed below); commonness is not possible at all for the Supreme Triad, and at this level there are only substances, unique in terms of their species.

Next I will try to clarify the historical and philosophical background of these different positions from the viewpoint of the theory of universals. First, I will focus on the historical situation.

As I have mentioned, at the first phase of the Arian controversy in the time preceding the Neo-Nicean movement, the concept of “consubstantiality” (ὁμοούσιος) in respect to the Persons of the Trinity was used in the derivative sense, but not in a “horizontal” sense of common species and individuals. Accordingly, the Arian criticism and refutation of the usage of ὁμοούσιος as applied to the divine was built on the concept of derivation. In the first period of the Arian controversy, the Arians criticized the usage of the concept of “consubstantiality” as applied to the Persons of the Trinity on the grounds that consubstantiality of the Persons would involve a separation of a part in the generation of the Son of from the Father:

We acknowledge One God... who begat an Only-begotten Son before eternal times... nor as Valentinus pronounced that the offspring of the Father was an issue nor as Manichæus (Μανιχαῖος) taught that the offspring was a consubstantial portion (μέρος ὁμοούσιον) of the Father. ... But if the terms ‘from Him,’ (Rom. 11:36) and ‘from the womb,’ (Ps. 110:3) and ‘I came forth from the Father, and I am come’ (John 16:28), be understood by some to mean as if a part of consubstantial Him (μέρος αὐτοῦ ὁμοουσίου) or as an issue, then the Father is according to them compounded and divisible and alterable and material, and, as far as their belief goes, has the circumstances of a body, Who is the Incorporeal God¹⁸.

¹⁸ ATHAN. *De Syn.* 16, trans. by J. Newman, revised by Rev. A. Robertson and by me.

In the beginning of the second stage of the Arian controversy, Eunomius argued with the concept of “consubstantiality” in his first work *Apology* (359) along the same lines.¹⁹ Shortly after Eunomius had written his *Apology*, Basil of Caesarea introduced the concept of horizontal structure of commonness into the Trinitarian doctrine, insisting that consubstantiality should be understood in this sense. For the first time this concept was articulated by Basil in his treatise *Contra Eunomium*²⁰ written to refute the Eunomius’ *Apology*. Eunomius replied to this treatise of Basil with his new treatise *Apology of Apology* (whose text survived only in small fragments and in the paraphrase in Gregory of Nyssa’s *Contra Eunomium*), where Eunomius showed the understanding of universals which we mentioned above. Thus, for refuting a the new concept of consubstantiality proposed by Basil, Eunomius needed a different set of philosophical arguments than his Arian predecessors and he himself had while writing the first *Apology*, when it was possible to rely on the traditional Arian criticism of consubstantiality understood in the sense of derivation. Now it was necessary to develop the argument which Eunomius could use for refuting the horizontal structure of commonness for consubstantial beings. In my opinion, it is for this reason that Eunomius in his *Apology for Apology* changed the nature of his criticism for the horizontal concept of consubstantiality of the Persons of the Trinity, proposed by Basil of Caesarea, and, therefore, articulated his specific understanding of universals. For this reason we may see a parallel development in the position of Eunomius and in the opposing position of Gregory of Nyssa who developed the ideas of Basil both in terms of the Trinitarian doctrine and the doctrine of universals.

In his treatise *Contra Eunomium*, Basil of Caesarea said that the right way to conceive the commonness between God the Father and the Son was to think of a combination of the general (understood as a species, that is, in a horizontal sense) and of the individual properties of the Persons. Giving an analogy, according to which the common divinity of the Holy Trinity was likened to the commonness of light, and being generated and ungenerated (the hypostatic properties of God the Son and the Father) – to the properties in which this commonness subsisted and through which it is contemplated, Basil wrote:

If anyone wants to accept that which is true, namely, that begotten and unbegotten are distinctive features (τινας ιδιότητας) that enable identification and are observed (ἐπιθεωρούμενας) in the substance, which lead to the clear and unconfused notion (ἔννοιαν) of the Father and the Son, then he will escape the danger of impiety and preserve logical coherence in

¹⁹ EUNOM. *Apol.* XXVI, 23 (Vaggione).

²⁰ BAS. CAES. *Eun.*, PG 29b 556; 637.

his reasoning. ... The divinity is common, whereas fatherhood and sonship are distinguishing marks: from the combination (συμπλοκῆς) of both, that is, of the common and the unique (τοῦ τε κοινοῦ καὶ τοῦ ἰδίου), we arrive at comprehension of the truth (ἡ κατάληψις ἡμῶν τῆς ἀληθείας ἐγγίνεται). Consequently, upon hearing 'unbegotten light' we think of the Father, whereas upon hearing 'begotten light'²¹ we receive the notion of the Son²².

In his *Apology of Apology* Eunomius objected the argument of Basil in the following way:

Our God also is composite, in that while we suppose the Light to be common, we yet separate the one Light from the other by certain special attributes and various differences. For that is none the less composite (σύνθετον) which, while united by one generality (τὸ κοινότητι μιᾷ), is yet separated by certain differences and conjunctions of peculiarities²³.

The position on the universals articulated here is the same as in the above paraphrase of Eunomian position concerning the universals by Gregory of Nyssa (in the *Contra Eunomium*, 3.5.61-64). The general assumption for understanding the universals in both sources on the Eunomian doctrine is that the concept of division into genera and species (and its subtype, the division into species and individuals) was only possible for the complex and composite beings; such a division was not possible for the immaterial realm, that is, for the realm of the intellectual beings and the divinity. On this assumption Eunomius drove the conclusion that the doctrine of consubstantiality of the Persons of the Trinity in the horizontal sense, that is, in the sense that entailed the concept of species and individuals, implied complexity and corporeity of the Persons which was absurd.

It seems that this assumption was based on a specific Neo-Platonic understanding of Aristotle's doctrine of categories, common in the philosophy of Late Antiquity, namely, on the understanding of the categories which was developed by Porphyry, and later by Iamblichus, both of whom relied on the Plotinian interpretation of Aristotle's categories and on the Plotinian doctrine concerning a specific undivided manner of the existence of forms in the intellectual world.

²¹ Comparing the common divinity of the Father and the Son with light, Basil follows the paradigm which he outlined in his *Ep.* 361, 27–35 (Courtonne) to Apollinaris of Laodicea.

²² *BAS. CAES. Eun.*, PG 29b, 637, transl. by M. DelCogliano and A. Radde-Gallwitz in: ST. BASIL OF CAESAREA, *Against Eunomius*.

²³ GREG. NYSS. *Eun.* 3, 10, 46, 1–7 (Jaeger), trans. by B. Moore and H. Wilson, in: *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Series II, vol. 5*, slightly revised by me.

In addition to the specific interpretation of the Aristotelian doctrine of composite substance, this interpretation was based on the doctrine of the two kinds of incorporeal beings, existing apart from the bodies or together with the bodies²⁴ as well as on the doctrine of the existence of universals in three different ways: prior to things, in the things, and posterior to the things. According to the understanding of Porphyry, categorical statements (in the Aristotelian sense), and, in particular, statements concerning genera and species, comprised by the Aristotelian categories, referred only to the realm of forms immanent to the things or the universals in the things (depending, in their being, on the universals prior to the things), and therefore such statements might apply only to the corporeal realm.²⁵ The intelligible realm was beyond the grasp of categorical statements and was outside the realm which could be indicated by the language,²⁶ since the human language applied only to the sensible realm.²⁷ Thus, the universals prior to the things, being the causes of the universals in the things were unformalized in the human language and could not be predicated to material things. The categorial predicates in relation to things were the universals in the things.

In developing his “intellectual interpretation” of categories, Iamblichus attempted to develop and transform the Porphyrian understanding.²⁸ According to Iamblichus, things are formed not by the immanent forms-universals, but by the forms-universals prior to things. Iamblichus solved the problem of how the universals prior to things, being the ontological reasons of things, could be predicated to things as categories in such a way that the intellectual forms, of course, could not be the predicates of sensible things in the proper sense. Therefore, in this case we have a synonymous predication in the improper sense.²⁹ For example, the statement “Socrates is a man” is an improper expression meaning that material Socrates participates in some transcendental idea of man.

In his treatise *On the Mysteries of the Egyptians*, Iamblichus developed the theory that the higher creation, combining divine and non-divine worlds in itself, was not the subject to the hierarchy of genera-species and species-individuals, which implied individuation through genus and individual property, but every genus of the “greater beings” was a simple and distinct state, distinguished from all others by their genus. In doing so, Iamblichus might have had in mind the corollary of the Porphyrian understanding of the categories, according to which the framework of

²⁴ PORPH. *Sent.* 19; 42.

²⁵ PORPH. *In Cat.* 56, 29-32; 58, 5-29; 91, 5-12 (Busse).

²⁶ Cf. PORPH. *Sent.* 19.

²⁷ PORPH. *In Cat.* 91, 7-12; 91, 19-27 (Busse).

²⁸ SIMPL. *In Cat.* 79, 29-30 (Kalbfleisch).

²⁹ Ibid. 53, 9-18 (Kalbfleisch) = fr. 16 (Larsen); in more detail see J. DILLON, *Iamblichus' Noera Theoria of Aristotle's Categories*, “*Syllecta Classica*” 8 (1997), pp. 65–77; R. CHIARADONNA, *Porphyry and Iamblichus on Universals and Synonymous Predication*, “*Documenti e studi sulla tradizione filosofica medievale*” 18 (2007), pp. 123-140.

division into genera and species as well as into species and individuals could only be applied to material beings, but not to the intellectual realm.

As for the properties which you enquire about as pertaining to each of the superior classes (τῶν κρείττωνων γενῶν), which distinguish them from each other, if you understand the properties as specific differences (εἰδοποιούσας διαφορὰς) distinguished from one another by dichotomy within the same genus, as for example "rational" and "irrational" within the genus "Animal," we will never accept the existence of properties in this sense in the case of beings who have no community of essence (κοινωνίαν οὐσίας μίαν), nor division into sub-species of the same rank, and which do not exhibit the synthesis (σύνθεσιν) of an indefinite (ἀορίστου) element that is common, and a determinative (ὀρίζοντος) element that defines. But if you understand "property," (τὴν ιδιότητα) on the assumption that you are dealing with primary and secondary entities that differ from each other in their whole nature and by entire genus, as a simple (ἀπλᾶ) state delimited in itself, then this concept of property makes some sense; for these will certainly each be separate and simple, as totally transcendent properties of beings which exist eternally³⁰.

In this case Iamblichus followed the Aristotelian idea of unmoved movers, giving the motion to the planets.³¹ Each of the movers was original, had its own species, and was not subject to the common genus with the others.³² Iamblichus denied any possibility of species formation in the "greater genera" on the premise that each of these genera did not have a common substance with other beings but was defined by its own simple genus. Otherwise, according to Iamblichus, these genera would have been not simple but complex being the combinations of the general and the particular. His argument is likely to be based on the conclusion that in the opposite case we would not have been able to speak about the divine genera, but about the genera of the material world. Indeed, in his "intellectual interpretation" of the Aristotelian categories, Iamblichus spoke of species formation as the principle of distinguishing between the beings only with respect to the material reality³³ – but denied it, as we have seen, with respect to the divine genera.

³⁰ IAMB. *De myst.* I, 4, 10-11, trans. by E.C. Clark, J.M. Dillon, J.P. Hershbell, in: *Iamblichus on the Mysteries*, Leiden: Brill 2004, slightly revised by me. On Iamblichus' preference of the particular over the general see PROCLUS. *In Tim.* I, 426, 3.

³¹ Cf. ARIST. *Met.* XII, 8.

³² See G. SHAW, *Theurgy and the Soul. The Neoplatonism of Iamblichus*, Pennsylvania 1995, p. 76.

³³ SIMPL. *In Cat.* 218, 8-9.

Thus, Eunomius followed the same line of argumentation as that of Iamblichus: the reasoning in terms of general and particular implied the complexity of what existed through the combination of the two, and therefore could not be applied to the incorporeal realm. The fact that Iamblichus rejected the principle of defining the indefinite general with the determinative properties as leading to complexity – the key principle of the horizontal structure of commonness for the Persons of the Trinity for the Cappadocian Fathers³⁴ – also indicates that it was suitable for Eunomius to choose the Iamblichian conceptual structure as a philosophical basis for refuting the use of this principle in the Trinitarian sense. We can assume that in his teaching on the singular natures of the types of the angelic powers which did not have any commonness with each other, Eunomius directly relied on Iamblichus.³⁵ However, in general, in his doctrine of the universals, which allowed for the application of the concept of consubstantiality, understood in a horizontal sense, and in general of the applicability of the division into genera-species and species-individuals only to the material realm, Eunomius followed the Neoplatonic paradigm of understanding the Aristotelian categories, according to which the categories, including the Aristotelian category of the second substance (species and genera), were applicable only to the material and physical reality.

Eunomius might have been introduced to the Neoplatonic tradition by his teacher Aetius who lived and studied,³⁶ or even was born³⁷ in Syrian Antioch. In the beginning of the fourth century Daphne, the suburb of Antioch, was a center of Syrian Neoplatonism which had emerged around the School of Iamblichus. Moreover, Aetius was a friend of the Emperor Julian,³⁸ the

³⁴ Cf., for example, the famous *Ep.* 38: «...My statement, then, is this. That which is spoken of in a special and peculiar manner is indicated by the name of the hypostasis. Suppose we say “a man.” The indefinite meaning (τῷ ἀορίστῳ τῆς σημασίας) of the word strikes a certain vague sense upon the ears. The nature (τὴν φύσιν) is indicated, but what subsists and is specially and peculiarly indicated by the name is not made plain. ... This then is the hypostasis, or “understanding;” not the indefinite conception of the essence or substance (ἡ ἀόριστος τῆς οὐσίας ἔννοια), which, because what is signified is general, finds no “standing,” but the conception which by means of the expressed peculiarities gives standing and circumscription to the general and uncircumscribed (τὸ κοινόν καὶ ἀπερίγραπτον). ... Transfer, then, to the divine dogmas the same standard of difference which you recognise in the case both of essence and of hypostasis in human affairs, and you will not go wrong» (3:1-12, 30-33 (Courtonne), trans. by Rev. B. Jackson, in: *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, Series II, vol. 8).

³⁵ We should note that the language used by Gregory of Nyssa in his paraphrase of the Eunomian doctrine that the types of angelic powers cannot be the subjects of the common genus, is somewhat similar to the language used by Origen in the *Peri Archon* (if we consider those few passages that are extant in the original Greek); cf. the paraphrase of Gregory of Nyssa: οὐ γάρ, καθὼς Εὐνόμιος βούλεται, αἱ παρὰ τοῦ Παύλου κατειλεγμένοι φωναὶ τῶν ὑπερκοσμίων δυνάμεων φύσεις τινὰς ἀλλήλων παρηλλαγμένας σημαίνουσιν (GREG. NYSS. *Eun.* 3, 5, 63, 4-6 (Jaeger)) and Origen’s chapter title Περί λογικῶν φύσεων (*De Princ.* 1, 5) as well as in the extant Latin translation of the Greek text of the *De Princ.*: Igitur tot et tantis ordinum officiorumque nominibus cognominatis, quibus certum est subesse substantias (*De Princ.* 1, 5, 3, 74-75 (Crouzel, Simonetti)). However, further in the *De Princ.* 1, 8, 2, Origen rejected the idea that the angelic powers (as well as human souls) had different spiritual natures.

³⁶ PHILOSTORGIUS 3, 15.

³⁷ SOCRATES SCHOLASTICUS. *Hist.* 2, 35.

³⁸ PHILOSTORGIUS 3.27; 6.7; JULIANUS. *Ep.* 25 (see J. BIDEZ, *La Vie de l'Empereur Julien*, Paris 1930, pp. 90–93).

follower of Iamblichus, and the disciple of the Pergamum School of Neoplatonism. Orthodox contemporaries of Eunomius traditionally viewed him in the context of the Aristotelian doctrine,³⁹ and most scholars of the twentieth century followed them in this respect. However, there were some attempts to establish a connection between Eunomius and Platonic tradition. Thus, in the middle of the twentieth century, some scholars pointed to the presence of the Neoplatonic subordinationism in the Eunomian teaching on the Supreme Triad.⁴⁰ Jean Daniélou tried to connect the teaching of Eunomius with the contemporaneous Neoplatonic thought, demonstrating the influence of the *Cratylus* exegesis of the Iamblichian School on the theory of names of Eunomius.⁴¹ Pointing to the hierarchical nature of the Eunomian Supreme Triad and the triads of Plotinus, Porphyry, and Iamblichus, P. Mar Gregorius insisted on the Eunomius adherence to theurgic practices,⁴² and even called him a man deeply immersed in theurgy, unfortunately, not providing any evidence to his claim.⁴³ Not attempting at such radical claims of Eunomius' Neoplatonism, in this article I am trying to point out the Neoplatonic background of Eunomius in the sense that Eunomius might have depended on the interpretation of the Aristotelian categories, common in the Neoplatonic philosophical tradition.

Obviously, the Cappadocian Fathers did not accept this interpretation of the Aristotelian categories and do not limit the framework of division into genera-species and species-individuals to any realm of reality. We may say that one of the mitigating reasons for the Cappadocian understanding of the scope of how the Aristotelian categories could be applied, which diverged from the Neoplatonic understanding, prevailing in their time in the philosophical circles and followed by Eunomius, was the epistemological terminology used by the Cappadocians. This terminology combined the language of the general and the particular as applied to the Trinitarian doctrine. Indeed, the Cappadocians tended to describe in epistemological terms those notions which Iamblichus and Eunomius endowed with ontological status, referring to the indefinite general and defining particular as really existing principles and rejecting their applicability to the divine realm. The Cappadocians relegated the description of the general and the particular in the

³⁹ BAS. CAES. *Eun.*, PG 29b, 516; GREG. NYSS. *Eun.* I, 1, 55; 2, 620 (Jaeger); EPIPH. *Panar.* 76, 2, 2; SOCR. *Hist.* 4, 7. See also D. RUNIA, *Festugiere Revisited: Aristotle in the Greek Patres*, "Vigiliae Christianae", 43 (1989), pp. 9-12, 23-26.

⁴⁰ E. VANDENBUSSCHE, *La part de la dialectique dans la théologie d'Eunomius le technologue*, "Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique", 40 (1944-1945), p. 70; E. VON IVÁNKA, *Hellenisches und Christliches im frühbyzantinischen Geistesleben*, Wien 1948, pp. 21-22. See also D. BALAS, *ΜΕΤΟΥΣΙΑ ΘΕΟΥ*, pp. 25-27; P. PAPAGEORGIOU, "Plotinus and Eunomius: A Parallel Theology of the Three Hypostasis," *The Greek Orthodox Theological Review* 37, 3-4 (1992), pp. 215-231.

⁴¹ J. DANIELOU, "Eunome l'arien et l'exégèse néoplatonicienne du Cratyle," *Revue des études grecques* 69 (1956), pp. 412-432. The arguments that the philosophical background of the Eunomian theory of language implied the Stoic, and not the Neoplatonic framework are presented in D. BIRIUKOV, *The Strategies of Naming*.

⁴² P. MAR GREGORIOS, *Theurgic Neo-Platonism and the Eunomius-Gregory Debate: An Examination of the Background*, in L. Mateo-Seco, and J. Bastero (eds.), *Eun. I" en la produccion literaria de Gregorio de Nisa*, Pamplona 1988, pp. 217-235.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 230.

Trinitarian framework mainly to the activity of the human thinking – from the general notion of the object that was stored in memory, to its particular features which the mind identified through the deeper contemplation of the object.⁴⁴ However, the Neo-Niceans did not single out any particular concept for their Trinitarian system. In their works we may see the whole variety of approaches, including the analogy of the general species and individuals, the principle of *perichoresis* of the Persons, the language of the development of the Monad, etc. – but none of these concepts, apparently, was regarded as exclusive.

Thus, the specific nature of the Eunomian ontology is its “atomicity” which manifested itself in the idea that at the higher ontological levels there were only singular substances, while we might encounter the greater possible commonness at the lower steps of the hierarchy of beings. This view is specifically manifested in the teaching of Eunomius that each type of angelic powers possessed only a single type of nature, but not the common nature for the angelic powers as a whole. This understanding probably went back to a similar concept in the philosophical system of Iamblichus. It is possible that this particular doctrine of Eunomius concerning the universals provoked the natural philosophical reaction which was manifested in the development of the opposite doctrine on the hierarchy of commonness in the treatise of Gregory of Nyssa *Contra Eunomium*, namely, the doctrine which combined two strategies of the hierarchy of commonness. According to the first strategy which was built upon the principle of division into genera and species, “being” was at the summit of the hierarchy of divisions. In this strategy, the most common was located at the summit of the hierarchy, and the degree of commonness decreased in the process of descending. Such structure of hierarchy of commonness was opposite to that of Eunomius. The second strategy implied the hierarchy of commonness which did not correspond to the divisions into genera and species. This strategy attempted to reveal the ontological hierarchy of beings and had uncreated intellectual being at its summit. This strategy was also contrary to the Eunomian structure since it involved the commonness of the uncreated and the created intellectual realms.

Thus, various concepts related to the universals which emerged in the philosophy of Late Antiquity, are reflected in different positions on the universals in the Trinitarian controversy at the early stage of the Byzantine philosophical thought.

⁴⁴ Cf., for example, the passage from Basil of Caesarea, cited above (*Eun.*, PG 29b, 637) and *Ep.* 38, 3:1-12, 41-47 (Courtonne).

Chapter 9 “Hierarchies of Beings in the Patristic Thought. Gregory of Nyssa, Dionysius the Areopagite, Maximus the Confessor, John of Damascus, and the Palamites”

1. Now we should turn to the question of how the hierarchy of beings was understood by Dionysius the Areopagite in comparison with Gregory of Nyssa.

This paradigm of participation by Dionysius is radically different than that of Gregory of Nyssa. The hierarchy, built up by Gregory does not imply transcendental principles corresponded to the links of hierarchy and participated in by them, while Dionysius on the basis of the philosophy of Proclus developed his doctrine of hierarchy involving such principles.

This difference can be correlated with the rethinking of the concept of participation according to substance, and, in particular, participation in divine substance in the Patristic thought due to the change in the underlying philosophical understanding of the very notion of participation. Below, a short excursion into this subject will be provided.

I will use the expression, “Platonic paradigm of participation” for such a view when the participating entity is understood as being different from the participated entity according to nature, and the expression *by participation* implies the terms of the opposition to being *by existence* or *by nature* (by possession of nature). For example, a being, which is not the One, *participates* in It, and therefore is not It as such.¹ In the most general sense, *participation* in this paradigm points to the fact that a certain being possesses a certain property to a lesser extent than does the embodiment of this property. The “Aristotelian paradigm of participation,” opposite to the Platonic, is Aristotle’s understanding of participation expressing a logical relationship between the genera-species predicables of varying degrees of generality: less general participates in more general, while the latter does not participate in the former (an individual participates in species and genus; species participates in genus, but not vice versa).² Thus *by participation* in the Aristotelian paradigm meant the same as *by existence* or *by nature* since in this paradigm an individual by nature is which species and genus it belonged to or participated in. Moreover, unlike Platonic language which, when it comes to participation, speaks about a greater or lesser degree of participation, Aristotelian language cannot speak about varying degrees of participation.

¹ Cf. PLATO. *Parm.* 158a.

² ARIST. *Top.* 121a10-15, 122b20-22.

The Early Christian authors were inspired to actively use the Platonic paradigm of participation by the well-known passage from the *Second Epistle of Peter*, which stated that Christians would become the partakers of the divine nature (θείας κοινωνοὶ φύσεως) (2 Pet. 1, 3–4). Accordingly, the topic of participation in divine substance (nature), as implicitly or explicitly opposite of possession of it³, with more or less obvious philosophical connotations and usually with the allusion to 2 Pet. 1, 3–4 was used in the early Byzantine literature by Athanasius of Alexandria⁴, Gregory of Nyssa, Cyril of Alexandria, Macarius the Great⁵ and other authors. In the Middle Byzantine literature this topic was dealt with by John of Damascus, who summarized all possible paradigms of participation for his time – Platonic, Aristotelian, and Neoplatonic,⁶ and by Symeon the New Theologian.⁷ This trend of Patristic literature argued that holy people participate in the divine nature (they partake in the divine substance, but do not possess it as hypostases of the Trinity do), while the created world as a whole, according to Gregory of Nyssa,⁸ cannot be considered as participating in it.

This paradigm of participation fell into background in the Byzantine Patristic literature in connection with the new philosophical language which appeared in the *Corpus Areopagiticum*. Those notions which earlier Patristic exegesis expressed through the opposition of *by existence* (*by nature*) – *by participation*, started to be expressed in Dionysian philosophical and theological framework by the conceptual triad of *non-participated* – *participated* – *participating*⁹ (the Neoplatonic paradigm of participation) developed by Proclus and adopted by the author of the *Corpus Areopagiticum*. This paradigm of participation included some aspects of both Platonic and Aristotelian paradigms: the Aristotelian paradigm functioned as a background, in opposition to which the notion of non-participated was elaborated, while the Platonic paradigm manifested itself in relation to the *participated* and the *participating*.

In the process of transferring this triad into Christian theological thought, Areopagite distinguished in the divinity the *participated* (μετεχόμενον) which he associated with the divine processions and powers, and *non-participated* (ἀμέθεκτος) – the supra-substantial divinity of God.¹⁰ The author of the *scholia* to the *Corpus Areopagiticum* interpreted this in such a way that

³ About the opposition *by participation* and *by nature* see above.

⁴ For example, *Ep. 1 ad Serap.*, PG 26, 585B–C.

⁵ The last two authors very often devoted their attention to this subject; each of them has dozens of pertinent passages.

⁶ For example, see the Platonic paradigm in the *De imag.* 3.33 (on partaking in the divine substance by the saints); see the Aristotelian paradigm in the *De duab.* 7; see the Neoplatonic paradigm in *Ibid.*, 11: 9–10 (Kotter) (where John of Damascus, contradicting the *De imag.* 3.33, speaks about impossibility of partaking in the divine substance) and in the *De fidei* 7 (51).

⁷ *Eth.* 3, 82–86; *Hymn* 7, 30–36; 50, 153–154, 200–202 etc.

⁸ *Eun.* 3, 3, 7, 1–8, 6 (Jaeger).

⁹ This triad might have been introduced into the philosophical language by Iamblichus; see the testimony of Proclus in his *Commentary on the Timaeus* II, 105, 16–28; 313, 19–24.

¹⁰ *De div. nom.* (hereafter *DN*) 2, 5; 11, 6.

while divinity could be participated according to its processions and energies, God could not be participated according to His nature.¹¹ Moreover, this paradigm assumes that He is completely unparticipated for all created beings including saintly people. The topic of ultimate impossibility of participating in God according to substance (nature) and the opportunity to participate in God according to energies is exhaustingly developed in the writings of Maximus the Confessor (possibly the author of the *scholia* to the *Corpus Areopagiticum* mentioned above).¹² In this way the Aristotelian paradigm became partially borrowed in the understanding that to *participate* in substance meant to possess the substance or to be something according to substance. Thereby, the discourse of the participation of saints (as well as of any created beings) in the divine substance, which was used in the preceding Patristic literature including Gregory of Nyssa, became forbidden (since in this paradigm the participation of saints in the divine essence would imply becoming God according to substance for their).

After Maximus, Neoplatonic participation paradigm which implied complete impossibility of participating in God according to substance, for a time fell out of use, but reemerged among the Orthodox theologians after the rediscovery of the theological heritage of Maximus the Confessor at the end of life of Nicetas Stethatos, that is, in the last quarter of the eleventh century. Further this paradigm was taken over by Gregory Palamas; eventually in the course of the Palamite Controversy the idea of possibility of participation of created beings in the divine substance was rejected in the *Tomos* of the Council of the Church of Constantinople in 1351¹³ and anathematized in a special supplement to the *Synodikon of Orthodoxy*.¹⁴

Gregory of Nyssa used both Platonic and Aristotelian paradigms of participation in his writings. The Aristotelian participation paradigm was used by Gregory when he argued that all people equally partook in the human nature¹⁵. Gregory used the Platonic participation paradigm in the framework of hierarchy where it took place participation of *intellectual created beings* in the *uncreated intellectual being* – divine substance – according to the goodness of will as participation in the highest level of hierarchy. However, in Dionysius the Areopagite, who borrowed the Neoplatonic triad of participation, as well as subsequently in Maximus the Confessor and Gregory Palamas, such a Platonic paradigm of participation became impossible in its application to the divine substance. According to the philosophical paradigm of participation shared by these authors, participation in the divine substance would imply its assimilation, which was overall prohibited in the Patristic theological thought. In fact, the idea of assimilating divine

¹¹ PG 4, 221C, 404A–B, 404D.

¹² MAX. *Quaest. et dub.* 173, 1-7 (Declerck); *Cap. Theol. et oec.*, PG 90, 1180C-1181A.

¹³ 396-397 (Καρμίρη).

¹⁴ *Synodikon of Orthodoxy* 85, 628-633 (Gouillard).

¹⁵ *Eun.* 1, 1, 173, 2 - 1, 1, 175, 1 (Jaeger).

substance by created beings was “blocked” in this case through the introduction of the concept of non-participation into theological discourse.

Therefore, the authors who adopted the Neoplatonic triad of participation in their theological language and whose theological system implied the utter non-participation in God (non-participation in the divine substance) naturally developed the doctrine of hierarchy entailing participation of created beings not in the divine substance, but rather in the higher transcendental principles – processions of God, His qualities, or energies, as it can be found respectively in Dionysius the Areopagite, Maximus the Confessor, and Gregory Palamas.

The doctrine of the hierarchy of beings which exists in the *Corpus Areopagiticum* is generally associated with the theme of participation in the divine. Dionysius speaks about dual participation in God. On the one hand, all beings participate in God *naturally* – by virtue of possessing existence and in accordance with the nature of each being (which will be discussed in more detail below). Such a participation is static, and within this paradigm there is no being deprived of participation in the First Cause. On the other hand, Dionysius speaks about individual way of participation in God (for rational beings), and the ability to participate in the Divine Goodness for an individual being, which can either be fulfilled or not. In the latter case, Dionysius characterizes a being as not participating in Goodness (*DN IV, 4: 147, 15-148, 2* (Suchla)). Thus, one of participation paradigms used by the Areopagite corresponded to natural participation and implied participation of created beings in God as a given reality. In this paradigm we cannot speak about non-participation of beings in Godhead in any respect. Another paradigm corresponded to individual way of participation and implied participation as a condition which may (or may not) become a reality. The latter paradigm presupposed both participation and non-participation of a (rational) individual being in God, if the being chooses to close itself for divine gifts. According to the Areopagite, in both cases beings participate in the divinity in its entirety: God on His part gives himself entirely, whereas created beings participate in the divinity proportionately to their capacity, both in the ability to receive as defined by their nature, and in terms of individual openness to participating in the divine gifts (for rational beings) (*DN II, 5: 129, 4-6* (Suchla)). Later, a similar dual paradigm of participation of the created beings in the divine would be used by Maximus the Confessor and Gregory Palamas.

Thus, Dionysius the Areopagite developed his theory of processions and principles which are participated in by the created beings in the context of the natural participation of created beings in the divinity. In the *On the Divine Names V, 1* Dionysius speaks about such names of God as *Goodness, Being, Life, and Wisdom* as about the order of the divine processions,

outspreading on the corresponding realities in the created world and surpassed them.¹⁶ *Goodness* extends on *being* and *non-being*; *Being* extends on *beings*; *Life* on *living beings*, while *Wisdom* extends on *intellectual beings* (angelic powers), *rational beings*, and *sensible beings*. These good processions do not constitute multiple principles, but all belong to One God. At the same time according to Dionysius those beings which are the subjects of the processions and which participate in them, form a hierarchy: *living beings* (τὰ ζῶντα) are above *beings* (τὰ ὄντα); *sensible beings* (τὰ αἰσθητικὰ) are above *living beings*; *rational beings* (τὰ λογικὰ) are above *sensible beings*, and *intellects* (τὰ νοερά) are above *rational beings*¹⁷. Dionysius noted that intellectual beings were the closest to God as having the largest number of natural perfections.¹⁸ This very principle underlying the hierarchy of participation in Dionysius is associated with the concept of conformity or proportionality in outpouring of the divine gifts on the participating beings (see *DN I*, 2–3; *IV*, 1, 33) both in their natural and individual aspects.

Dionysius speaks of *Goodness*, *Being*, *Life*, and *Wisdom* using not only the terminology of “processions.” In relation to these names he also mentions two types of specific realities – *self-supra-substantial* and *self-participated* principles. As a rule, scholars have focused their attention on the Dionysian doctrine of *Goodness*, *Being*, *Life*, and *Wisdom* as the processions of the divine without going into great detail into the doctrine of these principles in the *Corpus Dionysiacum*. We should try to understand what Dionysius writes about them.

In *DN V*, 2 Dionysius speaks about self-supra-substantial *Goodness*, *Being*, *Life*, and *Wisdom* pertaining to self-supra-substantial divinity; they are above all goodness, being, life, and wisdom. The principles, as it seems, can be identified with supra-substantial Principle and supra-divine Life which Dionysius mentions in *DN XI*, 6. Yet, in order to standardize our terminological usage, we will refer to this kind of principles as *self-supra-substantial* principles.

¹⁶ It should be noted that the theological language of Dionysius speaks of divine names in a way that, on the one hand, the names explain the divine processions, while, on the other hand, Dionysius identifies those names with the processions. Dionysius says in *DN V*, 1 that the names *Goodness*, *Being*, and *Life* do not simply apply to non-beings, beings, and living beings, but also *exceed* them (181, 1–6 (Suchla)). Evidently, the reference that the divine names related to the processions exceed the corresponding realities of the created beings, indicates that Dionysius here identified the divine name and the procession.

¹⁷ «Yet someone might say, 'Wherefore is Being expands beyond Life and Life beyond Wisdom, when living things are above beings, and sensible things above living ones, and rational things above these, and the intellects are above the rational things and are more around God and closer to him? For, those which participate in God's greater gifts are the higher and surpass the rest. If the intellects are understood that way that they were without being and without life, the saying would be sound. But since the divine intellects are above other beings, and live in a manner surpassing other living things, and think and know in a manner beyond sense and reason, and in a manner beyond all existent things participate in the Beautiful and Good, they are nearer to the Good, participating in it in an eminent way, and receiving from it more and greater gifts; likewise rational things excel sensitive ones, having more by the eminence of reason, and the latter [excel other living things] by sensation, and [living things excel mere beings] by life» (*DN V*, 3: 182, 1–14 (Suchla)). I have made use the translations of E. Perl (E. PERL, *Theophany: the Neoplatonic Philosophy of Dionysius the Areopagite*, New York 2007, pp. 69-70) and C. E. Rolt (*Dionysius the Areopagite: On the Divine Names and the Mystical Theology*, transl. by C. E. Rolt, Grand Rapids, London: SPCK 1920, (Christian Classics Ethereal Library), pp. 133-134). Sf. *DN II*, 7: 131, 7-13; *IV*, 4: 148: 12-18 (Suchla).

¹⁸ *DN V*, 3: 182.3-4 (Suchla).

These entities differ from other higher entities established by God. The latter principles, like all beings, constitute the gift and the outpouring of self-supra-substantial *Goodness* (DN V, 6) and include the principles (ἀρχαί) with the prefix “self-” (αὐτο-): *Self-Being*, *Self-Life*, *Self-Wisdom*, *Self-Similarity of the Divinity*, *Self-Unity*, *Self-Order* (V, 5, cf. XI, 6), *Self-Goodness* (II, 1; XI, 6), *Self-Eternity* (V, 9), *Self-Equality* (IX, 10; XI, 6), *Self-Peace* (XI, 2; XI, 6), *Self-Divinity* (XI, 6), *Self-Beauty* (XI, 6), and *Self-Holiness* (XII, 1).¹⁹ Dionysius indicates that all existing things, including the principles with the prefix “self-” come from self-supra-substantial *Goodness*, and gives two examples: an example of the relation of number one to other numbers (all numbers are merged in number one, and the more the number is removed from the one, the more it is divided) and an example of a multitude of lines passing through the center of the circle (the farther from the center, the more their divergence is) (V, 6).

Dionysius speaks about the principles with the prefix “self-” as about realities which, being the gift and the outpouring of the non-participated God are participated in by beings, making beings to be and to become called beings, living beings, deified beings, etc. (XI, 6).

Self-Being is the highest principle among the principles with the prefix “self-”; it is participated in by other principles with the prefix “self-”, which are called “self-participating” (αὐτομετοχᾶς) by Dionysius. These principles are simultaneously participating and participated: they participate in *Self-Being* and are participated in by beings in accordance with qualities corresponding to these names (while some beings may simultaneously participate in several principles (V, 5: 184.11-12 (Suchla))). The beings, participating in the self-participated principles through them also participate in *Self-Being* (V, 5).

Although Dionysius the Areopagite called self-participating higher realities *principles* (ἀρχαί) (V, 5), he rejected the possibility of understanding them as creating substances or causes (αἰτίαι) of beings (XI, 6),²⁰ since the Cause (αἰτία) of beings and their principle is only the supra-substantial divinity in the moduses of self-supra-substantiality (self-supra-substantial *Goodness*, *Substance*, *Life*, and *Wisdom*) (V, 6; XI, 6). Despite the fact that Dionysius mentions a variety of such moduses, the divinity in these moduses is one and the same Cause of beings; it is not many causes, and it would be wrong to understand the self-supra-substantial *Goodness*, *Substance*, *Life*, and *Wisdom* as separate causes of beings (V, 2). We may say that according to Dionysius the realities of the self-supra-substantial represent a single Cause and Principle while there is a whole variety of principles with the prefix “self-” (*Self-Being*, *Self-Life*, *Self-Wisdom*, etc.) (cf. V, 5-6).

¹⁹ Speaking of these principles, Dionysius also mentions that *Self-Life* comes from divine *Life* (VI, 1), that God as Power dwells above *Self-Power* (VIII, 2) and is the basis of *Self-Similarity* (IX, 6), *Self-Equality* (IX, 10), and *Self-Peace* (XI, 2).

²⁰ Dionysius probably argues here against Proclus’ doctrine of hennads interpreted in the sense of hypostatized principles.

Dionysius says that God can be called both the basis, for example, of *Self-Life* or *Self-Power* and *Self-Life* or *Self-Power* in the proper sense. In the first case, it is said about God as about supra-substantially exceeding all beings and “first beings” (τὰ πρώτως ὄντα) (evidently, under the “first beings” Dionysius here means the principles with the prefix “self-”); in the second case he is named according to the names of beings and first beings²¹ as their Cause (XI, 6: 221.13-222.2 (Suchla)).

The relationship between the divine processions on the one hand, and the self-supra-substantial realities and principles with the prefix “self-” on the other, are not entirely clear, but it seems that self-supra-substantial realities and principles with the prefix “self-,” while differing from each other (the former are the cause and the source of existence for the latter) and not being identical to divine processions, represent different aspects of the processions.²²

Among all divine names as Dionysius describes them we can distinguish first four: *Goodness*, *Being* (τὸ ὄν) [= *Existence* (τὸ εἶναι) = *Substance* (ἡ οὐσία)], *Life*, and *Wisdom*. Dionysius writes about these names as related simultaneously to divine procession, to self-supra-substantial realities, and to the principles of beings with the prefix “self-.” This sequence of names was borrowed by Dionysius from the Neoplatonic tradition, which elaborated the doctrine

²¹ It is this language of speaking about the supra-being on the basis of being, which in my opinion may explain the words of Dionysius in *DN* XI, 6: 222, 13ff. (Suchla) that *Self-Being*, *Self-Life*, and *Self-Divinity* are spoken about the divine, supra-primary, and supra-substantial Principle and Cause, while earlier (XI, 6: 222, 6ff. (Suchla)) Dionysius rejected the notion that *Self-Being* was the divine Cause for all beings, and *Self-Life* was the Cause of all living beings, and said that it was the supra-divine *Life* that was cause of both *Self-Life* and all living beings.

²² It may be noted here that Eric Perl, in fact, identified divine processions in Dionysius with the principles with the prefix “self-” without mentioning it and without posing a question concerning the complexity and originality of the Dionysian doctrine of divine names and their denotations. In my opinion, this position somewhat distorts the doctrine of Dionysius in the form it was presented by Perl. Thus Perl developed the argument about the tetrad of processions *Goodness*, *Being*, *Life*, and *Wisdom* from *DN* V, 1 and went on to *DN* XI, 6. On the basis of the latter passage he pointed out that according to Dionysius divine processions were not mediating creative substances and hypostases (E. Perl, *Theophany*, pp. 66-67). However, in XI, 6 Dionysius precisely speaks about the principles with the prefix “self-” and not about divine processions in general. Dionysius’ purpose, among other things, was to claim that those principles were not the creative causes of beings, whereas the supra-substantial principle and the supra-divine *Life* were the Cause and Principle of all *being* and *life* (XI, 6: 222, 3 – 223, 3 (Suchla)). It seems that Dionysian distinction between the concept of “cause” (αἰτία), attributable only to self-supra-substantial (or divine) entities, but not to the entities with the prefix “self-,” and the notion of “principle” (ἀρχή), attributable to both of those, is relevant here; see above, the text around note 37). Thus, in my opinion, it is not correct to identify the Dionysian divine processions and the principles with the prefix “self-” without specifying details and context, as it was done by Perl, since not everything that Dionysius attributed to the principles with the prefix “self-,” he applied to divine processions in general.

of the triad *Being, Life, and Mind*.²³ Using this Neoplatonic triad, Dionysius replaced *Mind* with *Wisdom*, wishing, as scholars pointed, to bring this language closer to the Biblical.²⁴

In the Platonic tradition, the triad of *Being, Life, and Mind* went back at least to Plotinus, who taught about the One as the source of *Being* (τὸ ὄν), *Life*, and *Mind*.²⁵ Later Neoplatonists Proclus and Syrianus also placed *Being, Life, and Mind* underneath the One, linking the triad to the noetic realm. S. Klitenic Wear and J. Dillon believed that only Porphyry out of all Neoplatonists placed the triad at the level of the One, and in this respect we have a crossing point of Porphyry and Dionysius who also considered the triad to correspond to the highest reality.²⁶

However it is unlikely that Dionysius drew on Porphyry speaking about divine names of *Goodness, Being, Life, and Mind*; Proclus was the most likely source. As P. Sherwood noted,²⁷ in this regard Dionysius relied on the 101st and 102nd theorems of the *Elements of Theology* by Proclus, which referred to the triad of *Being, Life, and Mind*. In the 8th theorem of this treatise and further on Proclus spoke of *Goodness* as the highest principle. The dependence of Dionysius on Proclus in this respect also follows from the philosophical background of the Dionysian doctrine concerning the tetrad of *Goodness, Being, Life, and Wisdom* in *DN V*, 1-2, analyzed, among other scholars, by E. Perl.²⁸

It follows from the above that we may confidently speak about the hierarchy of created beings or hierarchy of participation in Dionysius the Areopagite. This is the following hierarchy (from the lowest level in the ontological sense as well as in relation to the measure of complexity): *being – living being – sensible being – rational being – intellectual being* (V, 3, see the relevant quote in note 34). This hierarchy corresponds to the order in the degree of expanding of the processions of God in the triad of *Being, Life, and Wisdom*, borrowed from the Neoplatonists, where the three levels in the hierarchy of participation – *intellectual, rational, and sensible* – corresponded to *Wisdom*. The structure of the hierarchy of participation is such that the more complex species the being belongs to, the greater amount of transcendent entities the

²³ However, P. Rorem indicated that there also was a Biblical background in relation to these divine names (P. ROREM, *Pseudo-Dionysius. A Commentary on the Texts and an Introduction to Their Influence*, Oxford 1993, pp. 153-155, cf. P. ROREM, “The Biblical Allusions and Overlooked Quotations in the Pseudo-Dionysian Corpus”, *Studia Patristica* 23 (1989), p. 64).

²⁴ Cf. S. KLITENIC WEAR, J. DILLON, *Dionysius the Areopagite and the Neoplatonist tradition: Despoiling the Hellenes* (Ashgate Studies in Philosophy and Theology in Late Antiquity), Aldershot; Burlington (VT): Ashgate 2007, p. 24, n. 31; p. 26; E. PERL, *Theophany*, p. 129.

²⁵ PLOT. *Enn.* I, 8, 2; see CH. SCHÄFER, *The Philosophy of Dionysius the Areopagite. An Introduction to the Structure and the Content of the Treatise On the Divine Names*, Leiden, Boston: Brill 2006, pp. 86. S. Klitenic Wear and J. Dillon mistakenly indicate *Enneads* I, 6, 7 in that respect (S. KLITENIC WEAR, J. DILLON, *Dionysius the Areopagite and the Neoplatonist Tradition*, p. 24).

²⁶ S. KLITENIC WEAR, J. DILLON, *Dionysius the Areopagite and the Neoplatonist Tradition*, pp. 25-26.

²⁷ P. SHERWOOD, *Introduction*, in *St. Maximus the Confessor: The Ascetic Life. The Four Centuries on Charity*, trans. and annot. by P. Sherwood, O.S.B., S.T.D. Paulist Press 1955 (Ancient Christian Writers), pp. 40-41.

²⁸ E. PERL, *Theophany*, pp. 68-69.

being participates in. This implied the inclusion of each preceding level by the subsequent level, and meant that possession of each subsequent perfection or natural capacity entailed the possession of all preceding capacities, as well as the corresponding participations (although it is still not entirely clear how this worked in the case of angelic powers, corresponding to the level of the intellectual – the highest level of the Dionysian hierarchy, since the nature of angels obviously did not include the preceding perfections in the hierarchy²⁹).

Although the order of the participated divine names-processions was borrowed by Dionysius from Proclus, the Dionysian hierarchy of participation is not close to the hierarchy of participation in Proclus, which had the following form: *living beings – vegetative beings – soulless bodies – matter*.³⁰ Thus, relying on Proclus in respect to his doctrine of the participated divine names-processions *Goodness–Being–Life–Wisdom*, Dionysius did not follow Proclus as far as his doctrine on *what* exactly participates in those processions was concerned.

It should be noted that Dionysius does not show a clear correspondence between the stages in the divine processions and the levels in participation hierarchy. As I have mentioned, the whole three levels of hierarchy participate in Wisdom: *intellectual, rational, and sensible*, unexpectedly appearing here.

However, is there a correspondence between the participating and the participated in the hierarchical structure? Does the hierarchy of participated beings correspond to a parallel hierarchy of participated beings in terms of participated divine processions? In my opinion, the answer to this question should rather be negative.

The processions-names *Goodness, Being, Life, and Wisdom* from DN V, 1–2, which are participated in by the hierarchically organized created beings do not form a hierarchy, but rather in the words of Eric Pearl, “are simply more and less universal modes of the same divine presence,”³¹ representing different limits, upon which the divinity expands itself (ἐκτείνω). That means, as it follows from the V, 3, that *Wisdom* includes *Life, Being, and Goodness*; *Life* includes *Being and Goodness*, etc.³² Ch. Schäfer called this principle the “Russian-doll-

²⁹ It should be noted that, unlike Dionysius, Gregory of Nyssa placed the perfection, corresponding to the angelic powers (as well as to the highest ability of the human beings), *intellectual created being*, outside the hierarchy of natural beings. Thus, such a perplexity does not arise in respect to Gregory’s doctrine of hierarchies.

³⁰ *Theol. Plat.* 3, 6. The specific character of Proclus’ teaching of participation hierarchy is that the number of the entities participated in by the levels of hierarchy increases as we approach the middle of the hierarchy (and not, for example, its summit, as it is the case with Dionysius); in general, see the list in E. R. DODDS, *Commentary*, in PROCLUS, *The Elements of Theology*, A revised text with transl., introd. and comm. by E. R. Dodds, Oxford 1963, pp. 232-233.

³¹ E. PERL, *Theophany*, p. 70.

³² Cf. E. PERL, *Theophany*, pp. 69-70. It should be noted that Klitonic Wear and Dillon claim that in the Dionysian triad *Being* is above *Wisdom* and *Life*, and that *Life* and *Wisdom* participate in *Being*: “Regarding Being, Dionysius places this name above Life and Wisdom so that Life and Wisdom participate in Being” (S. KLITONIC WEAR, J. DILLON, *Dionysius the Areopagite and the Neoplatonist Tradition*, p. 26. Unfortunately, the authors do not indicate the source for this claim in the text of Dionysius). However, this statement is valid only for the principles with the prefix “self-” (V, 5, see above), but not for all processions as such.

principle.”³³ Obviously, the same principle holds true in regard to the entities participating in those processions: *intellectual beings* contain the perfections of *rational, sensible, living, and existing beings*; *rational beings* contain the perfections of *sensible, living, and existing beings*, etc.

We may speak about the element referring to a hierarchy for the principles with the prefix “self-”, which Dionysius also speaks of as participated entities (see above). Dionysius mentions the deified being, the living being, the unified being, the similar being, and the ordered beings as entities participating in those principles (V, 5: 184, 8-16; XI, 6: 222, 17 – 223, 1 (Suchla)), but he assumes that beings with qualities corresponding to the names of the principles participate in each of them. This is why these principles (with the exception of *Self-Being*) are called “self-participating,” which is understood in a sense that they both participate (in *Self-Being* and through it in the self-supra-substantial *Goodness*), and are participated in (by the relevant types of participating beings). The element of hierarchical structuring in respect to these principles consists in their participation in *Self-Being* as a “senior” principle” (V, 5: 184.8–16 (Suchla)). However, Dionysius does not seem to give reasons to think that self-participated principles in his system form some kind of hierarchy among themselves apart from the fact that each of them participates in *Self-Being*.

Thus, if we take a closer look at the examples which Dionysius provides speaking about the origin of all beings, including the principles with the prefix “self-,” out of *self-supra-substantial Goodness*, namely, the example of many lines passing through the center of circle and the example of the relationship of one to other numbers (V, 6, supra), we may see that the first example does not imply any hierarchy, while the second example may imply it. However, one example is not sufficient to conclude about the hierarchical structure among the principles with the prefix “self-” in Dionysius, moreover, the first example does not support the hierarchical structure at all. Furthermore, in addition to *Self-Being*, *Self-Life*, and *Self-Wisdom*, such principles include, for example, *Self-Similarity*, *Self-Unity*, *Self-Order*, etc., and possible structure of hierarchy between them, unlike the first ones, is unclear.

One might add that even the “Russian-doll-principle,” entailing the inclusion of the lesser extended principles by the longer extended principles with certainty refers only to the divine processions (discussed in *DN V*, 1-2), but not to the principles with the prefix “self-,” and we cannot make any definitive conclusions concerning their subordination to this principle in Dionysius.

Thus, we can identify four elements concerning the subject of participation in the system of Dionysius, defined by the Neoplatonic paradigm which involved such aspects of participation

³³ CH. SCHÄFER, *The Philosophy of Dionysius the Areopagite*, p. 87.

as the *non-participated*, the *participated*, and the *participating*. The four elements include, firstly, the *non-participated* – the supra-substantial divinity of God; secondly, the *participated* – divine processions and self-supra-substantial principles; thirdly, the *participated* and *participating* – the principles with the prefix “self-,” and, fourthly, the *participating* – the created beings in their individual and natural aspects, and, in particular, the hierarchy of beings.

Unlike Gregory of Nyssa, Dionysius did not use either Aristotelian paradigm of participation according to substance, that is, when the language of participation is used for saying that some individual being belongs to some species, or species to genus, or the Platonic paradigm of participation according to substance, implying the opposition *by participation* (corresponding to the possession of a certain property) and *by being* (corresponding to what this property objectified). Instead of using those paradigms, Dionysius uses the combined Neoplatonic paradigm of participation, which implied a distinction between the *non-participated* and *participated* in the divinity. This fact defines the general concept of the hierarchy of beings in Dionysius in the sense that it is exactly the hierarchy of the *participating*.

Thus, Gregory of Nyssa and Dionysius diverge in the very concept of understanding the hierarchy of beings, since in Gregory this hierarchy did not imply any transcendental principles with respect to the types of created beings in which these types participate, while in Dionysius the hierarchy entailed the existence of such principles or some universals-prior-to-beings. The triad of the divine processions *Being*, *Life*, and *Wisdom* claims this role in Dionysius. Even though this triad represented a unified Cause of beings, it constituted a sequence of links differing in the degree of the expansion of the divinity. In addition, the principles with the prefix “self-” – *Self-Being*, *Self-Life*, and *Self-Wisdom*, representing some aspects of the divine processions – also claim this role, for in the system of Dionysius they also are participated in. Moreover, as far as we may understand Dionysius, these principles are distinct realities, since Dionysius speaks of a multitude of such principles (V, 5).

We may also point to the common features in the hierarchies of beings by Gregory and Dionysius. There is a certain similarity in the sequence of levels in the hierarchies. Keeping in mind this similarity, we may suggest the dependence of Dionysius on Gregory in some respect.

Thus the Dionysian hierarchy of participating beings is the following: *being* (τὰ ὄντα) – *living beings* (τὰ ζῶντα) – *sensible beings* (τὰ αἰσθητικὰ) – *rational beings* (τὰ λογικὰ) – *intellectual beings* (τὰ νοερά). In Gregory, if we take his hierarchy with the basis / summit as *being* and present the genera-species divisions in a linear way, we will have the following sequence of links: *existing* (τὰ ὄντα) – *corporeal* (σωματικόν) – *living* (ζωτικόν) – *sensible/animate* (αἰσθητικόν/ἔμψυχον) – *rational* (λογικόν). Each of these hierarchies has the direction of movement from *being (existing)* to *rational beings* or *intellectual beings*.

We can also point to a certain similarity between the hierarchies built up by Gregory of Nyssa and Dionysius the Areopagite. In Gregory, the hierarchy with *being* at its basis is the hierarchy of genera and species. In Dionysius, the hierarchy of the participating beings (as well as relationship between the divine processions) according to its structure is also similar to the genera-species hierarchy.³⁴ This follows from the understanding of the hierarchy, in which each successive level contains all the preceding levels, that is, from the “Russian-doll-principle.”

Further, the level of the corporeal is missing in the hierarchy of Dionysius compared with Gregory,³⁵ while the level of intellectual is missing the hierarchy of Gregory compared to Dionysius. At the same time the hierarchies of Gregory and Dionysius show similarity with respect to the sequence of levels *being* – *living beings* – *sensible beings* – *rational beings*.

Interestingly, the hierarchy of the participating beings according to nature of Dionysius contains the level of *sensible beings*. Its presence, as it was mentioned above, is quite unexpected, because it does not match *Wisdom* – the procession of the divinity in which it participates, and in general it falls out of the Dionysian order of divine processions (*Being, Life, Wisdom*) which are participated in by the levels of hierarchy. This level is missing in Proclus’ hierarchy of the participated entities. It should also be noted that in the Dionysian hierarchy the level of the *sensible* is located in the same place where it was in the hierarchy established by Gregory of Nyssa – between *living beings* and *rational beings*. Thus, taking into account the overall similarity in terms of the sequence of levels in the hierarchies of Gregory and Dionysius, we may assume that the appearance of such a level in the hierarchy of the naturally participating beings in Dionysius was caused by his reworking of the hierarchy of beings, provided by Gregory of Nyssa. If this is the case, Dionysius might have borrowed the level of the *sensible* from Gregory’s hierarchy, installing it in the appropriate place of his own hierarchical structure.

As I have mentioned, the presence of the level of *sensible beings* in the place where it was located in the hierarchy of Gregory of Nyssa, that is, between *living beings* and *rational beings* is related to the fact that in the course of developing his hierarchy Gregory had in mind the Biblical and cosmogonic order of natural beings (as it is mentioned in Gen. 1:11 and 20), and on its basis changed the order of levels in the hierarchy compared to the Tree of Porphyry, which he generally followed.

Thus the Biblical trend in terms of the order of natural beings through Gregory of Nyssa penetrated the Dionysian discourse and through it penetrated the corresponding doctrines of the subsequent authors, which I intend to discuss in the second part of this study.

³⁴ The difference from the genera-species structure in this case is only that the hierarchical language in Dionysius does not imply the links representing privative elements, symmetrical to the main links of the hierarchy (non-intellectual, non-rational, non-sensible, etc.), as it is the case in Gregory’s hierarchical structure.

³⁵ As a matter of fact, this link is present in the hierarchy of participation of Proclus, who, as we have seen, in many ways influenced the doctrine of Dionysius.

2. Now I turn to Maximus the Confessor who used the tetrad of *Goodness, Being, Life, and Wisdom* (or the triad of *Being, Life, and Wisdom* if the tetrad was taken without its first term), borrowed by Dionysius from the Platonists, and who discussed the hierarchy of beings in connection with the tetrad.

In the *Ambiguum* 24 which integrated the ascetic and the ontological trends in theology, Maximus discussed five *tropoi* of contemplation – a kind of theological categories: according to *substance, movement, difference, mixing, and position*.³⁶ First three were intended for the knowledge of God and pointed to Him as, respectively, as the Creator, the Caretaker, and the Judge. Two last *tropoi* were of pedagogical nature: *mixing* referred to our ability of volition, and *position* corresponded to the stability of this volition's directionality towards the good. The saints, having connected *position* with *movement*, and *mixing* with *difference*, that is, reducing the five *tropoi* of contemplation to three, arrived at contemplation of *substance, difference, and movement* and saw the Cause (God) in the effects, contemplating it as *Being, Wise Being* (σοφὸν εἶναι), and *Living Being* (ζῶν εἶναι), thus penetrating into the mystery of the *tropoi* of existence of the hyposteses in the Holy Trinity and learning a deifying doctrine of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.³⁷ We can speak about this triad as the triad of *Being, Wisdom, and Life*. Thus, in the *Ambiguum* 24 Maximus reproduced the Dionysian triad of *Being, Life, and Wisdom* in the form of a triad of *Being, Wisdom, and Life*, that is, rearranging the last two terms. Maximus correlated the members of the triad with persons of the Holy Trinity – the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

As it was noted earlier by Polycarp Sherwood, Maximus combined two triads: on the one hand, the Origenist–Evagrian triad of the *Creator, Caretaker, and Judge*,³⁸ and, on the other hand, the Dionysian triad of *Being, Life, and Wisdom*, going back to Proclus. As likely sources for this passage in Maximus, Sherwood indicated the passages from the *De divinis nominibus* 5.2 and 5.3, where Dionysius discussed *Goodness, Being, Life, and Wisdom*. Dionysius, in turn, relied on the 101st and 102nd theorems from Proclus' *Elements of Theology*, which mentioned the triad of *Being, Life, and Mind*. According to Sherwood, Dionysius reworked the system of Proclus, changing the level of *Mind* from the Proclean structure into *Wisdom*, and adding a fourth element of Goodness. In this way, according to Sherwood, Maximus returned to the triadic structure of the system which had been present in Proclus (this is not entirely correct,

³⁶ The concept of five *tropoi* of contemplation, introduced by Maximus, echoes the Platonic tradition, more precisely, Plato's doctrine of five greatest classes of genera – being, identity, difference, rest, and motion (*Soph.* 254D–255C); see the development of this doctrine of Plato in Plotinus (*Enn.* VI, 2). See also J. DILLON, *Philosophy and Theology in Proclus and Maximus the Confessor*, "Quaestiones Disputatae. A Journal of Philosophical Inquiry and Discussion", 2:1-2 (2011), pp. 37-55.

³⁷ *Amb.* 24, PG 1123A-1136C.

³⁸ See EVAG. *In Ps.* 138.16, PG 12, 1161CD.

since in the *Elements of Theology*, Proclus spoke also about *Goodness* as the supreme principle³⁹), and, compared to the structure of Dionysius, he reordered *Wisdom* and *Life* based on the traditional Patristic sequence of Persons – the *Father* – the *Son* – the *Holy Spirit*, referring *Wisdom* to the Son, and *Life* to the Holy Spirit (as to the Giver of Life).⁴⁰

The Dionysian triad also found its place in Maximus the Confessor's *Capita de caritate* 3.24–25, where Maximus said that God, bringing intellectual and rational beings into existence, gave them four divine properties (τῶν θείων ιδιωμάτων): *being* (τὸ ὄν), *ever-being*, *goodness*, and *wisdom*, in which the rational and intellectual substance (ἡ λογικὴ καὶ νοερὰ οὐσία) participates (μετέχει) by its very existence, by its capacity to exist in goodness, and by the grace of ever-being. First two divine properties were given to the substance, while last two properties were given to the gnomic ability, so created rational beings might become by participation that which God is by His nature. Here the topic of individual participation in the divine found its expression in Maximus.⁴¹ First two properties constituted the image of God in man, while the second two constituted the likeness of God in man. The terms “goodness,” “being,” and “wisdom” were used by Maximus for pointing both to the divine properties, and the properties bestowed by God upon the human beings.

In the *Ambiguum* 7 Maximus discussed the hierarchy of participating beings:

[We believe that]... the Word is shown and multiplied analogously (ἀναλογίαν) to each in all [originating] from Him, and He is the head of all in Himself. Both being and rest correspond to him, and those which came into being are from Him, since [they] came into being; and depending on why [they] came into being, resting and moving, they participate in God (μετέχει Θεοῦ). For all [created beings] because of their origin from God participate in God analogously (ἀναλόγως), either according to mind (νοῦν), or reason (λόγον), or sense (αἴσθησιν), or living movement (κίνησιν ζωτικὴν), or substatial

³⁹ PROCLUS. *Inst. theol.* 8ff. Cf. E. PERL, *Theophany: the Neoplatonic Philosophy of Dionysius the Areopagite*, New York 2007, p. 66.

⁴⁰ P. SHERWOOD, *Introduction*, pp. 40–41. These observations of Sherwood were reproduced by the subsequent scholars; see L. THUNBERG, *Microcosm and Mediator. The Theological Anthropology of Maximus the Confessor*, Lund 1965, pp. 129–130. Thunberg claims (p. 130) that according to Sherwood, Maximus the Confessor combined the Dionysian levels of *Wisdom* and *Goodness*, whereas in fact, Sherwood discovered that Maximus changed the order of the Dionysian levels of *Wisdom* and *Life*; L. THUNBERG, *Man and the Cosmos: The Vision of Maximus the Confessor*, Crestwood, N.Y., Vladimir's Seminary Press 1984, p. 46; J. DILLON, *Philosophy and Theology in Proclus and Maximus the Confessor*, “*Quaestiones Disputatae. A Journal of Philosophical Inquiry and Discussion*”, 2:1–2 (2011), p. 51.

⁴¹ On the subject, see also for instance *Amb.* 42, PG 91, 1329AB.

(οὐσιώδη) fitness holding [in existence], as the great revealer of God Dionysius the Areopagite thinks.⁴²

In the passage Maximus speaks about a hierarchy of natural abilities of created beings, through which every created being participates in God in accordance with its nature to a greater or lesser extent compared to other natural beings. Maximus mentions natural participation in God according to the abilities of *substantial fitness* (of *being*), *life*, *sense*, *reason*, and *mind*. Due to the principle of analogy, these natural abilities constitute a hierarchy from the level of *being* to the level of *mind*, increasing in the ontological sense. The listing and order of these natural abilities as formulated by Maximus, coincides with the hierarchically organized order of natural abilities of created beings, corresponding to the divine procession of *Being*, *Life*, and *Wisdom*, mentioned by Dionysius in the *De divinis nominibus* 5, 3 and 4, 4, where Dionysius wrote about *beings* – *living beings* – *sensible beings* – *rational beings* – *intellectual beings*. Clearly, Maximus must have adopted this system from Dionysius.⁴³

We may note that while Dionysius articulated the principle, according to which each successive level of participating hierarchy included the previous levels, what means that the possession of each subsequent natural ability required possession of the previous abilities as well as the corresponding participations (*De divinis nominibus* 5, 3), Maximus did not explicitly elaborate on that point here.

Thus, the hierarchy of naturally participating beings in Maximus goes back through Dionysius, on the one hand, to the Neoplatonic triad of *Being*, *Life*, and *Mind*, and, on the other hand, in respect to the level ensuring natural participation according to sense – to the teaching of Gregory of Nyssa and through him to the Biblical cosmogonic order of natural beings.

We may ask whether Maximus, just like Dionysius, shows the correspondence between the order of levels in the participating hierarchy and the order of the entities, participated in by the levels. In other words, the question is whether Maximus has an equivalent of the divine processions appearing in the system of Dionysius, which correspond to the Neoplatonic triad (tetrad) of (*Goodness*), *Being*, *Life*, and *Mind*, and which are participated in by the levels of the hierarchy of beings.

⁴² *Amb.* 7, PG 91, 1080AB.

⁴³ Moreover, in this passage from *Amb.* 7, Maximus combined several Dionysian concepts related to the hierarchy of participating beings, which surface in different passages of *DN* of Dionysius. These are the notions of commensuration (ἀναλογία, see *DN* 1, 2: 110, 13; 4, 1: 144, 5; 4, 33: 178, 17 (Suchla); on this concept in Dionysius see A. GOLITZIN, *Et Introibo Ad Altare Dei: The Mystagogy of Dionysius Areopagita: with Special Reference to Its Predecessors in the Eastern Christian Tradition*, Thessalonike 1994, pp. 86ff. and fitness (ἐπιτηδειότης; see *DN* 1, 5: 118.1; 4, 4: 147.17, 148.18; 9, 10: 214.4 (Suchla)) implying the concept of the measure of natural participation for various kinds of created beings.

In the passage quote above,⁴⁴ Maximus the Confessor speaks about direct participation of created beings in God according to their natural abilities. The immediate context of the passage as well as of other texts of Maximus indicates that according to him, the *logoi* from before the ages, by which God brought creation into being, correspond to the kinds of created beings. In *Ambiguum* 7, Maximus mentioned the *logoi* of angels, powers and entities of the heavenly world, the *logoi* of humans, and the *logoi* of all that exists.⁴⁵

We may try to find out specific meaning of what those participating natural abilities participate in, bearing in mind the Neoplatonic triad (tetrad) of (*Goodness*), *Being*, *Life*, and *Mind*, which genetically, by mediation of Dionysius the Areopagite, influenced Maximus' teaching on the hierarchy of participating natural abilities. In fact, as it is evident from the foregoing, Maximus sometimes used the notions of the participated *Goodness*, *Being*, *Life*, and *Mind* in his theological language.

Well, *Being*, *Life*, and *Mind* cannot be viewed as principles participated in by the created beings, when Maximus used the terms for designating the Persons of the Holy Trinity, as he did in *Ambiguum* 24, since the Persons of the Holy Trinity cannot be participated in by the creation. However, in the *Capita de caritate* 3.24–25 in the context of the triad of *Goodness*, *Being*, and *Wisdom* borrowed from Dionysius, Maximus speaks about *Being* (and ever-being) as simultaneously a property of God and something which human beings possess by nature due to their natural participation in God. We may also recall a well-known passage from the *Capita Theologia et Oeconomiae* 1.48, where Maximus speaks about participated timeless works of God (τά ἔργα), which are *Goodness*, *Life*, *Immortality*, *Simplicity*, *Immutability*, and *Limitlessness* contemplated around God. Among these properties, *Goodness* and *Life* are also included in the Dionysian tetrad.

Thus, we can say that Maximus did not elaborate the doctrine of the supreme principles participated in by the levels in the hierarchy of naturally participating beings, corresponding to the Neoplatonic triad (tetrad) of (*Goodness*), *Being*, *Life*, and *Mind*, in great detail. Nevertheless, we may speak of *Being* and *Life* as such principles – divine properties or divine works – participated in by the corresponding natural abilities of created beings. As opposed to Dionysius, the participated *Wisdom* which Maximus mentioned in the *Capita de caritate* 3.25, corresponds not to a ability of human beings but to an inclination of will. Therefore we cannot mention it among the principles included in the Neoplatonic triad and naturally participated in by the created beings.

⁴⁴ *Amb.* 7, PG 91, 1080AB.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 1080AC.

3. Next we should discuss the Neoplatonic triad of *Being, Life, and Mind* in the natural hierarchy of participating beings in John of Damascus who addresses the topic of participation in his *Exact Exposition of the Orthodox Faith* in the following way:

Because of the exceedingly great wealth of His goodness, the good, all-good, and exceedingly good God, who is all goodness, did not rest content that the Good, or His nature, should just be and not be participated in (μετεχόμενον) by anything. For this reason, He first made the intellectual and heavenly powers (τὰς νοεράς καὶ οὐρανίους δυνάμεις), and then the visible and sensible world, and then, finally, man of the intellectual and the sensible (ἐκ νοεροῦ καὶ αἰσθητοῦ). Hence, all things He has made participate in His goodness by the fact that they have being (κατὰ τὸ εἶναι). For He is being (τὸ εἶναι) to them all, since “in him are all things,”⁴⁶ not only because He has brought them from nothing into being, but because it is by His operation that all things He made are kept in existence and held together. Living beings (τὰ ζῶα), however, participate more abundantly, because they participate (μετέχειν) in the good both by their being and by their living. But rational beings (τὰ λογικά), while they participate in the good in the aforementioned ways, do so still more by their very rationality (κατὰ τὸ λογικόν). For they are in a way more akin to Him (οἰκειότερα), even though He is, of course, immeasurably superior.⁴⁷

John of Damascus followed what can be called the Platonic paradigm of participation⁴⁸ – the paradigm according to which something participating in the nature of other being did not become of the same nature as the participated entity by virtue of participation. John of Damascus stated that all created beings in their existence participate in God as Goodness that is His nature.⁴⁹ Developing this idea, John of Damascus described how living and rational beings

⁴⁶ Rom. 11: 36.

⁴⁷ *Exp. fidei* 4 XIII (86), 2-14 (Kotter), transl. by F. H. Chase, in SAINT JOHN OF DAMASCUS, *Writings*, New York 1958 (The Fathers of Church. A new translation), p. 354, slightly revised by me.

⁴⁸ In general in his writings John of Damascus used all possible paradigms of participation of his time as applied to substance (nature) – the Platonic, Aristotelian, and Neoplatonic paradigm. In addition to the above citation, the Platonic paradigm is manifested, for example, in *Or de imag.* 3.33. The Aristotelian paradigm appears in the *De duabus vol. 7*; the Neoplatonic paradigm is used in *De duabus vol. 11: 9-10* (Kotter), and in the *Exp. fidei* 7 (51). We may point to some inconsistencies in the way John of Damascus used all three paradigms of participation in substance. Thus, in the *Apologetic Treatises* 3.33 John of Damascus speaks about participation of saints in the divine substance, whereas in *De duabus in Christo voluntatibus* 11: 9-10 (Kotter) he mentions that the divine substance is non-participated.

⁴⁹ It seems that we do not have reasons to think that John of Damascus used the concept of nature in the technical sense as the common substance of the hypostases of the Holy Trinity, speaking here about Goodness, participated in by the natural species as about something constituting the nature of God. More likely, John of Damascus meant that Goodness was an essential property of Godhead.

participated in God through their natural abilities in such a way that each subsequent ability and participation incorporated the preceding abilities. Living beings participated in God through *life* and *being*; and rational beings participated in God through *reason*, *life*, and *being*. Here we may clearly discern the Neoplatonic triad of *Being*, *Life*, and *Mind*.

Compared to the lists of participating natural abilities established by Dionysius the Areopagite and Maximus the Confessor, the levels of *intellectual* and *sensible* as individual entities are absent in John of Damascus. It seems that John's train of thought in the passage suggests the identification of *intellectual* (νοερός) and *rational* (λογικός), since at first John of Damascus speaks about God's creation of intellectual powers and human beings who possessed an intellectual principle among other faculties. Then John follows up describing rational beings (τὰ λογικὰ) as participating in God according to rationality and describes them as the most closely participating in God, obviously implying that rational beings are the bearers of the intellectual principle. The fact that John of Damascus did not mention the level of the *sensible* in his natural hierarchy of participating beings can be explained by his borrowing of the hierarchy from Dionysius the Areopagite. However, in building up his hierarchy and enumerating its levels, John of Damascus must here have relied not on the order of levels in the Dionysius hierarchy of participating beings, which contained the level of the *sensible*,⁵⁰ but on the Dionysian description of the participated processions of God: *Goodness*, *Being*, *Life*, and *Wisdom*.⁵¹ At the same time, in accordance with the standard name of the corresponding level in the hierarchy of the participating in Dionysius and Maximus, John changed *wisdom* into *reason*.

The proximity of John of Damascus to Dionysius the Areopagite also finds its expression in John's statement that the beings, richest in possession of natural abilities, allowing them to participate in God (that is, rational beings), are the most akin to God. Dionysius expressed the same idea when he said concerning the hierarchy of participating beings that the beings which had the largest number of natural perfections – intellectual beings – are the closest to God.⁵²

Finally it should be noted that John of Damascus does not seem to have a doctrine of principles participated in by the levels of natural hierarchy of beings; he speaks about participation of beings through their natural abilities directly in God or in natural divine Goodness, but not in some higher realities like some universals-before-things corresponding to the natural abilities of created beings, as it was in the case with Dionysius and Maximus.

4. At this point we should discuss the hierarchy of participating beings in Gregory Palamas. I suggest that this subject started to be actively discussed in the Palamite controversy in connection with the doctrine of the anti-Palamite Gregory Akindynos. Unlike Barlaam of

⁵⁰ *DN* 5, 3.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 5, 1-2.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 5, 3: 182.3-4 (Suchla).

Calabria, his predecessor in the polemics with the Palamite doctrine on the distinction between substance and uncreated energies in God⁵³ and on the divinity of the Tabor light defended by Palamas, Akindynos taught about participation in the divine substance. The fact that Akindynos held this view even before the summer of 1341 is testified by a passage from the *Short History of How the Evil Heresy of Barlaam and Akindynos Originated* written by the monk David Disypatos, a friend of Gregory Palamas. That passage from the manuscript *Oxon. Misc. gr. 120*, was not used by the editor of the *Short History* Manuel Candal⁵⁴; it was discovered by Richard Browning and was published in his edition of the *Poem against Akindynos* by David Disypatos. According to the passage, beings of the created order – inanimate, irrational, and rational – participate in divine substance:

<...> Fearing to end up having the same fate as Barlaam, for he preached the same blasphemous doctrine, [Akindynos] resorted to a trick – he would not answer directly. <...> He admitted only substance to be incorruptible, and therefore he presented divine substance as participated and visible, <...> and participated in not only by rational creatures, but also by the irrational, and even inanimate <...>.⁵⁵

We can see from this passage that it describes the events of the time between the Councils of Constantinople in June and July 1341, when Barlaam had already been condemned⁵⁶ (this, apparently, was “the fate of Barlaam” resulting from his preaching of “blasphemous doctrine,” mentioned in the passage) while Akindynos was not condemned yet.⁵⁷ The testimony that Akindynos taught about participation of all creation in the divine substance seems to be trustworthy since it fits the theological doctrine of Akindynos attested in his other texts.⁵⁸ On the

⁵³ See the evidence that the doctrine of participation in the divine substance was unacceptable for Barlaam in the *Short History* of David Disypatos (M. CANDAL, *Origen ideológico del palamismo en un documento de David Disipato*, “Orientalia Christiana Periodica”, 15 (1949), pp. 39-41); the same is mentioned in the acts of the Council of Constantinople in June 1341.

⁵⁴ M. CANDAL, *Origen ideológico del palamismo*.

⁵⁵ R. BROWNING, *David Dishypatos' Poem on Akindynos*, “Byzantion”, 25–27 (1955–1957), p. 744.

⁵⁶ That is, condemned at the Council of Constantinople on June 10, 1341.

⁵⁷ Akindynos was condemned at the Council of Constantinople, summoned in July, 1341.

⁵⁸ Thus, in his treatise the *Dial.* 3, 91: 305-306 (Cañellas), Akindynos discussed how participation in substance could be understood. After mentioning an interpretation, inappropriate in the theological context, which implied that the nature of the participated being was assumed by the participating being, he mentioned the appropriate understanding of participation in substance in such a way as the body participated in the soul, while each of them did not assume the nature of the other; thus the soul was both by its nature participated and unparticipated in by the body. Likewise, according to substance God was both participated and unparticipated. Similar position concerning participation in the divine substance was expressed by Nicephorus Grigoras, the next major representative of the anti-Palamite movement after Akindynos (see Niceph. Grig., *Antirrheticus I* 2.1: 231.17-20 (Beyer)).

other hand, the accusation that the divine substance according to Akindynos was visible, seems to merely represent a rhetorical device of the narrator.

In the opposition to the belief of Akindynos that created beings in the measure of their natural abilities (which constituted a certain hierarchy) participated in the divine substance, Gregory Palamas developed the doctrine that created beings participated in God through participation in uncreated divine energies, while the divine substance could not be participated in by anything created. At the same time, while the participation paradigm offered by Akindynos did not employ a conceptual framework making it possible to distinguish between the modes of participation of the holy men and of the rest of the humans in God, Gregory Palamas emphasized the distinction between the natural mode of participation in God for all beings, and the supernatural participation of the deified people.

For this reason, Palamas distinguished between two kinds of uncreated divine energies: on the one hand, there are the *creating energies*, and the other hand, the *energy of deification*. Various *creating energies* are participated in by all created beings depending on their place in the hierarchy of natural abilities;⁵⁹ *deifying energy* is supernaturally participated in by the deified humans and the angelic powers which are capable of participation, in addition to natural participation in the *creating energies*.

Gregory Palamas developed his doctrine of the hierarchy of participating beings in the treatises *On the divine union and distinction* (the summer of 1341), the *Dialogue between an Orthodox and a Barlaamite* (the autumn of 1341), *On the divine and deifying participation* (the winter of 1341/1342), and in the *Antirrhetikoi against Akindynos* (1342–1345).⁶⁰

Speaking about the hierarchy of natural abilities, Palamas distinguished – in the descending measure of generality – natural participation of the following types: *existential*, *living*, *sensible*, *rational*, *intellectual* (or *wisdom-like*⁶¹), as well as *spiritual* (for angelic

⁵⁹ When Doru Costache discusses the kinds of participation of created beings in Palamas' *On the divine and deifying participation*, 11, he seems to have misunderstood the text, “Ἄρα εἶναι φανερον ὅτι ταῦτα δὲν μετέχουν τοῦ Θεοῦ κατ ἀκρίβειαν, ἀλλὰ λέγεται ὅτι μετέχουν ὡς ἀποτελέσματα τῆς δημιουργικῆς ἐκείνου ἐνεργείας καὶ δυνάμεως” (237: 10-13 (Χρήστου)) in such a way that according to him the kinds of created beings participated in the *effect* of the creating divine energies (and not in the creating divine energies themselves): “... whilst the saints experience the divine life as an immediate and deifying participation, all other beings are only capable of a providential or mediated participation in the ‘effect’ (ἀποτέλεσμα) of God’s ‘demiurgic energy and power’ (τῆς δημιουργικῆς ἐνεργείας καὶ δυνάμεως)” (D. COSTACHE, *Experiencing the Divine Life: Levels of Participation in St Gregory Palamas' On the Divine and Deifying Participation*, “Phronesis”, 26:1 (2011), p. 16). Clearly, however, the notion of ἀποτέλεσμα is associated here not with divine energies, but with created beings; the passage means that created beings participate in God, being themselves the “products” (ἀποτέλεσμα) of His creating energy and power.

⁶⁰ Palamas also briefly mentions the kinds of natural participation of created beings in the divine creating energies in the *Triads* 3, 2, 11, and in the *Capita* 150, 87, 89, 91 (in connection with the doctrine of Dionysius).

⁶¹ Gregory Palamas speaks of *wisdom-giving* energy which implies the ability of *wisdom* participating in it, instead of the notion of the *intellectual*, usual for him in this context, in the *Fifth Antirrheticus against Akindynos*, 27, 116: 23 (Χρήστου). Obviously Palamas depends here on the name of the corresponding divine procession in Dionysius the Areopagite (*DN* 2, 5: 129, 1 (Suchla)).

powers⁶²). A specific creating divine energy – *substance-creating, life-giving, wisdom-giving*, etc. – corresponds to each of these abilities. A being which possesses the abilities, participates in the energies.⁶³ Almost everywhere, where Palamas used the concept of the hierarchy of naturally participating beings, he also mentioned participation of people “who live in a divine way” in the deifying energy.⁶⁴

Palamas argued that according to its nature, the created being could possess different kinds of natural participation. In *On the divine union and distinction*, 16, Palamas said that all created beings participated in God in virtue of their existence. Another kind of created beings combined *existential, living, and sensible* natural abilities (probably Palamas had animals in mind), as well as the corresponding participations. Human beings combined *existential, living, sensible, rational, and intellectual* abilities, as well as the ways of participating in God. Thus, following the Dionysian paradigm, Palamas taught that possession of each subsequent natural ability (within the above order of abilities), corresponding to the participation in a certain divine energy, entailed the possession of the previous abilities and the corresponding participations.⁶⁵ One can say that in this respect the kinds of created beings – the bearers of the corresponding kinds of natural participations – constituted the hierarchy.

Following Dionysius the Areopagite,⁶⁶ Palamas also argued that God was fully participated in by the creation, whereas intellectual created beings could participate in Him fully or partly⁶⁷ depending on the disposition of will. On the part of God, the completeness of natural participation in Him by the created beings did not depend on the type or number of the kinds of this participation, but natural participation in God at least in one respect implied participation in the entire divinity.⁶⁸

Gregory also followed the Areopagite while speaking about the order of levels in the hierarchy of naturally participating beings. Levels and their order, listed by Palamas, are the following: *existential – living – sensible – rational – intellectual / wisdom-like – spiritual*. In general they correspond to the hierarchy of Dionysius: *beings – living beings – sensible beings – rational beings – intellectual beings*, and therefore the hierarchy of natural beings in Gregory must have gone back through the Areopagite, on the one hand, to the Neoplatonic triad of *Being*,

⁶² Palamas clearly speaks of this kind of natural participation only in the *Dial.* 46-47. The fact, that he mentions angelic powers as a kind of created beings corresponding to the highest level in the hierarchy of the participating beings, shows the influence of Dionysius the Areopagite (*DN* 5, 3). According to the Dionysian hierarchy of participating beings, angelic powers occupy the same place.

⁶³ *Antirr. C. Akind.* V, 27, 116.

⁶⁴ *Particip.* 11: 147, 3 (Χρήστου).

⁶⁵ It is not entirely clear how this works in the case of angelic powers, corresponding to the highest level in the hierarchy of natural abilities (*spiritual*), since the nature of angels, obviously, does not include the preceding perfections of the hierarchy.

⁶⁶ *DN* 2, 5.

⁶⁷ Cf. *Antirr. C. Akind.* V, 27, 115; *Dial.* 45-47.

⁶⁸ *Antirr. C. Akind.* 27, 116: 20-21 (Χρήστου).

Life, and *Mind*, and, on the other hand (in respect to the level of the *sensible*, located between *living beings* and *rational beings*), to the hierarchy built by Gregory of Nyssa, and through it to the Biblical cosmogonic order of natural beings.

However, there are certain differences between the hierarchies of naturally participating beings developed by Gregory Palamas and Dionysius the Areopagite.

Thus, Palamas' list of natural abilities through which created beings participate in God, included the level of *spiritual* (πνευματικός), corresponding to a natural participation, typical for the angelic powers, while in Dionysius angelic powers participated in God through *intellectual* ability. This means that Gregory Palamas partly shifted natural abilities in relation to the kinds of created beings which possessed them, compared to Dionysius: in the Dionysian hierarchy of naturally participating beings, *intellectual* ability was typical for the angelic (intellectual) powers, while *rational* ability was typical for the humans.⁶⁹ In Palamas, *intellectual* ability was typical for the humans, while *spiritual* natural ability was typical for the angelic powers.

Another difference between Dionysius the Areopagite and Gregory Palamas is that the hierarchy of naturally participating beings in Gregory is strictly connected with the idea of supernatural participation. We may say that the very subject of the hierarchy of naturally participating beings appears in Palamas to clarify the difference of deification as *supernatural* participation in God and *natural* participation of all beings in God. Therefore, the discussion about the hierarchy of naturally participating beings in Gregory Palamas is almost always related to and emphasized by the doctrine of the supernatural participation of the deified people in God. This means that the highest element in Palamas' hierarchy of participation for the created beings – not only natural participation, but also supernatural – is the deifying participation corresponding to the deifying divine energy.⁷⁰

At the same time, although Dionysius speaks about the principle of Self-Divinity or Self-Deification, as well as about deified beings, corresponding to it,⁷¹ he mentions this principle among other principles with the prefix “Self-,” without emphasizing it or incorporating it into the hierarchy of participating beings. The hierarchies of participation, found in Maximus the Confessor and John of Damascus as well do not employ the element responsible for deification.

Besides this, while both Dionysius and Maximus developed the discourse of individual participation in God, fundamental for Palamas' doctrine of supernatural participation, these authors did not associate it with the hierarchy of participating beings.

In the authors, preceding Gregory Palamas, which we briefly viewed, the topic of deification was treated in the context of the hierarchy of beings only by Gregory of Nyssa, but

⁶⁹ DN 5, 3; E. PERL, *Theophany*, pp. 70–71.

⁷⁰ In particular, see *Antirr. C. Akind.* V, 27, 116.

⁷¹ DN 11, 6.

from an entirely different viewpoint in regards to the mechanism and the structure of the hierarchy than that of Palamas. We should point to the contrasting conceptual frameworks used by Gregory of Nyssa and Gregory Palamas for indicating the concept of deifying participation in God in the context of the hierarchy of participating beings. Gregory of Nyssa used the concept of participation in the divine nature,⁷² while this concept was forbidden for Palamas,⁷³ and deifying participation in Palamas' theological system was understood as participation not in the divine nature, but in the uncreated energy of God. This difference is associated with the opposite paradigms of participation used by Gregory of Nyssa and Gregory Palamas. Gregory of Nyssa used the Platonic paradigm of participation when he spoke about participation of holy men in the divine nature. The Platonic paradigm implies that something, participating in the nature of something else, does not become of the same nature by virtue of participation. In his theological language, Gregory Palamas used the Neoplatonic paradigm of participation introduced in the Patristic thought by the Areopagite, which implied a distinction of the unparticipated and the participated in God. Following Maximus the Confessor, Gregory Palamas related the unparticipation to the divine substance. Thereby the system of Gregory Palamas entailed deifying participation in God as participation in the uncreated divine energy, and not in the divine nature, as was the case in Gregory of Nyssa.

Thus, a substantial point in the teaching of Gregory Palamas on the hierarchy of participating beings is his position on *what* the hierarchically organized kinds of created beings participate in. Palamas' fundamental position was that they participated in the uncreated divine energies, that is, that they naturally participated in the creating energies and supernaturally in the deifying energy. According to Palamas, those energies are God; they are different from the divine substance and differ between each other. We may say that according to the Palamite paradigm, the levels in the hierarchy of naturally participating beings participate in certain

⁷² See *Eun.* 1, 1, 270-277 (Jaeger); specifically on the participation of intellectual created beings in uncreated divine nature depending on the goodness of will, see *Eun.* 1, 1, 274, 1-4 (Jaeger).

⁷³ The doctrine that divine substance cannot at all be participated in by the created beings is a throughline in the texts of Palamas, and he discussed this issue very often. However, there are isolated instances when Gregory softens this attitude: in the 13th chapter of the dialogue *Theophanes* he says in the person of one of the interlocutors (Theophanes), that although the substance of God cannot be participated in, it is nevertheless somehow participated (238, 7-10 (Χρήστου)), and in the 17th chapter, Palamas says that the divine nature is participated in, although not in itself, but through its energies (243, 20-24 (Χρήστου)); see also DAVID DISYPATOS, *C. Akindynos*: 447-448 (Browning)). Interestingly, in the 16th chapter of the dialogue *Theophanes*, Palamas denies the concept which was, in fact, used by Gregory of Nyssa, namely, that only holy people participate in the divine substance, while it cannot be participated in by other beings (see above, the text at the note 4). Palamas attributed this concept to the Messalians and rejected it (THEOPHANES 16: 240.16-23 (Χρήστου)). This change of the theological language in Gregory Palamas compared to the language of the pre-Areopagite theology (represented, in particular, by Gregory of Nyssa) is obviously related to the fact that the former theological language in the situation of changed philosophical paradigms entailed unacceptable theological connotations. Thus, for example, at the time of Gregory Palamas the concept of participation in substance referred to the adoption of substance by the participating being or the division of substance (cf. GREG. PAL. *Capita* 150, 110: 208.1-8 (Sinkewicz)), while at the time of Gregory of Nyssa this concept did not have such connotations.

universal principles in the Godhead. Yet we have no grounds to think that in the Palamite doctrine these participated principles form a hierarchy between themselves similar to the hierarchy of beings which participated in them.

Among the authors whom we have considered, Dionysius the Areopagite shows a relatively well-developed doctrine of the transcendentals, participated in by the levels of the hierarchy of created beings. The doctrine of the Areopagite implied participation of naturally participating beings, on the one hand, in divine processions, and, on the other hand, in the principles with the prefix “self-.”⁷⁴ The creating uncreated divine energies in Palamas rather correspond exactly to the processions in the conceptual framework of Dionysius, since the status of the principles with the prefix “self-“ in Dionysius is not entirely clear. It may be noted that Dionysius speaks about three of the processions (*Being, Life, and Wisdom*) with the corresponding five levels in the hierarchy of naturally participating beings (*beings – living beings – sensible beings – rational beings – intellectual beings*), while creative energy in Palamas is correlated with each corresponding level of naturally participating beings.

In this way various aspects of the Patristic understanding of the hierarchy of beings were used and transformed in the teaching of Gregory Palamas.

⁷⁴ *DN* 5, 1-3; 5, 5; 11, 6 (Suchla).

Conclusion

This dissertation has demonstrated how the topic of the universal was manifested mainly in the Arian controversy of the fourth century and the works of the Cappadocian Fathers, as well as in the Ancient philosophy and the late Eastern Christian philosophical and theological tradition.

In Chapter 1 of the dissertation, three paradigms of participation were identified. Each of the paradigms presupposed a certain status of the universal principle involved. The dissertation has shown that three paradigms of participation can be distinguished in Ancient philosophy in relation to the concept of universals, which are relevant for the subsequent Eastern Christian tradition. The Platonic paradigm of participation in its positive sense indicated that some beings – the participating entities – had a certain property to a lesser extent than that which was the embodiment of that property (the participated entity). The participated entity acted as a transcendent cause (corresponding to universals-before-things) for the participating entity. This implied the opposition of “according to being” (that which referred to the participated entity) and “according to participation” (that which referred to the participating entity). The Aristotelian paradigm of participation “according to being” in fact was the same as “according to participation,” since that paradigm pointed to the relation of an individual to the species/genera, constituting the nature which the individual carried, as well as the relationship of the species to the higher genera. This paradigm involved a logical relationship between the genera/species predicables of the varying degrees of commonness: that which was less general participated in that which was more general, while the latter did not participate in the former. The Aristotelian paradigm involved the correspondence of the participated entity to the universal-in-things. The analysis of the topic of participation in Porphyry’s *Isagoge* has shown that with minor reservations Porphyry followed the Aristotelian discourse. This dissertation further analyzed the relationship between the concept of participation as applied to individual hierarchy and the hierarchy of genera/species, and the position that the individual represented the principle of division while the general represented the principle of unification, which Porphyry elaborated in his *Isagoge*. In this context Porphyry introduced the concept of the “general man,” which went back to Alexander of Aphrodisias and was understood in the sense of the human species. The Neoplatonic paradigm of participation, which was probably originated by Iamblichus, included the concept of a non-participated entity. In the Platonic general paradigm of participation, this entity indicated a cause which was transcendent in respect to that which was caused and unaffected by the generation of that which it generated.

Chapter 2 diverged from the topic of participation and addressed the problems of the universal in Clement of Alexandria – the first Christian author who exposed a fundamental knowledge of the classical philosophical tradition. The doctrine of Clement on acquiring knowledge about the general, which contained Middle Platonist and Aristotelian elements, was analyzed. Clement’s doctrine on categories was further considered and the conclusion was made that this doctrine was consistent with the Middle Platonist philosophical tradition in a sense that categories were understood as statements which could only refer to the sensible world, but not to the intelligible world. Thus, according to Clement, God was not subject to the genera/species division. As it was shown in Chapter 8, such an interpretation of the applicability of the Aristotelian categories would become relevant for Eunomius, the leader of the Neo-Arian party, who would use it in his polemics with the Niceneans.

Chapter 3 continued to study the concepts of universal and participation, turning to the works of Origen – the author who made a significant impact on the subsequent Christian philosophical and theological thinking. Four types of natural participation were identified in Origen; each of the types became relevant for the subsequent Eastern Christian tradition. The first type implied the order in which different kinds of created beings participate in the Persons of the Holy Trinity. According to the second type, all created beings naturally participate in the *logoi* contained in the Logos-Wisdom. In this respect Origen elaborated on the concept outlined by Clement of Alexandria. This type suggests that according to Origen the Logos-Wisdom in some way contains universals-before-things. The third type of natural participation implied that all rational beings have a natural ability to unify with God. It is assumed that the divine nature, common for the Persons of the Holy Trinity, serves as a universal participated principle for the natural ability of rational beings to unify with God. According to the fourth type, all people naturally participate in the main capacity which constitutes human nature – capacity of reasoning. This type is characterized by the use of the Aristotelian paradigm of participation.

In Chapter 4, the problems of participation and universals in the doctrine of Arius were analyzed, and the trends in the use of the language of participation in Arius and the Arians were identified. According to the first trend, it was said about the Son that He participates in the divinity of the Father, which is understood in a way that the Son does not have divinity according to His own nature. The second trend is associated with the concept of non-participation: it is said about the Son that He does not participate in the Father and His nature. The third trend is related to the concept of participated realities in the Godhead – Wisdom, Word, and Power, in which the Son participates. A reconstruction of the doctrine of Arius was proposed, where those realities were universal principles, participated in by the beings of the created realm. A suggestion was made as to how Origen might have influenced Arius as far as

the topic of participation is concerned, while significant differences between Origen and Arius were outlined. One such difference was the concept of non-participation, absent from the conceptual framework of Origen, but appearing in Arius. Keeping in mind that this concept emerged in the Neoplatonic philosophy and was used in a similar way by Iamblichus, the older contemporary of Arius, as well as the presence of the doctrine of henads in Iamblichus, which were understood as universal participating entities, the assumption that Iamblichus' doctrine might have influenced the philosophical and theological language of the Arian doctrine was made.

In Chapter 5, the place of universals in the Eunomian controversy was analyzed.

As far as the contribution of the Cappadocian Father, Basil of Caesarea, is concerned with relation to the problems discussed in the dissertation, the philosophical and theological context of the principle of individuation was elaborated by Basil in his polemics with Eunomius with the help of the concept of the convergence of properties. After analyzing the Stoic and Platonic concepts of the convergence of properties, it was concluded that Basil's theological system revealed more of a Stoic background. Two paradigms of Basil's understanding of the material substrate common for all humans – the Platonic and Stoic paradigms – were identified. This research demonstrated a direct Stoic influence on Basil and specified what it consisted of and why exactly Basil used the Stoic paradigm. This context of the Stoic natural philosophy makes a case against the opinion of P. Kalligas concerning the nominalist tendencies in Basil.

The problem of universals was examined from the viewpoint of the principle of "greater-lesser," which was discussed by Basil's brother Gregory of Nyssa in his criticism of the Arian doctrine of Eunomius. In this criticism, Gregory appealed to the position of the Aristotelian *Categories*, according to which the first substance (an individual) could not relate to a greater or lesser degree to the second substance (its species) than another first substance (another individual) or than it did at some other time. It can be argued that despite Gregory of Nyssa's claim that Eunomius applied that principle to the category of substance (and this was taken for granted by modern scholars), a careful analysis of quotations from Eunomius cited by Gregory, allows us to doubt that the doctrine of Eunomius indeed entailed the application of the principle of "greater-lesser" to the category of substance. After discussing the application of the principle of "greater-lesser" to the category of substance, it can be concluded that Gregory of Nyssa elaborated on both the Aristotelian paradigm of participation in respect to the human species, entailing the existence of universal-in-things, and the Platonic paradigm of participation, arguing for participation of rational created beings in the divine nature depending on the goodness of their will. It is concluded that in the latter case Gregory combined the allusion to 2 Pet. 1: 3-4 and the Platonic paradigm of participation. This feature went back to Origen, and the divine

substance was understood in the sense of a substance common for the Persons of the Holy Trinity.

In Chapter 6, Gregory of Nyssa's concept, actively discussed in the current academic literature, was reviewed. According to this concept, all people in a certain sense constituted a single person, and the word "man," which pointed to humanity in general and not to a human individual, could be properly used only in the singular but not in the plural form. Arguing with the reconstruction of the historical and philosophical background of this concept in Gregory of Nyssa, proposed by J. Zachhuber and R. Cross, it was suggested that in the essential points of this concept Gregory followed Porphyry's *Isagoge*.

Chapter 7 discussed the topic of the hierarchy of beings in Gregory of Nyssa. In general, the dissertation has demonstrated that the authors, who treated the topic of the hierarchy of natural capacities in the Eastern Christian tradition, combined the Platonic, Aristotelian, and Neoplatonic conceptual frameworks. The early treatment of this subject can be seen in Origen's use of the Platonic paradigm which implied the modes of participation of the created beings in the Godhead (the Father and the Son) according to their existence and intellectual capacity. This subject also appeared in the doctrine of Arius. However, in its well-developed form, the hierarchy of natural capacities emerged only in Gregory of Nyssa.

For building his hierarchy, Gregory followed two strategies: the strategy of dividing genera and species with the entire "being" at the summit of the hierarchy, and the strategy of taking the uncreated nature to be the summit of the hierarchy. The hierarchy of beings discussed in Gregory of Nyssa's *De opificio hominis*, 8, was analyzed in terms of the first strategy. The evolutionary ascent of natural species towards increasing vitality from inanimate beings to human beings in accordance with the order of creation described in the Bible, and the related topic of the genera-species hierarchy (of the division of beings) were examined along with the influence of the preceding authors on Gregory concerning his thought on the subject. It was argued in opposition to K. Reinhardt, G. Ladner, and a number of other scholars, that the influence of Posidonius on the emergence of the topic of hierarchy of beings in Gregory is not sufficiently well-founded. A brief overview of the genera-species divisions, elaborated by several philosophers of Antiquity was provided along with the general conclusion that the Tree of Porphyry had a direct impact on the division of beings in Gregory. In this respect Gregory seems to manifest the Aristotelian, the Platonic, and particularly the Stoic trends. The similarities and differences of Porphyry's Tree of beings and the hierarchy of natural beings in Gregory were analyzed. As opposed to the previous studies which only pointed to the closeness of both systems, it was shown that there were some significant differences between the orders of levels in both authors. Gregory of Nyssa must have changed the order of the hierarchical levels compared to that of Porphyry in order to align the

logical and philosophical structure of the division of beings common for his time with the logic of the order of creation described in the Bible, thus trying to achieve a synthesis between the Scriptural description of the order of natural beings and the order taught in the Greek philosophical schools.

Chapter 8 reconstructed the philosophical context of the polemics on the status of commonness in Eunomius and the Neo-Arian controversy. This chapter showed that the concepts of universals which had been developed in classical philosophy, played an important role in the Eastern Christian theology and philosophy of the fourth century. The Aristotelian principle of individual/species division were important in the process of problem setting in the Eastern Christian philosophy. In the second half of the fourth century, the representatives of the Nicene ecclesiastical party adopted the principle and developed the doctrine that the divine substance and the Persons of the Holy Trinity were correlated as individuals and species. The Nicaeans put forward this principle to justify their Trinitarian doctrine, according to which all Persons of the Holy Trinity, including the Son and the Holy Spirit, belonged to the divine order. This doctrine forced Eunomius, the leader of the Neo-Arian party which insisted on the created nature of the Son and the Spirit, to put forward the doctrine about the applicability of the individual/species/genera discourse only to material beings, but not to the realm of the intellectual and divine.

It is suggested that the doctrine of consubstantiality, proposed by Basil of Caesarea in his *Contra Eunomium* in response to the *Apology* of Eunomius, triggered the debate over the universals at the second stage of the Arian controversy. This doctrine implied the understanding of consubstantiality in the “horizontal” sense as commonness between the Persons of the Trinity in the same way as species were common to their constituent individuals. Using the fragments of Eunomius’ reply to Basil’s concept from Eunomius’ *Apology for Apology*, preserved by Gregory of Nyssa, it was concluded that in his attempt to refute the applicability of the notion of consubstantiality with relation to God the Father and the Son, Eunomius elaborated his own doctrine of commonness, according to which the higher we go up the hierarchy of beings, the lesser the horizontal commonness in the nature of individual beings we may find. It was suggested that this concept might have been closely related to the Middle Platonic (Clement of Alexandria) and Neoplatonic interpretations of Aristotle’s *Categories*, which implied that categories and especially the category of the second substance (corresponding to species and genera) could be applied only to the corporeal realm. This gives reason to believe that there might have been a connection between the arguments of Eunomius and the philosophical teaching of Iamblichus, while, conversely, the status of universals was treated completely differently by Eunomius and Gregory of Nyssa.

In Chapter 9, the hierarchy of beings in Gregory of Nyssa and Dionysius the Areopagite was compared. It was shown how the topic of the hierarchy of the participating beings, elaborated by Dionysius on the basis of the Neoplatonic triad (tetrad) (*Goodness*) *Being, Life, Mind*, and of the doctrine of the hierarchy of natural beings by Gregory of Nyssa, was further developed in Maximus the Confessor, John of Damascus and Gregory Palamas. The fundamental difference in the structure of hierarchies in the doctrines of Dionysius and Gregory was revealed. This difference is associated with a shift in the meaning of the philosophical concept of “participation.” Gregory’s hierarchy must have influenced Dionysius’s hierarchy. Gregory’s doctrine of hierarchy was based on the Biblical and cosmogonical order of natural beings. The further elaboration of the hierarchy of participating beings, proposed by Dionysius the Areopagite on the basis of the Neoplatonic triad (tetrad) of (*Goodness*) *Being, Life, and Mind*, and of the doctrine of the hierarchy of natural beings in Gregory of Nyssa was analyzed in the writings of Maximus the Confessor, John of Damascus, and Gregory Palamas.

This study resulted in discovering a terminological inconsistency of the Orthodox Eastern Christian tradition in respect to the issue of participation of created beings in the common nature of the Persons of the Holy Trinity. This inconsistency may be tentatively explained by the fact that Early Christian writers and authors of the later periods used different philosophical paradigms of participation.

The analysis has shown that the whole variety of participation modes can be found in the Arians and the Cappadocian Fathers. A specific Neoplatonic influence was likely to have influenced the Arians, whereas the influence of Porphyry’s *Isagoge* was important for their opponent Gregory of Nyssa.

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