The Pneumatology of Marius Victorinus:
A Rhetorical, Philosophical, and Theological Commentary
on Adversus Arium III

Christopher James McLaughlin

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Advisor: Rev. Brian Dunkle, S. J., Ph. D.

Caius Marius Victorinus (c. 285-c.365CE), the famed professor of rhetoric in Rome who brought Neoplatonic philosophy into the Latin theological tradition, wrote several treatises of trinitarian theology shortly after his conversion late in life. The uniqueness and sophistication of his *homoousian* trinitarian thought has been recognized. His contribution to pro-Nicene theologies of the Holy Spirit has likewise been noticed in patristic scholarship, but has received little direct scholarly attention. The key contention of my dissertation is that in Book Three of *Adversus Arium* (written c. 361) Victorinus expounds a sophisticated pneumatology consonant with the developments in pro-Nicene theology. The true purport of his pneumatology is difficult to grasp because of Victorinus's complex and fluid use of language which has led some scholars to consider his theology incoherent and his argumentation obscure. A careful reading of *Adv. Ar.* III allows us to assess his doctrine of the Holy Spirit for its precocious and idiosyncratic assertions while making a contribution to scholarship on early Christian thought, especially as relates to pro-Nicene Trinitarian theology and pneumatology before Constantinople I (381).

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my late godfather. He passed away in February 2020. It would have been nice to talk with him about Victorinus over the past couple years. He'll always be an example to me of a truly philosophical Christian, one who has his eyes on the things above, a heart pure and loving, a mind sharp and inquisitive. He faced death like a philosopher would and so never, even then, ceased to be a teacher.

The things you study are true, and the philosophers you read knew it

Charles Williams, *The Place of the Lion*

INTRODUCTION

General Introduction

Caius Marius Victorinus Afer (c. 280/290-c. 365AD) was highly respected in his day. He fulfilled his duties as *rhetor urbis Romae* so well as to merit civic honors under Constantius, including a statue dedicated to him in the Trajan's Forum.[1] Boethius a few generations later referred to Victorinus as *orator sui temporis ferme doctissimus*.[2] He was invoked as an authority of *artes liberales* in the Middle Ages, as seen in references from Cassiodorus to John of Salisbury.[3] Victorinus is well known to readers of Augustine's *Confessions* as the reluctant, then courageous, convert to Christianity.[4] Although his own theological thought may be rather unfamiliar to students of patristics, the scholarly attention he has received following the trailblazing work of Pierre Hadot in the twentieth century has recently increased dramatically.[5]

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[1] Jerome, *Chronicon* 2370, *GCS* 47 ed. Rudolf Helm (Leipzig, 1913), 239.7-17.

[2] Boethius, *In Isag. Porph. pr*. 1.1; CSEL 48, 4.12.

[3] Cassiodorus, *Institutions of Divine and Secular Learning; and, On the Soul*, tr. James W. Halporn and Mark Vessey (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2004), especially 183-208; John of Salisbury, *The Metalogicon of John of Salisbury: A Twelfth-Century Defense of the Verbal and Logical Arts of the Trivium*, tr. Daniel D. McGarry (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1955), especially 181-182.

[4] Augustine, *Conf.* 8.2.3-5.

[5] From Pierre Hadot, *Porphyre et Victorinus*, 2 vols. (*Études Augustiniennes*: Paris, 1968); *Marius Victorinus: Recherches sur sa vie et ses œuvres* (Paris: Études Augustiniennes, 1971). Recently, Victorinus was the subject of a whole issue of *Les Études philosophiques* in honor of Pierre Hadot (*Les Études philosophiques* 2 (2012): 147-256). He is also the subject of an edited volume to appear this year studying

In the development of Christian thought Victorinus has been aptly described as a transitional figure.[6] He transmitted through textbook and commentary the arts of Greek and Roman rhetoric in the late empire's crepuscular light. He made available Greek logical and philosophical texts that were out of reach for many of his Latin contemporaries. His introduction of Neoplatonic thought to Latin theologians was especially significant. His translation of the *libri Platonicorum* was influential on Augustine's theology, while his public conversion to Christianity late in life played a pivotal role in Augustine's decision to join the Church.[7] For Victorinus's use of philosophical knowledge for understanding the Trinity Adolf von Harnack called him "Augustine before Augustine."[8]

Victorinus's reputation continued after his day, but was overshadowed and superseded at important moments. He still had enough of a reputation in Rome at the beginning of the fifth century to make his works sought out by anti-Priscillianists in Spain. His philosophical theology might have gained a strong foothold there, but his works were abandoned in favor of Origen's.[9] Again, his works on Aristotle, Cicero, and Porphyry might have had greater influence in medieval Europe had Boethius's ambitious project of translation and commentary not coincided so completely with Victorinus's scholarly endeavors.

Victorinus as rhetor, philosopher, and theologian: *Marius Victorinus: Pagan Rhetor, Platonist Philosopher, and Christian Theologian*, ed. Stephen Cooper and Václav Němec (Atlanta: SBL Press, forthcoming, 2022).

[6] Werner Steinmann referred to him as "ein Mann des Übergangs," (*Die Seelenmetaphysik des Marius Victorinus*, (Hamburg: Steinmann & Steinmann, 1990), 22), quoted in Stephen Cooper and Václav Němec, "Introduction," in *Marius Victorinus*, 3, from which I also take the translation "transitional figure."

[7] Augustine, *Conf.* 8.2.3.

[8] Adolf von Harnack, *History of Dogma*, V, tr. Neil Buchanan (New York: Russell and Russell, 1958), 35, n. 1; quoted by Hadot, *Porphyre et Victorinus*, vol. 1, 14.

[9] Orosius *Comm. ad Aug.*, 3 (PL 33, 1214B); see Hadot, *Marius Victorinus*, 19.

Victorinus's works bring together Aristotelian logic and Neoplatonic metaphysics and used both Aristotelian and Platonic philosophical thought for the articulation of Christian theology. He translated Aristotle's logical works, Porphyry's *Isagoge*, and other Platonic works from Greek into Latin (see below under "Opera"). But Boethius's work of bringing Aristotelian logic, Ciceronian rhetoric, and Platonic metaphysics to bear on Christian theological expression effectively rendered the work of Victorinus obsolete. For their similar projects, Victorinus is rightly described by Pierre Hadot as "Boethius before Boethius."[10]

In addition to transmitting Neoplatonic thought into Christian theology, Marius Victorinus also stands out for his unique theological contribution to the history and development of Nicene trinitarian theology. He adapted Neoplatonic metaphysics and psychology to articulate his *homoousian* doctrine of the Trinity. Victorinus removed the noetic triad from its Platonic provenance and used it to explain how the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are not hierarchically differentiated but are of one and the same substance. He explained that the Trinity comprises two dyads, the first of which includes Father and Son in an ordered but eternal relation; the second includes Son and Holy Spirit, again with a proper *ordo* but without one being ontologically superior to the other. His contribution to Nicene trinitarian thought has been the subject of intense research since the work of Paul Henry in the early twentieth century.[11] Scholars have also recognized his ground-breaking contribution to pro-Nicene pneumatology insofar as Victorinus explicitly and insistently extends the logic of Nicaea's *homoousion* to the Holy Spirit.

[10] Hadot, *Marius Victorinus*, 20.
[11] Paul Henry, "The *Adversus Arium* of Marius Victorinus, the First Systematic Exposition of the Doctrine of the Trinity," *Journal of Theological Studies* 1 (1950): 42–55.

Victorinus's pneumatology, despite this admission, has remained the least well explored aspect of his theological thought. Victorinus's unique and precocious contribution to pro-Nicene pneumatology is the focus of my dissertation.

I argue that in the treatise *Adversus Arium* III Victorinus expounds an early and sophisticated pneumatology consonant with the developments in pro-Nicene theology. A careful reading of this text allows us to assess his doctrine of the Holy Spirit for its surprisingly early, explicit, and elaborate arguments regarding the Spirit's consubstantiality with and hypostatic distinctiveness from Father and Son. At the same time, my dissertation is a contribution to scholarship on early Christian thought, especially as it relates to pro-Nicene Trinitarian theology and pneumatology before Constantinople I (381).

Victorinus' development of *homoousion* pneumatology has been acknowledged.[12] His reasons for admitting and his manner of explaining the full and equal divinity of the Spirit relative to Father and Son, however, raise a number of questions, few of which have been adequately explored. In my commentary I attend especially to his most unusual arguments, conclusions, and claims concerning the Holy Spirit, all of which appear more clearly in his *Adversus Arium* III than in any of his other theological treatises.[13] The treatise is challenging and easily misunderstood due to Victorinus' rhetorical style of argumentation and to the sophisticated metaphysical claims he is making. The work calls for close engagement for which the genre of commentary is best suited. For its

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[12] Paul Henry, S. J. and Pierre Hadot, *Traités Théologiques sur La Trinité*, 2 vols, *Sources Chrétiennes* 68-69 (Paris: *Les Éditions du Cerf*, 1960), II.925-926; Hadot, *Porphyre et Victorinus*, I.45-52; *Opere teologiche di Mario Vittorino* ed. and tr. Claudio Moreschini and Chiara O. Tommasi (Turin: Unione Tipografica-Editrice Torinese, 2007), 45-100.

[13] With the possible exception of *Adv. Ar.* IV, though this slightly later work does not augment the pneumatological arguments Victorinus presents in *Adv. Ar.* III.

pneumatological content as well as for the treatise's form, scope, length, and position, *Adversus Arium* III is the best of Victorinus' works on which to base this thematic commentary detailing Victorinus' pro-Nicene pneumatology.

This dissertation's introduction treats Victorinus's life and works, followed by five chapters. In Chapter One I trace the history of pneumatology in Rome from the mid-second century up to Marcellus and Athanasius's appearance before Julius of Rome (340). Then in Chapter Two, I provide a thorough historical and theological introduction to *Adversus Arium* III, establishing the context of Roman pneumatology from 340 to 360 and giving a brief account of Victorinus's rhetorical and pedagogical principles. This account will establish some of the keys for deciphering Victorinus's arguments and argumentative strategies. Commentary on the text of *Adversus Arium* III will occupy the rest of the dissertation. The treatise has eighteen sections. I break these into three collections of six sections each and comment on them serially in Chapters Three through Five. I turn now to Victorinus's life and works.

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Vita

The details of Marius Victorinus's life are rather poorly known. The years of his birth and death are conjectural (c. 281/291-c. 365). Jerome says that Victorinus converted to Christianity *in extrema senectute*, which may indicate any age from at least 70 to at least 80 years old.[14] While the date of Victorinus's conversion is not perfectly settled it is

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[14] Jerome, *De Viris Illustribus* 101, 739. On *in extrema senectute* and the date of 280s see A. H. Travis, "Marius Victorinus," *HTR* 36 (1943): 83-90, and Hadot, *Marius Victorinus*, 24.

likely to have occurred between 355 and 357.[15] Working back 70 or 80 years from this

date gives us the range of his possible year of birth.

Victorinus was born in Roman North Africa.[16] Michael von Albrecht says he was

educated "in his African homeland" before moving to Rome.[17] He had a granddaughter

so we infer he had been married. Her epitaph makes allusion to Victorinus as rhetor and

one who had brought honor to the family.[18] That his name was still a cause for familial

pride two generations after his death suggests an ongoing public reputation. It has been

suggested that his granddaughter's *agnomen* Tulliana is a gesture to Victorinus's

distinguished efforts at expounding Cicero's rhetorical works.[19]

He was teacher of rhetoric in Rome. Albrecht presumes he also would have taught

philosophy since, according to Augustine, this would have been an expectation of

rhetors.[20] Presumably he held a chair in grammar before this, preceding Donatus.[21]

Augustine attests that Victorinus had educated the children of many senators.[22] For his

rhetorical achievement and service, Victorinus was honored in 354 with a bust statue in

Trajan's Forum.[23] Hadot suggests the senatorial rank, indicated by the title *vir*

clarissimus, may have accompanied the presentation of the statue.[24] Jerome tells us he

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[15] Hadot, *Marius Victorinus*, 27-29.

[16] *Afer* appears in Jean Sicard's 1528 edition of Victorinus's theological works (see Hadot, *Marius Victorinus*, 24). Jerome begins his entry "Victorinus, natione Afer," in *De viris illustribus* 101, 739.

[17] Michael von Albrecht, and G. L. Schmeling, *A History of Roman Literature: From Livius Andronicus to Boethius: With Special Regard to its Influence on World Literature* (New York: E.J. Brill, 1997), 1616.

[18] Hadot, *Marius Victorinus*, 16-17; Chiara Tommasi, "Marius Victorinus," in *Routledge Companion of Early Christian Philosophy*, ed. Mark Edwards (2020): 475-489, here 476; Cooper & Němec, "Introduction," 5-6.

[19] Hadot, *Marius Victorinus*, 17 with n. 21.

[20] Albrecht, *Roman Literature*, 1616, citing Augustine, *Conf.* 4.28.

[21] Aemelius Donatus, *fl.* c. 350. Jerome gives evidence of Donatus as holding the chair of *grammaticus* at the same time Victorinus was *rhetor* (*Chronicon* 2370).

[22] Augustine, *Conf.* 8.2.3.

[23] Jerome, *Chronicon* 2370, 239.7-17.

[24] Hadot, *Marius Victorinus*, 31-2.

was professor of rhetoric under Constantius.[25] This "most learned professor of rhetoric of his time" earned worldly glory in the course of a successful career dedicated to the study and teaching of the liberal arts.[26]

Victorinus's courageous decision to join the church took place around the time Liberius was exiled by Constantius for refusing to condemn Athanasius.[27] He had read the works of Christians and considered himself to be a Christian for some time before finally deciding to receive baptism at the persistent encouragement of Simplicianus.[28] Which Christian writings he was reading must be discovered from analysis of his works, for he is neither mentioned in Nicene circles nor does he have any extant correspondences, nor again does he himself cite the sources he has consulted.[29] Augustine relates an exchange between Simplicianus and Victorinus in which Victorinus seems to take the formal rites of Christianity rather lightly. "[Simplicianus] *Non credam nec deputabo te inter Christianos, nisi in ecclesia Christi videro. ille* [Victorinus] *autem inridebat dicens: Ergo parietes faciunt Christianos?*"[30] The impression of one suffering for the faith may well have replaced with gravity the apparent levity with which the rhetor had considered formal Christianity. Whether under Liberius or another Roman bishop, Victorinus was certainly initiated into the Church in Rome under pro-Nicene instruction.

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[25] Jerome, *De viris illustribus* 101, 739. Constantius reigned in the East from 337 and as sole ruler of the empire from 353-361.

[26] Boethius, *In Isag. Porph. pr*. 1.1; CSEL 48, 4.12; ET: Cooper and Němec, "Introduction," 2.

[27] Stephen Andrew Cooper, "The Platonist Christianity of Marius Victorinus," *Religions* 122 (2016): 1-24, at 6.

[28] Augustine, *Conf.* 8.2.4.

[29] Perhaps out of prudential concern or in the interest for his works' persuasiveness. See Chapter Two.

[30] Augustine, *Conf.* 8.2.4.

The risk he was undertaking in joining Nicene Christians is perhaps not done justice in Augustine's account—Augustine highlights the tremendous sacrifice Victorinus made in setting himself at odds with his fellow senators in Rome, but does not consider the challenges involved in joining the Nicene church at a time when Constantius was undertaking a campaign for Christian unity; indeed, the emperor's campaign had sent Liberius and other pro-Nicenes into exile. Constantius was laboring across the empire to eradicate *homoousion* from the Christian Creed. Victorinus began soon after his baptism to write theological treatises arguing specifically for the legitimacy and necessity of using *homoousion* to describe the relation of the three persons of the Trinity. He was in this regard precisely in tune with trends in Nicene theology which in the late 350s had begun to insist on the primary importance of this term from the Nicene Creed. He was afforded further leisure to compose commentaries on letters of Paul when Emperor Julian's education proscription against Christians holding teaching chairs forced Victorinus to abdicate his position as professor of rhetoric.[31] He would continue to write Christian works until his death, presumed to have taken place in the mid 360s.

Opera

Although Victorinus has a penchant for cross-referencing his own writings, he reveals hardly any autobiographical details in his extant works. Nevertheless, through careful consideration of his compositions we get to know quite a bit about him as a thinker and

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[31] Julian's "Rescript of Christian Teachers," Ep. 36 in Julian, *Letters, Epigrams, Against the Galilaeans, Fragments,* tr. Wilmer C. Wright, Loeb Classical Library 157 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1923), 116-23. On Victorinus's abdication of his chair of rhetoric see Augustine, *Conf.* 8.5.10.

pedagogue. The topics he addresses, the genres in which he writes, the form of his compositions, the examples he chooses in illustration, and even to some extent the things he omits, all reveal to us what was of interest to him, how he understood his responsibility as a teacher of rhetoric, and later what he thought the most important aspects of the Christian message and way of life.

The most convenient distinction of Victorinus's writings is by genre. I divide them into the categories of *opera artium liberalium* and of explicitly Christian writings. This is not the same as distinguishing between pre-conversion and post-conversion. While we are frequently able to distinguish his works chronologically, such a division according to date of composition tends to beg questions of succession of events for which we have only been able to offer conjectures. There is nothing to prevent a Christian from writing a book on grammar or logic that is not explicitly Christian. The extant works of liberal arts are *Ars grammatica*, *Commenta in Ciceronis De inventione*, and *De definitionibus*. He is also said to have translated Aristotle's *Categoriae* with eight books of commentary, the *De interpretatione*, Porphyry's *Isagoge*, and the *libri Platonicorum* whose titles are uncertain.[32] He also commented on Cicero's *Topica* and composed his own treatise on hypothetical syllogisms.[33]

Opera artium liberalium

Ars grammatica

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[32] Hadot, *Marius Victorinus*, 179-198; on the Books of the Platonists see below, 12.
[33] Hadot, *Marius Victorinus*, 115-141 and 143-161, respectively.

His *Ars grammatica* is an early work of basic grammar.[34] Its extant form comprises four books: *De vocis*, *De litteris*, *De orthographia* and *De syllabis*. Hadot considers its opening section defining the art of grammar as a distinct section named *De arte*.[35] Another section called *De metriciis* has not come down to us, having been replaced early in the manuscript tradition by a work of the same title composed by Aphthonius.[36] Three of the MSS excerpts of *De orthographia* refer to Marius Victorinus as *Grammaticus*.[37] The progression from *grammaticus* to *rhetor* would have been natural—such was the case with Ausonius, as Mariotti relates—but not necessary.[38] It is no less possible that he wrote the grammar while *rhetor*. Nothing would prevent someone teaching both grammar and rhetoric at once, although this seems to have been more typical of earlier ages. "A Roma era questa la più antica consuetudine, Suet. *gramm.* 4,6 '*Veteres grammatici et rhetoricam docebant*.'"[39] Mariotti concludes his introduction to *Ars grammatica* with the recognition that the work "may seem unworthy of the famous teacher of rhetoric, of the neoplatonic philosopher with expertise in Aristotle, of the subtle theologian," but is proper to a youthful work on an elementary topic.[40] On other grounds we know it should be taken as an early work, because the *Ars grammatica*

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[34] Italo Mariotti, *Marii Victorini Ars grammatica: Introduzione, testo critico e commento* (Florence: Le Monnier, 1967). The *editio princeps* of Sichard comes from Vatic. Palat. Lat. 1753 of the ninth century.

[35] Hadot, *Marius Victorinus*, 69.

[36] As to how the Victorinian work was combined with the *De metriciis* of Aphthonius see the hypotheses of Hadot in *Marius Victorinus*, 64ff.

[37] Mariotti, *Ars grammatica*, 40-42.

[38] Mariotti, *Ars grammatica*, 17: "*nomen grammatici merui . . . Augustam subolem grammaticus docui, mox etiam rhetor*," Donatus 470a, 18ff., quoting Ausonius from Rudolf Peiper ed., *Decimi Magni Ausonii Burdigalensis Opuscula* (Leipzig: B.C. Teubner, 1886), 2.

[39] Mariotti, *Ars grammatica*, 17.

[40] Mariotti, *Ars grammatica*, 62, my translation.

preceded Victorinus's commentary on Cicero's *Rhetoric* in which he refers to his prior

grammatical writing.[41]

Commenta in Ciceronis Rhetorica

Victorinus's commentary on Cicero's *Rhetoric* was a much more popular and

admired work than his grammar.[42] Victorinus's commentary is the first extant work of its

kind on the *Rhetoric*. Perhaps it was necessary to bring the work up to date in the

circumstances of the fourth century, or else to make it more appropriate to Victorinus's

task as *rhetor*, as opposed to *sophista* or *orator*.[43] Hadot suggests this work gives us

insight into Victorinus's work as teacher of rhetoric, especially given the central

importance of Cicero's *Rhetoric* for Roman *paideia* of the fourth century.[44]

The commentary is serial and very detailed, though the amount treated and the

detail of commentary falls off steeply by the time Victorinus gets to the second book. The

method of his commentary involves defining key terms (frequently through suggested

etymologies), mining authoritative sources for definitions and exempla, paraphrasing the

text to emphasize Cicero's structure and intended meaning, and amplification of elliptical

passages. The commentary is full of points of philosophical interest in its digressions on

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[41] Hadot, *Marius Victorinus*, 69, n. 42.

[42] The manuscripts are more abundant for this work than for his grammar: one from the seventh or eighth century, three from the ninth, five from the tenth, ten from the eleventh, and one more belonging either to tenth or eleventh (Antonella Ippolito, *Marii Victorini Explanationes Ciceronis De inventione*, *Corpus Christianorum Series Latina* 132 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2005), xxv-xxxiii). Ippolito's edition as well as that of Thomas Riesenweber (Thomas Riesenweber, ed., C. Marius Victorinus, *Commenta in Ciceronis Rhetorica* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2013) have now superseded that of Karl Halm (Karl Halm, ed. *Rhetores Latini Minores* (Lipsiae: B. G. Teubneri, 1863), 153-304).

[43] See *In Cic. Rhet.* I, praef., 60-76 (CCSL 132, 7): "*Rhetor est qui docet litteras atque artes tradit eloquentiae; sophista est apud quem dicendi exercitium discitur; orator est qui in causis privatis ac publicis plena et perfecta utitur eloquentia.*"

[44] Hadot, *Marius Victorinus*, 73.

time, substance, the soul, virtue, nature, and God.[45] These excursuses, which Boethius

thought excessive and unnecessary, Hadot explained as being due to the pedagogical

purpose of the work, which was to bring to maturity the whole character of Victorinus's

students.[46]

De definitionibus

His work on definitions is an elaboration of Cicero's *Topica* 5, 26-28.[47] He is the

only writer of antiquity known to have dedicated a work to definitions.[48] I treat *De*

definitionibus in Chapter Two.[49]

Non-extant Works

I have mentioned the remaining works which have not come down to us but are

attested in later authors. Most of them it seems were not really known around and after

the time of Cassiodorus, displaced by editions of later writers. Servius mentions

Victorinus as the author of a commentary on Virgil.[50] His commentary on Cicero's

Topics is lost, but was used by Boethius, Martianus Capella, and Cassiodorus.[51] His lost

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[45] Stephen Cooper and Václav Němec, "Introduction," 9.

[46] Hadot, *Marius Victorinus*, 78. And see Guadalupe Lopetegui Semperena, "Textual Analysis and Rhetorical Metalanguage in the *Explanationes in Ciceronis Rhetoricam* of Marius Victorinus," in Cooper and Němec, *Marius Victorinus*, 1-33.

[47] The critical edition is Theodore Stangl, *Tulliana et Mario Victoriniana* (Munich: Wild, 1888), reprinted in Hadot, *Marius Victorinus*, 331-62. The most thorough treatment on *De definitionibus* is that of Andreas Pronay, *C. Marius Victorinus: Liber de definitionibus: Eine spätantike Theorie der Definition und des Definierens, mit Einleitung, Übersetzung und Kommentar* (Frankfurt am Main: Lang, 1997).

[48] Hadot, *Marius Victorinus*, 163 (for treatment of the treatise see 163-78), and Cooper and Němec, "Introduction," 8.

[49] Ch. 2 §III.2.2.

[50] Servius, *In Georg.*, IV.373 (see Hadot, *Marius Victorinus*, 19).

[51] Boethius, *In Top. Cic.* I (PL 64, 1041B); the witness of all three later authors is presented by Hadot, *Marius Victorinus*, 313-321.

translations and commentaries on the works of Aristotle and Porphyry were known in the early middle ages, but superseded by later writers, notably Boethius.[52] *On Hypothetical Syllogisms* is important for my consideration of Victorinus's rhetorical principles, so I attend to it in Chapter Two.[53] The scholarly debate over the contents of the *libri Platonicorum* which Victorinus translated and Augustine read is ongoing.[54] Victorinus probably translated some sections of Porphyrian writings, notably from *De regressu animae*, and perhaps some of Plotinus's *Enneads*.[55]

Having examined the secular writings of Marius Victorinus, we find that they reflect the mind of a capable and conscientious teacher who was concerned to educate the whole student. We are left with the impression that Victorinus saw teaching as a vocation of supreme importance. With a little care we can infer that his pedagogy was based on his psychology which in turn was informed by his metaphysics. We find, too, that Victorinus was a master of his craft who had all of the best sources at his fingertips and knew how to employ them. He was certainly more eager to be understood by his readership than to be perceived as a Ciceronian stylist. Given that he possessed a thorough knowledge of what would strengthen and what would vitiate speech or thought, it is true, as Albrecht says, that his own writings are "strikingly unrhetorical." But based on what we have seen of the rhetor's professional works we agree even more strongly with the rest of Albrecht's assessment. "Victorinus is one of the few authors who, like Suetonius, let the facts speak

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[52] Hadot, *Marius Victorinus*, 179-198.
[53] Ch. 2 §III.2.
[54] Hadot, *Marius Victorinus*, 201-210; Tommasi, "Marius Victorinus," 476; Pier Franco Beatrice, "Quosdam Platonicorum Libros: The Platonic Reading of Augustine in Milan," *Vigiliae Christianae* 43 (1989): 248–281, who argues these Porphyrian texts included sections from Porphyry's *Philosophy from Oracles*.
[55] See Cooper and Němec, "Introduction," 10-11 and n. 41; Tommasi, "Marius Victorinus," 476.

for themselves, and he is even one of the still smaller group who build their text on consistent philosophical reasoning."[56] This is nowhere more patently true than in Marius Victorinus's theological treatises.

Opera Theologica

The theological works of Victorinus are twelve in total. Having once been considered a continuous work *Against the Arians*, the theological works which still bear this name are now known to have been discrete compositions.[57] The theological *oeuvre* comprises nine treatises and three hymns. The manuscript tradition witnesses two different collections.[58] For nearly a millennium the first two of the theological treatises, *Candidi Arriani ad Marium Victorinum Rhetorem de Generatione Divina* and *Marii Victorini Rhetoris Urbis Romae ad Candidum Arrianum*, had their own history independent of the other works. The pair are preserved together in six manuscripts, the oldest of which dates to the ninth century, the rest to the eleventh and thirteenth.[59] Only one manuscript from the tenth century conveys the rest of the theological *oeuvre* (with the exception of *De homoousion recipiendo*, which is supplied from another tenth-century manuscript).[60] Hadot proved that the works were known all together to Alcuin.[61]

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[56] Albrecht, *Roman Literature*, 1619.

[57] Hadot, *Porphyre et Victorinus*, I.45-67; *Marius Victorinus*, 253-280.

[58] The following account of the manuscript tradition is taken from Hadot, *Marius Victorinus*, 253-54, unless otherwise noted.

[59] *Bambergensis* 46.

[60] *Berolinensis Phillips* 1684.

[61] Hadot, "Marius Victorinus et Alcuin," *Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du Moyen Age* 22 (1954): 5-19.

All the theological works appear to have been composed between 357 and 363.[62] The *terminus post quem* of the earliest work can be established on the basis of a knowledge of events known to have taken place in 357, as Victorinus makes reference in his earliest theological writings to documents produced at Sirmium 357.[63] The first two of these are an epistle from the Arian Candidus (*Candidi Epistula I*) and Victorinus's response (*Ad Candidum*). It is scholarly consensus that Candidus the Arian is a fiction invented by Victorinus for rhetorical purposes.[64] It is unclear why Victorinus should have given him the name "Candidus." Anca Vasiliu makes the intriguing suggestion that this Candidus is connected with the Valentinian Candidus of Origen's acquaintance.[65] Then she speculates that the juxtaposition of *Candidus* and *Victorinus* in a dialogue over Christian truth was a conscious use of the trope in which a dialogue takes place between an "enlightened" thinker and a pious orthodox Christian.[66] The latter of course is cast as vanquisher (*victor*) of the arguments of the self-confident interlocutor having the inspiration of the Holy Spirit and the tradition of holy authorities behind him. Kurt Smolak suggests *en passant* that Victorinus adopts the pseudonym in the fashion of Ovid and Martial, addressing a reader as kind or well-disposed, *candidus lector*.[67]

"Candidus" argues that divine immutability is undermined by speaking of an eternal and divine begetting.[68] The Son must be seen as created rather than begotten.[69]

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[62] Hadot, *Marius Victorinus*, 253-283.

[63] *Faith in Formulae*, vol. 1, 404-408, §154; Hadot, *Marius Victorinus*, 253-275.

[64] See Hadot, *Porphyre et Victorinus*, vol. 1, 40 with n. 3.

[65] Anca Vasiliu "L'argument de l'image dans la défense de la consubstantialité par Marius Victorinus," *Les Études philosophiques* 2 (2012): 191-216, 192, n. 3.

[66] Vasiliu, "L'argument de l'Image," 192, n.3.

[67] Kurt Smolak, "*O beata trinitas*: Überlegungen zu den trinitarischen Hymnen des Marius Victorinus," *Wiener Studien* 33 (2009): 76-94, 77; Ovid, *Trist*. 1.11, 35; Martial, *Epigr*. 7.99, 5.

[68] *Cand*. I 1, 4-11 (CSEL 83.1, 1).

[69] *Cand*. I 10-11 (CSEL 83.1, 12-14).

Furthermore, the divine nature is "to be unbegotten" so the Son by definition cannot be of the same substance as the Father.[70] Victorinus's response begins with Scripture before engaging in philosophical reason, a deliberate reordering of his Arian interlocutor's priorities and a typical rhetorical strategy in these debates over dogma.[71] This work includes a virtuosic display of dialectical skill as Victorinus categorizes the whole of reality by the criterion of their manner of being or non-being.[72] This philosophical foundation enables him to argue that the Father is power and being (*esse* (20.17), *omnia potentia* (22.6)) and the Son eternal substantial act (*actio* (23.2), *agere* (19.8)), with the result that the two are *homoousion* while remaining both simple and immutable.[73] The Son is eternally begotten and perfectly divine.

The next work is another "letter" from Candidus in response to Victorinus's epistle (*Candidi Epistola II ad Marium Victorinum*). It comprises two letters, of Arius to Eusebius of Nicomedia and of Eusebius to Paulinus of Tyre, both in Latin translation with only brief introductory remarks from "Candidus." Victorinus's response makes up the first of four treatises, called in the manuscript tradition *Adversus Arium*, as if they were books of a single work. This collective title comes from a later editor who was following Jerome's *De viris illustribus*, in which Victorinus is said to have composed books against the Arians.[74] *Adversus Arium* I in fact comprises two initially separate works.[75] The first (*Adversus Arium* IA) is the response proper to Candidus's second

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[70] *Cand.* I 8, 26-29 (CSEL 83.1, 10).
[71] *Ad Cand.* 1, 12-16 (CSEL 83.1, 15-16). Clark emphasizes this point in her introduction (Clark, *Marius Victorinus*, 20).
[72] *Ad Cand* 4; 6-11 (CSEL 83.1, 19-20; 21-29).
[73] *Ad Cand.* 23, 3; 27, 16-17 (CSEL 83.1, 39; 43).
[74] *De viris illustribus* 101.
[75] Tommasi, "Marius Victorinus," 477; Stephen Andrew Cooper, "Victorinus, Marius, c. 285–c. 365 CE," in Oxford Classical Dictionary (2019), oxfordre.com/classics.

epistle. It ends with a creedal prayer at the conclusion of §47. The contents of IA show Victorinus engaging directly with the recent productions of Basil of Ancyra. He has just received the dossier of documents collected in Sirmium in the summer of 358.[76] Victorinus, after refuting the epistles of Arius and Eusebius, reacts to the theological opinions of not only Basil and his *homoiousians*, but of Marcellus (former bishop of Ancyra) and Photinus (bishop of Sirmium), as well as the teachings of the Patripassians.[77] This whole work is largely exegetical, leading the reader through the Gospel of John and the Synoptics, followed by Paul's epistles. According to Victorinus the biblical witness, rightly and comprehensively interpreted, points to the consubstantiality of the Trinity. "That God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit are the same spirit and one and the same spirit . . . All three are therefore *homoousia* with respect to action and *homoousia* with respect to substance, because all three are spirit, and because spirit is from the Father, substance is from the Father.[78] Victorinus alludes in this work to the divinity of the Holy Spirit by speaking of the Logos of God as one act of Life and Knowledge.[79] He then shows that the Holy Spirit is "from within the Son" just as "the Son is from the bosom of the Father and in the bosom of the Father."[80] The Paraclete Holy Spirit comes from Father and Son.[81] The Holy Spirit's role in the economy is to bear testimony to Christ.[82]

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[76] Hadot, *Marius Victorinus*, 266; for the dossier see *Faith in Formulae*, vol. 1, 412-413, §156; Hilary, *De syn.* 81 (PL 10, 534); Sozomen, *Hist. eccl.* 4.15, 1-3 (PG 67, 1149C-1152A).

[77] Hadot, *Marius Victorinus*, 263-275.

[78] *Adv. Ar.* IA 18, 32-34, 55-57 (Clark, *Marius Victorinus*, 114-115; CSEL 83.1, 82, 83): "Quod idem spiritus deus et Christus est et sanctus spiritus et idem unus spiritus . . . Omnia ergo tria actione ὁμοούσια et substantia ὁμοούσια, quod omnia tria spiritus, et quod a patre spiritus, a patre substantia."

[79] *Adv. Ar.* IA 13, 38-40 (CSEL 83.1, 73).

[80] *Adv. Ar.* IA 8, 16-18 (CSEL 83.1, 65).

[81] *Adv. Ar.* IA 13, 21-30 (CSEL 83.1, 72).

[82] *Adv. Ar.* IA 2, 37-42 (CSEL 83.1, 57).

Victorinus's introduction to *Adversus Arium* IB begins with a list of names ascribed to God in the Scriptures. Concerning these he poses a series of questions regarding the proper treatment of these names—do they all mean the same or different things? is there any order to them?[83] Following this introduction, Victorinus argues that these scriptural names Spirit, Logos, Nous, and Wisdom all name divine substance.[84] Further, these names are distributed to all three of the Trinity, though their proper applicability is a matter of predominance.[85] That is, some names express most properly the mode of being of one of the three consubstantial hypostases. Victorinus assimilates and alters the noetic triad of Middle and Neoplatonism to fit his purpose of explaining Nicaea's *homoousion*.[86] In its reworked form, the noetic triad becomes of preeminent importance for Victorinus's defense and explanation of Nicene theology. *Adv. Ar.* IB concludes (as had *Adv. Ar.* IA) with a kind of creedal prayer that resembles the conclusions of Paul's epistles. "Thanks be to God the Father and his Son our Lord Jesus Christ, from eternity and forever and ever."[87]

Adversus Arium II addresses primarily fellow believers, who are not necessarily Nicene Christians. "We all confess the omnipotent God, we only now confess Jesus Christ, but soon all will."[88] He addresses in this work both the *Homoiousian* group that had recently formed around Basil and the *Homoians* who came on the scene in 359,

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[83] *Adv. Ar.* IB 48, 4-10 (CSEL 83.1, 142).

[84] *Adv. Ar.* IB 60, 27-29 (CSEL 83.1, 161).

[85] *Adv. Ar.* IB 59, 1-12 (CSEL 83.1, 159)

[86] The Middle Platonic milieu includes various forms of Gnosticism, Hermeticism, and the *Chaldean Oracles* (see *The Chaldean Oracles: Text, Translation, and Commentary*, tr. Ruth Dorothy Majercik (Leiden; New York: Brill, 1989), 1-9).

[87] *Adv. Ar.* IB, 64, 28-30 (CSEL 83.1, 167); ET: Clark, *Marius Victorinus*, 193.

[88] *Adv. Ar.* II 1, 5-6 "Deum omnipotentem omnes fatemur, Christum Iesum nos nunc, mox tamen fatebuntur omnes" (CSEL 83.1, 168).

named for their rejection of all *ousia* language, and led by Ursacius, Valens, and Germinius.[89] *De homoousion recipiendo* is a brief and powerful recapitulation of Victorinus's extensive arguments in favor of Nicene trinitarian theology, especially as found in *Adv. Ar.* IB and II. It is unclear whether this work was written before or after *Adversus Arium* III and IV. It, along with *Adversus Arium* II, appears to be intended for "the Latin adversaries influenced by the Council of Rimini."[90] It may follow on efforts at reunion among western Christians under Emperor Jovian after Julian the Apostate had unexpectedly died. Hadot suggests a date of 363.[91]

Of *Adversus Arium* III, the material focus of this dissertation, I say much more in Chapter Two. Here I will mention that it was certainly composed before *Adversus Arium* IV which presupposes it, and after *Adversus Arium* IB and II, which, in turn, it presupposes. In it, Victorinus summarizes his preceding work in establishing the *homoousion* of the whole Trinity. He expands on his arguments for the divinity of the Holy Spirit, which he had only mentioned in passing in his earlier treatises.

Adversus Arium IV is "un traité sur la Forme consubstantielle de Dieu" based on Jn 5:26 and 6:57 as well as Phil. 2:5-7.[92] It is a consolidation and fortification of his earlier exegetical and metaphysical defense of *homoousion* theology full of clear and profound philosophical explanations. Victorinus repeats his pneumatological positions,

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[89] On the *Homoian* party and the developments beginning in 359 see Daniel H. Williams, *Ambrose of Milan and the End of the Arian-Nicene Conflict* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), especially 11-103. Williams sees the events of Ariminum 359 as the impetus for the reactionary establishment and subsequent development of Pro-Nicene theology.

[90] Hadot, *Marius Victorinus*, 257.

[91] Hadot, *Marius Victorinus*, 280.

[92] Hadot, SC 69, 977.

especially as expressed in *Adversus Arium* III, but in this and other respects does not go beyond theologically what he has proved elsewhere.

Victorinus has also left three hymns dense with high theologico-philosophical content. Their dating is not at all secure, nor can I guess what caused him to write them apart from personal religious devotion. Albrecht is certainly right that they mark a new type of Christian poetry, not metrical (Tommasi describes them as "rhythmical prose"), but "originating in and leading to meditation."[93] They influenced Alcuin in the early middle ages.[94] Clark makes a connection on the basis of their similar content between the first hymn and *Adv. Ar.* III and between the second hymn and *Adv. Ar.* IV. The third is of interest for its description of the Holy Spirit as the *nexus* by which the Father and Son are bound to one another.[95]

Biblical Exegesis

Victorinus wrote at least six exegetical works on the Pauline corpus. These were commentaries on Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Ephesians, Galatians, and Philippians.[96] Only the latter three of these have come down to us. The critical edition of these texts is that of Franco Gori.[97] The commentaries received significant attention among German scholars of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries for their perceived expression of *sola fide* soteriology.[98] They were composed, it is thought, after Victorinus resigned

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[93] Albrecht, *Roman Literature*, 1618; Tommasi, "Marius Victorinus," 477.
[94] Hadot, "Marius Victorinus et Alcuin," 5-19.
[95] Clark, *Marius Victorinus*, 37.
[96] Hadot, *Marius Victorinus*, 287.
[97] Franco Gori, *Marii Victorini opera, pars II: Opera exegetica*, CSEL 83.2 (Vienna: Hoelder-Pichler-Tempsky, 1986).
[98] See Stephen Andrew Cooper, *Commentary on Galatians* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 148-69.

from his chair of rhetoric under Julian's education proscription.[99] He worked on them between his retirement in 362 until his death about 365. These were the first commentaries on Paul in the Latin language.

Giacomo Raspanti's work on the formal rhetorical principles of Victorinus' Pauline commentaries is the most thorough treatment of the topic.[100] The same principles of rhetorical pedagogy Victorinus had used in composing his professional commentaries he put to the service of the Pauline corpus. His exegesis aims to be spare in order to remain focused on the text itself. In the grammatical, rhetorical, philosophical, and theological genres Victorinus was committed to the bare *expositio verborum*.[101] This principle of exposition is subservient only to his higher pedagogical concern which makes allowances for excurses on topics of importance for his students. The few philosophical and theological digressions included in his biblical exegeses are only those Victorinus deemed necessary for a full knowledge of soteriology and anthropology.[102] Victorinus often alludes to other books in which he has considered theological and philosophical questions at greater length, especially when the requirements of his interpretative program prevent him from departing from the intended meaning of the author.[103]

Victorinus does not mention the exegetical works of other Christians—nor, for that matter, does he refer to other theologians in his theological treatises. He may have

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[99] Hadot, *Marius Victorinus*, 285-286.

[100] Giacomo Raspanti, *Mario Vittorino esegeta di S. Paolo* (Palermo: L'Epos, 1996).

[101] *In Gal.* 4.18, 23-25 (CSEL 83.2, 151); see also *In Eph.* 1.11, 25-26 (CSEL 83.2, 18).

[102] Cooper, *Galatians*, 116.

[103] Alexander Souter, *The Earliest Latin Commentaries on the Epistles of St. Paul* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1927, repr. 1999), 23; Raspanti, *Esegeta*, 121-125; e.g. *In Eph.* 1.11, 5-7 (CSEL 83.2, 18) and *In Eph.* 2.praef., 14-20 (CSEL 83.2, 60).

been familiar with the Origenian Tractates, compilations of Origen's writings in Latin, perhaps based on translations made by Novatian in the third century and collected by the later author of the *Tractatus Origenis*.[104] He may also have known Origen's *Commentary on John*, although his awareness of Origen is a disputed point.[105] John Voelker suggests he also knew a Gnostic commentary on John's Gospel.[106] Victorinus seems to have made his own translation from the Greek of the NT in his theological treatises.[107] This may account for some of the idiosyncratic Latin terminology, which we will have occasion to point out in the course of the commentary. His seeming innocence of Greek exegesis is responsible both for the perceived insufficiencies of his treatment of the Scriptures and for his commentaries' freshness.[108] Kevin Madigan refers to them as "remarkably original," which we must admit so long as possible influences remain undiscovered or unproven.[109]

The intended audience of these writings remains uncertain, but Werner Erdt, Giacomo Raspanti, and Stephen Cooper have made compelling suggestions. One of the difficulties in determining an audience is what Erdt calls the "text-immanent manner" of Victorinus's commentaries.[110] The commentaries are so narrowly focused on expounding

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[104] As argued by György Heidl, "Some Traces of an Ancient Latin Compilation of Origen's Commentary on Genesis," *Revue des ´Etudes Augustiniennes* 46 (2000): 3-30; see also György Heidl, *Origen's Influence on the Young Augustine: A Chapter in the History of Origenism* (Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2003).

[105] See Hadot, *Marius Victorinus*, 283; Jean Daniélou, "Review of P. Henry and P. Hadot, SC 68-69," *RechSR* 41 (1964): 127-128; Cooper, *Galatians*, 120.

[106] John T. Voelker, "The Trinitarian Theology of Marius Victorinus: Polemic and Exegesis" (Ph.D. diss: Marquette University, 2006), 2.

[107] Hadot, *Marius Victorinus*, 261.

[108] Jerome says of Victorinus in his preface to his Galatians commentary, "*Non quod ignorem C. Marium Victorinum, qui Romae me puero rhetoricam docuit, edidisse commentarios in Apostolum, sed quod occupatus ille eruditione saecularium litterarum scripturas omnino sanctas ignoraverit et nemo possit, quamvis eloquens, de eo bene disputare quod nesciat,*" *In Gal.*, prol. PL 26, 308.

[109] Kevin Madigan, "Review of Giacomo Raspanti, *Mario Vittorino esegeta di S. Paolo* (Palermo: L'Epos, 1996)," *The Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 60 (1998), 169-170, 170.

[110] Werner Erdt, *Marius Victorinus Afer*, 94 quoted in Cooper, *Galatians*, 130 n. 9.

the text that they rarely give evidence of the surrounding circumstances of their composition. Cooper endeavors to discern the "encoded reader," the directly addressed (or directly intended) audience. He rejects the possibility that Victorinus was seeking in his commentaries "to propagandize philosophically oriented pagans."[111] Albrecht, speaking of the apologetic nature (as he saw it) of Victorinus's theological treatises, said "In accordance with his education, Victorinus uses the philosophical language of his day, probably also hoping thereby to win educated readers over to Christianity."[112] In Albrecht's account of Victorinus's Pauline commentaries he describes Victorinus's movement between theory and practice as "artful changes" which cause his commentary at times to approach homiletics.[113] These artful changes between what Cooper calls "metaphysics and morals" and Victorinus's philosophical language in the commentaries have more to do with Victorinus's pedagogy and with the content of the Pauline epistles themselves than to be indicative that Victorinus has an educated pagan audience in view in either commentary or treatise.[114] The treatises, however, do offer more philosophical argumentation and are certainly intended to elucidate Christian dogma through the use of sophisticated metaphysics. Even if Victorinus's arguments there depend on Scripture as their matter and touchstone, they are nevertheless more open to unbelieving interlocutors (and therefore of greater apologetic interest to non-Christians) than his Pauline commentaries. In contrast, and as one would expect, the biblical commentaries deal far more with matters *pro domo*, being completely focused on Christianity's sacred books.

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[111] Cooper, *Galatians*, 133-34.
[112] Albrecht, *Roman Literature*, 1619.
[113] Albrecht, *Roman Literature*, 1619.
[114] Cooper, *Metaphysics and Morals*, 22-24.

Both the matter (i.e., Paul's epistles) of Victorinus's exegesis and the questions he treats

would not be of much interest outside of Christian circles.

Raspanti has argued both Erdt and Cooper had not paid adequate attention to the

Trinitarian controversies, which he thinks were exerting pressure on Victorinus's Pauline

exegesis.[115] In his more recent work, Cooper takes into account the criticisms of Raspanti

and argues for a wider scope of Victorinus's intention, which was to provide "a complete,

if basic, guide to the entirety of the Christian life."[116] This guide would include both

doctrinal and moral teachings. The doctrinal considerations are naturally in continuity

with what one finds in Victorinus's theological treatises. Cooper shows how Nicene

theological considerations are animating some aspects of Victorinus's exegesis, but

resists reducing Victorinus's commentarial intentions to a narrowly polemical focus.[117]

The "scriptural exegetes of the fourth century engaged in commenting on the text for its

own sake, however much they may also have had their eyes on certain aspects of their

world."[118] This is as true for Victorinus the *grammatius* and *rhetor*, to say the least, as it

is for any of his Christian contemporaries.

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Review of Scholarship

All contemporary scholarly work on Marius Victorinus is indebted foremost to the labors

of Pierre Hadot. Until he began his extensive work in the 1950s the research on

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[115] Raspanti, *Esegeta*, 83; his criticisms of Erdt and Cooper 15-19. He is commenting on Cooper's *Metaphysics and Morals in Marius Victorinus' Commentary on the Letter to the Ephesians: A Contribution to the History of Neoplatonism and Christianity* (New York: Peter Lang, 1995).

[116] Cooper, *Galatians*, 136.

[117] Cooper, *Galatians*, 140-148.

[118] Cooper, *Galatians*, 148.

Victorinus had been somewhat *ad hoc*. It was thus also compartmentalized as scholars

saw Victorinus as *either* an early Latin biblical exegete, *or* a Neoplatonic philosopher, *or*

finally as a master of liberal arts and professor of rhetoric. German scholars of the late

nineteenth and early twentieth centuries tended to be interested in Victorinus the exegete

of Paul and representative of an early *sola fideism*.[119] Or else they read him as primarily a

Neoplatonist—not that his Christianity was in question, but it was argued that his

theological doctrine was cut to fit what he had learned from the philosophers.[120] His

secular writings were included in collections of the lesser rhetors of antiquity and studied

independently of his theological treatises.[121] While Victorinus was a synthetic thinker and

teacher, his trained sensitivity to genre combined with the modern tendency to

specialization justified this treatment of Victorinus as either rhetor or Platonist

philosopher or Christian exegete. Mistakes in earlier editions of Victorinus's works

vitiated scholars' understanding of Victorinus's theology. Problematic editions of

Victorinus' theological treatises have been corrected by Hadot and Henry in their critical

edition for the CSEL series of 1971.[122] Victorinus's professional works have also seen

improved editions with high quality commentary.[123]

As for his sources, parallel discoveries and research in gnostic writings and

ancient and late antique philosophy have greatly enhanced our understanding of

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119 Adolf von Harnack, *History of Dogma*, v, tr. Neil Buchanan (New York: Russell and Russell, 1958); Reinhold Schmid, *Marius Victorinus und seine Beziehungen zu Augustin* (Kiel: Uebermuth, 1895). See Hadot, *Porphyre et Victorinus*,vol. 1, 11-39, and Cooper, *Galatians*, 148-169.
120 G. Geiger, *C. Marius Victorinus Afer, ein neoplatonischer Philosoph*, I-II (Landshut, 1887-1889); E. Benz, *Marius Victorinus und die Entwicklung der abendlandischen Willensmetaphysik* (Stuttgart, 1932).
121 Halm, *Rhetores latini minores*, and see Martin Lowther Clarke, *Rhetoric at Rome: A Historical Survey* (London; New York: Routledge, 1996), 139-147.
122 For mistakes in editions prior to the CSEL, see Hadot, *Porphyre et Victorinus*, vol. 1, 30-1.
123 See above in "Opera."

Victorinus's influences. The discovery of and continuing studies on the Nag Hammadi Codices has illumined some of the darker corners of our understanding of the early centuries of the common era.[124] Scholars in the last few decades have also produced excellent editions and studies of Middle Platonists and Neoplatonists.[125] These gnostic and philosophical studies undertaken in the last sixty years continue to bear fruit in Victorinian *Quellenforschungen*, though they have also sparked considerable debate among scholars as to what precisely Victorinus was reading.

The dispute regarding what precisely was included in the *libri Platinicorum* Victorinus translated is ongoing, with disagreement as to whether the *Enneads* were among them or perhaps only Porphyrian works, as noted above (n. 58). Early in the twentieth century Paul Henry discovered in Victorinus's theological treatises a direct quotation in *Adversus Arium* IV of a passage from Plotinus's *Enneads*.[126] Victorinus renders the passage from *Enn.* V.2.1, 1-2 in his own Latin translation and adapts the lines from Plotinus for the purpose of explaining how the whole *homoousian* Trinity is both all things and exists beyond all things.[127] Alexey Fokin and others continue to produce arguments supporting a strong correspondence between aspects of Plotinus's thought and the Christian metaphysics of Victorinus.[128] It is certain that Victorinus knew Plotinus's

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[124] *The Nag Hammadi Library in English*, 4th rev. ed., gen. ed. James M. Robinson, tr. and intr. by the Coptic Gnostic Library Project, (Leiden: Brill, 1996); Michel Tardieu, "Recherches sur la formation de *l'Apocalypse de Zostrien* et les sources de Marius Victorinus," *Res Orientales* 9 (1996), 1-114.

[125] John Dillon, *The Middle Platonists: 80 B.C. to A.D. 220* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1977); R. T. Wallis, *Neoplatonism*, 2nd edition revised by Lloyd Gerson (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett, 1995); Stephen Gersh, *Middle Platonism and Neoplatonism: The Latin Tradition* 2 vols. (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1986); Lloyd Gerson, *Aristotle and Other Platonists* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2005).

[126] Paul Henry, S.J., *Plotin et L'Occident: Firmicus Maternus, Marius Victorinus, Saint Augustin, et Macrobe* (Louvain: Spicilegium Sacrum Lovaniense, 1934), 45-54.

[127] *Adv. Ar.* IV.22, 6-27 (CSEL 83.1, 258-259).

[128] Alexey Fokin, "Act of Vision as an Analogy of the Proceeding of the Intellect from the One in Plotinus and of the Son and the Holy Spirit from the Father in Marius Victorinus and St. Augustine," *Studia*

works and even incorporated some of his thought into Victorinus's own Christian metaphysics. The extent of Plotinian influence, however, is a matter of dispute. Hadot argues at length for a predominant Porphyrian influence on Victorinus. Porphyry's lost work on the *Chaldaean Oracles*, his *De regressu animae*, and *Sententiae* all influenced Victorinus. But by far the most important philosophical influence for his theological treatises is the *Anonymous Commentary on Parmenides*. Hadot supposes the *Commentary* Victorinus read was a composition of Porphyry.[129] While Hadot and others have argued that this is a production which presupposes Plotinus and thus belongs either to Porphyry or to someone heavily under Porphyrian influence, others have argued that this work is in fact of Middle Platonic provenance.[130] John Turner thinks it is closely related to Sethian Gnostic thought.[131] Along with other scholars, Turner has argued for the influence of Sethian Gnosticism and Middle Platonism on Victorinus.[132] Michel Tardieu has recently uncovered the dependence of Victorinus on a (Middle Platonic?) source which also, he argues, underlies the gnostic tractate *Zostrianos*.[133]

Patristica 75 (2017): 55–68; Alain Petit, "Existence et manifestation: Le Johannisme platonicien de Marius Victorinus," *Les études philosophiques* 2 (2012): 151-162.

[129] Hadot shows Victorinus's dependence on the Commentary on the *Parmenides* most forcefully in his two volume *Porphyre et Victorinus*. Gerald Bechtle, *The Anonymous Commentary on Plato's* "Parmenides" (Bern: Haupt, 1999).

[130] On the argument for Porphyrian influence, Wallis, *Neoplatonism*, 110-118; on the question of Middle Platonism, Kevin Corrigan, "Platonism and Gnosticism: The Anonymous Commentary on the Parmenides, Middle or Neoplatonic?" in *Gnosticism and Later Platonism: Themes, Figures, and Texts*, ed. John D. Turner and Ruth Majercik (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2001), 141-177.

[131] See John D. Turner, "Victorinus, *Parmenides* Commentaries and the Platonizing Sethian Treatises," in *Platonisms: Ancient, Modern, and Postmodern*, ed. Kevin Corrigan and John D. Turner (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 55–96.

[132] See the bibliographical notes in Cooper and Němec, "Introduction," 24-27.

[133] Mary T. Clark, "A Neoplatonic Commentary on the Christian Trinity: Marius Victorinus," in *Neoplatonism and Christian Thought*, ed. Dominic J. O'Meara (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 1982), 24-33; Hadot, *Marius Victorinus*; Henry, *Plotin et L'Occident*; Tardieu, "Recherches."

These six decades of *Quellenforschugen* confirm Clark's insight that knowledge of Victorinus's sources is immensely helpful to deciphering the meaning of his arguments throughout his theological treatises.[134] Textual studies in pursuit of Victorinian *Quellen* as well as engagement with his philosophical contributions, however, have sometimes obscured his overtly theological contributions and intentions. This may help to explain why older *Dogmengeschichten* surveys rarely treat Victorinus as more than a bystander to fourth-century Trinitarian developments.[135]

Scholarship of the last forty years has been busy redrawing the contours of what earlier generations of scholars knew as the period of the Arian controversy. The survey works of R.P.C. Hanson and Manlio Simonetti were especially effective at overturning the once prevalent view that the struggles of the fourth century could be comfortably described as an ongoing conflict between Arians and Nicenes. The work since theirs has continued the reconsiderations of the place of Arius, the nature of the controversies and debates, the varied alliances and parties formed and dissolved, the relation between theology and politics. These revisions sometimes involve the demotion of such heroes as Athanasius as well as sympathetic readings of history's vanquished, misrepresented, or misunderstood figures, such as Marcellus and Asterius. The careful work of many scholars dealing with the developments of fourth-century Christianity—the bibliography is extensive and growing—has been especially helpful in elucidating the developments in

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[134] Clark, *Marius Victorinus*, 9.

[135] See especially Joseph Lienhard, S. J., "*Ousia* and *Hypostasis*: The Cappadocian Settlement and the Theology of 'One Hypostasis,'" in *The Trinity: An Interdisciplinary Symposium on the Trinity*, eds. Stephen T. Davis, Daniel Kendall, S. J., and Gerald O'Collins, S. J. (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 99-122, 104.

and around the very middle of the century, the period in which Victorinus is active as a theological writer.[136]

Aside from Hanson's extensive treatment, Marius Victorinus has not received much attention by the authors in this cluster of Anglophone patristics scholars.[137] To Joseph Lienhard, Victorinus "stands quite outside the tradition."[138] Ayres acknowledges that he deserves more attention, but writes this in the context of explaining why Victorinus is not being included in his own study of the fourth-century controversies.[139] Edward Siecienski in his *Filioque* gives Victorinus a surprising amount of attention (three pages in his own subsection) in his chapter on early Latin theology. But his treatment is peremptory, presenting Victorinus as a fascinating but rapidly obsolescent forerunner of Augustine rather than as a sophisticated thinker and theologian in his own right.[140] In short, accounts of the trinitarian controversies of the fourth century since Hanson have tended to see Victorinus as interesting but idiosyncratic, ultimately of little import to the resolution of theological differences in his own day or as a contributor to the broader trajectory of trinitarian and Christological thought. In the midst of these scholarly revisions the time is right for us to try to see Victorinus in his true proportions by examining his theological contributions more carefully.

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[136] Among many others, see Lewis Ayres, *Nicaea and its Legacy: An Approach to Fourth-Century Trinitarian Theology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004); Barnes, "The Fourth Century as Trinitarian Canon"; Williams, *Ambrose of Milan*; Mark DelCogliano, "Basil of Caesarea, Didymus the Blind, and the Anti-Pneumatomachian Exegesis of Amos 4:13 and John 1:3," *Journal of Theological Studies* 61 (2010): 644-58; Joseph Lienhard, S. J., *Contra Marcellum: Marcellus of Ancyra and Fourth-Century Theology* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1999).

[137] Hanson, *Search*, 531-556.

[138] Lienhard, "*Ousia* and *Hypostasis*," 104.

[139] Lewis Ayres, *Nicaea and its Legacy*, especially 5.

[140] Edward Siecienski, *The Filioque* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 54-6. Hanson had treated Victorinus the same way. See R. P. C. Hanson, *The Search for the Christian Doctrine of God: The Arian Controversy 318-381* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1988), 531-556.

John Voelker's recent dissertation has already begun the work of situating Marius Victorinus within a trajectory of Latin Nicene theology.[141] He explicitly repudiates the tendency to treat Victorinus as philosopher *rather than* theologian. Voelker, following Simonetti and Hanson, argues for reading Victorinus as a serious, well-informed, and polemically engaged pro-Nicene theologian, operating within a tradition of Latin theologizing from Tertullian through Novatian, Phoebadius, and Hilary. He shows how Victorinus's arguments from power, unity, substance, and visibility all evince a knowledge of current theological trends. He emphasizes Victorinus's scriptural exegesis, highlights his early use of the so-called "Cappadocian settlement," and draws attention to Victorinus' pneumatology. On his pneumatology in particular Voelker says there is more to be done.[142]

In line with the recent trend of treating Victorinus more synthetically, Mathias Baltes's monograph on Marius Victorinus offers an integration of his philosophical and theological thought. The author's stated goal was to understand the philosophy of Victorinus in light of his theology.[143] Less synoptic, though thorough in its own philosophical vein, is the 2012 edition of *Les études philosophiques* devoted to Marius Victorinus, a volume honoring the decades-long scholarly project of Pierre Hadot.[144] The studies presented there were devoted to understanding both Victorinus's philosophical and theological thought mostly as pertaining to his metaphysical defense of *homoousion*

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[141] Voelker, "Trinitarian Theology."

[142] Voelker, "Trinitarian Theology," 228. Chiara Tomassi addresses the question briefly in her introduction: *Opere teologiche di Mario Vittorino* ed. and tr. Claudio Moreschini and Chiara O. Tommasi (Turin: Unione Tipografica-Editrice Torinese, 2007).

[143] Matthias Baltes, *Marius Victorinus: Zur Philosophie in seinen theologischen Schriften* (Munich: Saur, 2002).

[144] *Les études philosophiques* 101 no. 2 Marius Victorinus (2012) 147-288.

theology in his theological treatises. Pierre Hadot had himself undertaken this synthetic

approach with the greatest comprehensiveness, including all aspects of Victorinus's

thought in his two volume *Porphyre et Victorinus*.

There is another step to integration, however, namely the inclusion of his

rhetorical principles into the study of his philosophy and theology. Cooper and Němec's

forthcoming volume of studies on Victorinus is the most concerted effort at such

comprehensiveness to date.[145] The essays in this collection bring together all three aspects

of his thought and work. Cooper and Raspanti have already attended to his rhetorical

principles in their research on the rhetor's biblical exegesis. Particularly in regard to

Victorinus's pre-Christian rhetorical writings perhaps no one of recent years has done as

much for scholarly understanding as Guadalupe Lopetegui. She shows the close

connection Victorinus saw between dialectic and rhetoric and argues that the three

strands of the *trivium* are interwoven in his works because of his preoccupation with

pedagogy.[146] Florian Zacher's recent work of rhetorical analysis on one of Victorinus's

theological works shows the promise of the integration of rhetorical scholarship with the

work of interpreting his theological treatises, though more work bringing Victorinus's

rhetorical training, philosophical knowledge, and theological writings remains to be

done.[147]

Conclusion

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[145] Cooper and Němec eds., *Marius Victorinus*.
[146] Lopetegui, "Rhetorical Metalanguage," 1-5 and *passim*.
[147] Florian Zacher, "Marius Victorinus, *Opus ad Candidum*: An Analysis of its Rhetorical Structure," *StPatr* 95 (2017): 127-135.

Caius Marius Victorinus is one of Latin Christianity's most fascinating thinkers. He had profound insights into the critical metaphysical questions the revelation of Christ posed. He had confidence in the ability of philosophical speculation and contemplation to approach the mysteries enshrined in Christian doctrine. Victorinus was intrepid in arguing for the *homoousion* of the Trinity, posing arguments as bold for their defiance of the contemporary political regime as they were audaciously creative and trailblazing. Two decades before the *homoousion* was extended definitively to include the Holy Spirit in the writings of Gregory Nazianzen, Victorinus made the claim and labored to support it.[148] I argue in this dissertation that his pneumatology is one of the most significant of his theological contributions to the contemporary doctrinal disagreements and that this can be seen in its clearest, most developed form in his theological treatise *Adversus Arium* III. I do so by situating Victorinus within the context of contemporary controversy while also emphasizing his creative and unique articulation of Nicene *homoousion* theology.

Because his works are dense, elliptical, and have appeared to some to be obscure or even incoherent, I make his theological contribution clear through a serial commentary of *Adv. Ar.* III, which pays special attention to his historical setting, highlights his theological and philosophical sources, explains his theological arguments with the aid of rhetorical analysis and in the light of his whole theological and exegetical *oeuvre*. I show how he belongs to a tradition of Christian theologizing but has nonetheless a creative and unique understanding of the person, nature, and activity of the Holy Spirit. The first step will be selectively tracing the history of Christian pneumatology up to the time of Victorinus.

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[148] As did Athanasius, *Ep. ad Ser.*

1.0   CHAPTER 1

The History of Pneumatology

In this chapter I focus on the history of Christian theology of the Holy Spirit as it developed in and around Rome from the second century up to the middle of the fourth century. My understanding of Victorinus's place in the early development of pro-Nicene pneumatology has allowed me to apply four restrictive criteria to my treatment of this capacious and complex field of inquiry.[1] First, the stream of sources which appear to be pertinent to Victorinus allows me to limit the primary texts I engage. In the first section, "Apologists," I examine Justin, Irenaeus, and Tertullian, all of whose thought on the Holy Spirit seems to have more or less directly influenced Victorinus's pneumatology. Other figures and works of the first three centuries that are important for various reasons but had comparatively little direct impact on fourth-century pro-Nicene pneumatology I have

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[1] The literature on Pneumatology in the early Church is vast and growing. Still valuable is Henry Barclay Swete, *On the Early History of the Doctrine of the Holy Spirit with Especial Reference to the Controversies of the Fourth Century* (Cambridge: Deighton, Bell, 1873). More recent works of note are Anthony Casurella, *The Johannine Paraclete in the Church Fathers* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1983); Michael A. G. Haykin, *The Spirit of God: The Exegesis of 1 and 2 Corinthians in the Pneumatomachian Controversy of the Fourth Century* (Leiden: Brill, 1994); Michel René Barnes, "The Beginning and End of Early Christian Pneumatology," *Augustinian Studies* 39:2 (2008): 169–186; Andrew Radde-Gallewitz, "The Holy Spirit as Agent, not Activity: Origen's Argument with Modalism and its Afterlife in Didymus, Eunomius, and Gregory of Nazianzus," *Vigiliae Christianae* 65 (2011): 227-248; Anthony A. Briggman, *Irenaeus of Lyons and the Theology of the Holy Spirit* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012); Kellen Plaxco, "'I Will Pour Out My Spirit': Didymus against Eunomius in Light of John 16:14's History of Reception," *Vigiliae Christianae* 70 (2016): 479-508; Kyle R. Hughes, *How the Spirit Became God: The Mosaic of Early Christian Pneumatology* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2020).

either cut out entirely or relegated to footnotes. Figures such as Ignatius of Antioch, Clement of Rome, and the Shepherd of Hermas have been casualties of thrift; as have heterodox and fringe figures like Marcion, Valentinus, and Montanus, each of whose importance for fourth-century pro-Nicene pneumatology is indirect. The next section, "Approaching Nicaea," focuses on Origen's trinitarian theology broadly and his pneumatology in particular. His thought is immensely influential in all of the theological developments up to Nicaea and afterwards; it was possibly even a direct influence on Victorinus's Trinitarian theology. In the final section, "Nicaea and its Aftermath," I cover the Council of Nicaea and what followed up to 340, focusing on the Eusebian party and Marcellus, who are among the few Christian figures whom Victorinus addresses by name. In the next chapter I will examine other indispensably important figures of the mid-fourth century whose writings bear on Victorinus's pneumatology.

The second criterion by which I restrict my treatment of pneumatology is methodological. I will be focusing almost entirely on the *theological* aspect of pneumatological developments. Lewis Ayres spoke of his *Nicaea* as a work of historical theology, sufficient in its own sphere but "porous to other modes of research."[2] That is precisely what I have in mind in the present study. I prescind from social, political, and ecclesial concerns, except insofar as they bear on the historical circumstances of Victorinus in such a way that they affect his theological thought or the manner and mode of his theological expositions.

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[2] Lewis Ayres, *Nicaea and its Legacy: An Approach to Fourth-Century Trinitarian Theology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 6.

Thirdly, I consider Christian pneumatology only as it unfolded in the spheres of Scriptural exegesis and philosophy.[3] Scripture and philosophical thought were the two main sources from which early Christians worked out their pneumatology and drew their material for understanding and explaining the person, nature, and activity of the Holy Spirit—certainly the two most important sources from which Victorinus developed his own pneumatology. I leave out of account liturgical practices and personal and communal experience of the Spirit. While these matrices of Christian belief would bear on an exhaustive history of early Christian pneumatology, they shed little light on the pneumatology of Victorinus.

Because I am reading earlier texts with the question of their relevance for fourth-century pneumatology in mind, my final criterion concerns the particular pneumatological questions addressed. I consider those problems in the doctrine of the Holy Spirit that are most important from the point of view of the pneumatology of the mid- to late-fourth century. These have to do with the origin, nature, power, and activity of the Holy Spirit and its relation to the Father and to Christ.

1.1 Apologists

1.1.1. Justin the Martyr and Philosopher (c. 100-c.165)

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[3] On some of the common presuppositions early Christians made about Scripture and its uses see Michael Graves, *The Inspiration and Interpretation of Scripture: What the Early Church Can Teach Us* (Eerdmans: Grand Rapids, MI, 2014).

Justin Martyr wrote and taught in a community in Rome.[4] He is one of the earliest

Christians to be equally fluent in Scriptural exegesis and speculative philosophical

thought.[5] Justin's pneumatology reflects this dual preoccupation. While his theology of

the Holy Spirit is inchoate and at times confused, it is nevertheless prominently

articulated in his works. The Spirit is treated as a substantial being in Justin's trinitarian

theology with its own personal identity distinct from Father and Son. This distinctiveness,

however, is often undermined by Justin's confusion of the Spirit's activity with that of

the Logos; it is less frequently though more significantly compromised in places where

Justin conflated the identity of Logos and Pneuma.

Logos and Pneuma in Justin's Apologies

Justin's *Apologies* tend to involve the conflation of the Logos and Pneuma's

activity but keep their identities distinct.[6] The Logos and Pneuma have a role to play in

Christian morality. Justin informs his pagan audience that Christians live according to the

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[4] For biographical information see Leslie W. Barnard, *Justin Martyr: His Life and Thought* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1967). On Justin's "school" in Rome see Christoph Markschies, *Christian Theology and Its Institutions: Prolegomena to a History of Early Christian Theology*, tr. Wayne Coppins (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2015), 71-75.

[5] See his account of his conversion to the Christian philosophy after experience in Stoicism, Aristotelian, Pythagorean, and Platonic schools in *Dialogue with Trypho* 1-8. The philosophical and biblical aspects of Justin's thought are brought together nicely in *Justin Martyr and His Worlds*, ed. Sara Parvis and Paul Foster (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2007). Leslie Barnard questions the sophistication of Justin's philosophical thought; see Leslie W. Barnard, *St. Justin Martyr: The First and Second Apologies* (New York and Mahwah: Paulist Press, 1997), 3. For a more positive appraisal of Justin's intellectual capabilities and his grasp of contemporary Platonism see Mark Edwards, "On the Platonic Schooling of Justin Martyr," *The Journal of Theological Studies* 42 (1991): 17-34. As for his competency as an interpreter and scholar of Scripture see Oskar Skausane, *The Proof from Prophecy: A Study in Justin Martyr's Proof-Text Tradition: Text-Type, Provenance, Theological Profile* (Leiden: Brill, 1987).

[6] Cf. Anthony Briggman, "Measuring Justin's Approach to the Spirit: Trinitarian Conviction and Binitarian Orientation," *Vigiliae Christianae* 63 (2009): 107-137, 119-123.

Logos.[7] The holy *pneuma* is responsible for the reformation of morals.[8] Anthony Briggman points out three places in Justin's thought in which this confusion occurs, namely in the activities of rebuking the people of God;[9] in Christian prayer to the Father which Justin says occurs "through his Son, Jesus Christ, and through the Holy Spirit";[10] and in the adorning of the human mind whereby humans are made capable of knowledge of God.[11] More theologically significant, though occurring less frequently in Justin's writings, is the confusion of identity. I will give evidence first, however, of Justin's pronounced distinction of the persons of Logos and Pneuma in the *Apologies*.

It is in his attempt to reconcile Middle Platonism's eclectic physics with the natural philosophy expressed in the Scriptures that he distinguishes strongly between the identities of the Logos and Pneuma. He interprets Plato's enigmatic phrase in the *Second Letter* as a pagan foretelling of the Christian Trinity. "Plato gives the second place to the *logos* who is with God, and the third to the Spirit who was said to be borne over the water, saying, 'And the third around the third.'"[12] Apologetic Fathers could see an

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[7] *1 Apol.* 13.3.5 (Greek text of the *Apologies* is from *Justin, Philosopher and Martyr: Apologies,* ed., tr., and comm. Denis Minns and Paul Parvis (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009)).

[8] *1 Apol.* 44.

[9] Briggman, "Measuring Justin's Approach to the Spirit," 115-116.

[10] 1 *Apol.* 67, 2: εὐλογοῦμεν . . . διὰ τοῦ υἱοῦ Ἰησοῦ καὶ διὰ πνεύματος τοῦ ἁγίου (Briggman, "Measuring Justin's Approach to the Spirit," 116, and see 116-117).

[11] Briggman, "Measuring Justin's Approach to the Spirit," 117-119.

[12] *1 Apol.* 60.6-8: καὶ τὸ εἰπεῖν αὐτὸν τρίτον ἐπειδή, ὡς προείπομεν, 'ἐπάνω τῶν ὑδάτων' ἀνέγνω ὑπὸ Μωυσέως εἰρημένον 'ἐπιφέρεσθαι τὸ τοῦ θεοῦ πνεῦμα.' δευτέραν μὲν γὰρ χώραν τῷ παρὰ θεοῦ λόγῳ, ὃν κεχιάσθαι ἐν τῷ παντὶ ἔφη, δίδωσι, τὴν δὲ τρίτην τῷ λεχθέντι ἐπιφέρεσθαι τῷ ὕδατι πνεύματι, εἰπών, 'Τὰ δὲ τρίτα περὶ τὸν τρίτον.' Cf. Plato, *Second Letter*, 312d-e. John Rist suggests (though cautiously) Neopythagorean authorship for this epistle ascribed by Thrasyllas to Plato. See John M. Rist, "Neopythagoreanism and 'Plato's' Second Letter," in *Platonism and its Christian Heritage*, (London: Variorum Reprints, 1985), 78-81.

Cf. *1 Apol.* 13.3.1-5: τίς σωφρονῶν οὐχ ὁμολογήσει; τὸν διδάσκαλόν τε τούτων γενόμενον ἡμῖν καὶ εἰς τοῦτο γεννηθέντα, Ἰησοῦν Χριστόν, τὸν σταυρωθέντα ἐπὶ Ποντίου Πιλάτου, τοῦ γενομένου ἐν Ἰουδαίᾳ ἐπὶ χρόνοις Τιβερίου Καίσαρος ἐπιτρόπου, υἱὸν αὐτὸν τοῦ ὄντως θεοῦ μαθόντες καὶ ἐν δευτέρᾳ χώρᾳ ἔχοντες, πνεῦμά τε προφητικὸν ἐν τρίτῃ τάξει ὅτι μετὰ λόγου τιμῶμεν ἀποδείξομεν.

isomorphism between the Platonic first principles and the Christian Trinity, a historic precedent which would allow Victorinus to make similar use of Platonic philosophy in his defense of Trinitarian *homoousion* theology.

The Spirit as third in order (*taxis*) usually was made to correspond with the World Soul of Greek philosophy.[13] Scholars have seen this isomorphic comparison and the resulting correspondence between Holy Spirit and World Soul as a feature of the pneumatology of the *Apologists* generally. Athenagoras (c. 133-c. 190) posits *Logos* and *Pneuma* as two instruments of divine agency in his *Plea*. "If, therefore, Plato is not an atheist for conceiving of one uncreated God, the Framer of the universe, neither are we atheists who acknowledge and firmly hold that He is God who has framed all things by the Logos, and holds them in being by His Spirit."[14] Abraham Malherbe's commentary *apropos* of this passage compares the Spirit explicitly with the World Soul of Middle Platonism. He then goes on to show the relation of Spirit to Logos. "In this respect the Spirit corresponds to the Logos, with the exception that the Logos is the agent through which God created the world, while through the Spirit he maintains and controls it."[15] The Spirit, in other words, fulfills the same function of the World Soul, serving as providential and nourishing caregiver of the Cosmos, whereas the Demiurgic act belongs to the Son and Word of God. The *Logos* and *Pneuma* are thus both instruments of God, but are distinctly second and third according to *taxis*, so that the Holy Spirit, like the World Soul, may even appear as the product of the Demiurgic Logos. Theophilus of

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[13] See Barnes, "Early Christian Pneumatology," 173-174.

[14] *Athenagoras: Embassy for the Christians and The Resurrection of the Dead*, tr. and comm. Joseph Hugh Crehan, Ancient Christian Writers No. 23 (New York: Newman Press, 1956), 37.

[15] Abraham J. Malherbe, "The Holy Spirit in Athenagoras," *Journal of Theological Studies* 20 (1969), 538–542.

Antioch (d. 183/5), too, sees *Logos* and *Pneuma* as instruments of divine action. His account of their activities, however, grants the Spirit a role in creation. He combines Genesis 1:1-2 and Psalm 33:6 in a way that identifies the *Pneuma* with *Sophia* and thus describes the Spirit as God's creative instrument.[16]

An exception to Justin's consistent distinction of identity between Logos and Pneuma in his *Apologies* comes at *1 Apol.* 33.6. There Justin offers an interpretation of Lk. 1:35 ("The angel answered and said to her, 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; for that reason also the holy Child will be called the Son of God'"). "The Spirit and the Power from God cannot therefore be understood as anything else than the Word, who is alone the First-begotten of God."[17] The Word, Justin had said earlier, is the first Power after God (πρώτη δύναμις μετὰ τὸν πατέρα πάντων).[18] Justin then conflates Word and Spirit due to each one's identity as divine Power.[19] Anthony Briggman argues that this conflation is due to Justin's "binitarian orientation" which underlies Justin's thought despite his faithful adherence to dogmatic Trinitarian formulae. "Justin's commitment to Trinitarian belief is firm, it is just that his logic is not developed enough to support his convictions, which results in the occasional instances of Spirit Christology."[20] Justin thus distinguishes Word and Spirit insofar as the liturgical and theological tradition he has received is Trinitarian, but conflates the two on occasions where the tradition has not yet worked out ambiguities of referent in biblical accounts of person, activity, and characteristics of Christ and the Holy

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[16] Barnes, "Early Christian Pneumatology," 174.
[17] *1 Apol.* 33.6.
[18] *1 Apol.* 32.9.
[19] Briggman, "Measuring Justin's Approach to the Spirit," 127.
[20] Briggman, "Measuring Justin's Approach to the Spirit," 135.

Spirit. Briggman takes his definition of Spirit-Christology from Bogdan Bucur. "[Spirit-Christology] refers to the use of 'spirit' language to designate Christ—whether in reference to his divinity as opposed to his humanity, or as a personal title."[21] Justin's binitarian logic is owed partially to this Spirit-Christology which is itself related to the Jewish-Christian understanding of "Powers" (*dynameis*), an ontological category of angelic beings that emanate from God.[22] Whereas in the *Apologies* the strongest evidence of personal distinction between Logos and Pneuma came in his natural philosophy and description of divine *taxis*, the most convincing distinction in his *Dialogue with Trypho the Jew* comes in the context of his prosopological exegesis.

Justin's Exegesis in the Dialogue

Justin holds in common with his interlocutor in the *Dialogue* the inspiration of the Hebrew Bible (in the Greek translation of the LXX). Both see the Scriptures as products of the prophetic Spirit.[23] Michel Barnes argues the commonality between Justin and Trypho goes deeper than agreement on the inspired nature of Scripture.

Justin and Trypho regularly refer to the Holy Spirit, neither of them questions this terminology, and they both seem to understand what the other means by this term.

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[21] Bogdan Bucur, "The Son of God and the Angelomorphic Holy Spirit: A Rereading of the Shepherd's Christology," *ZNW* 98 (2007): 120-42, 121 n.7.

[22] See Briggman's discussion of "Powers" at "Measuring Justin's Approach to the Spirit," 124-135; Alan Segal, " 'Two Powers in Heaven and Early Christian Trinitarian Thinking," in *The Trinity: An Interdisciplinary Symposium on the Trinity*, eds. S.T. Davis, D. Kendall, G. O'Collins (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 73-95; Bogdan Bucur, *Angelomorphic Pneumatology: Clement of Alexandria and other Early Christian Witnesses* (Leiden: Brill, 2009).

[23] For "prophetic Spirit" see *Dial.* 32.3.3; 38.2.9; 43.3.8; 49.6.2; 53.4.2; 55.1.4; 56.5.2; 77.3.1; 84.2.5; 91.4.7.

This agreement is my point of departure: Justin and Trypho don't argue over "Spirit" because they share—in a broad but functional way—a pneumatology.[24] The points of disagreement between Justin and Trypho are specifically exegetical and are three relating to (1) Theophanies, (2) Prophecy, and (3) Prosopology. In each of these categories we see examples of Justin's inconsistent pneumatology as he sometimes differentiates Logos and Pneuma strongly while at other times the two are conflated either with respect to their activities or identities.

(1) Justin's account of Old Testament theophanies is meant to distinguish clearly between the Father and the Son.[25] The various appearances of God throughout the Scriptures and then in the man Jesus Christ were all presentations of the same Son and Word of God called by different names.[26] "The resulting Christology identifies Jesus as the God of Mamre, Bethel, Sinai, and Zion, and the rider of the chariot-throne."[27] The Logos tends to be the object of these revelations which are given by the agency of the prophetic Spirit. OT theophanies then mark a point of differentiation between Father, Logos, and Spirit for Justin, a distinction he undermines on occasion as when he ascribes the activity of inspiration to the divine Logos.

(2) The activities of the prophetic and divine Spirit include the empowerment to prophesy, moral transformation (of even the common, i.e., unphilosophical, person), sanctification, and the establishing of relationship to God by which those washed (baptism) and nourished (Eucharist) are made adoptive children of the Father.[28] This

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[24] Barnes, "Early Christian Pneumatology," 169-170.
[25] Cf. *1 Apol*. 63.14-16.
[26] *Dial*. 61.1.1-9.
[27] Bogdan Bucur, "Justin Martyr's Exegesis of Biblical Theophanies and the Parting of the Ways between Christianity and Judaism," *Theological Studies* 75 (2014): 34–51, here 50.
[28] On baptism with the Holy Spirit, see *Dial*. 29.1.

Spirit, says Justin, has come to rest on the Son at Christ's baptism. It now remains with Christ and is poured out on Christians, while prophecy and all spiritual things have ceased among the Jews.[29] The referent of the prophecies is Jesus Christ, that is, the Word made flesh.[30] The detailed fulfillment in Christ of the OT prophecies is evidence of the probative exegesis of Christians.[31]

Justin is also willing to ascribe the same prophetic activity to the Logos when it fits his argument. This tendency he shares with Philo. The phrase "prophetic spirit" appears in Philo's corpus, but "prophetic *logos*" appears more frequently. [32] While the influence of Philo on Justin is uncertain, Philo's shifting between describing biblical inspiration as an activity of God's Logos and of His Pneuma reflects the pattern one finds in Justin.[33]

(3) Justin comes to distinguish between the three persons of the Trinity most definitively in his prosopological exegesis of such texts as Ps. 110:1 (LXX 109:1) and Ps. 45:7-8 (LXX 44: 7-8). Matthew Bates defines prosopological exegesis as a reading technique whereby an interpreter seeks to overcome a real or perceived ambiguity

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[29] *Dial*. 82.1.1-3: Παρὰ γὰρ ἡμῖν καὶ μέχρι νῦν προφητικὰ χαρίσματά ἐστιν, ἐξ οὗ καὶ αὐτοὶ συνιέναι ὀφείλετε, ὅτι τὰ πάλαι ἐν τῷ γένει ὑμῶν ὄντα εἰς ἡμᾶς μετετέθη. See also *1 Apol*. 31.5–7. On Justin's account of the Spirit (and the seven powers of the Spirit) resting on Jesus see *Dial.* 87.3 and 5 and Briggman, "Measuring Justin's Approach to the Spirit," 130-135.

[30] See *Dial*. 135.3 in which Justin claims Isaiah 42:1-4 refers to Jesus Christ.

[31] *Dial*. 52.2.

[32] For 'prophetic spirit' see Philo, (*On Flight and Finding, On the Change of Names, On Dreams,* tr. F. H. Colson, G. H. Whitaker, Loeb Classical Library 275 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1934), 110. For 'prophetic Logos' see *On the Creation*, *Allegorical Interpretation of Genesis 2 and 3*, tr. F. H. Colson and G. H. Whitaker, Loeb Classical Library 226 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1929), 328; *On the Unchangeableness of God, On Husbandry, Concerning Noah's Work As a Planter, On Drunkenness, On Sobriety,* tr. F. H. Colson, G. H Whitaker, Loeb Classical Library 247 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1930), 272, 478.

[33] Oskar Skarsaune attenuates the strong claims of Philonic influence made by Demetrios Trakatellis; see Oskar Skarsaune, *The Proof from Prophecy: A Study in Justin Martyr's Proof-Text Tradition: Text-Type, Provenance, Theological Profile* (Leiden: Brill, 1987), 409-424; Demetrios Trakatellis, *The Pre-existence of Christ in the Writings of Justin Martyr* (Missoula, MT: Scholars Press, 1976), especially 53-92.

regarding the identity of the speakers or addressees (or both) in the divinely inspired source text by assigning nontrivial prosopa (i.e., non-trivial vis-à-vis the 'plain sense' of the text) to the speakers or addressees (or both) in order to make sense of the text.[34]

There are three things to attend to in Justin's prosopological exegesis, all of which appear in his interpretations of Psalms 110 and 45: (a) the agent of the speech; (b) the instrument through which or by whom the agent speaks; and (c) the dramatic or rhetorical person to whom the speech is to be assigned. The prophetic Spirit (which is the normal agent of inspiration) is always involved in the inspired texts, but not always in the same manner. The Spirit communicates by speaking *through* figures, and sometimes by speaking *in the person of* someone.

(a) The Spirit—or sometimes, the Word, again the two not always being clearly distinguished—is in all cases the agent of Scripture's inspired words. While the Spirit of God was generally acknowledged to be the agent or power behind the sacred books, this belief could be held comfortably without raising the question of whether the Spirit were a *hypostasis* distinct from that of the Father. Justin's Jewish interlocutor had no trouble admitting the inspiration and treating the Spirit as one of God's activities (*energeia*). If one were able to discover the Spirit as rhetorical speaker according to the exegesis of one of the Apologists, this could go some way towards determining whether the Spirit is being seen as a distinct hypostasis, a substantial agent as opposed to a mere activity. Justin also argues in his *Apologies* for the inspired nature of the Scriptures. The prophetic Spirit foretells the things which will happen in the future (τὰ μέλλοντα γίνεσθαι).[35] The

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[34] Matthew Bates, *The Hermeneutics of the Apostolic Proclamation: The Center of Paul's Method of Scriptural Interpretation* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2012), 218.
[35] *1 Apol.* 39.1; 42.1; *2 Apol.* 10.1

prophecies have now been fulfilled in detail.[36] This is proof of the genuineness of the

Christian revelation as well as the authenticity of the Judeo-Christian scriptures. The

prophetic Spirit also recalls to mind. "In order that we may be reminded that the one

suffering these ineffable things possesses the nations and rules his enemies, the prophetic

Spirit speaks thus . . ."[37] In this, the prophetic Spirit fulfills the role ascribed to the

Paraclete by Jesus in John's Gospel (Jn 14:26).

(b) As for the instrument, prosopology means establishing from whose mouth or

pen the words come.[38] This is a literary question provoked usually by ambiguities in the

text. Ambiguity could be caused either by the account itself or by grammatical

uncertainties (ambiguous relations of pronouns to antecedents). The key point of

ambiguity between Justin and Trypho is obviously not of a literary but a theological

nature, though grammatical arguments are one method for adjudicating interpretations of

these disputed passages. Justin has to clarify in his *1 Apology* that the prophets were not

the authors of their speech.

> [W]hen you listen to the prophecies, spoken as in the person [of someone], do not
>
> think that they were spoken by the inspired Prophets of their own accord, but by
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> the Word of God who prompts them. For, sometimes He asserts, in the manner of
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> a Prophet, what is going to happen; sometimes He speaks as in the name of God,

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[36] See *1 Apol.* 32.1 and the corresponding passage in *Dial*. 52.2, both of which explain Christ's fulfillment of Gen. 49:8-12 (only verses 10-11 were covered in the former).

[37] Ἵνα δὲ μηνύσῃ ἡμῖν τὸ προφητικὸν πνεῦμα ὅτι ὁ ταῦτα πάσχων ἀνεκδιήγητον ἔχει τὸ γένος καὶ βασιλεύει τῶν ἐχθρῶν, ἔφη οὕτως (*1 Apol.* 51.1.1).

[38] These are introduced by διὰ + genitive (see *Dial.* 25.1.3; 43.4.2; 55.2.5; 91.4.7) or else by ἐν + dative (*Dial.* 52.3.13; 73.2.5; 74.2.1), both indicating instrumentality.

the Lord and Father of all; sometimes, as in the name of Christ; sometimes, as in the name of the people replying to the Lord, or to His Father.[39]

In the final three clauses Justin articulates the third aspect of prosopological exegesis, establishing the rhetorical character or speaker. The scriptural exegete's determination of the *dramatis persona(e)* in a given passage is a weighty task full of theological implications. In his effort to stress the inspiration of the prophetic writings Justin passes between (a), (b), and (c).[40] The determination of the rhetorical speaker is the crux of Justin's prosopological exposition of Scripture on the basis of which he argues with both Gentile and Jewish interlocutors. It is also a means for clarifying his trinitarian theology.

(c) The third aspect of prosopological exegesis concerns the rhetorical speaker in a passage. Justin's interpretation of Psalms 110:1 (LXX 109:1) and 45:7-8 (LXX 44:7-8) in *Dial.* 56.14 is one of the clearest instances of his acknowledgment of three divine persons.[41] Justin puts forth these two texts after discussing Gen. 19:24 ("the Lord rained on Sodom brimstone and fire from the Lord out of heaven"[42]) as further evidence of intertrinitarian dialogue in the Hebrew Bible, supplementing his earlier proof that there is another God (Jesus) besides the Father. In his exegesis of both Psalms, Justin ascribes the role of the rhetorical speaker to the Holy Spirit who bears witness that there is another God and another Lord besides the Father. Acknowledging David as the instrument

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[39] *1 Apol.* 36, 1-2: Ὅταν δὲ τὰς λέξεις τῶν προφητῶν λεγομένας ὡς ἀπὸ προσώπου ἀκούητε, μὴ ἀπ' αὐτῶν τῶν ἐμπεπνευσμένων λέγεσθαι νομίσητε, ἀλλ' ἀπὸ τοῦ κινοῦντος αὐτοὺς θείου λόγου. ποτὲ μὲν γὰρ ὡς προαγγελτικὸς τὰ μέλλοντα γενήσεσθαι λέγει, ποτὲ δ' ὡς ἀπὸ προσώπου τοῦ δεσπότου πάντων καὶ πατρὸς θεοῦ φθέγγεται, ποτὲ δὲ ὡς ἀπὸ προσώπου τοῦ Χριστοῦ, ποτὲ δὲ ὡς ἀπὸ προσώπου λαῶν ἀποκρινομένων τῷ κυρίῳ ἢ τῷ πατρὶ αὐτοῦ.

[40] All three are found together in *1 Apol.* 53 in which the Spirit speaks, using Isaiah as an instrument, while impersonating the "Jews and Samaritans."

[41] For this section on Justin's prosopological exegesis I draw from Kyle Hughes, *The Trinitarian Testimony of the Spirit: Prosopological Exegesis and the Development of Pre-Nicene Pneumatology* (Leiden: Brill, 2018), 35-46.

[42] *Dial.* 56.12: "καὶ ὁ κύριος ἔβρεξεν ἐπὶ Σόδομα θεῖον καὶ πῦρ παρὰ κυρίου ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ."

through whom the Spirit's testimony is presented, Justin says "the Holy Spirit calls another 'God' and 'Lord' besides the Father of all things and his Christ."[43] Kyle Hughes interprets these instances of prosopological exegesis as evidence that Justin understands the Spirit to be not merely a divine activity, an *energeia* of God, but indeed a divine agent and a distinct divine *prosopon*.[44]

Early scholars claimed Justin had no notion of a Trinity. "Doctrine of the Trinity Justin had none. . . . The Logos was divine, but in the second place; the Holy Spirit was worthy of worship, but in the third place. Such words are entirely incompatible with a doctrine of the Trinity."[45] "Justin had no real doctrine of the Trinity" because his statement about Father, Son, and Spirit is "the language of Christian experience rather than theological reflection."[46] There is at times such clear distinction between the Son and the Spirit that I cannot agree with Goodenough or Barnard. On the contrary, Justin's theological arguments (exegetical and otherwise) most certainly involve three bearers of divine power whose activities are divine: the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The Son and Word is distinct from the Father. The Spirit is clearly a divine actor as well as a manifestation of divine activity and presence. The three are all objects of Christian worship, as Goodenough acknowledged.[47] Still, Justin's pneumatology is not so

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[43] *Dial.* 56.14.

[44] Hughes, *The Trinitarian Testimony of the Spirit*, 40; he notes, however, the more circumspect position of Matthew Bates, *The Birth of the Trinity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 164.

[45] E. R. Goodenough, *The Theology of Justin Martyr* (Jena: Frommannsche Buchhandlung, 1923), 186.

[46] Barnard, *Justin Martyr*, 105.

[47] The passage in *1 Apol* 6.1-2 is notorious for seeming to include angelic hosts in the list of the objects of Christian veneration: Ἔνθεν δὲ καὶ ἄθεοι κεκλήμεθα, καὶ ὁμολογοῦμεν τῶν τοιούτων νομιζομένων θεῶν ἄθεοι εἶναι, ἀλλ' οὐχὶ τοῦ ἀληθεστάτου καὶ πατρὸς δικαιοσύνης καὶ σωφροσύνης καὶ τῶν ἄλλων ἀρετῶν ἀνεπιμίκτου τε κακίας θεοῦ. ἀλλ' ἐκεῖνόν τε καὶ τὸν παρ' αὐτοῦ υἱὸν ἐλθόντα καὶ διδάξαντα ἡμᾶς ταῦτα, καὶ τὸν τῶν ἄλλων ἑπομένων καὶ ἐξομοιουμένων ἀγαθῶν ἀγγέλων στρατόν, πνεῦμά τε τὸ προφητικὸν

developed as to prevent his conflation of the Logos and the Spirit. There is tension between Justin's "Binitarianism and Trinitarianism." The Holy Spirit in Justin's theology is "partially eclipsed by the Word."[48] Irenaeus of Lyons would correct this conflation with his strong and consistent differentiation between the divine persons of the Trinity.

1.1.2. Irenaeus of Lyons (c. 130-c. 202)

Irenaeus's pneumatology is more differentiated in comparison with Justin's.[49] Irenaeus consistently differentiates the Spirit from the Word, acknowledges the Spirit's role in the economy and in creation, and touches (albeit obliquely) on the Spirit's origin. While he evinces a kind of Spirit-Christology, this does not lead him to conflate Spirit and Word as Justin had and Tertullian will. Confronting gnostic thought, he identifies biblical Sophia with the Holy Spirit, thus ascribing the various activities of wisdom to the Spirit. These activities include adornment of creation and the joining together of the world's disparate elements. Victorinus will similarly identify the Holy Spirit with *sapientia* and will ascribe to the Spirit the activity of joining together. Irenaeus posits giving life (*vivifacere*) as the Spirit's role, which Victorinus will ascribe rather to the Son. The point at which Irenaeus's pneumatology appears in strongest agreement with Justin and Tertullian (and mainstream Christians generally) is in its articulation of the Spirit's role in inspiring Scripture and its qualified interpreters.

σεβόμεθα καὶ προσκυνοῦμεν, λόγῳ καὶ ἀληθείᾳ τιμῶντες καὶ παντὶ βουλομένῳ μαθεῖν, ὡς ἐδιδάχθημεν, ἀφθόνως παραδιδόντες. See the note by Falls, *The First Apology*, 39.

[48] Briggman, "Measuring Justin's Approach to the Spirit," 136.

[49] On the pneumatology of Irenaeus of Lyons see Briggman, *Irenaeus of Lyons*; Barnes, "Early Christian Pneumatology"; John Behr, *Irenaeus of Lyons: Identifying Christianity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013); Hughes, *The Trinitarian Testimony of the Spirit*.

The Spirit, Scripture, and the Rule of Faith

Irenaeus maintains that the Spirit is responsible for the inspiration of the sacred Scriptures. Like Justin, Irenaeus sometimes speaks of the Word as giving the prophetic gift to Scripture's inspired authors.[50] More typically Irenaeus refers to the Holy Spirit as the one through whom all the prophets spoke, who has inspired the Scriptures, and by whom one is empowered to grasp the significance of the sacred page. Irenaeus, in a polemical passage, uses the example of Gideon's fleece as a way of differentiating the Christian interpretation of Scripture from Jewish interpretations. The Spirit is as the dew which came and soaked the fleece; the dry fleece represents the absence of the Spirit. That Spirit has left the Jews just as Gideon's fleece was left dry.[51] The Christian interpretation of Scripture, on the other hand, is probative, comprehensive, and veracious specifically because of the illumination Christians receive from the Spirit.

Understanding Scripture entails acknowledging its *skopos*: Scripture has a particular message which can only be seen by one who has the hermeneutical key.[52] This key is contained in the *regula fidei* preserved and passed down in the apostolic church.[53] Irenaeus gives the church's *regula* in different forms, in some of which the Holy Spirit is conspicuously absent.

> They carefully preserve the ancient tradition and believe in one God, the Creator
> of heaven and earth and everything in them, in Christ Jesus, the Son of God, who,

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[50] See *Haer.* IV.20.4.

[51] *Haer.* III.17.3 (Latin text, Irenaeus, *Libros quinque adversus haereses*, ed. William Wigan Harvey (Ridgewood, NJ: Gregg Press, 1965)).

[52] See especially *Haer.* IV.20.1-4 and Behr's analysis of *Haer.* IV (Behr, *Irenaeus of Lyons*, 98).

[53] Irenaeus traces the apostolic lineage down to his own day, claiming himself to have learned from Polycarp who was "instructed by apostles, and conversed with many who had seen Christ" (*Haer.* III.3.4, and see the whole chapter 3.1-4, in *ANF* I, 415-416).

because of his surpassing love for the world formed through him, consented to be born of the Virgin in order to unify humanity to God through his very self, who suffered under Pontius Pilate and rose again, and was taken up in splendor, who shall come in glory, the Savior of those to be saved and the Judge of those to be judged, who will send into eternal fire those who distort the truth and despise his Father and his own coming.[54]

This *regula fidei* has a pronounced emphasis on the oneness of God and the salutary work of the Son of God, Jesus Christ. The identity and work of Christ is the *skopos* of the Scriptures and their hermeneutical key. The Son is the content of the Scriptures both old and new. The Holy Spirit appears in Irenaeus's *regula fidei* in *Adv. Haer.* I.10.1 as the one "who proclaimed through the prophets the dispensations of God," making known the whole salutary work of Christ the incarnate Son of God.[55]

The Holy Spirit gives the knowledge of the faith to the disciples at Pentecost. After the Spirit came upon them they "had perfect knowledge" and preached "the Gospel of God" to all nations.[56] This knowledge is what is preserved in the *regula fidei*. The Holy Spirit bears witness to the divinity of the Father and the Son, calling them both Lord. "Since, therefore, the Father is truly Lord, and the Son truly Lord, the Holy Spirit has fitly designated them by the title of Lord."[57] The theophanies of the Old Testament are the work of the Son whose role always and everywhere is to reveal the Father.[58] If the Son is the object of revelation then so too is the Father *a fortiori* because the Son is the

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[54] *Haer.* III.4.2.
[55] *Haer.* I.10.1.
[56] *Haer*. III.1.1.
[57] *Haer.* III.6.1, *ANF* I, 418; see also *Haer.* IV.1.1.
[58] On the Son-Word's declaration of the Father see *Haer*. IV.6-7.

image of the Father, the visible of the invisible.[59] "[T]he knowledge of salvation was the knowledge of the Son of God, who is both called and actually is salvation and Savior and salutary."[60] This knowledge is the gift of the Spirit.

The Spirit and the Church

While in Irenaeus's thought the Spirit is not the direct object of revelation, it is an integral part of Christian life and liturgy. The Holy Spirit grants adoptive sonship and the ability to address God as Father.

[W]e shall not see another Father, but Him whom we now desire to see; . . . neither shall we look for another Christ and Son of God, but Him who [was born] of the Virgin Mary, who also suffered, in whom too we trust, and whom we love; . . . neither do we receive another Holy Spirit, besides Him who is with us, and who cries, 'Abba, Father.'[61]

The Spirit's presence constitutes the Church. "For where the church is, there is the Spirit of God; and where the Spirit of God is, there is the church and every grace: indeed, the Spirit is truth."[62] The church is constituted by the Spirit's life-giving work.

For it is to the church that this gift of God has been entrusted, just as breath to the son who was molded, so that all the participating members may be made alive (*vivificentur*); and by it [the gift] communion with Christ has been deposited, this

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[59] *Haer.* IV.6.6.

[60] "sed agnitio salutis erat agnitio Filii Dei, qui et salus, et Salvator, et salutare vere et dicitur et est" (*Haer.* III.10.2, *ANF* I, 424).

[61] *Haer.* IV. 9.2; *ANF* I, 472.

[62] *Haer*. III.24.1.

is the Holy Spirit, the earnest of incorruption and the confirmation of our faith and

the ladder of ascent to God.[63]

The mode of life which the Spirit gives to the faithful is spiritual life, although the Spirit

is also responsible for the gift of common life bestowed at creation.[64] Christ, too, is

responsible for vivification, as is seen in *Haer.* III.18.7: "What he [Jesus Christ] did

appear, that he also was: God recapitulated in himself the ancient formation of man, that

he might kill sin, deprive death of its power, and vivify the human being."[65] For Christ

becomes the "life-giving spirit" through his suffering.[66] The life which Christ gives,

however, he gives through the Spirit. In fact, Irenaeus makes both responsible for

vivification in his *Haer.* V.1.3. This passage, referring as it does to the fashioning

(*plasmare*) of the human being, is best explained in connection with Irenaeus's famous

"two hands" analogy and will be discussed below.

The spiritual life which the Holy Spirit gives is directly related to the *oikonomia*

of Christ. In the incarnation, the Father is said to anoint, the Son is anointed (*Christ*), and

the Spirit is the unction itself. The Holy Spirit comes upon Jesus at his baptism Irenaeus

asserts in opposition to the gnostic view that 'Christ' descended upon Jesus and flew

away at the Passion.[67] The Holy Spirit dwelling in Christ becomes thereby accustomed to

dwelling among humans, in the meantime "renewing them from their old habits into the

newness of Christ."[68] Briggman explains how Christ's glorification after his Passion has

salutary effects for humanity.

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[63] *Haer.* III.24.1.
[64] Cf. *Haer.* V.1.3 and Briggman, *Irenaeus of Lyons*, 124.
[65] See Behr, *Irenaeus of Lyons*, 91.
[66] See *Haer.* III.22.3 and Behr, *Irenaeus of Lyons*, 92.
[67] *Haer*. III.16.
[68] *Haer.* III.17.1, see John Behr, *Irenaeus of Lyons*, 90.

The first qualitative change of Jesus's humanity occurred at his Incarnation when its union with the Word rendered it incorruptible. The second qualitative change of his humanity occurred at his glorification or spiritualization, when the Spirit rendered his already incorruptible humanity the saving principle for the rest of the human race.[69]

Briggman does not give as much weight as Behr to the Spirit's "becoming accustomed to dwell among human beings."[70] Christ as the saving principle for the human race bestows the gift of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost and sends the Holy Spirit as Paraclete is sent to fit Christians to God (*qui nos aptaret Deo*).[71]

The Spirit is also called "dew." Irenaeus explains "why the dew of God is necessary for us," namely, "so that we may not be consumed with fire, nor be rendered unfruitful, and so that [where] we have an accuser there we may also have the Paraclete."[72] The dew, as Anthony Briggman explains, keeps humanity from condemnation (consumption by fire).[73] The Spirit waters the believer "as dry ground" so that one may "bear the fruit of life."[74] In the same passage, the Irenaeus says we receive "the image and inscription of the Father and the Son [that] we may bear fruit."[75] The work of cultivating virtues and spiritual gifts is the forming of the human being to the likeness of the Son who is himself the image of the Father. The whole Trinity is involved in the work of salvation, but in both salvation and creation each has a distinct role.

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[69] Briggman, *Irenaeus of Lyons*, 75.
[70] Behr, *Irenaeus of Lyons*, 91.
[71] *Haer.* III.17.3.
[72] *Haer.* III.17.3.
[73] Briggman, *Irenaeus of Lyons*, 84.
[74] *Haer.* III.17.3.
[75] *Haer.* III.17.3.

The Activity of the Trinity

The Trinity acts in the world in a differentiated manner. The Father is the Creator, but acts through the Son and the Holy Spirit. The Son and the Holy Spirit Irenaeus refers to as the two hands of God, a phrase that is particularly pertinent for Irenaeus's account of the creation of Adam. "Now humanity is a mixed organization (*temperatio*) of soul and flesh, who was formed after the likeness of God, and moulded by His hands, that is, by the Son and Holy Spirit."[76] This work of the hands of God is repeated in *Haer*. V.1.3 where Irenaeus explains the first life of Adam and the new spiritual life granted by the Word and Spirit through Christ's passion.

> [J]ust as at the beginning of our formation (*plasmationis*) in Adam, the breath of life from God, having been united to the handiwork (*plasmati*), animated the human being and showed him to be a rational being, so also, at the end, the Word of the Father and the Spirit of God, having become united with the ancient substance of the formation (*plasmationis*) of Adam, rendered the human being living (*viventem*) and perfect, bearing the perfect Father, in order that just as in the animated we all die, so also in the spiritual we may all be vivified (*vivificemur*).

The two hands of God are operative in the molding and animating of Adam. The life given to Adam and the life given by Christ through the Spirit appear distinctive, although Behr argues they differ rather in degree than in kind.[77] By the Logos God made all things intelligently. "And, since God is rational, therefore by (the) Word He created the things

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[76] *Haer*. IV.*Praef*.4 (*ANF* I, 463): Homo est autem temperatio animae et carnis, qui secundum similitudinem Dei formatus est, et per manus eius plasmatus est, hoc est, per Filium et Spiritum sanctum.
[77] Behr, *Irenaeus of Lyons*, 149-158; cf. Briggman, *Irenaeus of Lyons*, 167-173.

that were made; therefore, by Logos He created the world."[78] The human person, as a rational being, is made in the image of the Logos. The Holy Spirit has the role of rendering the creation beautiful. "God is Spirit, and by (the) Spirit He adorned all things."[79] The Spirit does so by giving order, form, and diversity, three components of ancient aesthetic theory. Their association with Spirit is to name the Spirit as responsible for the beauty and goodness of creation hence its role as adorner.[80] The two passages just quoted from *Dem.* 74 belong to a continuous passage in which Irenaeus interprets Ps. 33:6: "By the Word of the Lord were the heavens established, and by his Spirit all their power." His explanation that God created by the Word of the Lord and by the Spirit God adorned the creation marks a distinction between Word and Spirit and an acknowledgment of the distinctive role of the Spirit in creation which he seems to have learned from Theophilus of Antioch.[81] The Spirit's creative work allows Irenaeus to identify it with the *Sophia* of Proverbs.

Irenaeus assimilates the biblical title of *Sophia* to the Holy Spirit. The Spirit's work of adornment, which includes bestowing order and harmonizing, are activities belonging to Wisdom. Briggman counts seven times where Irenaeus refers to the Holy Spirit as Wisdom in *Against Heresies* and two in *Demonstration of the Apostolic Preaching*.[82] At *Haer.* IV.20.3 he claims "Wisdom also, which is the Spirit, was present with Him, anterior to all creation." He has in mind passages in Proverbs in which

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[78] *St. Irenaeus: The Demonstration of the Apostolic Preaching,* tr., intr., and com. J. Armitage Robinson (New York: SPCK, 1920), 74.

[79] *Dem.*, 74.

[80] For this section see John K. Mackett, "Eusebius of Caesarea's Theology of the Holy Spirit," (Ph. D. diss.: Marquette University, 1990), 156.

[81] As Barnes and Briggman both note: Barnes, "Early Christian Pneumatology," 174; Briggman, *Irenaeus of Lyons*, 97-103.

[82] Briggman, *Irenaeus of Lyons*, 128.

Wisdom participates in God's work of creation. The connection "famously establishes the eternality and creativity of the Spirit."[83] The assimilation of Spirit to Sophia is a way in which Irenaeus confronts the system of the gnostics; in so doing he obliquely addresses the question of the Spirit's generation.

The query comes about in the course of his refutation of gnostic emanations. "[S]ince they [the Valentinians] allege that the Creator originated from a defect or apostasy, so have they also taught that Christ and the Holy Spirit were emitted on account of this defect."[84] The Valentinians identified Sophia and the Holy Spirit, as Irenaeus himself did, though Briggman is right to say the meanings the Valentinians and Irenaeus gave to these terms differed considerably from one another.[85] Irenaeus is careful to assert that the Spirit did not come forth as the result of a lapse or imperfection.

> [I]t is not possible . . . that the Sophia of God, she who is within the Pleroma, coming from a production of this kind [i.e., as the Valentinian emanation of the aeons], should have fallen under the influence of passion, and conceived such ignorance.[86]

The Spirit is perfect and eternal, not a defect or an emanation from God coming about accidentally. God was never without his two hands, the Word and the Spirit, and certainly was never without His Wisdom.

1.1.3. Tertullian (c. 155-c. 240)

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[83] Briggman, *Irenaeus of Lyons*, 130.

[84] "Et quemadmodum fabricatorem ex labe sive defectio emissum dicunt, sic et Christum et Spiritum sanctum propter labem emissum docuerunt" (*Haer.* IV.*praef.*3, *ANF* I, 462).

[85] Briggman, *Irenaeus of Lyons*, 133.

[86] *Haer.* II.17.8.

As "the font of Latin trinitarian theology," Tertullian's writings are voluminous and stand at the head of several streams of Latin theologizing.[87] His contribution to pneumatology is somewhat ambivalent. He takes a step back from the advances of Irenaeus due to his treatment of spirit (*pneuma*, *spiritus*) and the divine substance as material. His account of the Son-Word and the Spirit is ambiguous as Tertullian clearly emphasizes the difference between them, though at other times his Spirit-Christology leads him often to conflate the two. He gave Latin writers their theological vocabulary and shaped the very mold of Latin trinitarian thinking.[88] With great rhetorical skill he transposed legal and philosophical terminology into a theological register that established *substantia*, *persona*, and *status* as Latin Christianity's choice vocabulary for both trinitarian theology and Christology.[89] His theology of the Holy Spirit in his later career show the influence of the New Prophecy on his thought, but its impact appears to have had more of an influence on his account of Christian *disciplina* and on his trinitarian theology generally than on his pneumatology in particular.

Influence of Montanism

Tertullian's pneumatology is underdeveloped, in spite of the fact that he was an adherent of the New Prophecy. One would expect that as a Montanist and for all his contribution to theological language and trinitarian thought Tertullian would offer a

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[87] Barnes, "Latin Trinitarian Theology," 70.

[88] On Tertullian's masterful rhetorical skill and consistent use of it see Timothy David Barnes, *Tertullian: A Historical and Literary Study* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971), especially 187-232.

[89] "He owed the shape of his own thought to the confluence of Stoic philosophy, Roman Law, intra-ecclesial polemics, and his own theological reflection on the nature of Christianity and the message of the revealed Scriptures" (James Morgan, *The Importance of Tertullian in the Development of Christian Dogma* (London: K. Paul, Trench, Trubner, 1928), 11-12.

strong teaching on the Holy Spirit. In this respect Tertullian's work is disappointing.[90]

Michel Barnes notes Tertullian's underdeveloped theology of the Spirit as entailing a

conspicuous silence on the Holy Spirit's role in creation, a weak account of the

generation of the Spirit, and the confusions of Son and Spirit in Tertullian's writings on

the incarnation owing to his Spirit-Christology.[91] Claudio Moreschini likewise does not

find a robust pneumatology in Tertullian's writings. His account of the procession of the

Spirit is not only weak, but not treated at all. "Sulla processione dello Spirito Santo

Tertulliano non parla."[92] On the other hand, Stegman and Kretschmar, in Moreschini's

recounting, are of the opinion that Tertullian initially understands Spirit in a dynamic

sense (i.e., as a divine activity), but in his Montanist phase takes Spirit hypostatically.[93]

Yet a third perspective is articulated by Jaroslav Pelikan and more recently JohnMark

Beazley, who discern a moderate impact of the New Prophecy on Tertullian's

pneumatology.[94]

I agree with Moreschini and Michel Barnes that Tertullian's theology of the Holy

Spirit was hardly influenced by his Montanism.[95] Montanism was concerned with the

renewed experience of prophecy in the Church whose object was especially moral

reform, not necessarily with speculations concerning the nature of the Spirit. Christine

Trevett explains the ethical appeal of Montanism. "Tertullian saw the Paraclete promise

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[90] "The common assumption is that the result of Tertullian's Montanism would be a strong pneumatology, but such is not the case" (Barnes, "Latin trinitarian theology," 75).

[91] Barnes, "Latin trinitarian theology," 75.

[92] Claudio Moreschini, "Tradizione e innovazione nella pneumatologia di Tertulliano," *Augustinianum* 20 (1980): 633-644, 636.

[93] Moreschini, "Tradizione e innovazione," 634.

[94] JohnMark Bennet Beazley, "Novatian's Pneumatology," (Ph. D. diss.: Southern, 2016), 86.

[95] "La personalità dello Spirito Santo non è, secondo noi, il prodotto della riflessione teologica del montanismo" (Moreschini, "Tradizione e innovazione," 634).

fulfilled through them [the Montanists], with the Holy Spirit continuing the work of ethical renewal and with fresh leadings on discipline."[96] Montanist thought was likely by and large in agreement with the Catholic theology of the period.

> Earlier sources suggested the prophets' conformity with 'mainstream' Christian thinking: they accepted the same scriptures (of both covenants) as other Christians and held the same view of Father, Son and Holy Spirit and the resurrection of the dead (*Pan.* 48.1.3–4), just as Hippolytus wrote that they maintained the same views about Christ and the creator as did his co-religionists (*Refut. omn. haer.* 8.19; 10.25).[97]

If Montanism did not in fact hinder adherence to Catholic pneumatology, it was nevertheless no more than neutral from the point of view of doctrinal development on the Holy Spirit. Montanism impacted the practical side of Tertullian's Christian devotion but could not touch either his philosophical materialism or his theological interpretation of the nature and persons of the Son and the Spirit.

Timothy Barnes, Andrew McGowan, and Hughes give a stronger account of the influence of the New Prophecy on Tertullian's pneumatology, drawing attention to passages like this just quoted in which Montanism has clearly affected Tertullian's exposition.[98] This work against Praxeas, the patripassian and modalist monarchian, is both "his fullest exposition of God as Trinity but also one of his most 'Montanist'

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[96] Christine Trevett, "Montanism," in *The Early Christian World*, ed. Philip F. Esler, 2nd ed. (London: Routledge, 2017), 867-884, 872.

[97] Trevett, "Montanism," 872.

[98] Timothy Barnes, *Tertullian*, 130-142; Kyle Hughes, *How the Spirit Became God: The Mosaic of Early Christian Pneumatology* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2020), 70; Andrew McGowan, "God in Early Latin Theology: Tertullian and the Trinity," in *God in Early Christian Thought: Essays in Memory of Lloyd G. Patterson*, eds. Andrew McGowan, Brian Daley, and Timothy Gaden (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 61-81.

writings."[99] The upshot of Tertullian's Montanism was a marked presence of the

Paraclete in his writings, an aspect of pneumatology that will likewise have a prominent

place in Victorinus's pneumatological arguments in *Adv. Ar.* III. Tertullian sees himself

as interpreting the Scriptures under the inspiration of the Paraclete who was sent by

Christ to lead the people into all truth.

> For we, who by the grace of God examine both the occasions and the intentions of
>
> the scriptures, especially as being disciples not of men but of the Paraclete, do
>
> indeed specify two, the Father and the Son, and even three with the Holy Spirit,
>
> according to that calculation of the economy which makes plurality, lest, as your
>
> selfwill imports, the Father himself be believed to have been born and to have
>
> died—which is not lawful to be believed, seeing it has not been so delivered.[100]

Tertullian's rule of faith is nearly identical to that of Irenaeus, with this significant

addition: "that thereafter he, according to his promise, sent from the Father the Holy

Spirit the Paraclete, the sanctifier of the faith of those who believe in the Father and the

Son and the Holy Spirit."[101] The addition anticipates the Paraclete clauses of the creedal

statements of the 340s and 350s discussed in the next chapter. Tertullian's concern in

Adversus Praxeam was not purely a matter of discipline but included the Spirit's role in

Christian *doctrina* as McGowan argues.[102] Tertullian's appeal to the Paraclete's

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[99] McGowan, "God in Early Latin Theology," 61-62.

[100] *Ad. Prax.* 13.5: nos enim, qui et tempora et causas, scripturarum per dei gratiam inspicimus, maxime paracleti non hominum discipuli, duos quidem definimus, patrem et filium, et iam tres cum spiritu sancto, secundum rationem oeconomiae quae facit numerum, ne, ut vestra perversitas infert, pater ipse credatur natus et passus, quod non licet credi quoniam non ita traditum est (Tertullian, *Treatise against Praxeas*, ed. and tr. Ernest Evans (London: SPCK, 1948), 103).

[101] *Ad. Prax.* 2.1: qui exinde miserit, secundum promissionem suam, a patre spiritum sanctum paracletum, sanctificatorem fidei eorum qui credunt in patrem et filium et spiritum sanctum (Evans, 90).

[102] McGowan, "God in Early Latin Theology," 64.

inspiration to secure his own authoritative interpretation of the tradition and his reference to the Paraclete as "sanctifier of the faith" are proof of this. The emphasis on *doctrina*, however, does not alter our conclusion. For while Tertullian highlights the work of the Paraclete in securing authentic Christian teaching, that authentic teaching does not involve significant reflection on the nature of the Spirit as such. McGowan acknowledges the lack of pneumatological sophistication in the work, in spite of the Montanist influence.[103] The *doctrina* for which the Paraclete appears responsible in *Adv. Prax.* is that God is Trinity, the Word-Son and Holy Spirit are distinct from the Father, and the incarnate Son is the one who suffered, thus correcting the teachings of modalist Monarchianism and patripassianism. This teaching does not prevent Tertullian from confusing the Word-Son and Spirit and it does not at all suggest to him the question of the Spirit's origin. As for the Spirit's role in creation (alluding to the three criteria of Michel Barnes above), its absence seems to be accounted for by Tertullian's curious understanding of the divine economy.

McGowan explains that Tertullian's use of *oikonomia* or *dispensatio* in *Adv. Prax* is distinct from what one finds in Irenaeus before him and what becomes the consensus understanding after him. For Irenaeus, as for Hippolytus whose *Contra Noetum* Tertullian may have consulted as he wrote his *Adv. Prax.*, the divine economy refers to God's activity in the world.[104] "Tertullian's economy is not the way God is revealed in history, but the self-disposition of God—rather more the 'immanent' Trinity of later theology

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[103] McGowan writes of "Tertullian's understatement concerning the Holy Spirit" in this treatise (McGowan, "God in Early Latin Theology," 62).

[104] For Irenaeus's understanding of *economy* as pertaining to salvation history see Anthony Briggman, *Irenaeus of Lyons and the Theology of the Holy Spirit* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 166-181. See Hippolytus, *Contra Noetum*, 1-11; for the suggestion that Tertullian made use of *Contra Noetum* for *Adv. Prax.* see McGowan, "God in Early Latin Theology," 68-69.

than the 'economic.'"[105] While Tertullian locates the divine dispensation in God before creation, he does describe a kind of development according to which God's word is established when God decides to create, then is begotten as Son in the incarnation at which time God becomes Father.

> For when first God's will was to produce in their own substances and species those things which in company of Wisdom and Reason and Discourse he had ordained within himself, he first brought forth Discourse, which had within it its own inseparable Reason and Wisdom, so that the universe of things might come into existence by the agency of none other than him by whose agency they had been thought out and ordained, yea even already made as far as concerns the consciousness of God.[106]

Wisdom proceeds from God as he pronounces *fiat lux* (7.1). It becomes clear that *Sophia* is ascribed to the Word (*Sermo*) who becomes the Son, "thereafter causing him to be his Father by proceeding from whom he became Son, the first-begotten as begotten before all things, the only-begotten as alone begotten out of God in a true sense from the womb of his heart."[107]

Tertullian writes in temporal—or at least sequential—terms then of God's self-unfolding from single substance into three distinct subsistences. As McGowan says, "In the (very) beginning, God's substance has a trinitarian reality only *in nuce*."[108] This is one

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[105] McGowan, "God in Early Latin Theology," 65.

[106] *Adv. Prax.* 6.3: "nam ut primum deus voluit ea quae cum sophia e*t* ratione et sermone disposuerat intra se in substantias et species suas edere, ipsum primum protulit sermonem habentem in se individuas suas rationem et sophiam, ut per ipsum fierent universa per quem erant cogitata atque disposita, immo et facta iam quantum in dei sensu" (Evans, 94).

[107] *Adv. Prax.* 7.1: "exinde eum patrem sibi faciens de quo procedendo filius factus est primogenitus, ut ante omnia genitus, et unigenitus, ut solus ex deo genitus, proprie de vulva cordis" (Evans, 95).

[108] McGowan, "God in Early Latin Theology," 65.

particular way in which more philosophically sophisticated writers both before and after Tertullian provide a better understanding of trinitarian metaphysics, which upholds God's simplicity, eternality, and immutability along with the threefold distinction in God.

Trinitarian Terminology: Substantia, Persona, Status, Gradus

Tertullian writes against the perspective of a certain sect "which supposes itself to possess truth unadulterated while it thinks it impossible to believe in one God unless it says that both Father and Son and Holy Spirit are one and the same."[109] He insists that one God is possessed of diverse qualities such that

> they are all of the one, namely by unity of substance, while none the less is
>
> guarded the mystery of that economy which disposes the unity into trinity, setting
>
> forth Father and Son and Spirit as three, three however not in quality but in
>
> sequence, not in substance but in aspect, not in power but in <its> manifestation,
>
> yet of one substance and one quality and one power, seeing it is one God from
>
> whom those sequences and aspects and manifestations are reckoned out in the
>
> name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.[110]

Tertullian's view of substance and how it applies to the Christian Trinity is taken from the perspectives of Roman law and Stoic physics. Legally speaking, one substance can be possessed by a plurality of persons.[111] The substance that God is is *pneuma*, which, in line

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[109] *Adv. Prax.* 2.3: "maxime haec quae se existimat meram veritatem possidere dum unicum deum non alias putat credendum quam si ipsum eundemque et patrem et filium et spiritum sanctum" (Evans, 90).
[110] *Adv. Prax.* 2.3: "unus sit omnia dum ex uno omnia, per substantiae scilicet unitatem, et nihilo minus custodiatur οἰκονομίας sacramentum quae unitatem in trinitatem disponit, tres dirigens patrem et filium et spiritum, tres autem non statu sed gradu, nec substantia sed forma, nec potestate sed specie, unius autem substantiae et unius status et unius potestatis, quia unus deus ex quo et gradus isti et formae et species in nomine patris et filii et spiritus sancti deputantur" (Evans, 90-91).
[111] Morgan, *Tertullian*, 32.

with Stoic physics, is material for Tertullian. "[F]or who will deny that God is body, although God is a spirit? For spirit is body, of its own kind, in its own form."[112]

Tertullian writes of Christ as combining dichotomies, being composed in such a way as to avoid confusion of substances. "Certainly we find him set forth as in every respect Son of God and son of man . . . according to each substance . . . we observe a double quality (*status*), not confused but combined, Jesus in one person God and human."[113] Brian Daley argues the Trinitarian theology of Tertullian is dependent upon his account of the nature of Christ.[114] It is on the basis of Tertullian's forensic frame that Daley explains what Tertullian means when he refers to the Trinity comprising diverse ranks. In Roman law, grades within a single *status* was a typical way of understanding orders within a single office. The Spirit is given third *gradus*, the Son second.[115] On the other hand, within this legal use of terms, multiple substances can be the property of one person. And just as in trinitarian metaphysics three graded *personae* can belong to one *status*, so in Christology one *persona* may simultaneously occupy two offices (*status*).[116]

> By the aid of the distinction, recognized by jurists, between 'substance' and
>
> 'person,' he was able to develop on a satisfactory basis, in opposition to the

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[112] Tertullian, *Adv. Prax.* 7.8: "quis enim negabit deum corpus esse, etsi deus spiritus est? spiritus enim corpus sui generis in sua effigie" (Evans, 96). "Deus spiritus est è inteso come il corpus di Dio" (Moreschini, "Tradizione e innovazione," 633, alluding to *Adv. Prax.* 7.8 and 8.4).

[113] *Adv. Prax.* 27.10-11: "certe usquequaque filium dei et filium hominis . . . secundum utramque substantiam . . . videmus duplicem statum, non confusum sed coniunctum, in una persona deum et hominem Iesum" (Evans, 124).

[114] Brian E. Daley, S. J., "The Persons in God and the Person of Christ in Patristic Theology: An Argument for Parallel Development," in *The Mystery of the Holy Trinity in the Fathers of the Church: The Proceedings of the Fourth Patristic Conference, Maynooth, 1999* ed. D. Vincent Twomey SVD and Lewis Ayres (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2007): 9-36, 14-20.

[115] Cf. *Adv. Prax.* 9.3; 30.5.

[116] Morgan, *Tertullian*, 32.

Monarchians, the ancient ecclesiastical formula which became a great formula of the Western Church 'Christus deus et homo.'[117]

Whether it is altogether correct to consider this terminology to be specifically legal (as opposed to rhetorical or philosophical), the Latin tradition owes a good deal of its theological vocabulary, both Christological and Trinitarian, to Tertullian's developments.

Interpretation of Lk. 1:35

The effects of this account of substance combined with Tertullian's Spirit-Christology result in the conflation of Spirit and Word. There was in Christ, according to the logic of Tertullian's Spirit-Christology, "no impairment so that the spirit did the deeds, the flesh accomplished its own passions and at length died."[118] This conflation is seen in Tertullian's comments on Lk. 1:35. Tertullian's polemics with the "Spirit-Monarchianists," as with most intra-ecclesial controversies, comes down to competing exegeses of Scripture. On the one hand, Tertullian clearly distinguishes the Son and Paraclete Spirit, as when he says the "Son was sent by the Father into the virgin . . . thereafter he sent the Holy Spirit the Paraclete."[119] On the other hand, because the "internal disposition" of Tertullian's trinitarian theology in *Adv. Prax.* is determinedly anti-monarchian, he is often tempted to bring together passages referring to the Logos or the Son or the Spirit as somehow derivative from God so as to distinguish the agents of the economy with the impassible Father.[120] His interpretation of Luke 1:35-36 at *Adv.*

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[117] Morgan, *Tertullian*, 32.

[118] *Adv. Prax.* 27, 19-20.

[119] *Adv. Prax.* 2.1: "hunc [filius] missum a patre in virginem . . . qui exinde miserit . . . spiritum sanctum paracletum" (Evans, 90).

[120] Barnes, "Latin Trinitarian Theology," 70.

Prax. 26 is intended to prove that the power of the Most High is distinct from God the Father who is himself the Most High. While he makes his point rather effectively, the result of his exegesis is a confusion of Word-Son and Spirit.

When writing of Christ as the Wisdom and the Power of God, he associates this passage with 1 Cor. 2:11: "who knows the things which be in God except the Spirit which is in him?" Tertullian claims there is a distinction here between God Himself and the Spirit of God. "For when he said 'the Spirit of God,' although God is spirit, yet since he did not mention God in the nominative case he wished there to be understood an assignment of the whole which was to go to the Son's account."[121] The spirit which knows the things of God is the Son. He then argues the identity between Spirit and Word, combining this passage with John 1:3 in light of Tertullian's Spirit-Christology.

> This Spirit of God will be the same as the Word. For as, when John says, 'The Word was made flesh,' we understand also Spirit at the mention of the Word, so also here we recognize also the Word under the name of the Spirit. For spirit is the substance of the Word, and word is an operation of the Spirit, and the two are one.[122]

The distinction between God Himself and the spirit and power of God results in a conflation of Word and Spirit. While the Spirit is the name of God's substance (cf. Tertullian, *Apol.* 21.10-14), power and wisdom are qualities of spirit. "Since then these, whatever they are, the Spirit of God and his Word and his power, were conferred upon

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[121] *Adv. Prax.* 26.3: "dicens autem, Spiritus dei, etsi spiritus de*us*, tamen non directo deum nominans portionem totius intellegi voluit quae cessura erat in filii nomen" (Evans, 122).
[122] *Adv. Prax.* 26.4: "hic spiritus dei idem erit sermo. sicut enim Ioanne dicente, Sermo caro factus est, spiritum quoque intellegimus in mentione sermonis, ita et hic sermonem quoque agnoscimus in nomine spiritus. nam et spiritus substantia est sermonis et sermo operatio spiritus, et duo unum sunt" (Evans, 122).

the virgin, that which is born of her is the Son of God."[123] Thus over the course of an extended explanation of the "Power of the Most High" which overshadowed the Virgin Mary, Tertullian's Spirit-Christology and anti-monarchian polemic lead him to confuse the Holy Spirit with the Word-Son.[124]

Distinction of Persons

While Tertullian sometimes confuses *spiritus* as substance with that aspect of divinity which was present in Christ and does not consistently differentiate between the Word-Son and the Holy Spirit, there are places in his works in which he strongly and unambiguously differentiates all three *personae*. He articulates the following rule of prosopological exegesis.

> [A]ll the scriptures display both the demonstration and the distinctness of the Trinity: and from them is derived also our standing rule, that speaker and person spoken of and person spoken to cannot be regarded as one and the same, for as much as neither wilfulness nor deception befits God as that, being himself the one spoken to, he should prefer to speak to another and not to himself.[125]

How this works in practice Tertullian illustrates. He notes the "Spirit speaking in the third person concerning the Father and the Son," appealing to Ps. 110:1, Isaiah 45:1 and 53:1 as few among many scriptural passages in which this is the case.[126] He then explains. "So

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[123] *Adv. Prax.* 26.7: "his itaque rebus, quodcunque sunt, spiritu dei et sermone et virtute, conlatis in virginem, quod de ea nascitur filius dei est" (Evans, 122).

[124] As we saw with Justin Martyr's interpretation of Lk 1:35 in §I.1.

[125] *Adv. Prax.* 11.4: "scripturae omnes et demonstrationem et distinctionem trinitatis ostendant a quibus et praescriptio nostra deducitur, non posse unum atque eundem videri qui loquitur et de quo loquitur et ad quem loquitur, quia neque perversitas neque fallacia deo congruat, ut cum ipse esset ad quem loquebatur, ad alium potius et non ad semetipsum loquatur" (Evans, 100).

[126] *Adv. Prax.* 11.

in these <texts>, few though they be, yet the distinctiveness of the Trinity is clearly expounded: for there is the Spirit himself who makes the statement, the Father to whom he makes it, and the Son of whom he makes it."[127] Kyle Hughes, on the basis of such passages as this, argues for a stronger pneumatology in Tertullian's works than either Barnes or Moreschini acknowledges. Tertullian's prosopological exegesis, as we saw with that of Justin Martyr, sometimes places the Spirit as not only the primary author of Scripture, but as the very person from whose vantage Scripture is speaking. In such passages as Isaiah 53:1, the Father and the Son are objects of address and content, respectively. This leaves the Spirit as a Third, distinct from the other two.

The inconsistent differentiation of *personae* in Tertullian's thought is in line with Trinitarian theology from Justin through Irenaeus, although it is more prominent than Irenaeus's. Tertullian's attempt to avoid a Platonic mode of subordination would be influential for later Latin pneumatology. Both the tendency to conflate Word-Son and Spirit and the Stoic materialist conception of *pneuma* will require correction by later Christians. Victorinus is beholden to Tertullian's Trinitarian thought and his pneumatology. Unlike Tertullian, however, he consistently differentiates Word and Spirit and understands *spiritus* (*pneuma*) as immaterial.

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1.2. Approaching Nicaea: Origen

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[127] *Adv. Prax.* 11.9-10: "his itaque paucis tamen manifeste distinctio trinitatis exponitur: est enim ipse qui pronuntiat spiritus, et pater ad quem pronuntiat, et filius de quo pronuntiat" (Evans, 101).

Origen had immense influence on many of the theological controversies from the middle of the third to the fifth centuries. Origen's contributions on the specific question of pneumatology were in some respects clarifying and in others ambiguous. He formulated exegetical and theological questions which were as of yet unresolved in the Church's rule. According to his account there was in his day a preponderance of unanswered theological questions surrounding the Holy Spirit.

> Then they [the Apostles] handed down that the Holy Spirit is associated with (*sociatum*) the Father and Son in honor and dignity. It is not yet clearly known whether he is begotten (*natus*) or unbegotten (*innatus*), or whether he is to be understood as a Son of God or not.[128]

The association in honor and dignity of the Holy Spirit with the Father and the Son would seem to indicate coeternality, divinity, and generally a status equal to that of Father and Son. The nature of Spirit is to be immaterial, intelligent, holy, creative, life-giving, everlastingly good and confirmed in goodness.[129] This means it neither changes nor has goodness by participation. Since these are qualities only ascribed to the divine then the Spirit must be divine.

Their association in honor and dignity also implies personal distinction, a point for which Origen argued explicitly.[130] Following his discussion of these questions and possible answers, he concludes with a clear statement on the ontological distinction between Father, Son, and Spirit.

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[128] Origen, *On First Principles*, ed. and tr. John Behr (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), *Preface*.4: *Tum deinde honore ac dignitate patri ac filio sociatum tradiderunt spiritum sanctum. In hoc non iam manifeste discernitur, utrum natus aut innatus, vel filius etiam ipse dei habendus sit, necne*.
[129] *De princ.*, 1.3.1-4.
[130] *Commentary on the Gospel According to John Books 1-10*, tr. Ronald Heine (Washington, D.C.: CUA, 1989), 2.10-12.

We, however, are persuaded that there are three *hypostases*, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and we believe that only the Father is unbegotten. We admit, as more pious and as true, that the Holy Spirit is the most honored of all things made through the Word, and that he is [first] in rank of all the things which have been made by the Father through Christ.[131]

Origen thus here and elsewhere definitively articulated the distinction between Son-Logos and Holy Spirit. He interprets the two seraphim of Is. 6:2 as referring to the only-begotten Son and the Holy Spirit and similarly interprets Habbakkuk: "'In the midst of the two living creatures thou shalt be known' is spoken of Christ and the Holy Spirit."[132] Origen distinguishes between the two in his commentary on John through an appeal to Luke 12:10. He points out that the group who may want to identify the Father and Spirit at least want to distinguish between Son and Word.

[A] commonly acknowledged distinction between the Holy Spirit and the Son is revealed in the statement, "Whoever speaks a word against the Son of man shall be forgiven, but whoever blasphemes the Holy Spirit will not have forgiveness in this world or in the world to come."[133]

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[131] *Comm. Jo.*, 2.10.75.1-7: Ἡμεῖς μέντοι γε τρεῖς ὑποστάσεις πειθόμενοι τυγχάνειν, τὸν πατέρα καὶ τὸν υἱὸν καὶ τὸ ἅγιον πνεῦμα, καὶ ἀγέννητον μηδὲν ἕτερον τοῦ πατρὸς εἶναι πιστεύοντες, ὡς εὐσεβέστερον καὶ ἀληθὲς προσιέμεθα τὸ πάντων διὰ τοῦ λόγου γενομένων τὸ ἅγιον πνεῦμα πάντων εἶναι τιμιώτερον, καὶ τάξει <πρῶτον> πάντων τῶν ὑπὸ τοῦ πατρὸς διὰ Χριστοῦ γεγενημένων (Greek text: C. Blanc, *Origène: Commentaire sur saint Jean*, vol. 1 SC 120 (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1966).
[132] Barnes, "Early Christian Pneumatology," 176.
[133] *Commentary on the Gospel of John*, tr. Ronald Heine (Washington, D. C.: Catholic University Press, 1989), 113-114. I provide a fuller selection of the passage in Greek for more context: *Comm. Jo.*, 2.10.74.1-11: Ἔσται δέ τις καὶ τρίτος παρὰ τοὺς δύο, τόν τε διὰ τοῦ λόγου παραδεχόμενον τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον γεγονέναι καὶ τὸν ἀγέννητον αὐτὸ εἶναι ὑπολαμβάνοντα, δογματίζων μηδὲ οὐσίαν τινὰ ἰδίαν ὑφεστάναι τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος ἑτέραν παρὰ τὸν πατέρα καὶ τὸν υἱόν· ἀλλὰ τάχα προστιθέμενος μᾶλλον, ἐὰν ἕτερον νομίζῃ εἶναι τὸν υἱὸν παρὰ τὸν πατέρα, τῷ τὸ αὐτὸ αὐτὸ τυγχάνειν τῷ πατρί, ὁμολογουμένως διαιρέσεως δηλουμένης τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος παρὰ τὸν υἱὸν ἐν τῷ "Ὃς ἐὰν εἴπῃ λόγον κατὰ τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου, ἀφεθήσεται αὐτῷ· ὃς δ' ἂν βλασφημήσῃ εἰς τὸ ἅγιον πνεῦμα, οὐχ ἕξει ἄφεσιν οὔτε ἐν τούτῳ τῷ αἰῶνι οὔτε ἐν τῷ μέλλοντι."

Origen was merely reporting the position Barnes refers to as hyper-pneumatology.[134] His

own view, however, distinguishes all three hypostases, as we have seen.

One way he distinguishes the three is by the independent activities of each of the

hypostases. Christ is the Paraclete as an intercessor, but the Spirit is Paraclete as the

consoler.[135] The realm of activity of the Spirit is the sanctification of creation.[136] He was

poured out on all after the ascension, having been given only to some beforehand.[137] In

differentiating the *hypostases* by activity, Origen puts the Spirit after the Son (through

whom the Spirit comes), the Son-Word himself being after "the God" and Father.[138]

Origen says explicitly "there is no greater or lesser in the Trinity."[139] The association and

shared qualities of the Spirit with Father and Son show that Origen's thought on the

Trinity is rather too complex for simple categorization. Scholars acknowledge the

difficulty of describing Origen as subordinationist.[140] In spite of the statement quoted just

above, he asserts, on the basis of Scripture, that the Father is greater than the Son; and

when goes on to claim that "the Holy Spirit is still less."[141]

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[134] Barnes, "Early Christian Pneumatology," 182-183.

[135] *De princ.*, 2.7.4.

[136] *De princ.*, 1.3.8.

[137] *De princ.*, 2.7.2.

[138] Cf. *Comm. Jo.*, 2.13-15.

[139] *De princ.*, 1.3.7.

[140] "Subordination" is a disputed term in patristic studies. In his review of Christoph Markschies's *Alta Trinità Beata. Gesammelte Studien zur altkirchlichen Trinitätstheologie*, Mark Edwards alludes to the inadequacies of this category of patristic scholarship. Such academic constructs "collapse . . . when applied to Origen" (in *The Journal of Theological Studies* 53 (2002): 702–705, here 705, with allusion to 297–9 in Markschies's text where the author treats Origen), but this insight concerning scholarly categories is of more general import.

[141] See *Comm. Jo.,* 1.253-55.

So that in this way the power of the Father is greater than that of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and that of the Son is more than that of the Holy Spirit, and in turn the power of the Holy Spirit exceeds that of every other holy being.[142]

He raises the further and related question of the Spirit's derivation in his commentary on John. Commenting on Jn 1:3 (Πάντα δι' αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο), Origen asks "whether the Holy Spirit is brought into being through the Word."[143] The Holy Spirit, in fact, he says is a creature of the Son.[144] Though elsewhere Origen considers "whether the Father and Holy Spirit sent Jesus, or the Father sent both Christ and the Holy Spirit. "The second," he says, "is the truth."[145]

We find in Origen then apparent contradictions. He is the foremost exegete of the early church as well as perhaps the most philosophically learned and astute of the first three centuries of Christianity. Even those who will oppose him in the next three centuries (up to Justinian) will often do so from within Origen's self-constructed paradigm and often even in his own terms. This is just as true in the sphere of pneumatology as it is in other aspects of trinitarian theology, Christology, Scriptural exegesis, and the language of ascetical and mystical theologies. His relevance for our inquiry has at least as much to do with his trinitarian contributions as with his overtly

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[142] *On First Principles*, 1.3.5.

[143] *Comm. Jo.*, 2.10.73.1-2.

[144] *Comm. Jo.*, 2.10.73.3-6: Οἶμαι γὰρ ὅτι τῷ μὲν φάσκοντι γενητὸν αὐτὸ εἶναι καὶ προιεμένῳ τὸ "πάντα δι' αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο"· ἀναγκαῖον παραδέξασθαι, ὅτι καὶ τὸ ἅγιον πνεῦμα διὰ τοῦ λόγου ἐγένετο, πρεσβυτέρου παρ' αὐτὸ τοῦ λόγου τυγχάνοντος.

[145] *Contra Celsum* 1.46.29-40: Ἐπεὶ δὲ Ἰουδαῖός ἐστιν ὁ περὶ τοῦ ἀναγεγραμμένου ἁγίου πνεύματος κατεληλυθέναι ἐν εἴδει περιστερᾶς πρὸς τὸν Ἰησοῦν ἀπορῶν], λεκτέον ἂν εἴη πρὸς αὐτόν· [ὦ οὗτος, τίς ἐστιν ὁ ἐν τῷ Ἡσαΐᾳ λέγων· «Καὶ νῦν κύριος ἀπέστειλέ με καὶ τὸ πνεῦμα αὐτοῦ;» ἐν ᾧ ἀμφιβόλου ὄντος τοῦ ῥητοῦ, πότερον ὁ πατὴρ καὶ τὸ ἅγιον πνεῦμα ἀπέστειλαν τὸν Ἰησοῦν, ἢ ὁ πατὴρ ἀπέστειλε τόν τε Χριστὸν καὶ τὸ ἅγιον πνεῦμα, τὸ δεύτερόν ἐστιν ἀληθές. Καὶ ἐπεὶ ἀπεστάλη ὁ σωτήρ, εἶτα τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον, ἵνα πληρωθῇ τὸ εἰρημένον ὑπὸ τοῦ προφήτου, ἐχρῆν δὲ τὴν τῆς προφητείας πλήρωσιν ἐγνῶσθαι καὶ τοῖς ἑξῆς· διὰ τοῦτο ἀνέγραψαν οἱ Ἰησοῦ μαθηταὶ τὸ γεγενημένον (Greek text: M. Borret, *Origène: Contre Celse,* vol. 1 SC 132 (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1967)).

pneumatological opinions. For it is his language and conceptualization of trinitarian theology that provide the key issues and vocabulary of the controversies at and around Nicaea in 325 up to Constantinople I in 381.

1.3 Gnostic and Philosophical Texts

1.3.1 Gnostic Texts

A small selection of gnostic texts may have influenced the Trinitarian theology of Marius Victorinus. John Turner and Chiara Tommasi argue that Victorinus was reading "Platonizing Sethian treatises" and that these had a significant impact on his theological thought.[146] Others like Michel Tardieu have argued that both Victorinus and the gnostic text on which he is said to rely (*Zostrianos* in this case) are in fact both dependent on a Middle Platonic source.[147] Two Sethian gnostic writings presented in the Nag Hammadi library are especially pertinent to Victorinus's trinitarian theology and thus deserve our attention. These are *Allogenes* and *Zostrianos*, texts with which Plotinus and his circle engaged directly and which Victorinus himself may have read.[148]

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[146] John D. Turner, "Victorinus, *Parmenides* Commentaries and the Platonizing Sethian Treatises," in *Platonisms: Ancient, Modern, and Postmodern*, ed. Kevin Corrigan and John D. Turner (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 55–96; *Sethian Gnosticism and the Platonic Tradition*, BCNH, Études 6 (Québec: Les Presses de l'Université Laval; Leuven: Peeters, 2001). Chiara Tommasi, *Tripotens in unalitate spiritus: Mario Vittorino e la gnosi*, in *Koinonia* 20 (1996): 53-75; *L'androginia di Cristo-Logos: Mario Vittorino tra platonismo e gnosi*, in *Cassiodorus 4* (1998): 11-46; *L'androginia divina e i suoi presupposti filosofici: il mediatore celeste*, in *Studi Classici e Orientali* 46, 3 (1998): 973-998; *Viae negationis della dossologia divina nel medioplatonismo e nello gnosticismo sethiano (con echi in Mario Vittorino)*, in *Arrhetos Theos. L'inconoscibilità del Primo Principio nel Medioplatonismo*, ed. F. Calabi (Pisa, 2002), 119-154.

[147] Michel Tardieu, "Recherches sur la formation de l'Apocalypse de Zostrien et les sources de Marius Victorinus," *Res Orientales* 9 (Bures-sur-Yvette: Groupe pour l'Etude de la Civilisation du Moyen-Orient, 1996): 7–114; "Les Trois Stèles de Seth: Un écrit gnostique retrouvé à Nag Hammadi," *RSPhTh* 57 (1973): 545–75.

[148] The texts are presented in *The Nag Hammadi Library in English*, 4th rev. ed., gen. ed. James M. Robinson, tr. and intr. by the Coptic Gnostic Library Project (Leiden: Brill, 1996): "*Allogenes* (*NHC* XI, 3),"

The speculated source on which *Zostrianos* depends—and which Victorinus himself may have consulted, as Tardieu has argued—presents the triad of being-life-beatitude as constitutive of "the One itself."[149] Tuomas Rasimus, in line with Hadot, reads this as an adaptation of Stoic physics.[150] This same conception is found in *Zostrianos* which also defines "the first principle as the Triple-Powered Invisible Spirit" comprising the same three elements.[151] These elements correspond to the three aeons of Barbelo, who is the complex cosmic emanation from the Invisible Spirit. This correspondence indicates the strong connection between psychic states and degrees in the hierarchically constituted cosmos. These three aeons are, in ascending order, Autogenes, Protophanes, and "self-begotten Kalyptos" who "pre-exists because he is an origin of the Autogenes, a god and a forefather, a cause of the Protophanes, a father of the parts that are his."[152] The outgoing manifestation is represented by Barbelo (in whom the aeons are comprised) and thus corresponds to femininity. The Sethian gnostic is exhorted to choose the ascending path corresponding to masculinity, the contemplative journey taking its

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490-500; "*Zostrianos* (*NHC* VIII, 1)," 402-430. For Plotinus's engagement with these gnostic writings see Porphyry, *Vita Plotini*, 16, and Plotinus, *Enneads* 2.9. For a brief review of scholarly accounts of the relevance of *Allogenes* and *Zostrianos*, as well as the *Three Steles of Seth*, to Victorinus's theology see Stephen Cooper and Václav Němec, "Introduction," in *Marius Victorinus: Pagan Rhetor, Platonist Philosopher, and Christian Theologian*, ed. Stephen Cooper and Václav Němec (Atlanta: SBL Press, forthcoming, 2022), 1-38, 24-28.

[149] Tuomas Rasimus, "Johannine Background of the Being-Life-Mind Triad," in *Gnosticism, Platonism, and the Late Ancient World: Essays in Honour of John D. Turner*, eds. Kevin Corrigan and Tuomas Rasimus (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 369-409, Rasimus, "Johannine Background," 370; Tardieu, "Recherches," 7-114.

[150] Rasimus refers specifically to the Stoic notions (1) of the seminal *Pneuma* in which are all things immanently (2) and tonic expansion and contraction as the mechanism by which qualities and substances of existing things are determined ("Johannine Background," 377). See Pierre Hadot, "Stoïcisme et Monarchianisme au IV e siècle d'après Candide l'Arien et Marius Victorinus," *Recherches de théologie ancienne et médiévale* 18 (1951): 177-187.

[151] Rasimus, "Johannine Background," 378. This one is called "the Invisible Triple Powerful" and the "Invisible Spirit" (*NHC* VIII, 1.20.16 and 18; *Nag Hammadi Library*, 409). The triad is presented as Existence-Blessedness-Life at *NHC* VIII, 1.14.12-13; *Nag Hammadi Library*, 407; and as Existence-Life-Blessedness at VIII, 1.66.15-18; *Nag Hammadi Library*, 419. Blessedness is made to correspond with knowledge at *NHC* VIII, 1.73.10-11; *Nag Hammadi Library*, 420.

[152] *NHC* VIII, 1.20.5-10; *Nag Hammadi Library*, 409.

empowering impetus from the Triple Male Child.[153] The virgin Barbelo apparently stands

between the Kalyptos aeon (the first emanation from the productive Barbelo?) and the

Invisible Spirit. Rasimus notes the ambiguity of the relation of the second and third in

Zostrianos due to the "variation in the order of the second and third powers."[154]

Autogenes is sometimes made to correspond to Vitality, Protophanes to Knowledge, and

Kalyptos to Existence, although at other times Vitality and Knowledge or Blessedness are

reversed. Each of these terms of the triad is always operative at each of the aeons of this

complex system.[155]

      Allogenes presents a similar scheme and hierarchy. The primary difference is its

positing the "Triple-Power" between the first principle and the feminine sophic

emanation (Barbelo). This may well amount to the same thing if the "Triple Male Child"

of *Zostrianos* be seen not so much as the ontological median between the Invisible Spirit

and Barbelo but the mediator of the motion of return. The dominant image in other

Sethian gnostic writings is that of a triad of father-mother-child, which here is confused

by the ambiguous relation between the feminine Barbelo (the emanating wisdom of the

first principle) and the masculine self-begotten (Autogenes).[156] The latter appears as the

second activity of the first emanation, in other words, as an activity of Barbelo. This

activity is a masculine form of Barbelo. Whereas Barbelo's first activity is the going forth

from the first principle which is described in feminine terms, the act of the Autogenes is

to arrest and reverse this outgoing activity in a return movement to the first principle, an

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[153] The exhortation is the treatise's peroration, *NHC* VIII, 1.130.14-132.5; *Nag Hammadi Library*, 430.
[154] Rasimus, "Johannine Background," 379. Ruth Majercik notes this ambiguity of the positioning of the feminine principle as a feature of gnostic writings: *The Chaldean Oracles: Text, Translation and Commentary*, tr. Ruth Majercik (Leiden: Brill, 1989), 7.
[155] *NHC* VIII, 1.15.1-12; *Nag Hammadi Library*, 408.
[156] See, e.g., *Apocryphon of John*.

activity which is conceived in masculine terms. Barbelo and the Self-begotten then appear as mediators of one another's activities, the former mediating the coming forth, the latter mediating the return. In *The Three Steles of Seth* there are hints of a triad including the first principle, who is the object of address in the steles, a self-generative emanation, and a divine self-knowledge which empowers the Sethian community in its own quest of salutary gnosis.[157]

It is unclear whether these texts had been read by Victorinus directly, or Victorinus and these texts draw on a common source, or else that these texts had come to Victorinus through a later Platonic mediator such as Porphyry (all of which have been proposed in recent scholarly work).[158] In any case, the noetic triad as well as the three-phased cosmic and psychological cycle are of profound importance both for these gnostic writings and for the theology of Marius Victorinus.[159]

The origin of the scheme *esse-vivere-intellegere* in particular may be found in circles of Sethian gnostics, as recent studies of Nag Hammadi texts have suggested, though this is disputed.[160] Tuomas Rasimus thinks the noetic triad, for example, was not primarily a product of Platonism. He argues that "the originators and systematizers of the being-life-mind triad" can be seen "to have been Sethian Gnostics (a branch of Classic Gnosticism) who were influenced by Stoicizing Neopythagorean monism and especially by Johannine Christology, interpreted in light of Gen 1–5."[161] Platonists engaged these gnostic writings directly and scholars have speculated that influence between Platonists

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[157] "The Three Steles of Seth (*NHC* VII, 5)," in *The Nag Hammadi Library*, 396-401.
[158] See Cooper and Němec, "Introduction," 23-28.
[159] Majercik, *The Chaldean Oracles*.
[160] See Rasimus, "Johannine Background," 369.
[161] Rasimus, "Johannine Background," 369.

and Gnostics was reciprocal. Luise Abramowski and Ruth Majercik have argued that the *Allogenes* and *Zostrianos* of the Nag Hammadi Corpus are not identical to the "revelations" of the same name that Porphyry refers to in *Vita Plotini* 16. They argue that these Sethian treatises "represent a younger version of those texts, which *ex hypothesi* were rewritten under the influence of criticism raised by Plotinus's students Amelius and Porphyry."[162] The crisscrossing influences between philosophers (i.e., members of philosophical schools) and Gnostics, make both origin and transmission complex and the suggested direction of influence difficult to determine.

1.3.2 Philosophical Texts

The noetic triad comprising being-life-understanding and other closely related triadic schemes are present in Platonic writers pre-dating Plotinus and continue in the stream of Platonic thought through Proclus.[163] Numenius may also influence Trinitarian developments at Rome. The noetic triad of later Platonists, Rasimus suggests, lies implicit in the extant fragments of Numenius. In these fragments Numenius is seen to posit a highest god who is living and in some way beyond mind. Mind, the second god, has its own being and activity on its proper level below the first. This second is twofold, so that there is an implied triad in his two principles. "The first god, being in his own place is simple; and being together with himself throughout can never be divided."[164] The

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[162] Cooper and Němec, "Introduction," 27, with reference to Luise Abramowski, "Marius Victorinus, Porphyrius und die römischen Gnostiker," *ZNW* 74 (1983): 108–28; and Ruth Majercik, "The Existence–Life–Intellect Triad in Gnosticism and Neoplatonism," *ClQ* 42 (1992): 475–88.

[163] R. T. Wallis, *Neoplatonism*, 2nd ed. with foreword and bibliography by Lloyd P. Gerson (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett, 1995), 67, 124-125, 151, 156.

[164] Fg. 16, in Eusebius, *PE* xi. 22.3-5, 544ab.

first god does not create, but is "the father of the creator god."[165] The creator god is

twofold. "For the second [sc. god], being double, is personally responsible both for

producing the form of himself, and for producing the cosmos; he is on the one hand a

creator, on the other wholly absorbed in contemplation."[166] This second as dyad both

creates—an outward and downward tending activity—and contemplates—an inward and

upward activity. The activity of creation, however, is found to be a snare for the second

god. Indeed, it seems the second god's division into two occurs because of its encounter

with matter.

> He comes into contact with matter, but it is dyadic and, although he unifies it, he
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> is divided by it, since it has an appetitive and fluid character. Because he is gazing
>
> on matter, he is not intent on the intelligible (for in that case he would have been
>
> intent on himself); and by giving his attention to matter he becomes heedless of
>
> himself. And he gets to grips with the perceptible and is absorbed in his work with
>
> it, and by devoting himself to matter he takes it up even into his own character.[167]

This passage, as we will show in ch. 3, is remarkably similar to what we find in

Victorinus's account of the heavenly soul. This second god is dyadic in that part of it

retains a contemplative connection to the first god, while its other part (whereby a "third"

is said to exist) is turned in attention and activity towards what is below it—lower reality

being not only its charge but the product of this third thing's activity in conjunction with

matter.[168] Numenius himself may have been influenced by the gnostic milieu.[169] He may

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[165] Fg. 12, in Eusebius, *PE* xi. 18.6, 537b.
[166] Fg. 16, in Eusebius, *PE* xi. 22.3-5, 544ab.
[167] Numenius, fg. 11, in Eusebius, *PE* xi. 17.11-18.5, 536d -537b, tr. George Boys-Stones.
[168] Cf. Rasimus, "Johannine Background," 390-391.
[169] *The Neoplatonic Writings of Numenius*, ed. and tr. Kenneth Guthrie (Lawrence, KS: Selene Books, 1987).

also be the primary source for Plotinus's noetic triad comprising being-life-knowledge. His influence on Plotinus in other respects is well known.[170]

The noetic triad appears in the works of Plotinus, but he felt no compulsion to make systematic use of it. Its constituent parts are not consistently ordered. Plotinus sometimes associates Life with the hypostasis Soul of his metaphysical system and thus posits it in the third place (Being-Intellect-Life); this arrangement appears most suited to his metaphysical scheme.[171] When it comes to the cosmic movements of procession and return, however, Plotinus posits "that Life should be equated with the Second Hypostasis in its unformed stage (i.e. with Procession) and Intelligence with the stage of Reversion, when it has received form and limit."[172] His only point of consistency is to posit the triad as at most secondary to the simple absoluteness of the One. Rasimus, however, thinks Plotinus is not altogether consistent on this point. He claims Plotinus "compromised the One's transcendence" in his early works.[173] He finds the *Anon. in Parm.* to be comparable to Plotinus in this respect. "In its use of the noetic triad, the *Anonymous Parmenides Commentary* thus resembles Plotinus, especially his early works, which also compromised the One's transcendence (e.g., Enn. 3.9 [13] 1)."[174]

The *Anonymous Parmenides Commentary* seems to understand the triad to be latent in the One and manifest at a degree removed from the simplicity of the Absolute.[175] Hadot argued at length for Porphyrian authorship of the commentary, while others such

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[170] Rasimus, "Johannine Background," 391-392.
[171] See especially Plotinus, *Enn.* V.1.
[172] Wallis, *Neoplatonism*, 67. For this point he refers to *Enn.* VI.7.17.14-26, 21.2-6.
[173] Rasimus, "Johannine Background," 376.
[174] Rasimus, "Johannine Background," 376.
[175] See Rasimus, "Johannine Background," 375; Wallis, *Neoplatonism*, 114-118; Gerald Bechtle, *The Anonymous Commentary on Plato's* Parmenides (Bern: Haupt, 1999).

as R. T. Wallis and David Bell prescind from the question of its authorship, contenting themselves with acknowledging the similarities between its author's doctrine and the thought of Porphyry.[176] Still others see it as pre-Plotinian.[177] Hadot has proved without doubt, in any case, that the commentary influenced Victorinus's metaphysics. In both Porphyry's *Sententiae* and in the *Commentary*, the first principle is identified with the triad's first term as Absolute Being.[178] In the *Commentary* the triad is manifest and operative at the level of Νοῦς, as in the *Chaldaean Oracles*.[179] The simplicity of Plotinus's transcendent One is compromised by this identification of the One with the first term of the triad in both Porphyry and the *Commentary*. If we take this to be a post-Plotinian work the author of the *Commentary* also conflates Plotinus's first state of Intelligence—a mode of intelligence in which the subject-object division is overcome in unitive knowing—with the One, identifying the One and this unitive knowing. Wallis points out that "in either case the consequences for Plotinus' metaphysical hierarchy are equally disastrous."[180]

Among Latin writers, Marius Victorinus is distinctive in his engagement with these gnostic and philosophical sources, which are only minimally significant to the theological controversies of the fourth century. Victorinus will make special use of these diverse and often discordant sources in his trinitarian theology. Victorinus appropriates

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[176] Wallis, *Neoplatonism* 114; Bell, "Esse, Vivere, Intelligere," 13, n. 40.

[177] Kevin Corrigan, "Platonism and Gnosticism: The Anonymous Commentary on the Parmenides, Middle or Neoplatonic?" in *Gnosticism and Later Platonism: Themes, Figures, and Texts*, ed. John D. Turner and Ruth Majercik (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2001), 141-177.

[178] See John M. Dillon, "Porphyry's Doctrine of the One," in ΣΟΦΙΗΣ ΜΑΙΗΤΟΡΕΣ "Chercheurs de sqgesse": Hommage à Jeqn Pépin, ed. Marie-Odile Goulet-Cazé, Goulven Madec, and Denis O'Brien (Paris: Institut d'Études Augustiniennes, 1992), 356-366.

[179] Wallis, *Neoplatonism*, 116; *Oracles Chaldaïques,* ed. text and French tr. by Édouard des Places (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1971); *The Chaldean Oracles: Text, Translation and Commentary*, tr. Ruth Majercik (Leiden: Brill, 1989).

[180] Wallis, *Neoplatonism*, 117.

the noetic triad and makes it foundational to his theology and therefore to his articulation of a Nicene pneumatology.[181] In making use of the *Anon. in Parm.*, Victorinus was able to conceive diverse hypostases as all equal in substance without losing their transcendence or simplicity, a conception that helped him articulate the *homoousion* of the Christian Trinity. The complexity of the sources he inherited make his theological syntheses appear rather impressive, though it also alerts us to the need to keep before ourselves the question of whether and to what extent his trinitarian and pneumatological thought is coherent and cohesive.

1.4 Nicaea and Its Aftermath

1.4.1. Nicaea

The Council of Nicaea was called by Emperor Constantine in 325. The synod was intended to stabilize the *oikoumene* by unifying the Christians. It is generally acknowledged today that the clash of the Libyan presbyter Arius with his bishop Alexander was the manifestation of ecclesial differences rather than the cause of disunity.[182] Members of the western empire had, as we have seen, been wary of the

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[181] See Hadot, SC 69, 754; Paul Henry, "The *Adversus Arium* of Marius Victorinus, the First Systematic Exposition of the Doctrine of the Trinity," *Journal of Theological Studies* 1 (1950): 42–55, here 44; and Bell, "Esse, Vivere, Intelligere," 13-14.

[182] The narrative of the Trinitarian controversy has been undergoing revision as scholars have complicated certain old and inadequate categories so as to make room for more carefully differentiated and felicitous accounts of theological and political positions, alliances, hostilities, and machinations. This trend in scholarship goes back to the 1960s and in the past sixty years the scholarship produced is immense. Some of the most notable contributions to this project of redrawing the map of fourth-century Christianity are Manlio Simonetti, *La crisi ariana nel IV secolo* (Rome: Institutum Patristicum Augustinianum, 1975); Rowan Williams, *Arius: Heresy and Tradition* (London: Darton, Longman, and Todd, 1987; revised 2002); Joseph T. Lienhard, S.J., "The 'Arian' Controversy: Some Categories Reconsidered," in *Theological Studies* 48 (1987): 415-37; Michel René Barnes, "The Fourth Century as Trinitarian Canon," in *Christian Origins: Theology, Rhetoric, and Community*, ed. Lewis Ayres and Gareth Jones (London; New York: Routledge,

patripassians' "Spirit-Monarchianism."[183] The christological heresies of psilanthropism and Docetism had been thoroughly condemned around Rome and North Africa.[184] The cumulative result of these determinations was that the distinction of Father and Son was strongly articulated; the Son was known to be both human and divine, to have been born of the Virgin Mary, and to have suffered on the cross. "The Holy Spirit was no longer looked for as coming to be inhominized in a particular individual, but was to reside in the whole body of the Church."[185]

In the east, on the other hand, there was continued apprehensiveness towards Sabellius's dynamic Monarchianism. This meant some were at pains to uphold the genuine diversity among Father, Son, and Spirit. The "metaphysico-theological position" articulated at Antioch in 268 was influential into the fourth century and stands behind the hostility towards the conciliar decisions of Nicaea in 325.[186] The council of Antioch had explicitly defined the Son as a substance (*ousia*) distinct from the Father, thus rejecting any modalistic and merely economic understandings of the Word-Son.

Likewise, for Arius, the First Principle was one and unique; there could be nothing else that was unoriginated. Anything originated was necessarily dependent on and distinct from the unoriginated First Principle. The Father and Son were necessarily distinct *hypostases* and necessarily of distinct natures. The Son must be subordinate to the

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1998); Khaled Anatolios, *Retrieving Nicaea: The Development and Meaning of Trinitarian Doctrine*; Lewis Ayres, *Nicaea and its Legacy: An Approach to Fourth-Century Trinitarian Theology*.

[183] See above, 1.1.3.

[184] See Adolf von Harnack, *History of Dogma*, vol. 3, tr. Neil Buchanan (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1901), 28-29.

[185] Barnes, "Early Pneumatology," 177.

[186] Andrei Giulea Dragoș, "Antioch 268 and Its Legacy in the Fourth-Century Theological Debates," *Harvard Theological Review* 111 (2018): 192-215, 193.

Father. Arius in his epistle to Eusebius of Nicomedia relates the following disagreements between him and Alexander of Alexandria.

> [W]e do not agree with him when he publicly says: always God, always Son; no sooner Father than Son; the Son coexists with God in an unbegotten way; always-begotten; unbegotten-generated; neither by thought nor by any moment does God precede the Son; always God, always Son; the Son is from God himself.[187]

In response, the Nicene Creed was issued with the term *homoousios* to thwart the Arian articulation of the division between Father and Son. Reading the creed as a whole Barnes notes "one finds precious little 'relationship' language expressing divine 'diversity.'"[188] What one finds, rather, is phrasing emphasizing the sameness of Father and Son. Barnes adds the further point that this articulation of divine unity "is expressed explicitly in *ousia* doctrines." He concludes that "the creed was intended to be a strong statement of divine unity, and the kind of language it uses reflects that intention."[189]

It is unclear whether the term homoousios was introduced by Constantine or by Ossius of Cordoba along with Alexander of Alexandria. "It is plausibly reported that Ossius of Cordoba, who presided over the doctrinal debates, and Alexander of Alexandria had agreed in advance that the philosophically dubious term *homoousios* should be the touchstone of orthodoxy (Philostorgius, HE 1.7, 7a)."[190] Pier Beatrice says that *homoousios* was deliberately and apparently independently placed in the creed by

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[187] "Arius, Letters to Eusebius of Nicomedia and Alexander of Alexandria," tr. Mark DelCogliano, chapter seven in *The Cambridge Edition of Early Christian Writings*, vol. 1, ed. Andrew Radde-Gallwitz (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 109-113, 111.
[188] Barnes, "Trinitarian Canon," 51.
[189] Barnes, "Trinitarian Canon," 51.
[190] Timothy Barnes, *Constantine: Dynasty, Religion, and Power in the Later Roman Empire* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011), 121.

Constantine on the basis of his own knowledge of and affinity for Hermetic works. He shows how the term was used extensively and early in Hermetic writings.[191] Michel Barnes, on the other hand, doubts that either Constantine or Ossius introduced the term, and rejects its ascription to Alexander, in whose known works the word never appears.[192]

Some objected that *homoousios* was unscriptural and therefore unfit for the articulation of Christian dogma.[193] Others thought the term misconceived, whether because they considered it to have materialist connotations or because they thought it modalist.[194] Nicaea had continued the practice of treating *ousia* and *hypostasis* as more or less synonymous.[195] The two were semantically equivalent at the time—their synonymity was implied in an anathema attached to the creed.[196] It appeared to be either nonsense or blasphemy, therefore, to speak of God having one *ousia* but more than one *hypostasis*. This term *homoousios* would become the rallying call of later pro-Nicenes, but it should be remembered that it was a point of contention even at the time of the council.

1.4.2 Marcellus and the Eusebians

[191] Pier Franco Beatrice, "The Word 'Homoousios' from Hellenism to Christianity," *Church History* 71 (2002): 243-272.

[192] Barnes, "Trinitarian Canon," 49, and 64, n. 7.

[193] A position reflected in several creeds of the 350s; see Hilary, *De syn.* 11, 1-48; Athanasius, *De syn.* 28, 2-12; Socrates, *Hist. eccl.* 2.30, 31-41; *Faith in Formulae: A Collection of Early Christian Creeds and Creed-related Texts*, ed. Wolfram Kinzig (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 1.404-408, §154.

[194] There are "three strikes" against *homoousios* in the eyes of the opponents of Nicaea. "First, it had a modalist history of use, and indeed figured in a third-century conciliar condemnation of a modalist theology. Second, and not unrelatedly, in its limited use it had had materialist connotations. Third, it was nowhere to be found in Scripture" (Barnes, "Trinitarian Canon," 49).

[195] Lienhard, "The 'Arian' Controversy," 421.

[196] Joseph Lienhard, S. J., "*Ousia* and *Hypostasis*: The Cappadocian Settlement and the Theology of 'One Hypostasis,'" in *The Trinity: An Interdisciplinary Symposium on the Trinity*, eds. Stephen T. Davis, Daniel Kendall S. J., and Gerald O'Collins S. J. (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 99-122, 110-111

Around and after Nicaea, Marcellus of Ancyra found himself in a prolonged theological dispute with "the Eusebians."[197] Eusebius of Nicomedia, Eusebius of Caesarea, and Asterius had all consorted with Arius before the council and had been suspect to the emperor and those in favor of Nicaea. Marcellus wrote a polemical work against Asterius the Sophist.[198] Wolfram Kinzig summarizes Asterius's theology as found in the authentic fragments from Athanasius and Marcellus. Asterius the Sophist supported three divine *hypostases*.[199] Marcellus complained of his separating the Father and the Son.[200] Asterius considered the Son to be created, but without mediation, directly by the divine will.[201] In this respect he is strongly subordinationist.[202] It is through the Son as divine instrument and mediator that God created all else.[203] The Father alone is *agennetos*, so that there must have been when the Son was not, though he does not seem to mean precisely what Arius means by this phrase.[204] "The Son is an identical image of the Father and similar to his essence, yet not consubstantial with the Father."[205] For

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[197] "Eusebians" refers to the party of Eusebius of Nicomedia with Eusebius of Caesarea whose spokesman after Nicaea was Asterius the Sophist. See David M. Gwynn, *The Eusebians: The Polemic of Athanasius of Alexandria and the Construction of the 'Arian Controversy,'* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).

[198] It is only through the fragments preserved in the works of Marcellus and Athanasius that we know anything reliable of the thought of Asterius the Sophist.

[199] Wolfram Kinzig, *In Search of Asterius: Studies on the Authorship of the Homilies on the Psalms* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1990), 127, 132. The fragment cited is 61 in Vinzent's critical edition of Asterius's works: Markus Vinzent, *Asterius von Kappadokien: Die Theologischen Fragmente: Einleitung, kritischer Text, Übersetzung, und Kommentar* (Leiden; New York; Köln: Brill, 1993), 120. Asterius says "one must say the Father is truly Father and the Son is truly Son and the Holy Spirit likewise [is truly Holy Spirit]" (Vinzent, *Asterius*, fr. 60 (120), my translation).

[200] Kinzig, *Asterius*, 128.

[201] Kinzig, *Asterius*, 130-131 (Vinzent, *Asterius*, fr. 18 (90)).

[202] Kinzig, *Asterius*, 131 (see Vinzent, *Asterius*, fr. 26 (94)).

[203] Kinzig, *Asterius*, 131 (Vinzent, *Asterius*, frgg. 27-30 (96)).

[204] Kinzig, *Asterius*, 130.

[205] Kinzig, *Asterius*, 132 and 131 (Vinzent, *Asterius*, frgg. 16, 19, 21 (90-92)).

pneumatology, we have the three *hypostases* already mentioned, and a statement that the Spirit proceeds from the Father.[206]

Marcellus had been supportive of Nicaea—its theological expression appeared perfectly suited to his unitarian theology. Marcellus was supportive of *homoousios* for reasons exactly antithetical to Eusebius's thought. Asserting God's "substantial inner unity,"[207] he argued there was "one ousia, one hypostasis, and one prosopon in God."[208] "In contrast to the Arian theology of Asterius, Marcellus stressed absolute monotheism, taking the Nicene *homoousion* as *tautousion,* or 'numerically identical in essence.'"[209] He thought the Word of God is innate and unbegotten so that the Word is only called Son at the incarnation. Marcellus made a distinction between *logos endiathetos* and *logos prophorikos*, which he set up as an alternative between an internally undifferentiated but latent power in God (*Logos en dynamei*) and an activity (*energeia*) of God only manifest economically. "Since the expansion of the Monad into a Triad exists for the economy, or the order of redemption, it is not eternal. At the end, Marcellus believed, the Word and the Spirit would return into the Godhead, and God would again be an absolute Monad."[210]

Eusebius of Caesarea was apprehensive about *homoousios* when it was introduced into the council's creedal statement.[211] We can appreciate the difficulty in which he must have found himself. The key word of the Nicene creed was "unscriptural," was rejected

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[206] Vinzent, *Asterius*, fr. 59 (120), quoting Jn. 15:26.

[207] Daley, "Persons in God," 23 (and see Jaroslav Pelikan, *The Christian Tradition: A History of the Development of Doctrine, 5 vols., vol.1: The Emergence of the Catholic Tradition (100-600)* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1971), 208).

[208] Lienhard, "Marcellus in Modern Scholarship," 488.

[209] Lienhard, "Marcellus in Modern Scholarship," 488.

[210] Lienhard, "Marcellus," 488.

[211] Eusebius, "Letter to His Church in Caesarea," in Socrates, *Hist. Eccl.* 1.8.

by an important and authoritative council (Antioch 268), and was regarded with suspicion by an prominent authority Dionysius from the illustrious see of Alexandria; on the other hand, it was included at the insistence of the first Christian emperor in the first ecumenical council's creed with a gloss then appended in whose anathemas the phrase *ousia* appeared in parallel with *hypostasis*.[212] Origen, an important authority for Eusebius, had explicitly differentiated the hypostases of the Son and the Spirit from that of the Father.

While the creed cut against the grain of Eusebius's Origenist thought, lack of a standardized interpretation of the creed had left open diverse, even antithetical, hermeneutical possibilities. He accepted it under a particular interpretation which precluded any corporeal understanding of *ousia*. *Homoousion* and the rejection of claims that Father and Son were diverse with respect to *hypostasis* or *ousia* sounded to the Eusebians and eastern Christians like the modalism which councils and theologians had condemned in the recent past. Marcellus's interpretation of Nicaea had been exactly what the eastern bishops were worried it might be taken to mean. In answer to Marcellus's *Contra Asterium*, Eusebius of Caesarea composed a thorough refutation of the bishop of Ancyra.[213]

The debates between Marcellus and the Eusebians are overwhelmingly concerned with the relation between the Father and the Son. Marcellus taught that only the Incarnate Word can be the image of the Father because only then is the Word visible and images are by definition perceptible.[214] Arguing against this Eusebius says, "the Son is like the

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[212] See Lienhard, "*Ousia* and *Hypostasis*," 103; *Faith in Formulae*, I.290-294, §135.
[213] Eusebius of Caesarea, *Against Marcellus and On Ecclesiastical Theology*, tr. Kelley McCarthy Spoerl and Markus Vinzent, FC 135 (Washington, D. C.: Catholic University of America Press, 2017).
[214] *Against Marcellus*, 107.

Father as much as possible," and reflects the Father as a spotless mirror.[215] This likeness

is not a corporeal likeness. As for Marcellus's interpretation of the Scriptural word

"mediator," Eusebius claims the Son is always mediator between God and creation even

before the Word became flesh and dwelt among us.[216] He was first mediator between God

and angels and became mediator between God and humans in the Incarnation. From

Eusebius's perspective, this was an inadequate account of the nature and power of the

Father and the Word-Son as attested by Scripture. Indeed, it was a regressive theological

opinion that had already been rejected by ecclesiastical theology.[217] Eusebius is clear that

he knows the Son to be Son before the incarnation. The Son-Word is always Son and

Word. He does not, as Marcellus had thought, become Son at the incarnation. "God

always brings forth the Word and the Holy Spirit without delay."[218] Eusebius supports the

emperor's position that the Son-Word

> was in being even according to his generation which is before all ages, since even
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> before he was generated in actuality, he was potentially with the Father
>
> ingenerately, the Father . . . being all things potentially, and being always in the
>
> same respects and in the same way.[219]

Eusebius takes the Scriptural texts Marcellus had used to illustrate the expansion of the

Monad and argues that all of them in fact illustrate relation of distinct hypostases. The

Word of God, contrary to Marcellus' opinion, is not a mere word like a *logion* of

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[215] *Against Marcellus*, 107.

[216] See Jon M. Robertson, *Christ as Mediator: A Study of the Theologies of Eusebius of Caesarea, Marcellus of Ancyra, and Athanasius of Alexandria* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2007).

[217] Hanson, *Search*, 225.

[218] *Against Marcellus*, 103.

[219] "Letter of Eusebius of Caesarea to his Church," in *A New Eusebius*, ed. J. Stevenson, rev. W. H. C. Frend (Baker: Grand Rapids, MI, 2013), 390-394, 393. On this the editors say, "Eusebius' statement about, 'Before his generation he was not,' appears to miss the point at issue completely" (394).

Scripture or a word of human speech. The Son-Word is not *anhypostaton*. Nor is the Word of God merely economic. With all of this attention paid to the Father and Son-Word and their relation, there is little advance by either Marcellus or the Eusebians on Pneumatology.

Hanson takes it as the scholarly consensus that "Eusebius' doctrine of the Holy Spirit is meagre and inadequate."[220] It is restricted to "the biblical language that refers to his activities."[221] The Spirit is a distinct hypostasis, but is also created—even if the first and highest creation produced through the Son-Word. Eusebius distinguishes clearly between the Word-Son and the Spirit. He interprets the overshadowing of Christ as an activity of the Holy Spirit. John Mackett has shown, further, that Eusebius's pneumatology is directly dependent on the logic of his theology of the Son.[222] The Spirit comes forth from the Son just as the Son originates in the Father. The Spirit is "subordinate to the Son as the Son is to the Father," responsible for "ruling over those things which have come into existence later."[223] The letter of Eusebius of Nicomedia to Paulinus of Tyre stated that "all things were made by the Son," and Eusebius of Caesarea had specifically said of the Paraclete Spirit that it has its being (*hyparxis*) from the Son, coming about through the Son (*dia tou Huiou*). Both Eusebiuses are inheritors of the ambiguous writings of Origen on the Spirit.[224]

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[220] Hanson, *Search*, 225.

[221] Mackett, "Eusebius," 309.

[222] "We can summarize the logic of Eusebius' theology of the Son this way. One must assert that the Son is divine, or else the Church will reject him as a Samosatene. One must assert two divine hypostases or else she will be teaching Sabellianism. One must assert that one hypostasis is greater than the other, or she has denied monotheism" (Mackett, "Eusebius," 312).

[223] Hanson, *Search*, 55 (quoting *PE* VII.15.6).

[224] For the references of both Eusebii, see Swete, *Early History*, 33.

Philosophically, Marcellus's theology of the Spirit is like Tertullian's in that Marcellus takes spirit in the generic sense of divine substance—it is set over against flesh which refers to the incarnation. Eusebius of Caesarea's characterization of the Spirit, on the other hand, is nearly identical to that of Justin. As with Justin, Eusebius makes the Christian Trinity closely correlative to Plato's three-tiered ontology of the divine, comprising the transcendent God, the demiurgic Logos, and the soul of the all. "The Father corresponds to the first God of Platonism, the Son to the second cause, and the Spirit to the soul of the universe," as Mackett summarizes Eusebian trinitarian theology.[225]

Perhaps the pneumatological contribution of Eusebius most pertinent for Victorinus is his careful exegesis of the gospel of John for the sake of distinguishing the "Paraclete Spirit" from the Son who promises to send Him.[226] From the point of view of the Nicene theology of the middle of the fourth century, Eusebius's pneumatology was useful but inadequate.[227] Eusebian theology would be taken up in two distinct forms in the decades after the deaths of Eusebius of Caesarea (c. 339) and Eusebius of Nicomedia (c. 341) of which I will say more in the next chapter.

Marcellus would outlive Arius, Constantine, and the Eusebians by many years. Although he was frequently condemned by eastern bishops and most steadfastly opposed

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[225] Mackett, "Eusebius," 312.

[226] Mackett calls this "an innovation in the development of the theology of the Holy Spirit" ("Eusebius," 313).

[227] Mackett's conclusion to his dissertation is balanced. "Judged by later formulations, this theology of the Spirit was inadequate. However, by appealing to both the Johannine writings and the relationship between the Spirit and the Son to articulate his theology of the Spirit, Eusebius opened a very helpful path in the development of the Church's theology of the Spirit" (Mackett, "Eusebius," 318).

by the Eusebians, he was never formally condemned in the West.[228] He had much interaction with the church at Rome as well as with Athanasius. While he and the Alexandrian were both exiled at Rome in 340 they both made pleas to Pope Julius I, Athanasius to clear his name of the many and frequent disciplinary charges brought against him by the Eusebians, and Marcellus for ongoing doctrinal discrepancies with the same. It is at this point, towards the beginning of Constantius II's reign as Augustus of the east, that the trinitarian controversy enters a new phase of intense activity. The next two decades (340-c. 360) will be the historical focus of the next chapter.

Conclusion

The history of pneumatology from the mid-second to the early middle of the fourth century is a narrative of uneven progressions and regressions. Justin is a pioneer in plying philosophy and hermeneutics in his apologetics and polemics defending Christian belief, but his trinitarian articulations do not consistently or adequately differentiate Word and Spirit. Irenaeus adds partitive exegesis and a Christological *skopos* to Justin's prosopological strategy of interpreting Scripture. His trinitarian theology advances on Justin's in that he makes a clear distinction between each of God's "two hands." Tertullian forges the language and framework for later Latin theologizing. He confuses the Word-Son and Spirit at times due to his Spirit-Christology. Origen establishes the categories and methods for theologizing in Egypt and Syria and throughout the

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[228] He was restored to his see in 337 only to be again excommunicated. He appealed to Julius of Rome as did Athanasius in 340. He was again condemned in 343 at Philippopolis by eastern bishops who had broken from the synod at Serdica to hold their own council, and then again in Antioch in 345.

Mediterranean world. In his pneumatology he confirms the hypostatic reality of the Spirit distinct from the Son-Word; supports the church's rule of its association (conglorification) with Father and Son; and argues for the Spirit's divinity, as well as its role in creation and sanctification. As one of the great influences behind Antioch 268, Arius and Alexander, Nicaea 325, Athanasius and Eusebius of Caesarea, Origen's ambivalent theological legacy remains relevant well into the fourth century and after. There was little or perhaps no progress in the Church's theology of the Holy Spirit until a century after his death. The great leap forward in Christian pneumatology took place in Victorinus's lifetime. He was among the first to acknowledge that the controversial phrase of the Nicene Creed applies as much to the Holy Spirit as to the Son and Father with whom He is *homoousion*.

2.0   CHAPTER 2

Introduction to *Adversus Arium* III

Marius Victorinus wrote his theological treatises as a direct response to contemporary

controversies facing the church. In this chapter I offer the reader a historical, theological,

and rhetorical orientation to Victorinus's *Adversus Arium* III in three parts. (1)

"Historical Setting": I begin by establishing the work in its historical milieu. I show how

Victorinus's theological treatises respond directly to the pressing doctrinal concerns of

the day by tracing the theological and political circumstances of the 340s to early 360s.

(2) "Orientation to *Adversus Arium* III": On the basis of the theological and political

scene examined in section one, I introduce the reader to *Adversus Arium* III by analyzing

its structure and highlighting its key arguments. I also anticipate some of the points of

interest raised in the next three chapters of commentary, particularly those relating to

Marius Victorinus's pneumatology. (3) "Pedagogical and Rhetorical Principles": Finally,

I explain Victorinus's self-understanding as pedagogue and rhetor so that the reader may

be primed for a careful and accurate reading of *Adversus Arium* III. Under the heading of

pedagogy, I address what Victorinus thought the purpose of teaching was and how he achieved his educative ends. With respect to rhetoric, I show how his linguistic and argumentative knowledge features in his theological writings.

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2.1 Historical Setting

In the last chapter I discussed two-hundred years of Christian speculation on the Holy Spirit, ending at the year 340. This was because for Victorinus's trinitarian theology the significance of the next two decades is as great as that of the previous two centuries. The years from 340 to 360 are dense with conciliar decisions, the defining of dogmatic positions, and the formation of theological and political alliances. I will treat the pneumatologies of these years in greater detail than I had those of the second to the fourth century in chapter one.

2.1.1 Councils and Creeds

2.1.1.1 340s

We concluded chapter one in 340 with Athanasius and Marcellus before Julius I, bishop of Rome. Athanasius and Marcellus successfully pled their orthodoxy to the Roman see at the start of what will be another busy decade among Christian hierarchs. Marcellus wrote a confession of faith as part of his appeal. James Stevenson implies that after spending fifteen months in Rome, Marcellus knew how to conceal his modalist monarchian Trinitarian theology in terms that would appease the Roman hierarch, and

that this accounts for how similar his confession is to the Roman Creed.[1] Tarmo Toom,

however, while acknowledging the similarities, reads Marcellus's profession as sincere.[2]

Markus Vincent, contrary to both of these positions, claims that Marcellus's statement,

far from being dependent on Roman creeds, actually comes to inform Roman creedal

statements.[3] In any case, its pneumatology is identical with that of Nicaea, Marcellus

mentioning Christ's birth "from the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary," and his belief "in

the Holy Spirit."[4]

Shortly after Athanasius and Marcellus received their vindication from the church

in Rome, the dedication of the "Golden Church" took place in Antioch. The occasion

gave opportunity for the *ad hoc* calling of a council (Antioch 341) while Constantius II

was in attendance. Four creeds came out of this meeting. The third, which in actual fact is

not a synodal creed but the personal confession of faith of Theophronius of Tyana, has a

short portion devoted to the Paraclete. It rejects the theologies of Marcellus, Sabellius,

and Paul of Samosata.[5] The second and fourth are most significant theologically. Antioch

IV is the creed with the greatest influence on the empire-wide theological disputes of the

next two decades. It was produced with a particular eye towards the Church in the West

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[1] James Stevenson, *Creeds, Councils, and Controversies: Documents Illustrating the History of the Church AD 337-461* (London: SPCK, 1989), 11-12.

[2] Tarmo Toom, "Marcellus of Ancyra and Priscillian of Avila: Their Theologies and Creeds," *Vigiliae Christianae* 68 (2014): 60-81.

[3] See Wolfram Kinzig and Markus Vincent, "Recent Research on the Origin of the Creed," *The Journal of Theological Studies* 50 (1999): 535-559; and *Faith in Formulae: A Collection of Early Christian Creeds and Creed-related Texts*, ed. Wolfram Kinzig (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), vol. 1, 12 (at n. 56 *in loc.* Kinzig notes he had agreed with Vincent at the time of Vincent's publication, but has since then "become more cautious") and vol. 2, 222 §253.

[4] *Faith in Formulae*, 2.223, §253.

[5] *Faith in Formulae*, 1.342-343, §141a. "And in the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete, 'the Spirit of truth,' which God also promised by his prophet to pour out upon his servants, and the Lord promised to send to his disciples; which he also sent, as the Acts of the Apostles witness."

and was dispatched to Constans in Gaul.[6] The decision to have an official composition for "in-house" purposes (Antioch II) and another for distribution (Antioch IV) highlights the Antiochene awareness of theological differences between East and West, and a shrewd concern for theological and political concordance. A comparison of its text with that of Antioch II shows by contrast what the Antiochenes thought would be problematic to their western counterparts—or at least to Constans.

Antioch IV asserts belief "in one God, the Father almighty," in Christ "his only-begotten Son" who is also "Word, Wisdom, Power, Life, and true Light," "whose kingdom endures unceasingly unto the infinite ages."[7] In Antioch II, the "Dedication Creed," the creed's composers quote the Matthean baptismal passage (Mt. 28:19), then specify that they believe in

> a Father who is truly Father, and a Son who is truly Son, and of the Holy Spirit who is truly Holy Spirit, the names not being given without distinction or idly, but denoting accurately the respective subsistence (*hypostasis*), rank, and glory of each one that is named, so that they are three in subsistence, and one in harmony (ὡς εἶναι τῇ μὲν ὑποστάσει τρία, τῇ δὲ συμφωνίᾳ ἕν).[8]

These assertions in Antioch II are far less amenable than the Creed of Antioch IV to the theological perspective of the West. The Nicene Creed had insisted on consubstantiality which, combined with the equation of *ousia* and *hypostasis* in its anathemas, had precluded tri-hypostatic expressions. "The parallels between this highly Scriptural creed

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[6] *Faith in Formulae*, 1.346-347, §141d. See Athanasius, *De synodis* 25, 2-5; Socrates, *Eccl. Hist.*2.18.3-6.
[7] *Faith in Formulae*, 1.347.
[8] *Faith in Formulae*, 1.344 (Greek 1.343); cf. Vinzent, *Asterius*, fg. 60 (120).

and the writings of Asterius and Eusebius of Nicomedia are readily apparent."[9] They are thus precisely opposed to the miahypostatic theology of Marcellus and of Rome. It is both Origenian and anti-Sabellian in its emphasis on distinct subsistences, and holds a pronounced "theology of will" as opposed to a "theology of being." That is, its theological grammar is such as to see the Father and Son related according to a "unity of will" rather than as a "unity of being."[10] This creed will later be important for Basil of Ancyra in 358 (at councils in Ancyra and Sirmium) and Seleucia 359, as Antioch IV is important at Serdica 343, the *Ekthesis Macrostichos* of 345, at Sirmium 351, in the Dated Creed and Acacius's suggested formulation at Seleucia (both 359).[11]

The pneumatologies of Antioch II and IV show the importance of John's Gospel in this period of theological controversy, most notably through their treatment of the Spirit as Paraclete. Antioch II highlights the Spirit's role as comforter, sanctifier, and co-operator in Christian baptism. These references are all specific to the activities of the Spirit and say nothing about the Spirit's status or its origination. The statements are also conspicuously silent on the Spirit's role in creation and prophecy. The pneumatology expressed in Antioch IV, similar to Theophronius's confession, also follows closely the testimony of the Gospel of John.

> And in the Holy Spirit, that is the Paraclete, whom he [Christ] sent as he promised
> to the Apostles after his ascent to heaven to teach them and to remind them of all

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[9] David M. Gwynn, *The Eusebians: The Polemic of Athanasius of Alexandria and the Construction of the 'Arian Controversy'* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 221.
[10] On the diverse theological grammars of those who understand the Father and Son related according to a "unity of will" and those who see their relation as a "unity of being" see Khaled Anatolios, *Retrieving Nicaea: The Development and Meaning of Trinitarian Doctrine* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2011), 41-98.
[11] See Stevenson, *Creeds*, 14-15.

things, through whom also the souls of those who have sincerely believed in him will be sanctified.[12]

This pneumatology certainly goes beyond that of the first creed of Antioch, which merely restated Nicaea's laconic "also in the Holy Spirit." It is distinct from the pneumatology of Antioch II in being slightly briefer but, more importantly, in its chosen emphases. Unlike Antioch II it does not draw attention to Matthew 28:19, which Antioch II had used to emphasize the difference between the hypostases.[13]

In an effort to secure peace among Christian factions East and West, Constans and Constantius called another synod in 343, ecumenical in scope, to meet at Serdica.[14] It was intended to determine the question of Athanasius and Marcellus—in fact to secure their exiles—and to reach some agreement on doctrine. The sheer episcopal intransigence displayed at Serdica is pronounced even against the generally eristic background of the mid-fourth-century theological controversies (equaled only by the events of Ariminum and Seleucia in 359). The eastern bishops refused to commence so long as Athanasius and Marcellus were not removed from the company. When this demand was refused, they themselves removed to Thrace to hold their own council. Any hope of productive discourse was thus stymied immediately. The easterners merely confirmed Antioch IV, with a brief appendix to IV's original anathema:

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[12] Stevenson, *Creeds*, 14.

[13] Kinzig includes the epistle of Dionysius of Rome to Dionysius of Alexandria among the documents gathered for Serdica (so c. 342), claiming it is likely a forgery. Its purpose is to uphold the distinction of the "divine Triad" (ἡ θεία τριὰς) and the singleness of the "divine monad" or "monarchy" (ἡ θεία μονάδα, ἡ μοναρχία) (*Faith in Formulae*, 1.348-349, §142).

[14] There is a long history of debate on the date of this Council. Mark DelCogliano gives a thorough account of the debate and concludes autumn of 343 is correct (Mark DelCogliano, "The Date of the Council of Serdica: A Reassessment of the Case for 343," *Studies in Late Antiquity* 1 (2017): 282–310).

Likewise those who say that there are three gods, or that Christ is not God, or that before the ages neither the Christ nor the Son of God existed, or that Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are the same, or that the Son is unbegotten, or that the Father did not beget the Son by choice or will, the holy catholic Church anathematizes.[15]

The addition in the absence of westerners emphasizes the distinctiveness of all three hypostases and that the Son comes forth by the will (*boulesis*, *consilium*) or choice (*thelema*, *voluntas*) of the Father.

The westerners continued their meeting in Serdica. Athanasius claimed they merely reasserted Nicaea with its creed and Socrates tells us this body "distinctly recognized the doctrine of consubstantiality."[16] But in fact the bishops did produce a document, preserved by Theodoret.[17] This statement claims that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are one hypostasis or *ousia*. The western bishops composed a statement of their theological perspective which reveals no further nuance with respect to the meanings of *ousia* and *hypostasis*, whose synonymity continued to be assumed. These bishops branded as Arian the Illyrian bishops Ursacius and Valens for their claim "that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are of diverse and distinct *hypostases*."[18] To the western bishops this sounded like saying the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are three different kinds of beings, which would of course make the Son and Spirit creatures instead of divine. The westerners articulated a theology in which *miahypostatic* and *homoousion* are equivalent. They adamantly rejected the eastern "theology of will" according to which

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[15] *Faith in Formulae*, 1.352 (for all relevant texts see 349-354), §143. On this synod's adoption of Antioch IV see Stevenson, *Creeds*, 15.

[16] Athanasius, *Tomos ad Antiochenos*,5.1; Socrates, *Hist. Eccl.* II.20.9 and 10.

[17] Theodoret, *Hist. Eccl.* 2.8.39-52.

[18] Stevenson, *Creeds*, 16.

Father and Son are one "on account of their harmony and concord" (διὰ τὴν συμφωνίαν καὶ τὴν ὁμόνοιαν).[19]

There is a subordinationism in the Creed of Serdica, as will be found in a few creeds over the next two decades. "No one ever denies that the Father is greater than the Son, [though this is] neither on account of another hypostasis nor <any> difference [between the two], but because the very name of the Father is greater than that of the Son."[20] The Word (*logos*, *verbum*) is identified with spirit (*pneuma*, *spiritus*), reflecting a Spirit Christology which is also present in an interesting, though confused, passage on the Paraclete.

> We believe in and we receive the Paraclete, the Holy Spirit, whom the Lord both promised and sent to us. We believe that this [Spirit] was sent. We believe that this [Spirit] did not suffer, but the man with which he clothed himself, which he took from the virgin Mary; [it was that] man which was capable of suffering; for man is mortal, whereas God is immortal.[21]

The Paraclete is distinct from Christ insofar as Christ sent the Spirit, but shortly after that statement the same Spirit appears to be simply the divine Spirit which belonged to the Logos.

Antioch IV lay behind the *Ekthesis Macrostichos* of Antioch 345. The "Long-lined" Creed included some new anathemas and explanations. Marcellus of Ancyra and Photinus of Sirmium are both explicitly condemned and their views rejected in the fifth paragraph of elucidation.

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[19] *Faith in Formulae*, 1.359 (Greek 355), §144.
[20] *Faith in Formulae*, 1.359.
[21] *Faith in Formulae*, 1.359 (for all relevant texts see 354-362), §144.

> [W]e abhor and anathematize those who falsely call him only a mere Word of God and non-existent, having his being in another—[by some] he is called a spoken utterance (*prophorikon*), and by others he [is said] to reside in the mind (*endiatheton*). [Such people] maintain that he was not Christ, Son of God, mediator and image of God before the ages . . . For they maintain that after that Christ began his kingdom, and that it will have an end after the consummation and the judgement. Such are the followers of Marcellus and Photinus of Galatian Ancyra who . . . deny Christ's existence before time, as well as his godhead, and unending kingdom, under the pretense of supporting belief in the [divine] Monarchy.[22]

The seventh paragraph of the *Ekthesis* rebukes Patripassians and Sabellians. An intriguing feature is the polarity presented here between divine necessity and freedom: the Son was generated by the divine will lest God be hemmed in by necessity.

> Likewise those who irreverently say that the Son has been begotten not by choice nor will (thus encompassing God with a necessity which excludes choice and purpose, so that he begat the Son unwillingly) we consider most irreligious and alien to the church, in that they have dared to define such things concerning God, beyond the common notions concerning him, what is more, also beyond the intention of the divinely inspired Scripture. For we, knowing that God is absolute and his own Lord, have piously accepted that he begot the Son voluntarily and freely.[23]

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[22] *Faith in Formulae*, 1.366-367, §145.
[23] *Faith in Formulae*, 1.367, §145. Cf. Vinzent, *Asterius*, fg. 10 (86) and fgg. 14-22 (88-92).

This statement sets up the two prongs of a theological dilemma which later philosophically minded Christians, including Victorinus and Gregory Nazianzen, considered wrongly conceived. It presupposes an ascription to God of attributes which belong properly to creatures but not to the divinity who is beyond the *Categories*. But these resolutions have not yet been achieved; this *aporia* is raised in this period as another occasion for ecclesial division.

The key importance of these documents is their clarification of the eastern *trihypostatic* position and the western emphasis on the single hypostasis or *ousia* of the Trinity. Pneumatology continues to be little attended to, its interest subordinate to the Trinitarian understanding of hypostases; the Spirt may even be brought in to defend a single hypostasis under the confusion of Spirit-Christology. The next important council occurs early in yet another momentous and hectic decade for the church.

2.1.1.2 350s

The doctrinal questions facing councils in this period always relate to the relation of Father and Son; the questions of discipline they address almost always involve some initiative for or against Athanasius. Photinus's thought and person, too, are consistently on the docket for conciliar condemnation in this period.[24] Emperor Constantius II's involvement in ecclesial affairs and the increased clarity of theological positions—much influenced by the emperor's own labors—will have pronounced influence on the shape of Victorinus's theology. It is convenient to begin with Constantius whose itinerary

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[24] D. H. Williams, "Monarchianism and Photinus of Sirmium as the Persistent Heretical Face of the Fourth Century," *Harvard Theological Review* 99:2 (2006): 187-206.

beginning in the early 350s corresponds with some of the most important conciliar activity of the decade.

Constantius's involvement in church affairs grew in proportion to the scope of his reign. His conflict with the usurper Magnentius from 351 to 353 carried him from Antioch all the way over the Alps. When, after defeating Magnentius, he became sole emperor in 353, his position provided him the opportunity "to push for a unified religious policy throughout his domains in a way no emperor had been able to do since the days of his father in 337."[25] Hanson says of Constantius's role in the life of the Church:

> He certainly desired the unity of the Church, as his father had, and felt himself bound to follow a policy that would secure it. But his actions in the years . . . 351-357, and later during the closing years of his life, do not suggest that he was only concerned with unity, political and ecclesiastical. We shall see that he favored one solution to the problem of the Christian doctrine of God, that which is best called Homoian, and that he rejected others, the Homoousian and the Anhomoian.[26]

His theological views were strongly shaped by those of the Eusebians, under whose influence he seems to have been since his appearance at the Council of Antioch in 341.[27]

At Sirmium 351 Basil of Ancyra debated Photinus, who was condemned by the council and exiled by Constantius. The council rejects the claim that the Father and Son are two gods (*an.* I), the Photinian and Marcellan assertions that the *ousia* is extended and retracted (VI and VII), that the three are one *prosopon* (XIX) or that they are three gods (XXIII). Its pneumatological anathemas proscribed treating the Holy Spirit as

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[25] Ayres, *Nicaea*, 133.
[26] Hanson, *Search*, 324.
[27] Cf. Ayres, *Nicaea*, 134.

indistinguishable from the Father and the Son (XIX-XXII).[28] Hanson sees the creed from this council as definitely anti-Nicene and possibly directly anti-Athanasian.[29] Ayres is more circumspect, but agrees that it is a "partially cloaked attack on Athanasius and the theologies of other early partisans of Nicaea."[30] Appended to it were anathemas against all who say the Holy Spirit and the Son are one person (*hen prosopon*), that the Paraclete is the unbegotten God (*agenneton theon*), that "there is no Paraclete besides the Son," and who say the Holy Spirit is part (*meros*) of the Father or the Son.[31] This council "set the trend for a series of councils in which Constantius attempted to get the condemnation of Athanasius and probably some sort of theological statement accepted throughout the west."[32]

Constantius spent 353 to 357 in the western part of the empire where he carried out a consolidation campaign among the churches. At Pope Liberius's request, Constantius convened a council in Milan in 355. It did not turn out as Liberius had hoped. His allies Dionysius of Milan, Eusebius of Vercelli, and Lucifer of Cagliari were all exiled and Athanasius condemned through the influence of Valens of Mursa and Ursacius of Singidunum.[33] The council also resulted in the confirmation of a creed "patient of an Arian interpretation."[34] Eusebius and Lucifer would be important figures a few years later at the council of Alexandria (362) and the ecclesiastical disorder it meant to address in

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[28] All the anathemas listed by Hanson, *Search*, 326-328. Henry Swete, in his still valuable historical work on the pneumatology of the early Church, discerned in this council some growing concern over the status of the Holy Spirit as early as the First Sirmian Creed of 351 based on these pneumatological anathemas. Henry Barclay Swete, *On the Early History of the Doctrine of the Holy Spirit with Especial Reference to the Controversies of the Fourth Century* (Cambridge: Deighton, Bell, 1873), 38.
[29] Hanson, *Search*, 329.
[30] Ayres, *Nicaea*, 135.
[31] *Faith in Formulae*, 1.375 (for all relevant texts see 371-376), §148.
[32] Ayres, *Nicaea*, 135.
[33] Ayres, *Nicaea*, 136-137; Hanson, *Search*, 338-340.
[34] Ayres, *Nicaea*, 133.

Antioch. In the course of their exile Eusebius and Lucifer ultimately ended up in the Thebaid, which allowed them to be involved in the Alexandrian Council in 362, although Lucifer hurried to Antioch before the Alexandrian Council began.[35] Liberius was exiled in 356.[36] Hilary was sent to Phrygia in exile at the council of Bitterae of 356.[37] This time in the east afforded him the chance to learn the positions and controversies of Greek theology. Hilary claims not to have heard *homoousios* until his time in the east, evidence that "Nicaea only slowly came to be of importance in the west."[38] This witness makes it all the more remarkable that Victorinus should have considered the term essential to trinitarian theology in the late 350s.

A small gathering of bishops took place at Sirmium 357 and produced a creed—Ayres calls it a 'manifesto'—of far greater significance than its size would lead one to expect: the Second Creed, which Hilary dubbed the "Blasphemy of Sirmium."[39] It proscribes any use of substance language, whether *homoousion* or *homoiousion*, on the grounds that *ousia* is not found in the Scriptures.[40] Hanson notes that the creed contains the first appearance of the term *homoiousios*.[41] Ayres sees this council and its creed as "a significant turning point," for the creed "demonstrates growing clarity among some

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[35] Hanson, *Search*, 332-334, and see 334, n. 73.
[36] Hanson, *Search*, 340.
[37] On Hilary's exile see Carl L. Beckwith, "The Condemnation and Exile of Hilary of Poitiers at the Synod of Béziers (356 C.E.)," *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 13 (2005): 21-38.
[38] Hilary, *De syn.* 90 (PL 10, 545A); Ayres, *Nicaea*, 136.
[39] Ayres, *Nicaea*, 137-138; Hanson, *Search*, 344-347. Hanson suggests only about six attendees: Potamius, Ossius, Valens, Ursacius, Germinius, and Mark of Arethusa. Ossius was made to sign off on the Second Creed of this small council, though Hilary says that he had a hand in its composition. The creed is preserved in Hilary, *De Synodis* 11 and Athanasius *De Synodis* 28; see *Faith in Formulae* I.404-408, §154.
[40] Hilary, *De syn.* 11, 1-48; Athanasius, *De syn.* 28, 2-12; Socrates, *Hist. eccl.* 2.30, 31-41; *Faith in Formulae*, 1.404-408, §154. "But as for the fact that some, or many, are concerned about substance (*substantia*) which is called *ousia* in Greek, that is, to speak more explicitly, *homoousion* or *homoiousion*, as it is called, there should be no mention of it whatever, nor should anyone preach it" (Hanson, *Search*, 344-345).
[41] Hanson, *Search*, 345.

theologians that resulted in the emergence of 'Homoian' theology."[42] It quotes Isaiah 53:8 in support of conciliar refusal to theorize about the Son's generation from the Father. With support from the gospel of John (20:17 and 14:28), it asserts in explicit terms that the Father is greater than the Son. We can see its repetition of certain aspects of Antioch IV. The Father and Son are two *personae*. The language of "likeness" in the creed betrays "a clear subordination emphasis."[43] The Holy Spirit is conspicuously peripheral, being left to the coda without even a hint that questions of the theological relevance of the Spirit are in the minds of these western bishops. The perfunctory pneumatology is so much an afterthought that it follows after what might have been the creed's peroration: "The whole faith is summed up and secured in this: that the Trinity should be forever preserved."[44] Then comes the "Paraclete is the Holy Spirit through the Son, who was sent forth and came according to the promise, that he might instruct, teach, and sanctify the apostles and all believers," a theology of the Spirit reminiscent of Antioch II and IV.[45]

In 358 Basil called a council in his own diocese of Ancyra. Lewis Ayres thinks the council "was prompted by the teaching of Aetius in Antioch."[46] Winrich Löhr sees the instalment of Eudoxius at Antioch as the catalyst for Basil's convening a synod. "According to the rather sparse hints in the extant sources it was the conflict about the succession of the Antiochene bishop Leontius that furnished the occasion for the Ancyran synod."[47] Whatever precipitated the gathering, its theological import had to do with the

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[42] Ayres, *Nicaea*, 137, 138.
[43] Ayres, *Nicaea*, 138.
[44] *Faith in Formulae*, 1.406.
[45] *Faith in Formulae*, 1.406; see Hanson, *Search*, 345.
[46] Ayres, *Nicaea*, 150.
[47] Winrich A. Löhr, "A Sense of Tradition: The Homoiousian Church Party," in *Arianism after Arius: Essays on the Development of the Fourth Century Trinitarian Conflicts* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1993), 81-100, here 83.

definition of a theology that resisted the trend of subordination which had begun in Antioch 341 and continued through the theological campaign of Constantius.[48] The bishops at this council reiterated the expressions of Antioch IV, along with a theology which has been called *homoiousion* because of Basil's insistence on confessing Father and Son as "like according to essence" (ὅμοιος κατ᾽οὐσίαν). He and a few others with him met with Constantius in Sirmium, bearing with them their *homoiousion* position. Of great importance for Victorinus's theological treatises is the dossier thought to have been collected at this time.

> This meeting with Constantius appears also to have drawn up a dossier of key texts dating from the Dedication creed to circulate among other bishops and Basil wrote a letter, which is not extant, on the difference between *homoousios* and *homoiousios*. This letter was circulated west, however, and was one way in which Homoiousian theology became more widely known.[49]

Constantius was convinced of their perspective (for the moment). He thought highly enough of its potential for securing ecclesial unity that he agreed to call a council in Sirmium which would propose the formula κατ᾽οὐσίαν ὅμοιος τῷ πατρί. What creed the bishops proposed on the occasion is lost, but it is known that they had confirmed the condemnation of some understanding of *homoousion* and affirmed the Second Creed of Antioch 341, the First Sirmian Creed of 351, and the language of likeness describing the relation of the Son to the Father. Around this time Liberius from his exile in Thrace gave in to Constantius and the current ecclesial powers.[50] He accepted the condemnation of

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48 See Ayres, *Nicaea*, 150.
49 Ayres, *Nicaea*, 153.
50 Sozomen, *Hist. eccl.* 4.15.1-3.

Athanasius and "signed a formula which his pro-Nicene contemporaries unanimously regarded as unorthodox."[51]

In 359 Emperor Constantius made yet a third attempt at ecumenical Christian unity—counting Nicaea under Constantine as the first, and Serdica 343 under the brothers Constans and Constantius as the second. Twin councils West and East were to meet late in 359 in order to unite both Christian bodies across the empire. Before these meetings a council took place in Sirmium to draw up a document on which all would be asked to agree. Those gathered produced what was called the Dated Creed for its having included the date of its formulation, 22 May 359.[52] It was a rehashing of the third creed of Sirmium from 357 and included a formulation credited to Mark of Arethusa: "the Son is similar to the Father in all things, as the holy Scriptures also affirm and teach" (ὅμοιον . . . τὸν υἱὸν τῷ πατρί κατὰ πάντα, ὡς καὶ αἱ ἅγιαι γραφαὶ λέγουσί τε καὶ διδάσκουσι).[53] The creed again excludes the use of *ousia*, saying "that henceforth no mention at all should be made of substance (*ousia*) in reference to God, since the divine Scriptures have nowhere made mention of the substance (*ousia*) of the Father and the Son."[54] A couple months later the western bishops gathered at Ariminum (July to November 359). Those gathered rejected the Dated Creed, preferring to reaffirm the Nicene Creed. What the

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[51] Hanson, *Search*, 362.

[52] *Faith in Formulae*, 1.413-415, §157.

[53] *Faith in Formulae*, 1.413-415, §157; Hanson, *Search* 363. On the Third Creed, now lost, see *Faith in Formulae*, 1.412-413, §156.

[54] *Faith in Formulae*, 1.415, §157; see Hanson, *Search*, 364. If one follows Hanson in rejecting Socrates's *epinoias* in place of *ousias* early in the creed (speaking of the Son as "before all ages and before all beginning and before all conceivable time and before all comprehensible substance (*ousias*)") then one has to account for the word *ousia* being applied with intentional theological weight only a few lines prior to its utter rejection as non-scriptural. Hanson explains this by the fact that there is a difference between the sophisticated language of theologians and the language proper for the simple believer, a point which the creed acknowledges explicitly. "To say that the use of *ousia* confuses the laity and is not found in Scripture is not to rule out its use among the theologians" (Hanson, *Search*, 365).

western council's delegates Valens and Ursacius presented to the emperor, however, was a Homoian statement reducing *homoios kata panta* to the underdetermined and therefore manipulable phrase, "the Son is like the Father."[55]

The eastern bishops gathered in Seleucia in September. Many present also rejected the proposed formulation, favoring the second Creed of Antioch 341. Acacius put forth his own creed during the proceedings—a bland piece, diluted enough to secure maximal support while causing minimal offense.[56] It also included a rejection of *ousia* language. The council was concluded prematurely, the diverse parties not having reached agreement. Delegations representing the sundry positions were sent from Seleucia to Constantius in Constantinople. The Homoians led by Acacius of Caesarea had immediate success with the emperor—unsurprising given the interests of Constantius. All the bishops from Seleucia, as well as those from Ariminum, were made to sign on to what was essentially the Dated Creed. It included an additional minor provision against "one hypostasis" language used for the Trinity and the subtraction of "in all respects" from the statement of the Son's likeness to the Father.[57] This updated Homoian statement—the Creed of Niké —was sanctioned in Constantinople in 360.

Recapitulation

We must admit that in the more than three decades after the council of Nicaea there has still yet to be presented an adequate interpretation of its key contentions. Its

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[55] Ayres, *Nicaea*, 160.

[56] Acacius was bishop of Caesarea after Eusebius. Jerome mentions him in *De viris illustribus*, 98 (PL 23:699). On Acacius see Joseph T. Lienhard, "Acacius of Caesarea: *Contra Marcellum*: Historical and Theological Considerations," *CrSt* 10 (1989): 1-22.

[57] Hanson, *Search*, 380.

determination that the Father and Son are *homoousion* is open to interpretations as diverse as that of Marcellus on the one hand, and the Eusebians and Antiochenes on the other: the former supports it because he thinks it expresses his own economic trinitarianism and the latter reject it because it sounds like the dynamic Monarchianism of the patripassians or the modalism of Sabellius. The word was used with great diversity until the late 350s when *ousia* language was rejected as consistently divisive. The *Homoiousian* position developed in 358—after *ousia* language had been rejected by the small group of bishops meeting in Sirmium in 357. The Homoiousians as a united group were ephemeral, Basil being willing to forego *ousia* language when Constantius desired unity between the Illyrian Homoians and the Antiochene anti-homoousians. Only the Nicenes and the Aetians—the flank of the Eusebians opposite the Homoiousians—were left utterly dissatisfied. Then in 360 the Homoiousians themselves—including those who had capitulated to the Homoian position like Basil and those who had not, such as George of Laodicea—were to suffer exile at the hands of the ascendant Homoians currently in imperial favor.

Athanasius, having been at the heart of these controversies for three decades by now, knew the thought of those at Rome and Ancyra, at Antioch and Alexandria. It is his global and lengthy experience of the protracted trinitarian controversy that allows him, finally, to have this indispensable insight: *homoousion* properly understood is the key to orthodox Christian trinitarian theology. Athanasius was aware that the word had been understood in the past to imply things about God that the church was right to anathematize. But the Fathers at Nicaea rehabilitated the term. Some wrongly rejected it but for the right reasons; others rightly confirmed it but for the wrong reasons. According

to the magnanimous perspective of Athanasius, those who accept Nicaea but doubt about *homoousion* are not 'Ariomaniacs' but brothers who agree in sense but not in word. For, says Athanasius, "confessing that the Son is from the essence of the Father, and not from another subsistence . . . they are not far from accepting even the phrase consubstantial. Such is Basil from Ancyra."[58]

2.1.2 359-361: Nascence of Pneumatology

Throughout the 340s and 350s the many-sided controversy always concerned the status of the Son and his relation to the Father. Although there had been hints of increased clarity on questions of the status, origin, and distinctive hypostatic reality of the Spirit in earlier eastern synods and especially in the anathemas of Sirmium 351, the first sign of attention being turned deliberately to considerations of the Holy Spirit is Athanasius's writing to Serapion (c. 359-361).[59]

2.1.2.1 Athanasius

Athanasius wrote his letters to Serapion against the so-called *Tropikoi*, a group in the Egyptian desert claiming that the Spirit was a creature, a minister or angel of God.[60] These had accepted the divinity of the Son, his *homoousion* relationship with the Father,

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[58] Athanasius, *De syn.* 41.

[59] On the dating of the letters, Shapland says they "can scarcely have been begun before the summer of 358; much of the evidence leads us to put them several months later in 359 or early in 360" (C. R. B. Shapland, *The Letters of Athanasius Concerning the Holy Spirit* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1951), 18). The dates are given as 359-361 in *Works on the Spirit: Athanasius's letters to Serapion on the Holy Spirit and Didymus's On the Holy Spirit,'* tr. Lewis Ayres, Mark DelCogliano, and Andrew Radde-Gallwitz PPS 43 (Yonkers, NY: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2011), 23, full discussion 20-23.

[60] *Ep. ad Ser* 1.15 (PG 26:565C)*.* Lewis Ayres, "Innovation and *Ressourcement* in Pro-Nicene Pneumatology," *Augustinian Studies* 39 (2008): 187-205, 188-89. This group may have been influenced by Clement of Alexandria: see Bogdan Gabriel Bucur, *Angelomorphic Pneumatology: Clement of Alexandria and Other Early Christian Witnesses* (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2009).

but had not acknowledged that the Spirit shared that same relation with both Father and Son.

> You write . . . that certain persons, having forsaken the Arians on account of their blasphemy against the Son of God, yet oppose the Holy Spirit, saying that He is not only a creature, but actually one of the ministering spirits, and differs from the angels only in degree.[61]

In the *epistula* Athanasius asserts that the Holy Spirit is necessary for Christian salvation, is eternal, associated with the Father and Son in worship and baptism, is divine, and participates in divine creation. His arguments are rooted in Scripture and are strongly soteriological; many are extensions of the "incipient lines of approach to the doctrine of the Spirit" one finds in his earlier *Orations against the Arians*.[62] Kevin Douglas Hill specifies five pneumatological positions Athanasius had come to hold during his work in the *Orations* which would come to further prominence in his *Epistula*.

> [B]y the completion of the Orations Athanasius held five major pneumatological tenets: the Holy Spirit is uncreated, eternal, inseparably united to the Son, essential for salvation, and worthy of worship. These tenets laid the groundwork for the pneumatological arguments that he would bring against the *Tropikoi*.[63]

In the *Epistula* each of these points is explained in such a way as to meet the perplexities and correct the mistakes of the Tropikoi of the Egyptian desert.

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[61] Shapland, *Letters of Saint Athanasius*, 59-60.

[62] Theodore C. Campbell, "The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit in the Theology of Athanasius," *Scottish Journal of Theology* 27 (1974): 408-440, here 410.

[63] Kevin Douglas Hill, *Athanasius and the Holy Spirit: The Development of His Early Pneumatology* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2016), 263.

The Spirit is "ranked with the Triad, the whole of which is one God."[64] As the deity is eternal and uncreated, so the Spirit, being an inseparable member of the Trinity, is always the Spirit of the Father and is not to be ranked among created things. Athanasius maintains the *taxis* seen in earlier writers: the Spirit is the image of the Son who is the image of the Father;[65] the Spirit relates to the Father through the Son.[66] Athanasius addresses the question of how the three relate to one another, stressing the inseparability of Spirit and Son while also upholding the unique begetting of the Son. "Just as we cannot speak of a father of the Father, so we cannot speak of a brother of the Son."[67] Nor is it possible to call the Spirit the son of the Son and thus grandson of the Father—there is only one Father in God, so that the Son does not imitate the paternity of his Father by begetting a child of his own.[68] What is left? Athanasius, relying on the symbols (*paradeigmata*) of Scripture,[69] sees the Spirit nowhere called a Son.[70] According to the imagery and pattern of Scripture, the Father is as a fountain, the Son a river; the Father is light, the Son the radiance of the light. In both cases, the Spirit stands to the Son as the activity of the Son present in humanity. "Thus, the Father being light, while the Son is his radiance, . . . we can also see in the Son the Spirit, in whom we are enlightened."[71] In illustration, Athanasius quotes Eph. 1:17 in which the Spirit of wisdom is responsible for "enlightening the eyes of your heart." As for the second illustration, "while the Father is fountain, and the Son is called river, we are said to drink of the

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[64] *Ep. ad Ser.* 1.17 (PG 26 569C; ET: Anatolios, *Athanasius*, 216).
[65] *Ep. ad Ser.* 1.24.
[66] *Ep. ad Ser.* 1.20.
[67] *Ep. ad Ser.* 1.16 (PG 26 568C).
[68] *Ep. ad Ser.* 1.16 (PG 26 569A).
[69] *Ep. ad Ser.* 1.19 (PG 26 573B).
[70] *Ep. ad Ser.* 1.16 (PG 569B).
[71] *Ep. ad Ser.* 1.19 (PG 26 573C; ET: Anatolios, *Athanasius*, 218).

Spirit."[72] He then quotes 1 Cor. 12:13 in which Paul says believers "have all been given

to drink of one Spirit." The Spirit is in the Son and the Son in the Spirit, so that to rank

either with creatures is to compromise the divinity of the other as well.[73] This series of

relations and indeed the instrumentality of the Spirit ("wielded" by the Son) no more

precludes the Spirit's divinity than the derivative and instrumental relation of Son to

Father precludes their being *homoousion*.[74]

Next, Athanasius combs the Scriptures to "determine . . . whether the Spirit has

anything that belongs (*idion*) to creatures or whether it belongs (*idion*) to God."[75] The

Spirit is not a creature for it comes from God (quoting 1 Cor. 2:11-12).[76] The Spirit is the

spirit of holiness (Rom 1:4) who sanctifies believers (1 Cor. 6:11).[77] He argues the

participation in holiness is granted to believers by one who does not itself participate

holiness, but is that very holiness in which recipients participate, so the Holy Spirit must

be divine rather than created.[78] It is the same with the Spirit's gift of life and activities of

anointing and sealing.[79] Beyond these things, the Spirit gives Christians a share in the

divine nature, which only a divine being could grant.[80] Finally, the Holy Spirit's role in

creation and renewal clinches the argument that the Spirit cannot itself be a creature.[81]

The Spirit's qualities of immutability, inalterability, omnipresence, too, indicate that the

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[72] *Ep. ad Ser.* 1.19 (PG 26 573D; ET: Anatolios, *Athanasius*, 218).

[73] *Ep. ad. Ser.* 1.21 (PG 26 580C).

[74] Stevenson, *Creeds*, 53.

[75] *Ep. ad Ser.* 1.21 (PG 26 581A; ET: Anatolios, *Athanasius*, 221).

[76] *Ep. ad Ser.* 1.22 (PG 26 581A; ET: Anatolios, *Athanasius*, 221).

[77] *Ep. ad Ser.* 1.22 (PG 26 581C; ET: Anatolios, *Athanasius*, 221-222).

[78] *Ep. ad Ser.* 1.23 and 1.27. On this mode of argumentation based on the metaphysics of participation in Origen and Didymus see Kellen Plaxco, "'I Will Pour Out My Spirit': Didymus against Eunomius in Light of John 16:14's History of Reception," *Vigiliae Christianae* 70 (2016): 479-508.

[79] *Ep. ad Ser.* 1.23.

[80] *Ep. ad Ser.* 1.23 and 1.25.

[81] *Ep. ad Ser.* 1.24 (PG 26 588A; ET: Anatolios, *Athanasius*, 223-224).

Holy Spirit is not a creature.[82] The Spirit is one of a kind "while creatures are many."[83] In

this section appears for the only time in Athanasius's works the application of

homoousion to the Holy Spirit. "It is a matter without any ambiguity that the Spirit is not

among the many and is not an angel, but rather is one and belongs (*idion*) to the one

Word, and accordingly belongs (*idion*) to the one God and is of the same being

(*homoousion*)."[84] Athanasius digresses from his cursus through the Scriptures to draw

attention to the tradition of the Church, though it is worth noting how scripturally focused

is even his digression from his biblical exegesis.[85]

It is the Church's practice to confess God as Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

The activity of the Trinity is one. Christians are baptized in the threefold name. Then

Athanasius asks a rhetorical question (rather pointedly when one considers Victorinus's

argumentation in *Adv. Ar.* III). "Since this is the foundation of the Church's faith, let

them once again speak up and give an answer: Is it Trinity or Dyad?"[86] The Church

baptizes in the name of all three, so if the Holy Spirit is included in that sacramental

formula then if God is only a dyad of Father and Son Christian baptism is likewise

twofold in that it is in the name of both the Creator and of creatures. This baptism is one

(cf. Eph. 4:5)—in the sole God who is Trinity. Athanasius appeals to 1 Cor. 12: 4-6,

along with Jn 16:15 and 17:10, and 2 Cor. 13:13 to secure his argument that God's

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[82] *Ep. ad Ser.* 1.26-27.

[83] *Ep. ad Ser.* 1.27 (PG 26 593B; ET: Anatolios, *Athanasius*, 227). Luigi Jammarrone mentions four essential positions concerning the Holy Spirit for which Athanasius argues in these letters: the unicity of the Spirit (the Spirit is one of a kind, as opposed to creatures which are many of their kind); the Spirit is immutabile; immense (in the sense that the Spirit is uncircumscribed (*aperigraphos*)); and eternal (Luigi Jammarrone tr., intr., with comm., *Atanasio: Lettere a Serapione sulla divinità dello Spirito Santo* (Padua: Messaggero, 1983), 19-25).

[84] *Ep. ad Ser.* 1.27 (PG 26 593B; ET: Anatolios, *Athanasius*, 227); for the claim that Athanasius's application of Trinitarian *homoousion* to the Spirit here is unique see n. 39.

[85] *Ep. ad Ser.* 1.28-31.

[86] *Ep. ad Ser.* 1.29 (PG 26 596C; ET: Anatolios, *Athanasius*, 228).

activity (*energeia*) is one.[87] He brings this in to secure his earlier point that the Holy Spirit is that by which God acts in humanity, enlightening the hearts of believers, granting them grace and communion with God.[88] That same single *energeia* is shown in that the Spirit inspires the Scriptures in which is presented the Word of the Lord.[89] He then, in conclusion, summarizes that the "divine Scriptures thus unanimously demonstrate," and the "consensus of the teaching of the saints" concurs, that the Trinity is one and indivisible, and "the Holy Spirit is not a creature but belongs to the Word and to the divinity of the Father."[90]

When Athanasius oversaw a synod in 362 in Alexandria in order to address the Meletian crisis in Antioch, he and his fellow bishops made it part of their program to ensure that the Spirit was not treated as a creature or somehow divided from the divine essence. The *Tomos ad Antiochenos* includes a recounting of the position of the Meletians in Antioch. They confessed that "Holy Spirit is not a creature, nor foreign, but proper to and inseparable from the substance (ousia) of the Father and the Son."[91] The letter dispatched from that synod, *Epistula catholica*, includes a statement on the liturgical witness to the Spirit's *homoousion* with Father and Son: "and the Spirit is jointly glorified (συνδοξάζεσθαι) with the Father and the Son."[92] The pneumatological

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[87] *Ep. ad Ser.* 1.30. On the use of 1 Cor. 12 in Athanasius's pneumatology see Michael A. G. Haykin, *The Spirit of God: The Exegesis of 1 and 2 Corinthians in the Pneumatomachian Controversy of the Fourth Century* (Leiden: Brill, 1994), 59-103.

[88] *Ep. ad Ser.* 1.30; cf. 1.19.

[89] *Ep. ad Ser.* 1.31.

[90] *Ep. ad Ser.* 1.32 (PG 26 605A; ET: Anatolios, *Athanasius*, 232).

[91] *Tom. ad. Ant.* 5.4 in *Faith in Formulae* I.454, §166a.

[92] *Ep. cath.* 7-8 in *Faith in Formulae* I.454-455, §166b; Athanasius says the Holy Spirit "is glorified with (συνδοξαζόμενον) the Father and the Son" at *Ep. ad Ser.* 1.31 (PG 26 601A; ET: Anatolios, *Athanasius*, 230).

questions which Athanasius addressed had to do with the Spirit's status (deity or creature) and the Spirit's relation to the Son-Word.

2.1.2.2 Didymus the Blind

The dating of Didymus the Blind's *De spiritu sancto* is difficult. As Ayres, DelCogliano, and Radde-Gallwitz note, the only secure fact on which to determine the date is its *terminus ante quem* of 381 when Ambrose used the text for his own composition on the Holy Spirit.[93] Some have suggested that Didymus had composed the work before Athanasius's *Epistula* (c. 358/9).[94] This seems unlikely, however, since the work seems to involve a response to Eunomius's address in Constantinople in January 360.[95] The relation of this work to Athanasius's *Epistula ad Serapionem* has not been secured; they may in fact have no relation at all.[96] Finally, DelCogliano has argued that Basil of Caesarea's *Contra Eunomium* III (c. 364-365) pulls from the *De spiritu sancto*. The conclusion then is that Didymus most likely composed the *De spiritu sancto* sometime between 360-365.[97] Thus it is possibile that Victorinus came across it. The mode of Didymus's argumentation in this work, however, appears rather remote from the pneumatological concerns of Victorinus.

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[93] Ayres, DelCogliano, and Radde-Gallwitz, *Works on the Spirit*, 33.

[94] Edeltraut Staimer, "Die Schrift 'De Spiritu Sancto' von Didymus dem Blinden von Alexandrien," (Ph.D. diss., München, 1960), 123; Wolf-Dieter Hauschild, "Die Pneumatomachen: Eine Untersuchung zur Dogmengeschicte des vierten Jahrhunderts" (Diss., Universitat Hamburg: 1967), 32-34.

[95] As shown by Lewis Ayres, "The Holy Spirit as Undiminished Giver: Didymus the Blind's *De Spiritu Sancto* and the Development of pro-Nicene Pneumatological Traditions," in Janet Rutherford and Vincent Twomey, eds., *The Theology of the Holy Spirit in the Fathers of the Church* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2010), 57-72.

[96] "In sum, then, we have no firm grounds for believing that either author knew the other's work, let alone that either used the other as a source" (Ayres, DelCogliano, and Radde-Gallwitz, *Works on the Spirit*, 37).

[97] Ayres, DelCogliano, and Radde-Gallwitz, *Works on the Spirit*, 39.

Didymus argues from Scripture (in light of ecclesiastical tradition) to address several pneumatological errors. He forestalls the temptation to associate the Holy Spirit with angelic beings—a problematic pneumatology, known in Alexandria at least since Clement's day and found in Athanasius's *Epistula*, as we have seen.[98] He argues against the interpretation of Amos 4:13 as though it indicated that the Spirit is a creature.[99] The Spirit's divinity does not imply that the Father is a Grandfather.[100] His pneumatological arguments are based on what Kellen Plaxco has called his metaphysics of participation.[101] The Holy Spirit sanctifies believers without receiving its holiness from another, without diminution of its own power of sanctification, and without change.[102] Didymus's pneumatology within the framework of this participation scheme is concerned to show the role of the Holy Spirit in the reformation of morals, for because God is good "he makes good those to whom he imparts himself."[103] The moral life for Didymus is the life of deification, of sanctification, so that the Holy Spirit's proper activity is rendering believers holy.[104] Being thus participated without participating, the Spirit is eternal, immutable, and a divine agent. Didymus, significantly, refers to the Trinity as *homoousion*.[105] The three of the Trinity are inseparable, though each has its own *hypostasis*.[106] Their activity is one.[107]

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[98] Bucur, *Angelomorphic Pneumatology*.

[99] Mark DelCogliano, "Basil of Caesarea, Didymus the Blind, and the Anti-Pneumatomachian Exegesis of Amos 4:13 and John 1:3," *Journal of Theological Studies* 61 (2010), 644-58.

[100] Ayres, DelCogliano, and Radde-Gallwitz, *Works on the Spirit*, 41.

[101] Kellen Plaxco, "I Will Pour Out My Spirit": Didymus against Eunomius in Light of John 16:14's History of Reception," *Vigiliae Christianae* 70 (2016): 479-508. See also Ayres, "The Holy Spirit as the Undiminished Giver."

[102] *De spiritu*, 11.

[103] *De spiritu*, 11.

[104] *De spiritu*, 26.

[105] *De spiritu*, 76.

[106] *De spiritu*, 75.

[107] *De spiritu*, 81, 86, 145, 161.

From this brief outline of his thought it can be seen that Didymus's *De spiritu sancto* "offers us one of the earliest and yet most developed forms of an argument for the Spirit's divinity," an argument, according to Ayres, "that soon became central to Greek pro-Nicene pneumatology."[108] His precociousness in this regard is similar to that of Victorinus in the Latin-speaking quarter of the Church, with the exception that Victorinus's pneumatology seems not to be taken up with the same enthusiasm in the west.

2.1.2.3 Basil of Caesarea

Basil of Caesarea, too, addressed the argument that the Spirit is not divine in his *Contra Eunomium* III, written c. 364.[109] Basil counters Eunomius's claim that the Holy Spirit, as third in rank and dignity relative to the Father and Son, is also of a different nature than both. Basil's argument is that whereas there is diversity among angelic ranks and dignity, this does not in any way suggest diversity of natures.[110] He draws the line between divinity and creation starkly and argues that the Holy Spirit is divine as being sanctity rather than sanctified, good by nature rather than by the acquisition of virtue through the practice of the free will.[111] He reprises the argument from participation and participated found in Athanasius and Didymus. "The holy powers and Holy Spirit differ in this regard: for the latter, holiness is nature, whereas for the former, being made holy

[108] Ayres, "The Holy Spirit as the Undiminished Giver," 57.
[109] See Basil of Caesarea, *Againt Eunomius*, ed. and tr. by Mark DelCogliano and Andrew Radde-Gallewitz, FC 122 (Washington, D. C.: Catholic University of America Press, 2011), 3 and 33 for dating.
[110] *Against Eunomius*, 186-187.
[111] *Against Eunomius*, 187-188.

comes from participation."[112] The Spirit is immutable and the source of holiness.[113] He

then extends the argument to show the equality of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit in

language remarkably similar to a passage in Victorinus's *Adv. Ar.* III.[114]

> Just as the Father is holy by nature and the Son is holy by nature, so too is the
>
> Spirit of truth holy by nature. Hence the Spirit has been judged worthy of the
>
> designation 'holy,' which is peculiar to him and distinctly identifies him.[115]

The Holy Spirit "bestows firmness and steadfastness on the heavenly powers" (ref. to Ps.

32:6), is responsible for bestowing adoptive sonship (ref. Jn. 1:12 and Rom. 8:15),

teaches all things (ref. Jn. 14:26), and bestows spiritual gifts (1 Cor. 12:4-6).[116] The Holy

Spirit spoke through prophets; knows the depths of God; and we are given life by the

Holy Spirit.[117] The Holy Spirit dwells in us (quoting 1 Jn. 3:24, the ναὸς Θεοῦ passage of

1 Cor. 3:16 and Eph. 2:21-22) and by so doing causes divinity to dwell in us, which the

Spirit would hardly be able to facilitate if it were not divine itself.[118] Christians are

baptized in the threefold name of deity with "no creature or servant . . . ranked together

with the Father and the Son."[119] He crowns his work by appealing to our ignorance of

even human affairs (he gives the examples of vision and the nature of thought as things

on which humans do not have precise or sure knowledge) as justification for claiming not

to have precise knowledge regarding the Holy Spirit.[120] The testimony of Scripture in

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[112] *Against Eunomius*, 188.
[113] *Against Eunomius*, 188.
[114] Cf. *Adv. Ar.* III 15, 14-15 (CSEL 83.1, 214): "Et ipse nunc dicit: spiritus veritatis. Et ita ei nomen est spiritus sanctus."
[115] *Against Eunomius*, 188-189.
[116] *Against Eunomius*, 190.
[117] *Against Eunomius*, 191.
[118] *Against Eunomius*, 191-192.
[119] *Against Eunomius*, 192.
[120] *Against Eunomius*, 193-194.

which the Spirit's activities and glorification are related gives sufficient knowledge for our present state.[121] Finally, Basil addresses interpretations of Amos 4:13 and Jn. 1:3, arguing in the former case that *pneuma* refers to wind, not the Holy Spirit, and in the latter that the Spirit as a singular nature ought not to be included under the plural *all things*. The Holy Spirit is thus not a creature.[122]

The arguments of Athanasius, Didymus, and Basil are not identical, but they do show a common set of concerns. They seek to show that the Holy Spirit is divine on the basis of the testimony of Scripture; they all argue that the Spirit is the source of holiness and is thus immutable, inexhaustible, and does not receive holiness from outside; they all associate the Holy Spirit with the Father and the Son by appeal to the dominical injunction and ecclesial practice of baptizing in the name of the Trinity; they all make some reference to the conglorification of the Spirit with Father and Son; and they all stress that if the Spirit makes humans divine the Spirit must itself be divine. These arguments all have their source ultimately in Origen as far as I can tell, even if they are developed independently in each of the three authors.[123] Athanasius, Didymus, and Basil all treat Amos 4:13 as a key locus of their exegetical argumentation for the divinity of the Spirit.[124] Didymus and Eunomius use a combination of 1 Cor 12:11 and Jn 3:8 to argue for the substantial reality of the Holy Spirit over against the tendency to treat the Spirit as an activity of God.[125] Both Athanasius and Basil argue for the Holy Spirit's divinity from

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[121] *Against Eunomius*, 194, 196.
[122] *Against Eunomius*, 194-195; on the exegesis of these two proofs from Scripture see DelCogliano, "Basil of Caesarea, Didymus the Blind."
[123] On Origen see above ch. 1 §2.
[124] DelCogliano, "Basil of Caesarea."
[125] Discussed in Radde-Gallewitz, "The Holy Spirit as Agent," *passim*.

our being temples of the Spirit. As we will see, none of this corresponds precisely with what we find in the pneumatological arguments of Marius Victorinus.

Although Victorinus, like these three authors, believes the Spirit makes Christians divine, the way this is accomplished is rather unlike the ascetical theologies of Athanasius, Didymus, or Basil.[126] Victorinus does not make a strong appeal to Christian doxology or practices of prayer to establish the divinity of the Spirit. He appeals to baptism in the threefold name (*Adv. Ar.* III, 16.29, discussed in Chapter Five), but his reference to Mt 28:19 is a *locus classicus* for discussions of the Trinity and thus does not reveal any relation to a particular author. The combination of 1 Cor 12:11 and Jn 3:8 does not occur in Victorinus's theological treatises, and Amos 4:13 does not appear at all. I have not seen the concept of Christians as *templa dei* to be very important for Victorinus.[127] If Victorinus knew Athanasius's *Epistula ad Serapionem*, the *Epistula Catholica*, the *Tomos ad Antiochenos*, Didymus's *De spiritu sancto*, or Basil's *Contra Eunomium*, he has formulated his pneumatological arguments quite independently from what he found in these authors. The frequent references to the Paraclete Spirit in the creeds of the 340s and 350s along with Victorinus's own reception of Nicene trinitarian theology and the triadic patterns of his metaphysical models seem to have been sufficient to Victorinus's careful and inquisitive mind to lead him to argue for the Spirit's consubstantiality with Father and Son.

2.2 Orientation to *Adversus Arium* III

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[126] See Victorinus, *Adv. Ar.* III, 15.33-40 discussed in Chapter Five.
[127] It occurs in his comments on Eph. 2:21, naturally, but seldom otherwise.

2.2.1 Historical and Theological Orientation

Historical Context

Marius Victorinus's *Adversus Arium* III poses challenges for the historical theologian. There are uncertainties surrounding its dating, intended audience, and the motivation for its composition. I mentioned in the introduction that the work was written between the earlier *Adversus Arium* IB and II, and the later *De homoousion recipiendo*. It reads in places as summary of the earlier works but appears not to have taken into account the hope of reconciliation which had placed *De hom. rec.* in the year 363. It must then have been composed after November 361, since Constantius (d. Nov. 361) is mentioned in *Adv. Ar.* II, and before c. 363, the year of *De hom. rec.*[128] As for external influences, we have only the inferences from its tone and from its content from which to guess the theological and political environment. The tone in this treatise is more serene than that of his earlier writings.[129] The frustration of the events from the twin councils (Ariminum and Seleucia 359) and the compelled capitulations of Nicenes to Constantius's desired doctrine has subsided by then. There was of course lasting ecclesial and imperial antagonism to the *homoousion* after the council of Ariminum and the confirmation of *Homoian* theology in Constantinople 360, so the need to defend Nicene *homoousion* theology remains a live concern. But the moment is rather less heated following the death of Constantius.

As for content, Victorinus is focused on elaborating the doctrine of *homoousion* as it applies to the Holy Spirit. It may be that he knows Athanasius has begun addressing the question of the status of the Holy Spirit, which could well have reached Rome either

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[128] See Hadot, *Marius Victorinus*, 253-280.
[129] Noted by Hadot, *Marius Victorinus*, 279.

through the *Epistula ad Serapionem* or the *Tomos ad Antiochenos*. Apart from the suggestion of the topic—the fact that the Holy Spirit's relation to Father and Son and its own status was a new set of questions being placed before the Church—we must say there is little evidence of Athanasian influence on his arguments. If he has read Athanasius's *Epistula ad Serapionem* it has not at all determined the kinds of argument presented in *Adversus Arium* III or on any of his corpus for that matter. All we can say is he may have been alerted to the Nicene church's need for further support in defining and defending the theological doctrine of the Holy Spirit. This raises the questions of the intention of this work and its intended audience.

Theological Approach

Victorinus's arguments for Nicene theology are grammatical, logical, exegetical, and metaphysical. To account for the complexities of the question posed for trinitarian theology, Václav Němec argues Victorinus uses distinct metaphysical systems.[130] Thus, *Ad Cand* presents God the Father as non-being beyond being (τὸ μὴ ὄν super τὸ ὄν),[131] and as being before and surpassing *exsistentia*, *vita*, and *intellegentia* (*supra omnem exsistentiam, supra omnem vitam, supra omnem cognoscentiam*).[132] *Adv. Ar.* IB and III primarily make use of the noetic triad, *esse-vivere-intellegere* and the polarity of *potentia-actio* or *substantia-motus*. In *Adv. Ar.* IV Victorinus's primary distinction is between the verbal forms of the triad (*esse, vivere, intellegere*) which all are meant to

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[130] Václav Němec, "Metaphysical Systems in the Theological Work of Marius Victorinus," in *Marius Victorinus: Pagan Rhetor, Platonist Philosopher, and Christian Theologian,* ed. Stephen A. Cooper and Václav Němec, Writings from the Greco-Roman World Supplement series (Atlanta: SBL Press, forthcoming, 2021), 1-51, here 2.
[131] *Ad Cand.* 13.10-14.1 (CSEL 83.1, 30-31).
[132] *Ad Cand.* 13.6-8 (CSEL 83.1, 30-31); Němec, "Metaphysical Systems," 3.

belong to the Father, and the substantive forms (*exsistentia*, *vita*, *intellegentia*) which are used for the Son and Holy Spirit.

There are three aspects under which Victorinus considers God. (1) His first principle is God in Himself, silent (*quies*), in repose (*cessatio*). Next, (2) comes God as understood in His interior life in which He actively lives and knows Himself in and as three distinct hypostases. Finally, (3) there is God in God's activity in the world through "the Son," that is through Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. Focusing on only (2) and (3) by eliding the first category into the second or ignoring the first altogether may lead one to read Victorinus as though he were speaking of God in terms of the immanent and economic Trinity of modern scholarship.[133] That is misleading and ought to be avoided. Victorinus's thought stands out equally from modern categories as from the molds of the theological schools of his own day.

The first category above (1) concerning the Father who is the first principle is the most distinctive of Victorinus' theological reflections. The Father is beyond or before being (προόν),[134] as the principle of all being. But for the sake of cataphatic theologizing, Victorinus most often speaks of the Father as undetermined being (*esse*),[135] without form (*sine forma*; *non forma*).[136] He is repose (*cessatio*),[137] silence (*silentium*),[138] power (*potentia*),[139] hidden (*occultus*),[140] and unknowable (*incognoscibile*).[141] To be sure,

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[133] See Karl Rahner, *The Trinity*, tr. Joseph Donceel (New York: Herder, 1970), 36.
[134] *Ad Cand.* 2, 28 (CSEL 83.1, 18).
[135] *Adv. Ar.* IA 4, 1 (CSEL 83.1, 59).
[136] *Adv. Ar.* IB 53, 16 (CSEL 83.1, 150); III.7, 17 (CSEL 83.1, 202).
[137] *Adv. Ar.* III 7, 29 (CSEL 83.1, 203).
[138] *Adv. Ar.* III 7, 28 (CSEL 83.1, 203).
[139] *Adv. Ar.* IB 52, 3-4 (CSEL 83.1, 148).
[140] *Adv. Ar.* IB 52, 45 (CSEL 83.1, 149).
[141] *Ad Cand.* 13, 9-10 (CSEL 83.1, 30).

Victorinus is not distinctive in maintaining that the Father is ineffable and unknowable, for indeed this had been a common opinion for the last few centuries, especially among Platonic and Gnostic writers who directly or indirectly affected Victorinus. What is distinctive is that the first principle is in some sense beyond the "immanent Trinity" while not being temporally prior or ontologically superior. The Father is *prior kat' aition*, as cause and source.[142] Also unique among fourth-century theologians is the way Victorinus conceives and argues for equality of essence and co-eternality among the *hypostases* of the Trinity. The Son is being in a certain way (*sic esse*),[143] being with form (*forma*),[144] and therefore a *substantia* and intelligible.[145] He is described as God's movement (*motus*) and act (*actio*),[146] image (*imago*),[147] *logos*,[148] spirit (*spiritus*, *pneuma*),[149] life (*vita*).[150] The Father and Son act together in one act.[151] The Son as substance of the Father is *homoousios* with Him because He is the substance that the Father is: "up there" (*ibi*) one's being and substance are one and the same.[152] But the Father is the power (*potentia*) of the Son's *esse*, whereas the Son is the power of everything else's *esse*.[153]

Victorinus's explanation of the Trinity by means of a double dyad is a distinctive feature of his trinitarian theology. The Father and Son make a dyad. *Ad Cand.* presents

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[142] *Adv. Ar.* III 10, 36 (CSEL 83.1, 209).
[143] *Adv. Ar.* IA 29, 20-21, 22 (CSEL 83.1, 106).
[144] *Adv. Ar.* IV 28, 4 (CSEL 83.1, 267).
[145] *Adv. Ar.* II 5, 7 (CSEL 83.1, 173).
[146] *Adv. Ar.* III 3, 2 (CSEL 83.1, 195).
[147] *Adv. Ar.* III 1, 10 (CSEL 83.1, 191).
[148] *Adv. Ar.* IA 3, 5 (CSEL 83.1, 58).
[149] *Adv. Ar.* IA 19, 1 (CSEL 83.1, 83).
[150] *Adv. Ar.* IA 27, 15 (CSEL 83.1, 102).
[151] "God is the Power of 'to be'; Logos is being itself. Therefore, together they are cause of the 'to be' of all things and cause of the 'determination' or essence of each thing. This community of action between Father and Son is the sign of their community of substance" (Clark, *Marius Victorinus*, 158).
[152] *Adv. Ar.* III 1, 20-24 (CSEL 83.1, 192).
[153] *Adv. Ar.* IB 52, 11-15 (CSEL 83.1, 148).

God the Father as non-being beyond being, and as being before and surpassing *exsistentia*, *vita*, and *intellegentia*.[154] The Son Himself comprises a dyad of two distinct hypostases, the Son and the Holy Spirit, distinguished by and as acts of living and knowing. The two dyads taken together make up a triad of being, life, and intelligence, life corresponding to the Son and intelligence to the Holy Spirit. Each hypostasis is what the others are, but each is primarily and properly itself according to predominance.[155] This double dyad model and Victorinus's sophisticated philosophical knowledge allows him to be the earliest Latin writer to argue for the full consubstantiality of the Holy Spirit with the Father and the Son.

2.2.2 Audience and Purpose

Victorinus is likely writing this treatise in Rome between late 361 and late 363. He makes no reference to current affairs nor does he include names, whether of his opponents or of his addressees. He does make references to his own earlier works, even summarizing them rather elliptically. We should perhaps assume then that he is writing for the same audience to whom he had addressed his earlier theological treatises. He takes the authority of Scripture for granted, so his audience must be Christian. He also is writing with great subtlety and density, so one assumes that, as Jerome said, he wrote treatises *more dialectico* understood only by the learned.[156] With all his experience teaching grammar and rhetoric, Victorinus surely knew well how to gauge his audience.

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[154] Němec, "Metaphysical Systems," 3.
[155] For summary of this complex of ideas see Clark, *Marius Victorinus*, 10-18; Matthias Baltes, *Marius Victorinus: zur Philosophie in seinen theologischen Schriften* (Munich and Leipzig: K. G. Saur Verlag, 2002) 23-63; and Pierre Hadot, "'Porphyre et Victorinus': Questions et Hypothèses," *Res Orientales* 9 (1996), 117-125, 117-18.
[156] Jerome, *De vir. ill.* 101.

We are left then with the plausible conclusion that he is writing to educated Christians, some of whom at least needed to be more thoroughly convinced that the Father and Son are *homoousion*.

The theological arguments for the divinity and consubstantiality of the Holy Spirit in *Adversus Arium* III are direct outworkings of Victorinus's own theological and philosophical principles. Regarding the hitherto prevailing emphasis on the Father and the Son, Hadot says for Victorinus "le fait que les orthodoxes parlent avant tout de la consubstantialité du Père et du Fils, n'implique pas qu'ils séparent l'Esprit-Saint des deux premiers."[157] Indeed, the extension of *homoousion* to the Spirit appears in earlier treatises composed before the death of Constantius in 361.[158] The arguments appear to be not at all dependent on Athanasius. Nevertheless, given Athanasius's ties to Rome since the time of Julius I, the Roman church may have caught word as early as the late 350s that there were some who accepted *homoousion* as applicable to Father and Son but were reluctant to bring the Spirit into this mode of relation. It is likely that Victorinus is working to secure commitment in Rome to the doctrinal orthodoxy into which he was baptized.

It is not unusual that he does not mention Athanasius in his treatises. The only names that Victorinus mentions of which I am aware—apart from the one mention of Plato, whose authority within his sphere was acknowledged by all—are those of the heterodox: men who were anti-Nicene or had been condemned by a council.[159] His reticence is plausibly interpreted as shrewdness, lending weight to our argument for

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[157] *Marius Victorinus: Traités théologiques sur la Trinité*, ed. Paul Henry, S.J., with introduction, translation, and notes by Pierre Hadot, *Sources Chrétiennes* 68-69 (Paris: Cerf, 1960), 56.
[158] See *Adv. Ar.* IA 16, 5-29 (CSEL 83.1, 77-78).
[159] Paul of Samosata, Marcellus, Photinus, Ursacius, and Valens are all listed as heretics at *Adv. Ar.* IA 28, 30-41 (CSEL 83.1, 104); Valentinus appears at *Adv. Ar.* IA 16, 1 (CSEL 83.1, 77).

Victorinus's attunement to the complexities of the theological debates which spread across the whole empire. In the absence of compelling evidence of an intended recipient, I reserve judgment. My tentative supposition is that he is continuing to address Christians, perhaps non-Nicenes whom he had addressed in *adv. Ar.* I and II and *de rec. hom.*; he is writing on behalf of the Nicene church in Rome; and he is exercising himself in looking at the question from various angles, consolidating his earlier arguments, and elaborating them.

2.2.3 Pneumatological Peculiarities

In this treatise in particular, Victorinus makes some rather striking (not to say bizarre) claims regarding the Holy Spirit. He writes of the Spirit as of a single motion with the Son. On the basis of this assertion he writes the Spirit is *unigenitus filius* while maintaining the Spirit's subsistent distinctiveness from the subsistent Son. The Spirit seems at various times to come from the Father alone and from the Father and the Son. Perhaps his most idiosyncratic assertion is that Jesus is the Holy Spirit.

Victorinus' teachings especially in *Adv. Ar.* III provoke the following queries. Who is the Holy Spirit? How are the Holy Spirit and Jesus distinct, related, united, and identical? What accounts for the double dyad in Victorinus' thought? What are the differences, metaphysically and theologically, between the first and second dyads? Why does Victorinus sometimes treat the Holy Spirit and Jesus as two aspects or activities of the Son? How can he account for an eternal and internal triad of hypostases if activity is what marks distinctions?

2.3 Pedagogical and Rhetorical Principles

Victorinus composed difficult, some would say obscure, texts. His topic was difficult and his purpose was both innovative and daring. Victorinus notes three reasons why something may be obscure. "What is obscure is always obscure in one of three ways: [it is obscure] if the one who narrates does not understand, or if the one to whom one narrates is slow of understanding, or if the thing itself is confusing."[160] Victorinus's theological treatises owe the greater part of their obscurity to this third reason, *res ipsa perplexa est.* Christian theology articulated, explained, and defended from within a Neoplatonic frame is bound to be abstruse. Trinitarian metaphysics in accordance with Nicene *homoousion* requires a kind of creative tension difficult to achieve and to maintain. It is the tension between identity and difference, simplicity and diversity, between one that is many and many that are one.

Victorinus takes pains to avoid resolving that tension illicitly. So often the tendency in Christian thought was to deny equal divinity of the derivative Son and Spirit, or else to render all three one and the same being in three modes or phases of the divine life. Trinitarian metaphysics and philosophical dialectic require training in thinking abstractly. They are modes of thought and study that are intrinsically challenging. Victorinus not only writes at a high level because the topic demands it, but because good pedagogy is demanding (on both the teacher and the pupil). He wants his reader to transcend imagination, as Plato had desired before him and Thomas Aquinas after him.[161]

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[160] *In Cic. Rhet.*, I.14, 154-156 (CCSL 132, 76): *Quod obscurum est tribus modis semper obscurum est: si aut is qui enarrat non intellegit, aut is cui narrator tardior est, aut si res ipsa perplexa est.*
[161] Cf. Plato, *Rep.* VII.509d-511e, *Thaet.* 155b; Aquinas, *ST* I, q. 75, a.1, corp.; *De pot.* q. 3, a.19.

He seeks to lead his students and readers beyond materiality to an understanding of intelligible and immaterial reality. Understanding the rhetorical principles at work in Victorinus's *Adv. Ar.* III will help us understand his philosophical and theological arguments—though it should be stressed that no amount of literary analysis will make these intrinsically difficult ideas easy to grasp. To understand his rhetorical principles, it will be helpful to understand the rhetor's pedagogy.

2.3.1 Pedagogical Principles and Practices

Marius Victorinus was clearly both a qualified and a dedicated educator. Victorinus's sense of responsibility as teacher can be seen in the genre and titles of his works, as well as by the diligence with which he composed them.[162] His particular pedagogical ends—that he desired to give his pupils and readers knowledge of significant philosophical questions beyond education in grammar and rhetoric—are indicated by his deliberately chosen digressions.[163] These include discussions of the soul, nature, virtue, and time.[164]

Due to the integration of his thought, it is difficult to speak of one aspect of his pedagogy without implicating several others. The nature of his pedagogy is informed by and conformed to his epistemology. That is, the way he teaches hangs together with what he thinks knowledge is. The goal of his pedagogy is likewise bound to his anthropology, his understanding of what a human person is. His idea of the progress of the pupil depends on his understanding of the goal of the person, the anthropological *telos*, which

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[162] See the section "Opera" in my introduction above, 9-20.
[163] On these digressions see Hadot, *Marius Victorinus*, 79; Cooper and Němec, "Introduction," 9, 20-21.
[164] Lopetegui, "Rhetorical Metalanguage," 2, 19-20, and especially 28-32.

itself is related to his metaphysics. And his metaphysics informs his natural philosophy including cosmology. Each of these aspects of thought has reciprocal influence on all the others. This integrity of thought makes it difficult to find a convenient point for departure. For facility of exposition I will write briefly of the final, material, efficient, and formal causes of his pedagogy: that is, of the goal, the conditions, the purpose, and the means of education as Victorinus sees them. This appropriation of Aristotelian causality for the sake of exposition is my own; it is not Victorinus's chosen way of explaining his pedagogy.

2.3.1.1 Goal of Teaching (Pedagogy's "Final Cause")

The highest goal of Victorinus's pedagogy was the same before and after his conversion to Christianity. In his role as *rhetor* he sought to form and instruct the whole pupil. This meant that he was charged with inculcating civic virtue as well as broadening his students' minds in philosophical thought.[165] His purpose was to make his students virtuous and wise, where wisdom means having knowledge of things human and divine.[166] Victorinus's understanding of both virtue and wisdom depends largely on his anthropology (including psychology) and metaphysics. Platonic *ethike* understood the end of the person as transcendent, beyond the sphere of civic life. The ultimate purpose of education was, as Plato had frequently instructed, the contemplative recovery of a primal intellectual union with our divine and intelligent source.[167] It meant getting out of the flux of phenomena in order to behold that which is everlasting, alone itself, which

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[165] Cooper and Němec, "Introduction," 9
[166] *Comm. Cic. Rhet.*, I.1, 148-149.
[167] Cf. the conversion (*periagoge*) Plato describes as the purpose of the philosophical pedagogue at *Rep.* 521c.

alone is truly intelligible and the knowing of which alone is truly intelligence. The practice of dialectic is to achieve knowledge by purging the ideas of the soul of all their sensible and foreign accretions so as to reveal to the mind the true nature of things. His pedagogical methods depend not only on these ends, but on his understanding of the human condition, that is, on the "material" on which the teacher works.

2.3.1.2 Nature, Powers, and Condition of the Soul (Pedagogy's "Material Cause")

Victorinus provides philosophical digressions on the soul in his commentary on Cicero's *Rhetoric* as well as across his theological writings, both the treatises and exegetical works.[168] The soul is separable from the body. Hadot notes that Victorinus's account of the soul and virtue is opposed to the Stoic notion of an immanent *logos*. Victorinus transposes the Stoic notion of virtue as a habit of soul in accord with its nature and reason (determined by the immanent *logos*) to the higher mode of virtue of the Neoplatonists, conformity to the transcendent logos of our nature as pre-incarnate.[169]

There is a close relation between the philosophical provenances of *physika* and *ethika*, the two aspects with which philosophy is comprised according to a way of understanding philosophy with which Victorinus concurred.[170] The nature of the soul belongs to *physika* (which includes also study of divine things), whereas the activity in accordance with that nature is the concern of *ethika*. The "thèse fondamentale" of *physika*, as Hadot points out, concerns the definition of nature itself, to which the

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[168] "The presence of these excurses in his commentaries on Paul indicates that Victorinus thought that a rudimentary comprehension of the philosophical framework was not beyond the needs or capacities of his audience" (Cooper, *Galatians*, 116).

[169] Hadot, *Marius Victorinus*, 82.

[170] See *In Cic. Rhet.* I.2, 34-40 (CCSL 132, 15).

question of the nature of the soul is subservient.[171] The Platonic definition of nature as the will of God Victorinus says is defined *recte* because "deus enim semper voluerit et velit necesse est."[172]

The soul and the body both have their own natures. The soul is immortal, therefore comes down from God, therefore is perfect.[173] In illustration he uses the image of the soul as wine and the body as its vessel.[174] Having its own and perfect nature, it is appropriate for the soul to live in accordance with its own nature such as it was before its descent into corporeality and as it is denuded of the body.[175] Because the soul in its integrity is ultimately separable from the body, the moral life at its highest aspiration is to transcend the body to the extent this is possible. This way of life is ascetical *de facto* and contemplative in principle.[176] Conformity to its pure nature and contemplation are the means of the soul's return to its origin which is its liberation or salvation. When he comes in his theological works to investigate and expound Christian soteriology he does so on the basis of this psychology. The redemptive and salutary activities of Christ and the Holy Spirit become the means of this return of the soul to its source.

When Victorinus becomes Christian, the notions of faith and *mysterium* take on fundamental and overarching importance. They do not overhaul his philosophical thought, but are integrated into it even as they expand, alter, and shift some of its elements. The divine nature is defined in and expressed by its "substantial qualities" of

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[171] Hadot, *Marius Victorinus*, 88.
[172] *In Cic. Rhet.* I.24, 132-133 (CCSL 132, 109); see Hadot, *Marius Victorinus*, 88.
[173] *"Anima inmortalis est; si inmortalis est, a divinis descendit; si a divinis descendit, perfecta est,"* *In Cic. Rhet.* I.praef., 38-40 (CCSL 132, 6).
[174] *In Cic. Rhet.* I.2, 54 (CCSL 132, 16).
[175] *In Cic. Rhet.* I.2, 5-51 (CCSL 132, 14-15).
[176] Cf. Hadot, *Marius Victorinus*, 82-3.

living and knowing.[177] "Therefore the truly existents are intelligibles, the merely existent are intellectual. And all these latter are intellectual souls not yet having exercised the act of knowing; but they are disposed for thought."[178] The "substantial qualities" of life and knowledge are the two primary powers of the soul. By these substantial qualities the soul is seen to be the image of the *Logos*.

While the purpose of Victorinus's pedagogy and the technical strategies he employs did not change after his conversion, a concomitant of joining the Church was an enhanced awareness of the limitations of human means of knowing. Victorinus became profoundly aware of the need for faith, the necessity of the assistance of the Spirit for the reception or attainment of theological knowledge. "Victorinus treats the capacities of our own spirits for attaining wisdom as something that follows from the activity of the divine Spirit within us, all of which happens through the mediation of Christ."[179] The change was the discovery of a new treatment for an unaltered diagnosis of the problem in which humanity found itself. The situation remained qualitatively consistent. The problem stems from the soul's ability to act in sub-optimal and unintelligent ways.

The soul's powers may operate in two directions, towards what is above it and to what is below.[180] The intelligent power desires to know, while the power of life desires to make things other than the soul alive. The abuse of these powers has led to the present

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[177] Mary Clark, "The Psychology of Marius Victorinus," *Augustinian Studies* 5 (1974) 149–66, 150.

[178] *Ad Cand.* 7, 13-16 (Clark, *Marius Victorinus*, 66). CSEL 83.1, 23: *Ergo intellectibilia ea sunt quae vere sunt, intellectualia, quae sunt tantum. Sunt autem ista omnia animarum in natura intellectualium nondum intellectum habentium, sed ad intellegentiam accommodata*.

[179] Cooper, *Galatians*, 161, n. 132; he refers to Victorinus's comments on Eph. 1:17.

[180] *Adv. Ar.* IB 61, 10-14; see Clark, "Psychology of Marius Victorinus," 156. Cf. Seneca, *Ep. mor. ad. Luc.* 41.5.

human condition in which the soul is infatuated with and dragged down by the world of sense, the things of the flesh.

> [Victorinus saw] commonalities . . . between Christian theological conceptions of the human person and certain traits of his philosophical anthropology. At times in his commentaries on Paul there appears the philosophical, particularly Neoplatonic, identification of the problem of the unreliable nature of sense perception and the limitations inherent in any such knowledge of this level of reality. One senses from his exegetical writings that he regarded the primary source of error in both life and doctrine as deriving from understanding things *corporaliter*, 'in a fleshly manner.' [181]

There are two declensions of the soul, the first a morally neutral descent, the second a punishable lapse. This first descent of the soul to vivify is not the fall of the soul. "The fall of the soul is something other than the work of vivification. It occurs when the intelligence draws near to the sensible world and is deceived."[182] The deception is precisely taking things *corporaliter*, for when "the soul turns aside from the intelligible world to vivify the sensible world, its intellect becomes involved in sensible knowledge which misleads it."[183] This second fall results in our present condition in which humans are bound to things of sense by their own untrained desire, while they are also deceived and unable to see things as they are. Being thus weighed down and deluded humans are kept from achieving a knowledge of intelligibles and thus realizing their highest innate capacities. This situation is dire but can be overcome, especially through the aid of the

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[181] Cooper, *Galatians*, 124. Cooper points out the importance of Victorinus's comments on Gal. 1:12, 2:20 and Eph. 1:4.
[182] Clark, "Psychology of Marius Victorinus," 157.
[183] Clark, "Psychology of Marius Victorinus," 157.

pedagogue. Victorinus favored the Platonic to the Aristotelian and Ciceronian accounts of both *habitus* and human vice: humans by nature do not will evil and so can be educated out of their moral and intellectual baseness.[184]

2.3.2 Educative and Rhetorical Strategies (Pedagogy's "Efficient and Formal Causes")

The means by which Victorinus the teacher helps turn the souls of his pupils are grammatical, rhetorical, and dialectical. His rhetorical and dialectical principles and practices are heavily focused on definition and syllogism. These technical means of persuasion operate by way of language and so depend on Victorinus's linguistic theory. Knowing some rudimentary aspects of his theory and use of language will dissipate some of the obscurity in his works.

2.3.2.1 Language: Res, Nomina, *and Contexts*

Victorinus's linguistic theory rests on two fundamental positions. First, that names (*nomina*) refer to things (*res*).[185] Second, that words are naturally ambiguous.[186] That is to say, the *res* to which the *nomen* refers is not always clear. "*Nomina vel voces interdum res significant, interdum facta, interdum dicta singula, interdum orationes.*"[187] According to Victorinus, there can be no realities without a name that designates them, so

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[184] *In Cic. Rhet*. I.1, 115.
[185] What Cooper refers to as his "correspondence theory" of language (Cooper, *Galatians*, 90).
[186] Lopetegui, "Rhetorical Metalanguage," 5-6.
[187] Andreas Pronay, *C. Marius Victorinus: Liber de definitionibus: Eine spätantike Theorie der Definition und des Definierens, mit Einleitung, Übersetzung und Kommentar*, StKP 103 (Frankfurt am Main: Lang, 1997), 2,7-8.

if this name is ambiguous, there will also be confusion around the object to which one alludes.[188]

> In fact, if words were known to everyone, or if they always had a single meaning, and if they were not misleading to listeners due to the darkness or ambiguity of a phrase provoking different interpretations, the definition would really be very little necessary.[189]

Victorinus expresses the clarifying task of both *grammaticus* and *rhetor* in this passage while also justifying his composition of a work on definitions. Explaining the meaning of an individual term is the task of grammarian, that of phrases and propositions the office of rhetor.

> In general, one characteristic that differentiates grammarians and rhetoricians in this field is the former's interest in non-syntactic ambiguity, as opposed to the latter, who dealt above all with syntactic ambiguity, since this *vitium* was a source of stylistic license.[190]

Victorinus as grammarian is "most concerned with analysis of individual terms— *polysemy*, *homonymy*, *amphibolia*."[191] As rhetorician, he is concerned to show that things have been properly joined, whether predications or propositions (of this I will say more

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[188] Lopetegui, "Rhetorical Metalanguage," 28.

[189] Hadot, *Marius Victorinus*, 331, 12-16 (Stangl, *Tulliana et Mario-Victoriniana*, 1) quoted in translation by Lopetegui, "Rhetorical Metalanguage," 9, n. 27: *Etenim si verba aut nota omnibus extitissent aut unam significantiam sui semper tenerent, et non ambiguo vel obscuro dicto audientes fallerent et loquentes sub diversa interpretatione deciperent, omnino definitio necessaria minime crederetur*.

[190] Lopetegui, "Rhetorical Metalanguage," 7.

[191] Lopetegui, "Rhetorical Metalanguage," 8. "Two other interesting commentary procedures entail clarifying or explaining the meanings of polysemic terms that can be ambiguous and specifying the use of synonymic words based on their technical meaning" (Lopetegui, "Rhetorical Metalanguage," 19).

below under *dialectic*). The syntactic depends on the non-syntactic, at least when it is a question of the truth of a statement and not merely its formal validity.

Fundamental to his grammar is the insight that words mean differently in different contexts. Victorinus models for us how we ought to read his works through the ways in which he himself read the literary works on which he commented. He presents examples from literature illustrating habitual and idiosyncratic uses of words in the works of his predecessors.[192] We see his diligent disambiguation in his commentaries both secular and theological. He even uses the grammatical tactic throughout his polemics with his heterodox opponents, frequently in his *reprehensiones*. The reader of Marius Victorinus's theological treatises must pay attention to how his own *confirmatio* arguments include significant instances of non-syntactic ambiguity. Recognizing such instances is the first step to clarifying his meaning. We can then bring what we have learned of his linguistic theory and of his grammatical *modus operandi* to bear on Victorinus's own use of polysemic terms in his theological treatises. Here is one brief example which will serve as illustration of the general tendency and how I will resolve such instances in the commentary.

Victorinus uses the term *filius* equivocally in his theological treatises.[193] (1) "Son" is a proper name of God. (2) It is also most properly the name of a particular biological relation of a male child to a parent. (3) Then when abstracted from its proper biological use it signifies any direct and necessary effect dependent on some necessary cause. Some of our confusions when reading Victorinus's theological treatises result from not knowing which particular meaning of a polysemic or equivocal word he intends in a

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[192] See Mariotti, *Ars grammatica*, 4 and *passim*.
[193] In the manner of Aristotle's *pros hen* equivocity, Aristotle, *Metaphysics* Γ.2 (1003a).

given context. He can speak of the second and third members of the Trinity as one *qua*

son, but two *qua* Logos. In such a case it is of paramount importance to know whether he

intends the term *filius* as the proper name of the second divine person, or if instead he

refers to both the second and the third under their single aspect of derivative relation to

the Father. This same ambiguity arises in Victorinus's treatment of *Spiritus*, which again

may be a proper name of one of the Trinity, or else be the name of the divine substance

itself, common to all three, or again name any non-material being (the intelligibles), apart

from its other uses in the philosophical system of the Stoics or as a word for the breath or

the wind.

It is the same with genus, substance, matter, *ousia*, *hypostasis*, subsistence,

homoousios: for all of these words he gives different definitions at different times. In his

commentary on Cicero's *Rhetoric* he defines four kinds of genus.[194] *Ousia*, *homoousios*,

and *hypostasis*, however, are the more important terms for his theological polemics.

Victorinus negates the argument of the Homoians of 357 and 359, that *ousia* language is

to be rejected because of its absence from Scripture, by pointing out instances in

Scripture of the keyword *ousia*, its derivatives, and its synonyms (*Adv. Ar.* I.30, II.8).

Victorinus's understanding of a word's semantic range helps account for apparent

inconsistencies in his usage. Voelker, for instance, critiques Victorinus's scriptural

defense of the theological use of *ousia*. He points out an apparent inconsistency in

Victorinus's work on this point. "There are places in *Against Arius* where Victorinus

baldly states that *ousia* and *hypostasis* are one and the same realities, contrary to the case

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[194] *In Cic. Rhet.* I, 5, 1ff. (CCSL 132, 33 and 50).

to which he has committed his efforts."[195] If we note Victorinus's theory of language, however, the problem is not Victorinus's incoherence, but rather the ambiguous use to which the words had been used in the course of the trinitarian controversy. The reason for the apparent inconsistency in Victorinus's uses of *ousia* and *hypostasis* is threefold. First, Victorinus knows the tradition of some Greeks who use the phrase *from one essence* (*ousia*) *three subsistences* (*hypostases*), indicating a semantic difference between the two key terms. Second, he himself is theologically committed to the trinitarian persons' distinctiveness in reality (whatever words one uses to get at the difference) and knows *homoousios* does not mean an undifferentiated monad who expands and contracts economically. Third, and in tension with these two points, he is committed to the Nicene Creed whose anathemas suggested the synonymity of *ousia* and *hypostasis*, as had many other formulations following Nicaea. He does not want to quibble over words, but desires to come to agreement on the intended significance. Victorinus is sometimes careful in distinguishing his intended meaning, but there are occasions in which ambiguity allows for meaningfully diverse interpretations. Naturally the best way to resolve these grammatical ambiguities is definition.

2.3.2.2 Definitions

Victorinus's work *De definitionibus* is an elaborate explanation of the different kinds of definition, prompted by a reference in Cicero's *Topica* to "*alia genera definitionum*" which Cicero does not discuss because they were not relevant to his book's

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[195] John Voelker, "Trinitarian Theology," 78; he refers to *Adv. Ar.* II 6, 12-18 and 6, 22-23 in illustration of this point, n. 158.

purpose.[196] Boethius criticizes Victorinus for including too much in his work *De definitionibus*. "Victorinus undertook to expand this passage in the course of a single book and to enumerate all differentiae of definitions, and so he inserted many things that almost everybody protests are not definitions."[197] Indeed, Victorinus explained fifteen distinct forms of definition. He was able to discover so many because he took from both philosophical and rhetorical uses of definition. In this combination of rhetorical and philosophical accounts of definition he synthesizes the Cicero of the *Topica* with the Porphyry of the *Isagoge*. Hadot suggests he had an intention of making the Porphyrian teaching more broadly available.[198]

The principal form of definition is that of the philosophers: the essential (*ousiodes* = pertaining to the substance) species of definition. According to Victorinus, "the optimal definition is that which starts from the genus, then specifies the species, and covers the particular traits (of an object or concept) in such a way that it excludes what it may have in common with others."[199] This is the mode of definition described by Porphyry in his *Isagoge* and put to the use of the practice of dialectic. The majority of definitions are not substantial, but rather *ennoematic*, that is, notional definitions, which do not include reference to the genus of the object in question. This was the most common form of definition among Stoics and favored by Cicero—it is the popular mode of defining, for use in the public discourse of the rhetorician.

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[196] Cicero, *Topica*, VI.28.

[197] Boethius, *In Ciceronis Topica*, tr. Eleonore Stump (Ithaca; London: Cornell University Press, 1988), 93.

[198] Hadot, *Marius Victorinus*, 95.

[199] *In Cic. Rhet.* 1.14.20 (CCSL 132:73.43–46); quoted in translation by Lopetegui, "Rhetorical Metalanguage," 10 (cf. Hadot, *Marius Victorinus*, 94).

Victorinus knows the strict mode of defining and prefers it as the most effective

and accurate, but is shrewd enough to recognize that persuasive arguments are not

necessarily the most rigorous. Boethius complains that Victorinus has discussed in this

work things that are not really definitions. On the basis of his linguistic theory and no

doubt from his experience as *grammaticus* and *rhetor* he came to prize definition as the

means to overcome misunderstanding and secure effective communication. His

unpretentious approach to securing mutual understanding led his account of definitions to

fall under the critique of Boethius.

> For he includes names also among definitions although Aristotle . . . does not
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> think this right and denies emphatically in the *Topics* that a definition arises by
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> means of a name. . . . Even Victorinus himself is not ignorant of this. Victorinus,
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> however, seems to have taken as the subject of the discussion not a definition but
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> just whatever can show the underlying thing in any way. For he included a name,
>
> too, among definitions, because often something that is obscure when it is
>
> expressed with a rather unfamiliar word becomes clearer when it is expressed
>
> with a more familiar word.[200]

Of the notional definitions I will mention only one in illustration of Victorinus's

technique in his theological writings, that of etymology. Cicero described it this way.

"Many arguments are derived from *notatio*. This is what is used when an argument is

developed out of the meaning of a word. The Greeks call this ἐτυμολογία."[201]

The etymological mode of definition is most noticeably present in Victorinus's

account of the word *homoousios*. He suggests different constituent parts of the Greek

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[200] Boethius, *In Ciceronis Topica*, 93.
[201] Cicero, *Topica*, 409.

compound and then expresses the intended meaning in Latin translation. In *Adversus Arium* IA he offers two etymologies in the same paragraph. "Therefore the three are *homoousia*, that is, *ousia* all together."[202] Then several lines later he offers another interpretation based on a different etymology. The three "are therefore *homoousioi*, having one and the same substance and always at once *homoousioi*."[203] It is clear here that he has taken the constituents to be either a combination of *homou* or *homos* with *ousia*.[204] Elsewhere in his theological treatises he gives the etymology ὁμοῦ οὐσίαν ἔχον which he renders in Latin *simul substantiam habens*.[205] A few chapters later he argues that "Christ, therefore, is *homoousios* with God, that is, *consubstantialis*, which is of the same substance."[206] He offers yet another etymology later in *Adv. Ar.* IV. "They [the Father and Son] are both at the same time, for this is what *homoousion* signifies, besides the same *ousian*."[207] This mode of defining, especially when it involves breaking down a compound word into constituent parts, will often also entail the use of another kind of definition applied to one or more of the compound's elements. Victorinus will use many of these general and notional forms of definition throughout his theological treatises.

2.3.2.3 Argument

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[202] Ὁμοούσια *ergo tria, hoc est simul* οὐσία (*Adv. Ar.* IA, 16, 20-21, Clark, *Marius Victorinus*, 111, altered).

[203] *ergo* ὁμοούσιοι *sunt, unam et eandem substantiam habentes et semper simul* ὁμοούσιοι (*Adv. Ar.* IA, 16, 27-28 (CSEL 83.1, 78), Clark, *Marius Victorinus*, 111, altered).

[204] ὁμοῦ: together, at once, (LSJ); ὁμῶς (adverbial form of ὁμός): equally, likewise, alike (LSJ).

[205] *Adv. Ar.* IV 10, 33, (CSEL 83.1, 239).

[206] Ὁμοούσιος *ergo Christus cum deo, id est consubstantialis, quod est eiusdem substantiae* (*Adv. Ar.* IV 14, 17-19 (CSEL 83.1, 245), Clark, *Marius Victorinus*, 272 altered).

[207] *Simul ambo; et hoc enim significat* ὁμοούσιον, *praeter eandem* οὐσίαν (*Adv. Ar.* IV 29, 37-38 (CSEL 83.1, 269), ET: Clark, *Marius Victorinus*, 295, altered).

One of the difficulties in determining the meaning of Victorinus's thought is tracing his arguments. One must pay close attention in order to recognize how his arguments have progressed and to what end, as well as to determine when he has concluded one argument and begun another. The rhetorical requirements of variety and brevity sometimes hide or obscure the full form of his deductions. Alerting the reader now to a couple of trends will help in the later deciphering of the forms and therefore the purposes of Victorinus's constructions.[208]

The basic structure of the syllogism is three-part consisting in major premise, minor premise, and conclusion. It may be expanded to five parts by including proofs to the major and minor premises. If the premises are especially obvious, the respective proofs can be left out. There may even be occasions on which the conclusion can be passed over, the audience being left to complete the argument in their own thought. The rhetorical need for variety may be met by changing the length of argument, i.e., including more parts (premises, proofs, conclusion), or supplying many proofs of one of the premises. Another common and effective strategy of variation is to alter the order of the presentation of the parts, e.g., beginning with the minor premise, or placing the conclusion second with one of the premises following it. Victorinus uses both strategies of varied length and order. These could cause some confusion whether through too lengthy a treatment of one of the premises or else from ambiguity as to how the parts are meant to fit together.

We can clarify obscurities (especially of this second kind regarding arrangement) by following Victorinus's linguistic signals. For example, he consistently uses specific

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[208] I leave out an account of the different modes of argumentation—the *loci* treated in Cicero's *Topica*—as well as the seven "moods" of syllogistic reasoning (see Hadot, *Marius Victorinus*, 150-151).

conjunctions to indicate parts of arguments. Most common is the use of *autem* to signal

the minor premise and *igitur* or *ergo* indicating conclusion. *Enim*, *deinde*, and at times

also *autem* signal that Victorinus is continuing to add proofs in support of the premise to

which these conjunctions are subtended.

Victorinus's rhetorical strategies deserve more elaborate treatment than I can offer

here. What has been said is enough to equip the reader for a careful engagement with

Marius Victorinus's *Adversus Arium* III.

3.0   CHAPTER 3

Analysis of *Adv. Ar.* III.1–5

3.1 Overview of the Structure and Argument of Adversus Arium *III*

Hadot calls the plan of this book "très simple et très clair. Il est destiné à montrer que le Christ et l'Esprit-Saint sont <<deux en un>>, c'est-à-dire qu'ils sont deux aspects, deux puissances du Fils."[1] Such is the specific thrust of the arguments; the general conclusion Victorinus argues is that it is appropriate and necessary to use the word *homoousion* to describe the relation between Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. As we have seen, the issues raised by *homoousion* are multiple. First, does Scripture itself use the term? Victorinus had addressed this point in his dealings with those who had adopted the Blasphemy of Sirmium in *Adv. Ar.* IA 30, 36-56,[2] IB 59, 17-25,[3] and at length in II 3, 1 – 11, 8.[4] The posing of the question thus presupposes an agreement that Scripture is the supremely authoritative source of Christian theology. Second, how is the term to be interpreted? To this second problem, Victorinus brings his considerable learning in grammar and philosophy to argue for an interpretation of the term in line with pro-Nicene theology. An

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[1] Pierre Hadot, *Porphyre et Victorinus*, 2 vols. (*Études Augustiniennes*: Paris, 1968), I 51.
[2] CSEL 83.1, 108-109.
[3] CSEL 83.1, 159-160.
[4] CSEL 83.1, 173-187.

adequate and agreed-upon common definition had been a desideratum for the four decades since *homoousion* had been indirectly approved for theological discourse by its use at Nicaea. Victorinus provides that definition in the course of his theological treatises. Here I will show how Victorinus gives a preponderate place to philosophical argumentation in the first half of *Adversus Arium* III in order that the exegetical argumentation of the second half of the work may be properly framed.

In the first (§1) of *Adversus Arium* III's eighteen sections Victorinus briefly summarizes his understanding of the metaphysical and cosmic structure of reality. In the first three segments (§§1-3) he introduces conceptual models—namely, the ontology of the soul and the relations *potentia-actio* and *substantia-motus*—in order to explain and illustrate how the Trinity is one in substance, yet each of the three is distinct from the others. In §4 Victorinus applies his arguments so far to the whole Trinity, surprisingly inserting *en passant* a Greek formula similar to the "Cappadocian settlement."[5] After offering his readers an illustration of his arguments taken from sensible things (§5) and admonishing them to rise above sensible forms (§6), he begins to explain how the Holy Spirit is also *homoousion* (§§7-8). This shift to discussion of the Holy Spirit marks the turning-point of this treatise. Victorinus then explains on the basis of his noetic triad that the Trinity is being, life, knowledge, that is, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; each is itself by predominance (*magis*) and is the others as presupposing and completing them (§9-10).[6] From here Victorinus undertakes a serial exegesis of the gospel of John beginning with Jn 5:26 (§§10-16). This strict exegetical treatment is briefly interrupted in §§11-12 by a

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[5] Joseph T. Lienhard, S. J., "*Ousia* and *Hypostasis*: The Cappadocian Settlement and the Theology of 'One Hypostasis,'" in *The Trinity: An Interdisciplinary Symposium on the Trinity*, eds. Stephen T. Davis, Daniel Kendall S. J., and Gerald O'Collins S. J., 99-122

[6] See above ch. 1 §III.1.

digression concerning Christ's taking of soul, where Victorinus explains how Spirit is able to take up (*assumere*) and put off (*ponere*) soul at will. He resumes his exegesis of John until §16 where he turns to the interpretation of a broader range of scriptural texts. Victorinus concludes *Adversus Arium* III (§§17-18) with a brief recapitulation which highlights his pneumatological arguments in particular.

3.2 Adversus Arium §§1-5.

In §§1-5 Victorinus is especially terse in his summations, even beyond his generally spare, dense, and elliptical style. In §1 he emphasizes the unity of Father and Son while erecting the proper frame in which to understand their relation. He begins in §2 to show how this dyad of Father and Son are distinct yet one. In §3 Victorinus gives a focused examination of the Logos as life and what this means for the Logos's relationship with the world. He slowly begins in §4 to turn his attention from the Father-Son dyad to the whole Trinity, indicated by his quotation of a Greek trinitarian formula. In §5 he offers an illustration of his previous points to be followed by further analytical elaboration on the basis of the *exemplum*.

Rhetorically, these sections move from summary, to the statement of his key arguments regarding both the Father-Son dyad and the *esse-vivere-intellegere* triad. His argument is dialectical, terse, and repetitive, with frequent allusions to other places (*aliis*) where he has treated a particular topic at greater length. He generally offers a reasoned argument which he then supports with Scripture; after offering an exegesis of Scripture that shows how his philosophical arguments accord with the inspired word, he resumes his reasoning. His theological position unfolds within this circular pattern. He offers

illustrations that mostly exploit the close analogy between sensible and intellectual light or sensual and intellectual vision.

Philosophically, we have his worldview displayed, though rather concisely and slightly abridged. The allusive argumentation dependent on Victorinus's earlier arguments allows us to see in quick succession some of the metaphysical models Victorinus uses to explain Nicene theology. His philosophical arguments and biblical exegeses, presented effectively through a variety of rhetorical strategies, frequently illustrate Victorinus's pedagogical intent: to offer philosophical and theological doctrinal insight and encourage his readers to aspire to contemplation. He is not a dogmatist of the handbook variety, but a trained and conscientious educator.

Theologically and contextually, we see Victorinus taking up the question of the nature, activity, origin, and status of the Holy Spirit, as well as the Christological question of Christ's rational soul. Here he displays profound awareness of the inherent limitations of language to describe and explain non-sensible reality. The pedagogue naturally takes up the question—a pressing one throughout the trinitarian controversy— of how we can and ought to speak of God and offers some of late antique Christianity's most careful and profound insights on the matter.

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§1. *Summary*

This opening section of *Adv. Ar.* III is a summary of Victorinus's prior works *Adv. Ar.* IB and II.[7] Victorinus first lays out very briefly his scheme of reality, from divine Logos

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[7] Paul Henry, S. J. and Pierre Hadot, *Traités Théologiques sur La Trinité*, 2 vols, *Sources Chrétiennes* 68-69 (Paris: *Les Éditions du Cerf*, 1960), SC 69, 926.

down to material things. He asserts that Logos is the image of God (*imago dei*), while soul—celestial soul (*anima caelestis*)—is image of the Logos. Corporeal things are not properly called images (*imagines*) of these immaterial things, but rather likenesses (*simulamenta*). As Victorinus continues differentiating between the manner of things *in divinis* or *in aeternis* and things *in sensibilibus*, he emphasizes the oneness of substance and its qualities in the former (distinguishable only in thought) and their real distinctiveness in the latter. He treats briefly the simplicity of God, noting how this simplicity is not compromised by divine begetting and how God may be known to us in our epistemic limitations.

Victorinus will elaborate the key arguments of *Adv. Ar.* III on the basis of this summarizing first section. The work as a whole is in continuity with what he elsewhere claimed and proved (*et id in aliis adsertum est et probatum*). But it also pushes Nicene theology forward to address questions concerning the Holy Spirit. Victorinus's reflection on God's visibility with which he ends §1 is especially interesting as an *entrée* into Victorinus's contemplative psychology. It is also especially significant as the overture to what will become one of the great themes of the work: expounding the conditions for acquiring, the manner of bestowing, and the contents of salutary gnosis.[8]

My commentary on this first section is primarily intended to do three things. First, to expand Victorinus's conceptual ellipses on the basis of his earlier writings while providing parallels in what may be his philosophical and theological sources. Second, to bring out the rhetorical structure and kinds of argument Victorinus uses. Finally, to

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[8] This last is my phrase to account for that aspect of Victorinus's soteriology which entails knowledge of self and knowledge of God through knowledge of Christ.

elucidate his thought by explaining how his epistemology and soteriology are mutually instructive.

Commentary

1.4-5. *Λόγος vel νοῦς divinus ut sede utitur atque ut corpore anima caelesti.*

The canons of ancient rhetoric hold that a good introduction is meant to render one's reader attentive, well-disposed, and receptive.[9] Victorinus is stylistically spare here, securing his audience's attention by employing a sublime theme according to the formula for an *exordium* given by Cicero: "The exordium ought to be sententious to a marked degree and of a high seriousness."[10] *Λόγος vel νοῦς divinus* catches the reader's attention by its *gravitas* or sublimity.[11] He had given more space to such preliminaries at the start of *Ad Cand.*, *Adv. Ar.* I, II, and *De recip. hom.*[12] Victorinus begins with the two terms Logos and *Nous* (to be taken as synonymous here as indicated by *vel*), because he intends the two to represent the first and highest level of intelligibility or determined being. Intelligibility requires and presupposes *forma* or *substantia*, which is the proper object of intelligence.

Victorinus makes it clear in what follows that there is a step beyond even this level: *deus* who is pure and indeterminate *esse* beyond form, beyond substance, and thus beyond intelligibility. He had established this dialectically in his extensive treatment of

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[9] *Explanationes in Ciceronis rhetoricam*, CCSL 132, ed. Antonella Ippolito (Turnhout: Brepols, 2006), I.1.4-6, 5.

[10] Cicero, *De inv.* I, 17: "Exordium sententiarum et gravitates plurimum debet habere."

[11] Commenting on *De inv.* I, 17 Victorinus explained "Praeterea, inquit, ut commendati simus auditoribus, in exordio omnia illa habere debemus quae nobis vel orationi nostrae pariant dignitatem" (Victorinus, *In Cic. Rhet.* I, 17, 102-104 (CCSL 132, 83).

[12] *Ad Cand.* 1, 4-5 (CSEL 83.1, 15); *Adv. Ar.* IA 1, 4ff (CSEL 83.1, 54); II 1, 5-13 (CSEL 83.1, 168); and *De recip. hom.* 1, 2-6 (CSEL 83.1, 278).

the categories of being and non-being in *Ad Cand.* 2-15. He does not reiterate that God

properly speaking is beyond substance (*ousia*) because his goal throughout *Adversus*

Arium III is to establish that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are *homoousion*, of one and

the same substance. Thus, the fact that God is properly speaking beyond *ousia* stands

outside of his present task. His initial purpose is to show that Logos or *Nous* is related to

deus as *imago*.

For many early Christian writers, as for most Middle Platonists including Philo,

Logos was understood as a mediating principle between the transcendent first God who

was the remote *aition* and *arche* of the cosmos, and the sensible cosmos characterized by

instability (flux) and the relative unreality of materiality.[13] It was not until the fourth

century that Christians articulated definitively the discovery that derivation and mediation

need not entail ontological subordination. Treatment of the Logos during the trinitarian

controversy tended to one or another extreme. Either the subordinationist tendency was

followed, as by the Eusebians and the western bishops Ursacius and Valens; or the Logos

of God was seen as a mere word or thought innate to God and thus without a subsistence

(*anhypostaton*) of his own, as with Marcellus.[14] The Council of Antioch (341) rejected

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[13] The literature on this question in general as well as in relation to particular Platonists and Christians of antiquity is vast. John Dillon's *The Middle Platonists: 80 B.C. to A.D. 220* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1977) is still perhaps the most comprehensive study available of Platonic figures and writings from this period. Alcinous (whose *Didaskalikos* Dillon had attributed to Albinus before the work of John Whittaker proved Alcinous was the author), Numenius, and Philo are arguably the most important philosophical figures of pre-Plotinian Platonism for the Platonic and Christian milieux of Victorinus. All three have a place in Dillon's *Middle Platonists*. The relevant references for the question before us are as follows: for Alcinous see especially 280-285 (treated under "Albinus"); for Numenius, 361-378; for Philo, 155-160. See also *Alcinous: The Handbook of Platonism*, tr. with comm. by John Dillon (Oxford: Oxford University Press; New York: Clarendon Press, 1993); *Numenius: Fragments* ed. with tr. by Édouard des Places (Paris: Belles Lettres, 1973); Philo, *On the Creation, Allegorical Interpretation of Genesis 2 and 3*, tr. F. H. Colson, G. H. Whitaker *LCL* 226 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1929). See Mark Edwards, "Justin's Logos and the Word of God," *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 3 (1995): 261-280. See Origen's discussion of the Logos in *Commentary on the Gospel of John*, II.16-18.
[14] Discussed in ch. 1 §IV.2.

this latter perspective in the anathemas of one of its creeds: "We, on the contrary, regard Him not as simply God's pronounced word or mental, but as Living God and Word, existing in Himself, and Son of God and Christ."[15] This is of course unsurprising, as Socrates Scholasticus claims Eusebius of Nicomedia (who was both anti-Marcellan and subordinationist) presided at this council.[16] This Logos, while both hypostatic and divine, was nevertheless subordinated to the Father, as was affirmed explicitly at Sirmium 357.[17] Victorinus, along with other pro-Nicenes of the mid-fourth century, avoids both extremes, though he is distinguished from other figures like Hilary and Athanasius for the extent to which philosophical training informs his account of a substantial Logos derivative from and yet *homoousion* with the Father.[18]

The use of *nous* in non-scriptural sources has impressed itself thoroughly on the thought and speech of Victorinus. In Platonist thought of the first century B.C. up to the time of Julian the Apostate, *Nous* was a determination of the ultimate and remote first principle. Whether the transcendent absolute itself is noetic properly speaking—whether it can be described as intelligible (able to be known) or intelligent (characterized by knowing)—was a point of contention from the Middle Platonists and Neopythagoreans through Plotinus to Proclus.[19] Plotinus, showing evidence of moving away from the

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[15] Athanasius, *De synodis*, 26; "'Ἴσμεν γὰρ αὐτὸν ἡμεῖς, οὐκ ἁπλῶς Λόγον προφορικὸν, ἢ ἐνδιάθετον τοῦ Θεοῦ, ἀλλὰ ζῶντα Θεὸν Λόγον καθ᾽ ἑαυτὸν ὑπάρχοντα, καὶ Υἱὸν Θεοῦ καὶ Χριστὸν" (PG 26: 732B).

[16] Socrates, *Historia Ecclesiastica*, II.8.

[17] "And to none can it be a question that the Father is greater: for no one can doubt that the Father is greater in honor and dignity and Godhead, and in the very name of Father, the Son Himself testifying, 'The Father that sent Me is greater than I'" (Athanasius, *De syn.* 27).

[18] I am following Lewis Ayres's definition of "pro-Nicene" which includes "those theologies, appearing from the 360s to the 380s, consisting of a set of arguments about the nature of the Trinity and about the enterprise of Trinitarian theology, and forming the basis of Nicene Christian belief in the 380s. Intrinsic to these theologies were compatible (but not identical) accounts of how the Nicene creed should be understood. These accounts constituted a set of arguments for Nicaea—hence pro-Nicene."

[19] R. T. Wallis, *Neoplatonism*, 2nd edition revised by Lloyd Gerson (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett, 1995), 94-134.

influential teaching of Numenius, argued for a complete ontological differentiation between the One and the Hypostasis *Nous*.[20] The *Chaldean Oracles*, the sacred text of Neoplatonists on which Porphyry commented, apparently wavered on the question of the first principle's noetic nature. It was in the *Oracles* that the notion of an ontologically equal noetic triad was articulated as Existence-Power-Mind (*hyparxis-dynamis-nous*) a concept which would be of profound importance for Victorinus's understanding of the Christian Trinity.[21] The *Anonymous Commentary on Parmenides*, in its dialectical reflection on the One, yields such paradoxes of apophaticism as to say the One is not intelligible or intelligent, but neither is it without intelligence.[22] In all these cases, the nature, power, and place of *nous* was near the heart of speculation.

Though Victorinus is steeped in the Platonizing philosophy of his day, he is nevertheless insistent on making Scripture the doctrinal touchstone of all Christian theologizing. In *Adv. Ar. IB* Victorinus had given a detailed account of the biblical use of names Logos and *Nous*.[23] He equated the "highest *Nous* and perfect Wisdom, that is, the universal Logos," since "in eternal movement they are identical."[24] At their highest but also most proper point of signification, the Biblical (especially Johannine) Logos and the philosophically endorsed *Nous* both represent divinity and derivation from the Absolute. Victorinus is using philosophical resources to explain Christian belief, not dressing the Christian body of thought in the foreign and ill-fitting vestiture of secular philosophy, or treating the Platonic metaphysical frame as a bed of Procrustes, cutting Christian dogma

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[20] *Enn.* V.1.5-7; V.2.1; V.3.10-14; V.4; V.6.4-6; VI.9.2; Wallis, *Neoplatonism*, 54-60, and 116-18.

[21] *Ch. Or.* fg. 1 (Majercik, *The Chaldean* Oracles, 48-49); Wallis, *Neoplatonism*, 106.

[22] Wallis, *Neoplatonism*, 114-18.

[23] See especially *Adv. Ar.* IB 59 (CSEL 83.1, 159-160; Clark, *Marius Victorinus*, 186).

[24] *Adv. Ar.* IB 60, 1-3 "Summus νοῦς et sapientia perfecta, hoc est λόγος universalis—idem ipsum enim in aeterno motu" (CSEL 83.1, 160; ET: Clark, *Marius Victorinus*, 187).

to its dimensions. Victorinus interprets Logos by way of *Nous* to ensure Logos is taken in his intended sense: not as "word" or "speech" or "account" but as the first determinant of the transcendent godhead and the principle of all forms and of all intelligibility. In the present context Victorinus treats the two terms as both occupying the same intermediate position between God and creation.

The shift from Greek spiritual terms to the Latin *anima caelestis* suggests that Victorinus considered Logos and *Nous* to be familiar terms among his Latin-speaking audience. Indeed, the terms Logos and *Nous* were so familiar to educated Latin ears that Victorinus had no qualms about pairing the Greek nouns with Latin adjectives (*divinus*). The shift may also indicate a preference for the Greek terms over Latin synonyms as more reliably bearing his intended significance. *Anima caelestis*, on the other hand, was philosophically adequate and sufficiently common among Latin philosophers to be communicated unambiguously in Latin.[25] Though the term itself was sufficiently circumscribed, there was less conceptual consensus among both Greek and Latin writers concerning the nature and power of the *anima caelestis*.

According to Victorinus, the *anima caelestis* is the first product of the activity of divine Logos. It is made by the will of God (*extitit iussione dei*) as *imago imaginis*, according to the image of the Son who is *imago dei*.[26] Because the Son and Word is *vita*, the *anima caelestis* as image of the image is the image of life (*imago igitur vitae anima effecta est*).[27] It is typical of Platonism (following, *Timaeus*, especially 41a-42a) to see the

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[25] For *anima caelestis* see Cicero, *De Natura deorum*, 2.8.19, 142-44; Cicero, *Timaeus* 34.6-35.10; Apuleius Madaurensis, *De Platone et Eius Dogmate* 1.9.1; Velleius Paterculus, *Historia Romana* 2.123.1.6-8; Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 1.69ff. and 15.832.
[26] *Adv. Ar.* IB 61, 4-5 (CSEL 83.1, 161).
[27] *Adv. Ar.* IB 61, 7 (CSEL 83.1, 161).

World Soul or the Soul of the All as an artifact of the divine *Nous*.[28] Victorinus follows

this philosophical tendency to differentiate between *Nous* and the World Soul along the

lines of Creator and creature, though he understands creation in a Christian manner, as

informed by the theological controversies of previous decades.

As Victorinus had creatively fused Platonic philosophy and Nicene theology to

secure the non-subordination of the Logos and *filius* to the Father, so here he avoids

earlier forms of subordination of the Spirit by making a clear distinction between the

Trinity and the heavenly soul. We have seen how earlier writers like Justin Martyr had

tried to make the Christian Trinity fit the metaphysical and cosmic scheme of

philosophers.[29] Tertullian had famously referred to the three grades of the Trinity.[30]

Doctrinal shoehorning of Christian theology into external philosophical conceptions,

especially when fixed with an uncritical tendency towards subordination, could easily

lead to the rendering of the Holy Spirit as the Christian equivalent of the philosophers'

World Soul. Victorinus avoids this association of Holy Spirit and World Soul by applying

philosophical categories with greater facility and nuance than most earlier Christian

apologists (especially in the Latin tradition) while under the pressure and influence of a

developing line of interpretation of Nicene *homoousion*.[31]

Victorinus's *anima caelestis* is not *Nous*, but by contemplating the divine *Nous* it

itself is "*quasi* νοῦς."[32] As Victorinus says, *ipsa anima semper quae sursum sit mundanas*

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[28] See George Boys-Stones, "World Soul and Nature," in *Platonist Philosophy 80 BC to AD 250: An Introduction and Collection of Sources in Translation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 212-249, 212.
[29] See ch. 1 §I.1.
[30] Especially *Adv. Prax.* 9.3.
[31] On the World Soul see Stephen A. Cooper, "Marius Victorinus," 549-551.
[32] *Adv. Ar.* IB 61, 9 (CSEL 83.1, 162).

animas gignens.[33] It keeps its nature in that some aspect of it is always remaining on high, but it acts externally with diminishing power insofar as it lets off contemplating its source. Mary Clark translates *mundanae animae* as "souls which come into this world."[34] On the basis of this translation, Victorinus's *anima caelestis* is the source for individual souls, just as Plotinus's Hypostasis Soul is the source for all souls.[35] Clark explains Victorinus's account of how the soul departs from its source. "The soul takes its first step outside the divine sphere when it turns from its contemplation of the Logos to descend to the plane of the purely intellectuals and become the light of the supercelestial world."[36] The heavenly soul is thus "divine" as it contemplates divine things—which is in fact beyond the ontological level of its proper nature. Its fall from this contemplation is a lapse to its own plane which nevertheless is "on high" relative to what is material.

Pierre Hadot questions what it means for *anima caelestis* to "become light" and what Victorinus means by "supercelestial world."[37] I make the following brief suggestions without treating the difficulties as settled. "Supercelestial" is best taken in the sense of Plato's myth of ascent beyond the rim of the world in the *Phaedrus* (247b-c) and his treatment of astronomy in *Republic* 529a-c. As to the former, ascending beyond the highest visible heavens in the old geocentric cosmos was Plato's imaginative way of speaking of what is beyond sense altogether.[38] Plato's discussion of astronomy in the latter concludes that this science in itself, far from raising the soul, in fact only binds it more closely to the material realm.

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[33] *Adv. Ar.* I 64, 6-7 (CSEL 83.1, 166).
[34] Clark, *Marius Victorinus*, 192.
[35] Plotinus, *Enn.* IV.3.1-8.
[36] Mary Clark, "The Psychology of Marius Victorinus," *Augustinian Studies* 5 (1974): 149–66, 156.
[37] See Hadot, *Porphyre et Victorinus*, I.198ff.
[38] Cf. Aristotle, *Physics* 267b9 where the unmoved mover is located on the edge of the cosmos.

But if anyone tries to learn about the things of sense, whether gaping up or

blinking down, I would never say that he really learns—for nothing of the kind

admits of true knowledge—nor would I say that his soul looks up, but down, even

though he study floating on his back on sea or land.[39]

This again captures Victorinus's sense of supercelestial exactly. The idea must be purged

of all spatiality, and the soul must "look up" not to what is spatially superior to the body

but to what is ontologically superior to the *caelum*. Since the heavens may stand for what

is greatest (both materially and ontologically) in the sensible cosmos, to go beyond them

can only mean to move from a lower to a higher ontological grade.

We must now consider what Victorinus means in claiming that soul becomes light

among intellectuals. Intellectuals (*intellectualia*) in Victorinus's use means things which

can understand and can be understood but which require the intelligent act of another to

be moved into a state of understanding. Again according to Victorinus's nomenclature

these are beings (*quae tantum sunt*) but they are not true beings (*quae vere sunt*).[40] They

are passive in relation to true beings, which comprise an ontologically superior class of

beings, that of the intelligibles. Intelligibles (*intelligibilia*) are everlastingly in a condition

of active knowing and require no activity from another to bring them into a state of

understanding. When Victorinus claims then that the heavenly soul becomes light among

intellectuals, he likely means this in an epistemological sense. It becomes the instrument

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[39] "ἐάν τέ τις ἄνω κεχηνὼς ἢ κάτω συμμεμυκὼς τῶν αἰσθητῶν τι ἐπιχειρῇ μανθάνειν, οὔτε μαθεῖν ἄν ποτέ φημι αὐτόν—ἐπιστήμην γὰρ οὐδὲν ἔχειν τῶν τοιούτων—οὔτε ἄνω ἀλλὰ κάτω αὐτοῦ βλέπειν τὴν ψυχήν, κἂν ἐξ ὑπτίας νέων ἐν γῇ ἢ ἐν θαλάττῃ μανθάνῃ" *Republic*, 529b-c, ET: Paul Shorey, *Republic*, *LCL* 6 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1969).

[40] Cf. *Ad Cand.* 7, 13-14 (CSEL 83.1, 23). See Friedrich Wilhelm Kohnke, "Plato's Conception of τὸ οὐκ ὄντως οὐκ ὄν," *Phronesis* 2 (1957): 32-40; and David B. Robinson, "The Phantom of the Sophist: τὸ οὐκ ὄντως οὐκ ὄν (*Sophist* 240a-c)," *Classical Quarterly* 51:2 (2001): 435-457.

by which the intellectuals are understood—raised from potentially to actually understood in the Aristotelian sense—on the analogy of the light of the sun by which all bodily things are made visible. The heavenly soul acquires a disposition (Aristotelian *hexis*) of knowing when it is contemplating *Nous* and carries this disposition along with it into the realm of the intellectuals when it falls. Due to its *hexis* it has the ability both to know the intellectuals and to raise them to the state of understanding. That is to say, it gives them the wherewithal to move from potentially knowing into the state of actually knowing, as the teacher raises a pupil to knowing by providing a phantasm by which the student may have an insight into the nature of the thing under investigation. For the intellectuals are things like souls which are not knowing the intelligible sphere but may be led to this knowledge if one with a habit of knowing comes down to bring them into intelligent activity. In this way Victorinus's account of the soul resembles (though he does not explicitly make the connection himself) that account of the soul as "the place of forms" which Aristotle ascribes to members of the Academy.[41] The heavenly soul is "where" all intellectuals have their being until they are raised into the state of knowing and being known, thus to the level of intelligibles. Heavenly soul is thus fulfilling the role Aristotle allotted to both the passive and the active intellect in different respects.

> Since just as in everything in nature there is something which serves as the matter in each genus (this is that which is all of those things in potency), as well as something else which is the cause and is productive (*poetikon*) by making all things, as in the case of art in relation to matter, so necessarily there exists these differences in the soul. And intellect is this sort of thing in one sense by becoming

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[41] Aristotle, *De anima*, 3.4, 429a28-29.

all things, and in another by making all things, like a sort of disposition (*hexis*), in the way that light does. For in a certain way light makes potential colors actual colors.[42]

The heavenly soul becomes all things by its ability to know each thing perfectly due to the purity of its substance. It makes all things in the epistemological sense of bringing what is potentially understood to being actually understood. This act of illumination occurs on heavenly soul's own proper ontological level, for it itself is intellectual by nature, as opposed to intelligible. Its departure from being *quasi* νοῦς is thus a fall, the first of its two declines. Its ability to raise intellectuals into the actuality of being understood does not undermine the fact that it has fallen, for it has fallen from the state of contemplating *Nous* as such into contemplating particular intelligibles.

These particular intelligibles are likely the universal forms of which Ellen Scully speaks in her discussion of Victorinus's account of creation. This account is characterized by "ever greater particularization from the universal forms to particular forms to particular individuals."[43] Scully says *anima caelestis* is the first thing the Son makes, "understood as the singular universal."[44] The heavenly soul as "singular universal," then, is the first determinate and existing universal from which all other created things receive their formal being. Heavenly soul may be called the light of intellectuals in an ontological

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[42] "Ἐπεὶ δ᾽ ὥσπερ ἐν ἁπάσῃ τῇ φύσει ἐστί τι τὸ μὲν ὕλη ἑκάστῳ γένει (τοῦτο δὲ ὃ πάντα δυνάμει ἐκεῖνα), ἕτερον δὲ τὸ αἴτιον καὶ ποιητικόν, τῷ ποιεῖν πάντα, οἷον ἡ τέχνη πρὸς τὴν ὕλην πέπονθεν, ἀνάγκη καὶ ἐν τῇ ψυχῇ ὑπάρχειν ταύτας τὰς διαφοράς. καὶ ἔστιν ὁ μὲν τοιοῦτος νοῦς τῷ πάντα γίνεσθαι, ὁ δὲ τῷ πάντα ποιεῖν, ὡς ἕξις τις, οἷον τὸ φῶς· τρόπον γάρ τινα καὶ τὸ φῶς ποιεῖ τὰ δυνάμει ὄντα χρώματα ἐνεργείᾳ χρώματα" *De anima*, 3.5, 430a10-17 (ET in Gerson, *Aristotle and Other Platonists* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2005), 153).

[43] Ellen Scully, "Physicalism as the Soteriological Extension of Marius Victorinus's Cosmology," *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 26 (2018): 221-248, here 236. *Adv. Ar.* I 64 (Clark, *Marius Victorinus*, 192). Of this we will say more below.

[44] Scully, "Physicalism," 236.

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sense, because it brings them into the light of being from the obscurity of their preexistence in their divine cause (discussed below).

The Soul declines a second time in its desire to act and to see its own activity, which is to say its infatuation with production and materiality. "[I]t takes the next step down when it vivifies the sensible world."[45] The productive externalizing act is one and the same with the soul's degradation.[46] The account of the second fall of soul helps to clarify the first by way of contrast. The activity of the soul after its first fall is activity that is on a par with its own nature. As the sun of the sensible universe gives light merely by being what it is and is not diminished in its essential activity, so the soul gives light within its own ontological realm merely by being itself.[47] "The soul seems in control during the first part of the descent but Victorinus speaks of it as out of control at the approach of non-being when it seems to become darkened or dizzy, plunging downward."[48] There is a strong moral tone in this philosophical cosmogony. The second declension of *anima caelestis* is discussed in ignoble terms because it is a movement from what is natural and proper to it to what is more base—indeed, movement in the direction of what is not, in accordance with the Platonic account of evil—as opposed to the first declension which was from an excellence surpassing its nature.

The divine Logos or *Nous* uses this celestial soul as seat or body. While *sedes* is a common word with as many varied applications (metaphorical and by synecdoche) as the

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[45] Clark, "The Psychology of Marius Victorinus," 156.

[46] It is a question of concentration of contemplative consciousness—Plotinus, *Enn.* IV.35, 37-50 on the good the planets do without attending to their acts. And see the terms for consciousness in Plotinus, especially *parakolouthesis*, *synaisthesis*, *antilepsis* in *Plotinus: Ennead IV.4.30–45 & IV.5: Problems Concerning the Soul*, tr. with intr. and comm. Gary Gurtler, S. J. (Las Vegas, NV: Parmenides, 2015).

[47] See below §2.32-36 for discussion of Plotinus's theory of two acts.

[48] Clark, "The Psychology of Marius Victorinus," 156.

English "seat," its meaning in this context is determined by Victorinus's philosophical cosmology and likely his reading of Scripture. Seat (*sedes*, *cathedra*, *thronos*) indicates the place of authority and the power of judgment as in Matthew 23:2: *Super cathedram Moysi sederunt scribæ et pharisæi*. The governing power sits as it fulfills its function just as Christ sits at the right hand of the Father (Mk 16:19) indicating both his exultation to supreme sovereignty and his active providential and judicial authority over all things. The twelve apostles will sit on twelve thrones to judge the tribes of Israel (Lk 22:28-30). Augustine takes Christ's session as indicative of where He dwells.[49] The Psalms speak of the heavens as the seat or throne of God, often combining these senses of dwelling, sovereignty, and judicial power, as in Psalm 11:4 (LXX 10:5): *Dominus in templo sancto suo; Dominus in cælo sedes eius. Oculi eius in pauperem respiciunt, palpebræ eius interrogant filios hominum.* Victorinus is able to interpret this last notion of God's throne or seat being in the heavens in light of his Platonism. That *anima caelestis* serves as *sedes* to divine Logos indicates the sovereignty of the noetic in the realm of the soul. Clark's translation of *sedes* as "center" preserves the Stoic notion that the mind with its seat in

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[49] For the locative sense of where one has settled, see Catullus 68A, 33-40. *nam, quod scriptorum non magna est copia apud me, hoc fit, quod Romae uiuimus: illa domus, illa mihi sedes, illic mea carpitur aetas.* See Matthew Leigh, "Illa domus, illa mihi sedes: On the interpretation of Catullus 68," in Richard Hunter and S. P. Oakley eds., *Latin Literature and its Transmission* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015): 194-224. Augustine, *De Symbolo*, 11: "He sits at the right hand of the Father: believe. By sitting, understand dwelling: as [in Latin] we say of any person, In that country he dwelt (*sedit*) three years. The Scripture also has that expression, that such a one dwelt (*sedisse*) in a city for such a time. Not meaning that he sat and never rose up. On this account the dwellings of men are called seats (*sedes*). Where people are seated (in this sense), are they always sitting? Is there no rising, no walking, no lying down? And yet they are called seats (*sedes*). In this way, then, believe an inhabiting of Christ on the right hand of God the Father: He is there" (tr. H. Browne, *NPNF* 1st series, vol. 3, ed. Philip Schaff (Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Publishing Company, 1887).

the heart—the center (as we speak of the "core" of someone or something) of the person—is the human being's ruling power (*hegemonikon*).[50]

"Body" is being used analogously, for the *anima caelestis* is related to divine Logos or *Nous* in a manner proportionate to how material body relates to soul. The ontologically superior operates on a lower ontological level by using an instrument by which its presence and activity are mediated to that lower level. In this case, the nature and power of the instrument limits the scope of activity of the agent—both with respect to the quality of the action performed and to the magnitude of the activity. At the same time, the instrument facilitates (one might even say is the *conditio sine qua non* for) that activity on the lower, more restrictive plane. This idea is similar to the two later Scholastic principles of (1) limitation of being by form and (2) that what is received is received according to the mode of the recipient.[51] Victorinus stands as an ancestor to the tradition of both—in direct relation to Boethius, and more indirectly as belonging to the general stream of Neoplatonic thought (Plotinus-Porphyry-Iamblichus-Proclus) of which the *Liber de causis* was an heir. The principle that form limits being underlies Victorinus's account of Christ's activity in the world through different media, which I discuss in a later chapter.[52] As for the second principle, reception in the mode of the receiver, Victorinus formulates it rather explicitly at *Adv. Ar.* IV 16, 6-10 where *esse* gives "'to be' to all existents according to the capacity of those which receive it."[53] This

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[50] On the governing power in Stoic psychology see *Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta*, ed. Hans Friedrich August von Arnim, 4 vols. (Leipzig: Teubner, 1903-1924), vol. 2, 225-230; for its location in the heart see especially 228.

[51] See Aquinas, *De esse et essentia* V; *Summa Theologiae* 1a, q. 75, a. 5.

[52] See §12 and commentary in chapter four.

[53] Clark, *Marius Victorinus*, 274; "Hoc ipsum quod deus est esse est, esse primum et principale, *omnibus quae sunt pro modo percipientium esse praestans*" (CSEL 83.1, 248).

principle appears to have been more forcefully insisted upon by Iamblichus than by Plotinus or Porphyry.[54]

1.5-7. ea vero sensuali νῷ vel λόγῳ in sensuali anima ut ipse, sensualis in corpore est et ideo in qualicumque corpore.

Ea refers back to *anima caelestis*.[55] The sensual *nous* or logos is what the celestial soul uses as seat or body.[56] We have here Victorinus's cosmology presented with extreme brevity. There is a sensible *nous* which resides in the sensible soul, which itself resides in sensible body. The sensible nous is the intellect's lower mode of activity which is "a copy of intellect."[57] Victorinus can therefore assert that sensible *nous* resides in every kind of body—indeed, it would not be qualified as "sensible" if it were not in a body. By "every kind of body" Victorinus means all informed matter whatsoever. In *Adversus Arium* IB, Victorinus speaks of the already-organized earth as the basis for the human body. From the fact that this earth is structured even before it is formed into a human body (insofar as it is earth, it has a definite nature or form), he infers that this "earth has, therefore, a material soul (*anima hylica*)."[58] Material soul is that soul which animates by organizing and in-forming (thus giving a nature and an intelligibility), but not in the proper sense of giving a thing self-movement (nor, *a fortiori*, sentience). It renders prime matter into proximate matter, fit to receive more complex forms.[59] Victorinus explains the way in which soul becomes material soul. "If, indeed, it looks toward inferior things, being petulant, it becomes a life-giving power, making live both the world and those things

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[54] Wallis, *Neoplatonism*, 118-124.
[55] Noted by Henry and Hadot in CSEL 83.1, 191.
[56] Cf. *Ad Cand*. 9 (CSEL 83.1, 25-26) and Hadot and Henry, SC 69, 709.
[57] *Ad Cand.* 9, 8-9 (CSEL 83.1, 25); see Cooper, "Marius Victorinus," 544.
[58] *Adv. Ar.* IB 62, 27 (Clark, *Marius Victorinus*, 191); "Habet ergo animam terra hylicam" (CSEL 83.1, 164).
[59] Cf. Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, VIII.6 1045b18.

which are in the world, even the stone according to its proper mode as stone."[60] In this case, "life" is the gift of a proper natural activity, the ability of some determined being to flourish (*vigere*) in its own manner, which is for a substance to be itself. Stephen Cooper specifies that it is world soul, *anima caelestis*, Victorinus has in mind in this passage just quoted.[61] So we see how *anima caelestis* is also *anima hylica* depending upon the manner of its activity, whether it is internally preserved, essentially active, or externally productive.

1.7-13. *omne autem, quod ex divinis est, ad sua non quasi pars eorum est, sed ut imago (et id in aliis et adsertum est et probatum), quippe cum in ipsis divinis λόγος dei imago sit. sic igitur cetera. ergo omnium divinorum. ut enim dei λόγος imago est, ita et τοῦ λόγου anima. quaeque hoc genus ibi cetera, imagines sunt. at in natura sensuali non imagines, sed magis simulacra ac simulamenta dicenda.*

Victorinus explains how things coming forth from the divine sphere relate to divinity. The phrase *ad sua* ("to them," *sua* as neuter plural accusative) is the equivalent of the Aristotelian πρός τι, the accident of relation, one of the nine accidents of a substance.[62] Hadot's explanation for the reflexive pronoun is that *sua* refers to all the things which are proper to divine things.[63] Things *ex divinis*, i.e., those things which proceed from the divine as opposed to being created by God, relate to divine things, are

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[60] *Adv. Ar.* IB 61, 14-17 (Clark, *Marius Victorinus*, 189); "Si vero in inferiora respicit, cum sit petulans, potentia vivificandi fit, vivere quae faciat et mundum et ea quae in mundo usque ad lapidem lapidum more" (CSEL 83.1, 162). Cf. Hippolytus, "Even stones are ensouled," quoted in G. R. S. Mead, *Thrice-Greatest Hermes: Studies in Hellenistic Theosophy and Gnosis* (York Beach, ME: Samuel Weiser, 1992), 104.
[61] Cooper, "Platonist Christianity," 9.
[62] *Categories*, 1b26; and Victorinus, *In Cic. Rhet.* I.9.61-67 (CCSL 132, 54-55) where Victorinus gives *ad aliquid* as equivalent to πρός τι.
[63] Hadot and Henry, SC 69, 927.

to them (*ad sua*) not as parts (*pars*), as though divinity itself were composed of many things. Everything from divinity is wholly divine, spiritual things are not divided, and God is simple. The whole divinity is present in each of its qualities, even if these things *ex divinis* must appear discrete when they are manifest outside the divine realm of undifferentiated simplicity and wholeness. These things are images as being of the same substance as that of which they are the image, as Victorinus has already said.

Here is Victorinus's first use of *ibi*. This is Platonic shorthand, perhaps specifically in imitation of Plotinus's frequent use of ἐκεῖ to refer to what is *in divinis et aeternis*.[64] Victorinus had admonished his readers in *Adv. Ar.* IA 19 not to "conceive the image up there (*ibi*) as it is in sensible things. For here we do not conceive the image to be a substance."[65] He specifies the difference between images here and images there (*ibi*).

> For it [the image here] is a sort of shadow in air or in water through a sort of corporeal light formed through the reflection of a corporeal emanation. By itself it is nothing nor has it movement of its own—only what is manifested by it is a substance; and it has neither body, nor senses, nor understanding. And when that in which it is reflected is removed or disturbed, it is no longer anything nor anywhere. Therefore in a different way we say that Christ is the 'image of God.'[66]

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[64] See Plotinus, *Enn.* V.4.2, and *passim*.

[65] *Adv. Ar.* IA 19, 10-11 (Clark, *Marius Victorinus*, 115); "Sed non sic intellegimus ibi imaginem, sicuti in sensibilibus. Hic enim nec substantiam intellegimus imaginem" (CSEL 83.1, 83).

[66] *Adv. Ar.* IA 19, 11-18 (Clark, *Marius Victorinus*, 115-116); "Umbra enim quaedam est in aere aut in aqua per quoddam corporale lumen, corporalis effluentiae per reflexionem figurata, ipsa per semet nihil, nec proprii motus—imaginalis solum substantia—neque corpus neque sensum neque intellegentiam habens et ablato aut turbato in quo figuratum est omnino nihil et nusquam est. Alio igitur modo dicimus Christum imaginem dei esse" (CSEL 83.1, 83). There are resonances in this passage of Plotinus *Enn*. I.4.10. See Anca Vasiliu "L'argument de l'image dans la défense de la consubstantialité par Marius Victorinus," *Les études philosophiques* 2 (2012): 191-216.

What Victorinus had expressed more fully in his previous books he here dispatches quickly through a simple distinction in terminology: *imago* is used for the peculiar relation that attains *up there* (*ibi*) between derivative things and their source.[67] *Simulacrum*, on the contrary, refers to sensible copies of sensible things. The key point of distinction between *imago* and *simulacrum* comes at the division between the noetic and the sensible, what is incorporeal and what is corporeal.

Allison Kidd notes that in earlier Roman thought there were, in particular circumstances, careful distinctions for such terms as *imago*, *simulacrum*, and other closely semantically related words. At the same time, she specifies the precise meaning of *simulacrum*.

> [S]*imulacrum* was a term reserved for the anthropomorphized likeness of a god, or the likeness of a god manifest in a cult statue as the object of veneration. Beyond the realm of figural statuary, *simulacrum* was also employed as a noun designating representations of the built environment.[68]

In less technical circumstances the words *simulacrum* and *imago* may have been used synonymously. "The Latin term *simulacrum* may be defined broadly in a corporeal sense as an image formed in the likeness of a thing and shares many connotative qualities with *imago*, *effigies*, *forma,* and *signum*."[69] Victorinus, having converted from paganism, may have wanted to distinguish the *imago dei* as Christians understood it with the *simulacra*

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[67] The reference to previous books refers to *Adv. Ar.* IA 19, 24-28; and 20, 32, noted by Clark, *Marius Victorinus*, 220, n 3. This is the same expedient noted above whereby Victorinus cut through the complex question of the status of *anima caelestis* relative to *logos vel nous divinus*.

[68] Allison B. Kidd, "*Imaginibus vel Simulacris:* Depicting Urban Landscapes and Architecture in Roman Antiquity" (PhD Diss.: New York University, 2018), 23.

[69] Kidd, "*Imaginibus vel Simulacris*," 22.

deorum of traditional Roman cult.[70] The Christian designation of the Word and Son of God as *imago dei* should be strongly differentiated from the effigies (*simulacra*) of antique paganism. In the context of Christian theology of the Son, *imago*, as Victorinus explains to his Christian interlocutors, is of the same nature as the thing it is manifesting. For the specific purpose of theological discourse he is defining *imago* in accordance with the Scriptural use of *imago* in reference to the Son. This was a common Nicene argument meant to combat the 'Arian' reasoning that an image is both less than and temporally posterior to its archetype.[71] Phoebadius used the same anti-Arian argument in his *Contra Arianos*, XVII.2: "*imago . . . non potest coepisse post Deum*." God was never without His *imago* and so one cannot say "there was when he was not," as 'the Arians' did. This Nicene account of image is also directly antithetical to Marcellus's interpretation of Col 1:15.[72] Marcellus thought "the image of the invisible God" must itself be visible.[73] The Word is εἰκὼν τοῦ θεοῦ, then, not as he was present in God from eternity—for then he was invisible—but when the Word came forth and became son and image for the first time in the incarnation.[74] After the son and image's return into the godhead the sonship

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[70] Lucifer of Cagliari writes of the *simulacra deorum* in *De Regibus Apostaticis* IX, 33-34 (*Luciferi Calaritani Opera Quae Supersunt*, ed. G. F. Diercks, CCSL VIII (Turnhout: Brepols, 1978)). *Simulacra* meaning cult statues is found frequently in the works of Cicero; see *In Verrem* 2.1.7.8; *In Catilinam* 3.19.3; *De Natura Deorum* 1.77.9; *De Divinatione* 1.46.3. On *signum* and *simulacrum* as signifying a statue of pagan cult see Anna Anguissola, "Statues and Their Function," *The Classical Quarterly* 56 (2006): 641-3.

[71] For uses of *simulamenta* in Hilary and Victorinus see Cooper, *Galatians*, 32 and n. 77.

[72] Sozomen, *Hist. Eccl.* IV.22 on the Council of Seleucia: "as it had been recently asserted that the Son is dissimilar from the Father, it was necessary, on this account, to reject the terms consubstantial and a similar substance, which do not occur in Scripture, to condemn the term dissimilar, and to confess clearly that the Son is like the Father; for He is, as the Apostle Paul somewhere says, the image of the invisible God."

[73] Col 1:15: ὅς ἐστιν εἰκὼν τοῦ Θεοῦ τοῦ ἀοράτου.

[74] See fg. 54 in *Eusebius Werke* IV: *Gegen Marcell, Über die kirchliche Theologie, Die Fragmente Marcells*, ed. Erich Klostermann and Günther Christian Hansen, GCS 3rd ed. (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1989), 93; and *Markell von Ankyra: Die Fragmente und der Brief an Julius von Rom*, ed. Markus Vinzent, VCSup 39 (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 48, 4-10.

would resolve and the Word return to its place of simple, monadic undifferentiatedness. On the contrary, Victorinus argues (in agreement with both 'western' Nicenes and Eusebians) that the Son and Logos are one and the same everlasting divine subsistence and the everlasting *imago dei* manifesting the Father who remains hidden at all times. Victorinus draws a stark contrast between the immaterial Word as image and the Son's appearance *in carne*.

This final passage concerning the difference between *imago* and *simulacra* makes clear why Victorinus began with such a terse and allusive summary of his ontology. Victorinus posits the Logos as *imago dei* with the soul as *imago Logou* in accordance with his thirteenth kind of definition, namely, the definition *kat' analogian*.[75] The soul is not *imago dei* but rather is made "*sicuti secundum similitudinem homo ad deum, alia cum sit dei, alia hominis substantia*."[76] The Logos and the soul are the most prominent concerns of and supports for his arguments here. In this whole treatise Victorinus will rarely descend to the level of familiar things of sense (*simulacra* and *simulamenta*). His educative program presumes a human tendency towards the infatuation of the senses and aims for the transcending of sense and imagination. A notable exception comes in §5, but we will see how quickly Victorinus "pulls up" from this brief descent at the start of §6. Under the recognition of the soul as image of the Logos, he makes frequent use of the nature and activities of the soul to support his theological arguments which themselves are focused on the (twofold) Logos.

1.14-19. *Ita enim rerum progressio est, ut effulgentia luminis imago sit luminis. unde substantia eadem est in summis et aeternis, quia imago luminis lumen est. ut enim de*

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[75] Hadot, *Marius Victorinus*, 358.
[76] *Adv. Ar.* IA 22, 4-5 (CSEL 83.1, 90).

spiritu nonnisi spiritus et de vero verum et de deo deus, sic et de substantia substantia.

spiritus enim et verus et deus substantia est.

Victorinus explains the relation of God and His image in the terms of the Nicene
Creed (light from light, God from God). He fittingly begins his account of the
development of things with the word *progressio*. He will trace the *progressio rerum* from
here to §2.54. *Progressio*, at the start of his "progression" through the account, is more
than rhetorically appropriate, it is metaphysically significant. It is one of the three terms
of the Platonic emanation scheme, *status, progressio, regressus* (*stasis*, *proodos*,
epistrophe). The scheme appears explicitly in one of Victorinus's hymns in which he
transposes its terms into a theological register. He made each refer by predominance to a
particular subsistence in the Trinity: *Status, progressio, regressus, O beata trinitas*![77] The
cycle of emanation in Victorinus's thought is thus at once metaphysical (describing the
order of being), cosmic (explaining the process of universal manifestation and reversion
from the level of determinate being), and anagogical (tracing the contemplative soul's
itinerary). In Victorinus's theological adaptation, *progressio* describes in particular the
coming forth of the Son from the Father whom the Son manifests as activity manifests
power or motion manifests substance. In describing the *progressio rerum*, Victorinus is
establishing the essential and continuous relationship of that which goes forth to that
from which it goes.

The mode of argumentation is objective, following the *modus naturae*, the way in
which things are in themselves, as opposed to the subjective, the *modus inveniendi*,

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[77] *Hymn* III 71-74 (CSEL 83.1, 297).

considering things in the order in which they appear to us.[78] It begins with phrases taken from the Nicene Creed.[79] In saying "For 'Spirit' and 'true' and 'God' designate substance" (*spiritus enim et verus et deus substantia est*) Victorinus is offering a descriptive definition of substance, defining it by its characteristics.[80] This is the third kind of definition Victorinus discusses in *De definitionibus*, that of ποιότης answering *quid quale sit*.[81] Victorinus has not given an essential definition of God, but rather a descriptive account of what God is on the basis of scriptural *nomina*.

Victorinus prefers the preposition *de* to either *ex* or *ab* because *de* is equally suggestive of derivation while less suggestive of spatial separation. The Nicene Creed's formula that the Son was "from the substance of the Father" (*ex substantia patris*) had been shown to be susceptible of an interpretation apparently too dependent on the example of bodily generation.[82] Paul uses *ex ipso* in Rom 11:36 to explain how all things are from God thus indicating a relation of creature to Creator. Victorinus seems to prefer *de* for the relation of Father to Son then because it more effectively indicates a relation of generation and continuity than other prepositions. But because *ex* and *ab* were current in Christian circles, Hilary and Phoebadius are content to use the terminology to describe the relation of Son to Father as at once derivative and substantially identical. Victorinus

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[78] Cf. Cicero, *Topica*, II.6-7: *Stoici autem in altera elaboraverunt; iudicandi enim vias diligenter persecuti sunt ea scientia quam διαλεκτικὴν appellant, inveniendi artem quae τοπικὴ dicitur, quae et ad usum potior erat et ordine naturae certe prior, totam reliquerunt*; Plotinus, *Enn.* II.9.1: "For this is the order (*taxis*) which corresponds to the nature of things."

[79] *Faith in Formulae: A Collection of Early Christian Creeds and Creed-related Texts*, ed. Wolfram Kinzig (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), vol. I, 290 (Greek), and 294-297 (Latin).

[80] Clark, *Marius Victorinus*, 220.

[81] *De definitionibus* 18.13-14 (Hadot, *Marius Victorinus*, 348).

[82] Cf. Athanasius, *De Synodis*, 42; 45; 50; and Hilary, *De Synodis*, 20 where he quotes one of the anathemas of the Ancyran Council of 358: "And if any one understanding that the Son is like in essence to Him whose Son He is admitted to be, says that the Son is the same as the Father, or part of the Father, or that it is through an emanation or any such passion as is necessary for the procreation of corporeal children that the incorporeal Son draws His life from the incorporeal Father: let him be anathema."

does not reject this common use—indeed on occasion he uses it himself—but he prefers *de* for this relation in order to stress the coinherence of Son in Father and to minimize the sense of remoteness unavoidably communicated by any of these three prepositions.

1.20-26. *sed hoc esse, quod dicimus, aliud intellegi debet in eo, quod est esse, aliud vero in eo, quod est ita esse, ut unum sit substantiae, aliud qualitatis. sed ista istic in sensibilibus et in mundo. at in divinis et aeternis ista duo unum. omne enim, quod ibi, simplex, et hoc deus, quod lumen, quod optimum, quod exsistentia, quod vita, quod intellegentia. ac de hoc et in aliis diximus.*

Victorinus puts forth a notion here that is related to his distinction, prominent in *Adv. Ar.* IB and II, between *esse* and *ita esse*. Yet whereas in earlier passages the distinction had concerned (1) pure being (unqualified *esse*), which is beyond definition and determination, and (2) being qualified as a certain kind of thing (*ita esse* as *forma* or *substantia*), here the distinction between *esse* and *ita esse* is applied at a lower ontological level. In the present context *esse* refers to determined being, substance (in fact, is equivalent to the earlier meaning of *ita esse*), and *ita esse* is rather a substance in a certain mode of being which he here calls *qualitas*. All "up there" is simple, so that God can have *lumen*, *optimum*, *exsistentia*, *vita*, and *intellegentia* as attributes (*qualitates*) without His simplicity being compromised. What a thing is (*quid sit*) and how it is (*quomodo sit*, *quid quale sit*)[83] are not different *in divinis et aeternis* since divine qualities are themselves substantial.[84] These two categories of predicables are one in divine simplicity since God is not other than His attributes. But to call them two is to admit that there is a conceptual distinction which in reality is only discernible in the refracting realm

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[83] See Victorinus, *De def.* 18.13-19.18 (Hadot, *Marius Victorinus*, 348-349).
[84] Cf. Athanasius, *De decretis*, 22.

of *sensibilia*. This transposition of categories for both substantial and qualitative predication from their usual use for material things to a higher use for intellectual things is typical of the Neoplatonic adaptation of Aristotelian and Stoic predication of which Victorinus was a faithful inheritor.[85]

1.26-30. *omnia ergo ibi substantialiter simplicia, inconexa, unum, numero unum, nec numero unum, sed ante numerum unum, id est ante unum quod est in numero, hoc est plane simplex, solum, sine fantasia quod alterum.*

Having explained how substance and quality are not different things in God, Victorinus now clarifies what it means for God to be simple. Here is another of Victorinus's frequent references to *ibi*, which in this work will always mean *in divinis*, *in aeternis*. *Omnia ibi substantialiter simplicia* must be understood in light of Victorinus's position that all of God's attributes are substantial. *Omnia* refers both to the distinct subsistences and to the various qualities of God. Victorinus spoke of the Son as *substantialiter filius* in his earlier theological treatises (*Adv. Ar.* IA 20, 46). He meant that the Son is not simply called son, but in fact is son by his very nature, son being predicated of him not accidentally but with respect to his very substance. Then because he is true Son he is also of the same substance as God. Victorinus uses the adverb *substantialiter* (Greek *ousiodes*) in a similar way here.[86] God is not only called *simplex*, but is simple with respect to His essence. Because he had established that the divine

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85 This adaption is well documented; for a recent discussion see Gerald Bechtle, "'Harmonizing' Aristotle's *Categories* and Plato's *Parmenides* before the Background of Natural Philosophy," in *Gnosticism, Platonism, and the Late Ancient World: Essays in Honour of John D. Turner*, ed. by Kevin Corrigan and Tuomas Rasimus (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 543-68. See also Lloyd Gerson, *Aristotle and Other Platonists*, 76-100.
86 Victorinus, *De def.* 7.10-17 (Hadot, *Marius Victorinus*, 337).

qualities are substantial, he anticipates the false inference that there is diversity of substance *in divinis*.

Victorinus posits the whole Trinity (as well as all of the divine attributes) as prior to number by making all *in divinis* substantially simple and ontologically prior to the nine Aristotelian accidents of the *Categories*. He might have made greater use of the point had he not been seeking to refute the monadic—and miahypostatic—thought represented by Marcellus and a temptation to which Roman Christians had been susceptible. There is the number which is counted, a sum of something, and the number by which we count, the pure quantity. But besides these there is also number as qualitative, a thing far less obvious to us than to the educated of antiquity. A thing may be one not as counted nor as that by which other things are counted, but simply as a united whole. The One of Plotinus is named for its quality of oneness, not as a quantity of something, nor as the one by which we count. God's oneness is before and beyond number. God is one rather as being the only, as being unique, than one as a something numbered among other somethings. This should be kept in mind when Victorinus speaks of dyad and triad. It is not that three somethings have a share in a certain more primary something. The three are three insofar as they are distinguished by predominance (*magis*) while simultaneously being one and the same substance.[87]

In speaking of God before number and before alterity Victorinus has also posited the Trinity where other thinkers posit the Monad before the Dyad. Nicomachus the Neopythagorean, for example, posits the One as the principle of number which is neither same as itself nor different from itself. Number, as well as sameness and difference,

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[87] For an explicit presentation of the concept of predominance see p. 176 below.

would not appear until Two appears.[88] For Victorinus, the whole triad is present in the Monad prior to all number. This locating the triad in God is a profound revision of Plotinian metaphysics, as Plotinus refused all suggestion of diversity, even latent diversity, in the One.[89] Victorinus's account has closer affinity to Porphyry, who saw the noetic triad as somehow preexistently present in the One.[90] Even still, Victorinus shows a creative independence from his sources and is able to rethink these metaphysical conceptions in the service of Christian belief.

Victorinus had referred to the Spirit as *nexus* in Hymn I: "*In unum qui cuncta nectis, tu es sanctus spiritus.*"[91] The Holy Spirit "connects all in one" (*in unum qui cuncta nectis*) as all created things return to their one universal source by way of knowledge.[92] This is to speak of the Spirit's economic activity. *Inconexa* in the present passage is used of God theologically and properly (insofar as any language of God is proper), since Victorinus's purpose here is to differentiate the manner of being in God from the manner of being *in sensibilibus*. God's qualities—and *a fortiori* the three divine subsistences of the Trinity—are not drawn together in unity but are substantially identical in God's simplicity.

He elaborates what he means in calling God simple, claiming God is *simplex plane, solum, sine fantasia quod alterum*. God's simplicity occurs without any

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[88] See Dillon, *The Middle Platonists*, 355.

[89] Wallis, *Neoplatonism*, 47-72, especially 57-61.

[90] See Wallis, *Neoplatonism*, 114-119.

[91] *Hymn* I, 5 (CSEL 83.1, 285).

[92] Cooper and others have seen this as having influenced Augustine's own conception of the Holy Spirit as *nexus* of Father and Son ("Platonist Christianity," 10); see Nello Cipriani, "Le fonti cristiani della dottrina trinitaria nei primi Dialoghi di S. Agostino," *Augustinianum* 34 (1994): 253–312; and Chad Gerber, *The Spirit of Augustine's Early Theology: Contextualizing Augustine's Pneumatology* (London: Routledge, 2016), 149.

appearance of another, as Victorinus had explained in similar terms in *Adv. Ar.* IB 49, 10-13: *illud enim unum oportet dicere et intellegere quod nullam imaginationem alteritatis habet, unum solum, unum simplex, unum per concessionem*. Hadot traces the phrase *quod nullam imaginationem alteritatis habet* to the *Anonymous Commentary on the Parmenides*: Αὕτη ἐστὶν ἡ γνῶσις ἡ (θεο)ῦ οὐκ ἑτερότητα ἐμφαίνουσα καὶ δυάδα.[93] The initial context for this rejection of alterity in God, then, had to do with God's own knowledge. That self-knowledge does not entail a duality between the one knowing and the one known was a Platonic advance on an Aristotelian *aporia*. There are three levels of application. First, God is in a sense beyond all intelligibility, is simplicity beyond all duality. Second, all true knowledge—noetic apprehension of noetic objects—is characterized by an identity between knower and known. This is the first and most proper application in Plotinus of the theory of predominance, for each νοῦς is potentially all other νόες while being actually itself.[94] Finally, the knowledge humans have of God requires the purification of the imagination, lest any appearance appropriate to material things distort the way we are understanding God. The final phrase of Victorinus's earlier text, *per concessionem*, has the same meaning as in his earlier *De def.*: *similium*.[95] Victorinus evinces the same awareness of the limitations of language in reference to divine simplicity in this present passage, clarifying the sense in which God is *unum*: even to call God *unum* is to risk ascribing quality to him and thereby introduce some notion of

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[93] Hadot, *Porphyre et Victorinus* II, 81, n. 1; fg. 2, fol. 64ᵛ lines 19-20. "This is the knowledge of God, not displaying any otherness and any dyad" (Gerald Bechtle, *The Anonymous Commentary on Plato's* Parmenides (Bern: Haupt, 1999), 50). See also Michel Tardieu, "Recherches sur la formation de l'*Apocalypse de Zostrien* et les sources de Marius Victorinus," *Res Orientales* 9 (1996), 1-114, here 62-63.
[94] Plotinus, *Enn.* VI.2.20.
[95] *De def.* 6.12-14 (Hadot, *Marius Victorinus*, 136).

composition to our discourse.[96] On the other hand, because Victorinus is discussing God as triad of *esse-vivere-intellegere*, he needs to affirm in strong language God's simplicity lest these three appear either to compromise divine unity or else lead to a hierarchy of hypostases occupying different levels of reality, as the triad had done in Victorinus's sources.[97]

1.30-33. *unde quod inde nascitur imago, non scissio, nec effusio, sed effulsio, nec protentio, sed apparentia, nec geminatio potentiae, quam potentiae actio.*

This passage is in effect a development of what Victorinus meant by the *progressio rerum*. He had spoken of *what* the progression of things is, now he speaks of *how* the progression takes place. Victorinus uses negations to define how the image is born. The principle of the positive counterpart of the negations is varied: the first set appears to be increasing in subtlety from continuous solids to continuous fluids to the semi-incorporeal example of light.

Victorinus's reference to *effusio* may have a specific target. *Effusio* appeared in a work of Potamius, bishop of Lisbon, written sometime after 359.

> *Ita cum ad prosapiam tenditur, et faui et mella in unam florum substantiam reuertuntur: omnium enim rerum origo principium est, sed est omnibus substantia principalis. Sic in solem suum redeunt, cum emissi diluculo uesperam radii contrahuntur, et origo fluminum fontis effusio est. Substantia ergo rei est omne illud per quod est res.*[98]

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[96] *De def.* 6.12-14 (Hadot, *Marius Victorinus*, 136).

[97] Most notably Plotinus, *Enn.* V.1.

[98] Potamius, *Epistula de substantia Patris et Filii et Spiritus sancti*, 17, 4-18, 3, Latin and English text in *The Life and Works of Potamius of Lisbon*, ed. and tr. Marco Conti*, Instrumenta Patristica et Mediaevalia* 32 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1998), 151-178, 161 and 163.

Victorinus may be rejecting Potamius's writing directly. Potamius was known to be an 'Arian' by at least 357 when he tried to convince Liberius to sign on to the "Blasphemy of Sirmium."[99] Hilary claims Potamius was even one of the authors of the creedal statement of Sirmium.[100] The *Epistula de substantia* is pro-Nicene, surprisingly so if indeed it belongs to Potamius, and may therefore mark a kind of recantation of Potamius's earlier 'Arian' theologizing. If this is correct, Victorinus may be rejecting the *Epistula's* use of *effusio* as still bearing the mark of 'Arian' subordination of Son to Father, even though he would quite agree with the conclusion to which Potamius's argument leads: *Merito ut ait propheta: 'Et nunc quae est expectatio mea? nonne dominus? et substantia mea ante te est'* [Ps. 38,8]. *Ergo Patris et Filii et Spiritus sancti una substantia est. Filius enim Patris est Christus*.[101] In any case, Victorinus prefers strict dialectical argument on the basis of non-material things and their relations to the *simulamenta* taken from the natural world. The sensual imagery is inadequate for the articulation of the Son's consubstantial relation to the Father in which the Son always indwells the Father as nevertheless a distinct hypostasis.

The exception to this rule for Victorinus is when a particular use of imagery is found in authoritative works, whether of Scripture or of the Nicene Creed. His endorsement of *effulsio* for this relation of Father and Son is possibly because it is a Latin equivalent to the ἀπαύγασμα of Hebrews 1:3, which Victorinus elsewhere translates as *refulgentia*.[102] The term expresses both distinction and inseparability, as well as

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[99] "Potamius of Lisbon," Brill Encyclopedia of Early Christianity.
[100] Hilary, *De Synodis*, 3 (*PL* 10: 482B) and 11 (*PL* 10: 487A).
[101] *Epistula de substantia*, 18, 4-7 (Conti, 163).
[102] Victorinus is given as the only early witness for the alternative reading of *refulgentia* in place of the common *splendor* for ἀπαύγασμα of Heb 1:3 in *Vetus latina: Die Reste der altlateinischen Bibel*, ed.

preserving the order of cause and effect without indicating a temporal beginning. It reinforces the creedal image of light from light. In the next group *protentio* is rejected in favor of *apparentia*. *Protentio* is a Latin nominal equivalent of the verb πλατύνεσθαι, a term that had featured in the works of Marcellus and Photinus but had been anathematized at the Council of Sirmium in 351.[103] The Latin of the Sirmium anathemas VI and VII used the verb *dilatari* and the nouns *dilatio* and *latitudo* in expression of πλατύνεσθαι and related Greek terms: VI. "Si quis substantiam Dei dilatari et contrahi dicit: anathema sit;" VII. "Si quis dilatatam substantiam Dei Filium dicat facere, aut latitudinem substantiae eius Filium nominet: anathema sit."[104] Hilary used *dilatio* as equivalent to *protentio* in his commentary on this anathema: "Quidam enim ausi sunt innascibilem Deum usque ad sanctam Virginem substantiae dilatatio protendere."[105] Marcellus's account of the Incarnation entails an "extension" of the divine activity by which alone is the Logos "separate from the Father."

> If we were to examine the Spirit alone, it would be reasonable to think that the Logos was one and the same thing with God. But if we were to examine the additional fact of the Incarnation in the case of the Savior, the Godhead would appear to be extended simply by activity, so that in all likelihood the Monad is genuinely indivisible.[106]

Boniface Fischer *et al*, v.25:2: *Epistulae ad Thessalonicenses, Timotheum, Titum, Philemonem, Hebraeos*, ed. J.J. Frede (1975): 1083.

[103] *Faith in Formulae* I.371-376, §148.

[104] Hilary, *De Synodis*, 43 and 44 (PL 10: 514C).

[105] *De Synodis*, 45 (PL 10: 514 CD).

[106] Preserved in Eusebius, *Eccl. theol.* II.4.102 (ET: Eusebius of Caesarea, *Against Marcellus and On Ecclesiastical Theology*, tr. Kelley McCarthy Spoerl and Markus Vinzent, FC 135 (Washington, D. C.: Catholic University of America Press, 2017), 224.

Apparentia should not be taken to mean that the *imago* is sensibly visible, but rather as an account of how the *imago* stands to its archetype as making it manifest as a whole. Hilary, too, had rejected this expression of the relation of Son to Father. "*Non enim per desectionem aut protensionem aut deriuationem ex Deo Deus est, sed ex uirtute naturae in naturam eandem natiuitate subsistit*."[107] Victorinus's point is that this process does not entail divine extension or expansion, but God's presentation of himself to himself.

The final pair, *nec geminatio potentiae, quam potentiae actio*, can be read as epexegetically related to the pair immediately prior. The power is not doubled in its appearance in act. It is the one same power as expressed in its activity. This is not the raw capability of Aristotelian physics, but the metaphysical potency of vertical causality.[108] This metaphysical potency is perfectly actually itself and in need of no other to bring it into act. It is the power (Plotinus's *dynamis*) of secondary acts, which it itself is capable of enacting by itself.[109] For this second act is not a raising from capability to realization, but a declension from a superior state of concentrated power to the diffusion of that power in activity. Victorinus, in line with this Plotinian insight, argues the power of God is not augmented or diminished, but is simply expressed by the act that is the Son and Logos. He is at odds with the Neopythagorean understanding of the relation of Monad to Dyad. According to Nicomachus, "the Monad creates the Dyad by a process of self-doubling (*diphoretheisa*)."[110] The Neopythagorean position—building on Pythagorean and Platonic thought—envisions all of the realm of becoming as a combination of the

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[107] Hilary, *The Trinity*, V.37.5-6. See also VI.35.4-7; IX.37.5; XII.54.3.
[108] Cf. Cooper, "Platonist Christianity," 7.
[109] *Enn.* II.5.3.19-22.
[110] Nicomachus of Gerasa, *Theologumena Arithmeticae*, ed. V. De Falco (Leipzig: Teubner, 1922), 4, 6, quoted in Dillon, *The Middle Platonists*, 355.

principial Monad who gives definition (making finite) and the derivative Indefinite Dyad which gives distinction. Victorinus sees the whole Trinity as of one and the same substance and quality, but also insists on divine simplicity. The first dyad, that of the Father and the Son, of which he is speaking here, is not *geminus*, which would imply a duality of substances.[111] It is rather as the activation of a faculty which in no way changes *qua* substance or *qua* power by virtue of its activity.

1.33-36. *Ubi enim actio aut unde, nisi in potentia atque ex potentia? et quando aut ubi potentia, nisi cum actione et in actione? non ergo alterum in altero, nec aliquando simile, quia idem semper.*

     Victorinus raises the rhetorical question of the place and source of action and its relation to power in order to argue for their substantial identity. Action is nowhere else but in power insofar as power is the condition for the possibility of action. The act does not go outside of the power even when it expresses (i.e., goes out from) the power. On the one hand, it could only make the power known if it were still in direct causal relation to the power it is actualizing, and it could only make it known in a specific way if it was the very image of the power it enacts; on the other hand, it would cease to be in act if it were removed from its power of acting, as a branch cut off from the trunk or a stream separated from its spring. Action is from power as from its cause. They are neither different nor similar; first, because difference and similarity apply to the accidents of quality or of relation. "What is similar is called similar *to* something" (*Categories* 6b9-10), and the same could be said of difference, but here there are not two but only one "something." Second, none of the species of the genus of difference applies to the

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[111] Victorinus speaks of the Father himself as *quasi geminus* in *Adv. Ar.* III 17, 13 treated in ch. 5.

relation of power to act; as he says in his commentary on Cicero's *Rhetoric*: "*Aristoteles 'opposita' genus posuit, 'contrarium, disparatum, ad aliquid' sub oppositis.*"[112] Power is not the contrary of act, because the two are not species of one genus. "*Aristoteles sic definivit 'sub eodem genere species multum inter se diversae.'*"[113] This can be seen by the fact that their existences are not mutually displacing as are potency and kinesis or passion and action in Aristotelian physics. Third, likeness and difference are categories applicable to quality and not to substance, and all *up there* is substantial, so there can be no likeness *in divinis*.

This rejection of *similis* in God is a refutation of Homoian thought. On the one hand, there is nothing similar to the divine *ousia*; on the other hand, similarity is not a proper predicable of substance properly speaking. Later, at §12.21, Victorinus will claim that the divine triad is *homoousion*, while the soul is *homoiousion* with respect to the divinity. On his own principles this is to speak of substance improperly, but it is rhetorically effective as a *reprehensio* of Homoian (and, as a holdover from his earlier polemics, a refutation of Homoiousian) thought. Furthermore, it puts the unity beyond that of Monad and Dyad, where same and different are introduced. This is an important Nicene Trinitarian insight, as it keeps the triad from being seen as a superior principle producing an ontologically subordinate dyad.

1.36-48. *et quia effulgentia declaratur lumen vel actio<ne> declaratur potentia, idcirco: qui me vidit, vidit patrem. et quia potentiam ipsam solam nemo videt: deum nemo vidit umquam. et quoniam potentia cessans vita est et cessans intellegentia, haec autem vita et intellegentia actio est, si quis deum viderit, moriatur necesse est, quia dei vita et*

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[112] *In Cic. Rhet.* I 28, 122-123 (CCSL 132, 130).
[113] *In Cic. Rhet.* I 28, 124-125 (CCSL 132, 130).

intellegentia in semetipsa est, non in actu, omnis autem actus foris est, hoc vero est

nostrum vivere quod foris est vivere, ergo est mors deum videre. Nemo, inquit, umquam

deum vidit et vixit. Simili enim simile videtur. Omittenda igitur vita foris, omittenda

intellegentia, si deum videre volumus, et hoc nobis mors est.

Having explained the relation of action and power, Victorinus now argues that the Son makes known the Father without being distinct from Him in substance. The divine power is never seen in its pure form, because indeed all power is only inferred from the substance's activity. Life and Intelligence at rest are precisely the pure power of *vivere* and *intellegere*. The power under consideration is capacity for action not as inert and dependent on a thing in act to raise potency into activity, as with Aristotle's physics, but rather power-to-act as presently unexpressed. The difference between inert and unexpressed (my terms) is that the former requires some other object currently in act as cause bringing the potentiality into the state of activity; the latter depends on nothing but its own will to come into the state of actuality. Again, in the former case the thing is not truly itself until it is in act, whereas in the latter being in act adds nothing to the full reality of the thing which is fully itself even in its own potency (potency meaning power-to-act).

Victorinus understands Life and Intelligence as essential to principial *esse* for two reasons. First, by inference from effects to cause. There are things that live and understand, but none has these powers *a se*; hence, they must have their living and understanding from higher principles which are life itself (*ipsum vivere*) and understanding itself (*ipsum intellegere*). Second, from the negation of its contrary, which is in fact a probable argument. Common opinion considers it unlikely, if not absurd or

sacrilegious, to consider the first principle to be without life or intelligence. This probable

argument was put forth by the Athenian stranger in the *Sophist*.[114] It is to infer from the

appearance of life and intelligence to their presence in God. Victorinus adapts the point,

combining it with a negative theology according to which the life and intelligence of God

are of such a kind that creatures cannot know them in themselves unless they manifest

themselves. This is why *si quis deum viderit, moriatur necesse est, quia dei vita et

intellegentia in semetipsa est, non in actu*.

Victorinus explains why no one can see God and live, combining biblical and

philosophical perspectives. He combines Exodus 33:20 with John 1:18, reading the

former in light of the latter. Victorinus had used Jn. 1:18 along with Eph. 3:14-21 at the

beginning of *Adv. Ar.* IA, 2 in order to affirm both that knowledge of God is possible and

that it is attained through the revelation of the Son. In the context of Exodus 33:20 the

vision of God was presented as too terrible to be endured.[115] By applying Jn. 1:18 now to

Moses's encounter with God, he has shifted the tone of the reference in Exodus from that

of numinous terror of the divine presence to the mystery of divine hiddenness. The threat

of an awful encounter thus becomes a mystical formula: it is neither an absolute

prohibition or threat against prying, nor an insuperable obstacle to the divine vision.[116]

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[114] "τί δὲ πρὸς Διός; ὡς ἀληθῶς κίνησιν καὶ ζωὴν καὶ ψυχὴν καὶ φρόνησιν ἦ ῥᾳδίως πεισθησόμεθα τῷ παντελῶς ὄντι μὴ παρεῖναι, μηδὲ ζῆν αὐτὸ μηδὲ φρονεῖν, ἀλλὰ σεμνὸν καὶ ἅγιον, νοῦν οὐκ ἔχον, ἀκίνητον ἑστὸς εἶναι;" *Sophist* 248e-249a; "But for heaven's sake, shall we let ourselves easily be persuaded that motion and life and soul and mind are really not present to absolute being, that it neither lives nor thinks, but awful and holy, devoid of mind, is fixed and immovable?" (Plato, *Sophist*, tr. Harold N. Fowler, LCL 12 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1921)).

[115] Brevard S. Childs, *The Book of Exodus: A Critical, Theological Commentary*, (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1974), 595-596. Philo had given an allegorical reading according to which God is unknowable due to His transcendence; see Philo *The Special Laws* 1.32.50, and *On Flight* 165, both quoted in Ilaria Ramelli, "The Divine as Inaccessible Object of Knowledge in Ancient Platonism: A Common Philosophical Pattern across Religious Traditions," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 75 (2014): 167-188, 172.

[116] On the possibility of a Victorinian mysticism see Bernard McGinn, *Foundations of Mysticism: Origins to the Fifth Century* (New York: Crossroad, 1991), 198-200.

Victorinus interprets the passages as indicating an epistemological limitation on the part of humans. It is endemic to the knowledge of embodied souls that it is from outside. We come to know substances through their activities, that is, we make inferences concerning the interior from what is expressed externally. But this is the case for knowledge in our present state of gross materiality. True knowledge—knowledge of what really is—belongs to souls purged of sensuousness and turned upwards.[117]

Victorinus's epistemology is dependent on his anthropology, both of which are consistent with his cosmology (related above). He explained what *homo* is in *Adversus Arium* IB 62. Humans comprise a body composed of the four elements, a twofold soul, and a twofold *nous*. As in his cosmology, these components representing different levels of the cosmic structure are telescoped one inside the other. Put briefly, "*λόγος caelestis, hoc est νοῦς vel spiritus divinus, est in anima divina. Ipsa autem divina anima in hylico spiritu, hylicus autem spiritus in hylica anima, hylica autem anima in carnali corpore.*"[118] The *λόγος caelestis* or *νοῦς vel spiritus divinus* mentioned in the context of anthropology refer to the participated forms of *λόγος*, *νοῦς*, *spiritus*, not the principial forms of these, which are names of the divine substance. Stephen Cooper explains this passage in his article on the Platonist Christianity of Victorinus. "The divine soul is the representative of the higher realm as a descendent of the world-soul, which Victorinus as a Christian theologian put outside the divine proper."[119] Our share in νοῦς πατρικός, or the *spiritus divinus* which God breathed into humanity at creation, is what allows us to transcend materiality and gain essential knowledge, knowledge of the noetic.[120] But this highest

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[117] Cf. *In Eph,* 1.4, 66-92 (CSEL 83.2, 8-9).
[118] *Adv. Ar.* IB 62, 34-37 (CSEL 83.1, 164).
[119] Cooper, "Platonist Christianity," 9.
[120] *Ad Cand.* 1, 6 (CSEL 83.1, 15).

aspect of the human person is inaccessible to gross consciousness which is the present consciousness of the *anima divina*, embodied humanity's most active faculty.

The way to regain this spiritual knowledge for Victorinus is through faith in Christ. Victorinus's account of the knowledge itself as well as the pedagogy required to deepen and focus faith in Christ owe much to his Christian Platonism. He adapted elements of Plato, Plotinus, and Porphyry, among other sources, to his Christian commitments and came up with his own notion of a dialectical and contemplative purgation of humanity's three components (*tribus*).[121] By the dialectical purgation I mean the same kind of purging of the intellect which Plato exhibited in the *Sophist*, Plotinus elaborated in "On Virtue," and Porphyry systematized in the *Isagoge*.[122] It is a careful and perseverant differentiation of things, especially so as to remove all conceptions and images that do not rightly belong to an intelligible object intended to be grasped by the understanding. Likewise the contemplative purgation is a turning away from things of sense and imagination so as to approach intelligibles with intuitive directness by way of the divine spirit insufflated at humanity's creation. Both of these can be called purgative, the one by an active scourging and refinement of the intelligence, the other by the falling away of neglected habits. Such purgation is a concomitant of faith by which Christians walk "not by sight" (2 Cor. 5:7). Victorinus's eschatological allegory of one of Christ's parables (Mt. 24:40-41) offers a kind of extrinsic hint of what the purified mode of consciousness of the faithful on earth might be like.

Christ speaks of two men working in the field and two women grinding grain, and how one of each pair is taken up. Victorinus thinks these pairs refer to the twofold *nous*

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[121] *Adv. Ar.* IB 62, 37-38 (CSEL 83.1, 164).

[122] Plato, *Sophist*, *passim*; Plotinus, *Enn.* I.2; Porphyry, *Isagoge*, *passim*.

and twofold *anima* respectively. The heavenly *nous* and heavenly *anima* are taken up (*accipientur*) while the material *nous* and *anima* are left (*relinquetur*).[123] Again, while this parable is eschatological, it illustrates, too, that the contemplative believer may pull his or her attention away from *sensibilia* and the lower (passionate) movements of the soul and rise to the consideration of heavenly and eternal things.

This transition from exteriority to interiority is a kind of death in two ways. First, because all change is a kind of death: *Nihil enim mutatur, nihil corrumpitur, quae genera mortis sunt, vita*.[124] Victorinus claims life does not undergo change or corruption because life is itself a genus opposed to the genus of death and thus excludes the various species of the genus of death. Second, because the effect of contemplation as experienced by consciousness imitates or is analogous to death in that it entails a deliberate separation of the soul from the body.[125] This is what Victorinus implies in saying *omittenda igitur vita foris, omittenda intellegentia, si deum videre volumus*. Like is seen by like. Therefore if we, who are living and knowing externally, would see God who is *intus*, we must reject *vita foris* and *intellegentia* (*foris*), the life and understanding bound by what is *sensualis*.[126] And we must live in and by the Spirit who, through faith, empowers us so to see and to live.[127] Our forgetting of the life and understanding characteristic of embodied souls is a withdrawal of consciousness from the senses ("*foris*") to which the mind has

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[123] Massimo Stefani, "Sull'antropologia di Mario Vittorino (La 'discesa' vivificante dell'anima in prospettiva cosmologica)," *Scripta theologica* 19 (1987): 63–111.

[124] *Adv. Ar.* III 13, 8-9 (CSEL 83.1, 213); see commentary in chapter five.

[125] See Plato, *Phaedo* 64c.

[126] Cf. p. 303 below, petitioning in Christ's name is mystical which for Victorinus entails not asking for anything worldly.

[127] The holy man has as teacher the Spirit (*Adv. Ar.* IA 2, 40-42 (CSEL 83.1, 57)) who is *magister intellegentiae* (*Adv. Ar.* III 6, 17-18 (CSEL 83.1, 201)) discussed in ch. 4.

become habituated since the Fall.[128] *Omittenda* also brings to mind the Platonic

recollection (*anamnesis*) model of contemplative knowing (famously illustrated at *Meno*

82b ff.) and the oblivion brought on from drinking of the river *Lethe*.[129] Contemplation is

an imitation and indeed a participation in death. Baptism, too, is a kind of death insofar as

the Christian initiate participates in Christ's death (Rom 6:3). The contemplative and the

initiate imitate death inasmuch as they separate themselves from material, bodily,

temporal concerns.

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§2. *Summary*

There are two metaphysical models at play here, Victorinus's *potentia-actus* and his

substantia-motus models. The two models are similar but not identical and are useful for

arguing to the same general conclusion from different points of view. Victorinus is trying

to show how the Father and Son are distinct though inseparable, and that God is

internally differentiated and yet simple. Here he is beginning his account of the twofold

aspect of the *unigenitus filius* who is one motion comprising both life and understanding.

He is also foreshadowing his *exemplum* of vision by which he will illustrate his point

more clearly in §5.

Especially important and especially interesting in this section are the terms

unigenitus and *geminus*. The former, *unigenitus*, is present in Scripture and enshrined as a

Christological title of special significance in the Nicene Creed. Yet Victorinus's use of

unigenitus is unusual in that it seems to apply to both the Son and the Holy Spirit as they

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[128] Cf. *Ch. Or.* fg. 109, *The Chaldean Oracles: Text, Translation, and Commentary*, tr. Ruth Dorothy Majercik (Leiden; New York: Brill, 1989), 90-91.

[129] Cf. Plato, *Rep.* 621a; Virgil, *Aen.* VI.703-751.

are both born from God as one motion, i.e., they both constitute the second dyad of his double-dyadic trinitarian theology. His idiosyncratic use of the term may confuse readers if they approach the term from the perspective of later orthodoxy. Victorinus's contemporaries are already beginning to articulate the question of how one ought to differentiate the processions of Son and Holy Spirit and apply the term *unigenitus* explicitly and solely to the Son. Victorinus for his part has a way of distinguishing between the second and third persons of the Trinity which does not rely on the distinction between each one's principle of procession. In other words, he has raised a similar question regarding the differentiation of members of the Trinity, but has answered it in a unique way.

    Geminus is important for two reasons. Philosophically, the meaning of the term in Victorinus's metaphysics distinguishes his thought from that of earlier philosophers such as Nicomachus and Plotinus. Theologically, his application of the term to God avoids the errors endemic to trinitarian doctrine, i.e., of subordination, both of Son to Father and of Spirit to Son, and of modalism, that God is one and simple yet manifests Himself in diverse manners without this indicating any more than one divine hypostasis.[130]

He uses the term in a few ways in this treatise. First, he has already rejected the idea that the Father as power produces the Son as act in such a way that the power is "geminated" (see §1.30-33). Second, in the present section he uses *geminus* in his description of the knower and the known in God's self-knowledge, somewhat on the model of a mirror. What sees and what is seen is one and the same in self-reflection, so

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[130] *Pace* John Voelker, see p. 219 below.

that one exists as a kind of two just as when one looks in a mirror the person viewed is a kind of twin of the person viewing. Next, in §8.25-30 (discussed in ch. 4) he argues that the Son and the Holy Spirit, insofar as both are generated by the Father and are thus *filius* are *unicus* (equivalent of *unigenitus*), but insofar as they are Logos—God's outgoing activity—are *geminus*. The two are also a *gemina potentia* as Victorinus explains in §9.1-8. Finally, Victorinus will say that the Father Himself is *quasi geminus* (§17.13), while the Trinity is *sine geminatione simplex* (§17.18).

His account of both *geminus* and *unigenitus*, which are essentially related in Victorinus's discussion of the second divine dyad, is rather at odds with what would become standard Nicene understandings of the relation of Son and Holy Spirit. Pro-Nicenes at this stage in the Trinitarian controversies were stressing the distinction of the Son and the Spirit from one another especially along the lines of their diverse origins and their order in the Trinity. I do not know of any orthodox writers applying *unigenitus* to the Spirit. In Athanasius's *Epistula ad Serapionem* the question of the Spirit's divinity is concomitant with the question of how one may be able to distinguish the processions of the Son and the Holy Spirit. The claims of Egyptian monastics that the Spirit must be brother to the Son or else grandchild of the Father would render the language of *geminus* in application to Son and Spirit suspicious.

Commentary

2.1-2. *Quoniam autem haec vita et intellegentia λόγος est, qui Christus est, per Christum et nos.*

The start of this new section is a continuation of the end of the first regarding our ability to see God. There are three closely linked claims. First, Victorinus is still elaborating the overarching argument concerning the *homoousion* of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Here we have proofs (*adprobationes*) for the minor premise, whose purpose was to define the relation of *imago* to archetype *in divinis*. These proofs will be ongoing in the form of explanations of how—and what it means to say that—life and intelligence are one with being.

Second, Victorinus, knowing that the argument as a whole and many of its parts are difficult to understand, offers his readers encouragement. He does this by highlighting the epistemic effects of Christ's salutary work. The prospect of knowing God had looked somewhat desperate or at least baffling at the end of the first section, when Victorinus told us we must die if we want to see God. Now Victorinus goes so far as to say Christians themselves (*nos*) become through Christ the Logos which is both *vita* and *intellegentia*.

Victorinus explains what it means to become the Logos in his commentary on Galatians 4:6.

> It is as if we name something what it is by knowledge. . . . So because Christ knows God, Christ is the Word of God. And because Christ is given to us, the Spirit grants us knowledge of God through its very own self. Whence it comes about that we too are a word, both to Christ and to God. . . . Now, as a knower belongs to the very thing known, it happens that the known is the Father and the knower the Son. If this is the case, we are right to conclude that when we come to

know the Father through Jesus, we are made into a word of the Father, and on that

account become sons.[131]

Christ is God's Word as naming—and being—the knowledge of the Father. When we

know the Father, we too become God's Word as naming the knowledge of God.

Practically, becoming Logos means turning back to ourselves, coming to know ourselves

by knowing (i.e., returning to) our principle; in knowing our principle, the universal

Logos, we know all things and become all things.[132] The Hermetic text *Asclepius*, which

Victorinus may have known given his knowledge of Hermeticism generally, rings an

identical note in saying "Who knows himself, knows the All."[133]

Third, and as the obverse of Victorinus's encouragement, he is putting distance

between natural and revealed knowledge. Christ is the revelation of God, a revelation we

received through our assimilation to him. By saying that we are Logos through Christ,

Victorinus means we transcend sensible *nous*, sensible soul, and body.

2.2-8. *Omnia per ipsum. Est ergo λόγος et vita et intellegentia. Quare? Quia ista omnia*

motus et adiectio est. Nos ergo, si sumus in Christo, deum per Christum videmus, id est

per vitam veram, hoc est per imaginem veram. Et quia veram, ergo eiusdem substantiae,

quia et in actione potentia est. Ibi ergo deum videmus, et hinc illud: qui me vidit, vidit

deum.

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[131] Cooper, *Galatians*, 310-11 on Gal 4:6; "quasi illud, quale sit, cognitione appellamus. . . . Ergo Christus quia cognoscit deum, dei verbum est. Et spiritus, quia Christus nobis datur, dat nobis cognitionem dei per ipsum se. Inde fit ut et nos verbum simus et in Christum et in deum et idcirco clamemus cognitores. Cognitor autem cum est ipsius cogniti, fit ut cognitum pater sit, cognitor filius. Quod si ita est, merito, cum cognoscimus per Iesum patrem, ex cognitione verbum ipsius efficiamur ac propterea filii" (CSEL 83.2, 143, 26-37).

[132] Cf. Plotinus, *Enn.* VI.7.16.15-19, quoted in Laurent Lavaud, "Substance et Mouvement: Marius Victorinus et l'héritage plotinien," *Les Études Philosophiques* 2 (2012): 163-179, 169.

[133] *Asclepius*, VI.1. In Gilles Quispel, "Hermes Trismegistus and the Origins of Gnosticism," *Vigilae Christianae* 46 (1992): 1-19, 1.

This passage continues Victorinus's account of what the Logos is, beginning with an argument from effects. If *omnia per ipsum*, then this Logos is both life and intelligence as active outside of God, working in the world. The etymological sense of *adiectio* as "throwing at" seems to fit more neatly with the externalizing nature of Victorinus's *logos* than does Clark's rendering "addition." I expect the word, which occurs nowhere else in Victorinus's corpus, is his Latin rendering of the Greek προβολή. If this is so, *adiectio* is the equivalent of the more theologically common *prolatio* or *emissio*.[134]

Victorinus's mysticism shows through here, although he does not linger on the topic. His mysticism has two poles, the objective and subjective. The subjective pole depends on the work of the Spirit and our own contemplative and ascetical efforts. The objective involves those external conditions for the mystical life which are secured by Christ through His incarnation, as well as by His Passion and resurrection. The objective effect of Christ's Passion is the purgation from our souls of their earthly attachments and their sinfulness, as will be shown below (§3.46-52).

Another aspect of the objective pole Victorinus discusses here: the soul is unable to see God insofar as He is pure *potentia*. God needs to show Himself to humanity in order to grant us knowledge of who He is. The Son shows us the Father. The subjective and objective poles meet in faith in Christ Jesus, for the vision of God is in Him—and only those who believe in Christ are in Him, so faith is something required of the

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[134] Cf. Tertullian, *Adv. Prax.* 8, where he discusses in which sense the orthodox Christian may use προβολή in opposition to the sense of Valentinus's emanations. Cf. also Didymus the Blind, *De sp.* 113 (ET: Ayres, DelCogliano, Radde-Galwitz, *Works on the Spirit*, 179 and n. 92).

subject—and through Him (*per Christum*) who as *vera imago* of God is the only one capable of manifesting the Father.

In Christo can be interpreted on the basis of *Adversus Arium* II. There Victorinus had given a more expansive account of this knowledge of God. He is commenting on a passage in Jeremiah (23:18), "if you stand in my substance" (*si stetissent in mea* ὑποστάσει).

> This one who 'stands' also knows: but he who knows does not go astray; therefore, he 'stands.' But, knowing God, he knows and 'sees' the Logos, Son of God. Therefore it is evident that this is the hypostasis of God, which, when it is known, the Word also is known . . . For one who 'stands' in the substance of the thing, knows a thing, that is, in the first source of the thing, so as to know all things that belong to it.[135]

His exegesis may be questionable, but the epistemological account is at once creative and consistent with Victorinus's philosophical ideas. First, in line with the passage on which we have been commenting, that in order to know God we must "stand within" Him, implies a displacement of ourselves, a standing out of our familiar consciousness in which we focus on the works of our own hands. It also is consistent with the application of the preposition "in" among intellectual rather than sensible things. Standing in God's substance is to be at the very center of divinity, thus it is to confront "the first source of

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[135] *Adv. Ar.* II 5, 7-11, 14-16 (Clark, *Marius Victorinus*, 205, slightly modified): "Sed sic dixit: si stetissent in ὑποστάσει domini, vidissent verbum eius. Quid hic intellegimus ὑπόστασιν domini, nisi id quod est deus? Est autem deus, spiritus, lumen, potentia omnipotens et huius modi talia. *Hic qui stat, et intellegit: non autem errat qui intellegit; stat ergo. Intellegens autem deum, intellegit et videt λόγον, dei filium. Manifestum ergo hanc dei esse ὑπόστασιν, qua intellecta et verbum intellegitur*: simul enim sunt et hoc est ὁμοούσιον. Hoc et iterum dicit: quia si stetissent in mea ὑποστάσει et verbum meum audissent. Supra videre, hic audire posuit, utrumque hoc est quod intellegere. *Is enim rem intellegit qui in rei substantia* stat*, id est in primo fonte rei, ut omnia quae sunt eius intellegat*" (CSEL 83.1, 178).

the thing." To be at the center is to know all that belongs to a thing principially, just as all points on a circle's circumference converge in—indeed, emerge from—the central point.[136] We are able to stand in God's substance by being incorporated into Christ. The purgation and ascension of the mind is brought into effect by the economic work of Christ and the Spirit.

2.8-11. *Quod vero de potentia actio, ideo de patre filius, ac de spiritu λόγος. Et quia de spiritu spiritus, ideo de deo deus, ergo de substantia eadem substantia, ut supra docuimus.*

Victorinus continues to explain the relation between God and Logos. He provides a compressed series of isomorphically related pairs, constructed as a *repetitio* in which the same phrasal structure is repeated three times. Victorinus's fondness for the "triple-beat" has been pointed out by Alexander Souter.[137] The first two pairs are clear, but the third requires explanation. By saying the Logos is from Spirit Victorinus seems to understand *Spirit* as the common substantial characteristic of God (*deus spiritus est* [Jn. 4:24]) from which comes divine activity and manifestation.[138] But the Logos is itself spirit, as Victorinus argues in *Adv. Ar.* II, 3, 29-30; 10, 1-20, so Logos from Spirit is a species of spirit coming from a genus spirit.

2.12-16. *Potentia deus est, id est quod primum exsistentiae universale est esse, quod secum, id est in se, vitam et intellegentiam habet, magis autem ipsum quod est esse hoc est quod vita atque intellegentia motu interiore et in se converso.*

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[136] For the image of the point and circumference of a circle see *Adv. Ar.* IV 24, 35-39 (CSEL 83.1, 262).
[137] Souter, *Earliest Latin Commentaries*, 28.
[138] Cf. *Adv. Ar.* IV 4, 7 (CSEL 83.1, 228).

What Victorinus had compressed in the previous passage he renders explicit here. God is both *potentia* and *esse*. To be (*esse*) is the first universal of *exsistentia*. God as power is in fact more universal, if the comparative with the absolute be allowed, than divine Logos, which is *ita esse*, qualified being. For God is the power of the "to be" or *esse* of the Son just as the Son is the power of being for all existing things. The ability to turn toward oneself (*in se converso*) is a characteristic particular to non-bodily things.[139] God's self-contemplation entails the identity of power (*potentia*) and the double operation of the act of contemplating Himself—the going forth as the life of *esse* and the turning back unto Himself to understand (*intellegere*) Himself. God does not, however, know Himself as an object, even in the manner of an intelligence knowing an intelligible thing in which there is identity of knower and known. God's self-knowledge is simple identity, not the identity resulting from perfect knowledge by one thing of an ontologically different thing.[140]

2.16-21. *Est ergo motus in deo et ex hoc et actio. Unde dictum: amen, amen dico vobis, non potest filius a semet ipso facere aliquid, si non viderit patrem facientem. Quae enim ille facit eadem et filius facit. Similiter ergo et pater et facit et agit, sed intus. Unde cum nullo eget extrinsecus, semper plenum, semper totum, semper beatum est.*

Victorinus here addresses the question of the internal activity of God which may only be known on the basis of the Son's revelation of the fact, or be inferred from the activity which is seen outside of God. The Son makes and acts visibly. On the basis of the scripture text (Jn 5:19), Victorinus acknowledges that the Father must also act, though

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[139] "All that is capable of reverting upon itself is incorporeal" (Proclus, *The Elements of Theology*, ed. E. R. Dodds (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1963), 17, prop. 15).
[140] Cf. Plotinus, *Enn.* V.1.6.18.

this poses a conceptual difficulty since he has been differentiating Father and Son on the model of *potentia-actio*. The Father's doing and acting are internal to Himself: *in se*, *in se converso*, *nullo eget extrinsecus*. The Father's activity does not at all leave the realm of His very substance. His interior doings and actings do not compromise the Father's everlasting fullness, wholeness, blessedness. These three terms may also be a trinitarian allusion. The Father is indeed unqualifiedly *plenum*. The Son, on the other hand, is both *plenum* and receptive, "always the fullness and always the receptacle."[141] This makes *plenum* not predominantly proper to the Son. It suggests *totus* as the adjective most appropriately ascribed to the Son who touches all qualities (both principial and derivative) at once. The Son is spoken of elsewhere as *totus*, in the twofold sense of the Logos's comprehension of *omnia* and as the Son's taking on the *totus homo* in the Incarnation. Later, Victorinus will speak of the Spirit as beatitude in presenting the triad "*substantialitas, vitalitas, beatitudo*."[142]

2.21-23. *Verum, quoniam vita atque intellegentia motus sunt—omnis autem vita vivificat, omne vero quod vivificatur foris est.*

Having addressed God the Father's interior activity, Victorinus now explains how *vita atque intellegentia* are themselves divine movement, though working outside (*foris*) of the Father. Clark takes *omnis* as a nominative singular adjective modifying *vita* and thus reads this sentence "all life vivifies."[143] What is made alive is outside in that it receives its life from something external to itself. This makes the activity of *vita*

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[141] *Adv. Ar.* IA 13, 17-18 (Clark, *Marius Victorinus*, 106); *semper plenitudo et semper receptaculum est* (CSEL 83.1, 72).
[142] *Adv. Ar.* III 10, 22 (CSEL 83.1, 208), treated in ch. 4.
[143] Clark, *Marius Victorinus*, 222.

transitive, so that the work of the Logos is *foris*. The activity of the Father, on the

contrary, is not outgoing but self-contained.

2.23-26. *itemque intellegentia, quod intellegit, foris est et id quod intellegit intus, tracta et vita et intellegentia vel effulgente vel inluminante, intellegit.*

What Victorinus argued for *vita* he now extends in parallel fashion to

intellegentia. Hadot sees the initial *quod* as the equivalent of *quia*, a subordinating

conjunction.[144] What intelligence understands is outside, whereas the agent of the activity

of understanding is internal. Thinking Victorinus is talking specifically about divine self-

knowledge as a motion going out from and turning back to God, Hadot and Clark take *et id quod intellegit intus* as "that which it understands is in the interior."[145] That is, the

object of understanding is the Father who remains inside. Both *intellegentia* and *vita* are

foris. *Vita* is outside by making other things to live, whereas *intellegentia* in a way begins

from outside insofar as it looks *in se* or *ad se* which imply that it stands outside of itself,

as it were, so as to look back towards itself. It is outside looking in on what is *intus*.[146]

Both activities are "drawn out" (*tracta*), *intellegentia* by shining out (*effulgente*) or by

lighting up an object (*inluminante*). The former participle refers to the intelligence's

going forth to know an object, whereas the latter refers to its transitive activity of

rendering a potentially intelligible object actually intelligible and understood. Divine

understanding is external because it is an activity with an object (even if, as a reflective

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[144] Hadot and Henry, SC 68, 194.
[145] Hadot, SC 69; Clark, *Marius Victorinus*, 222.
[146] Cf, Plotinus, *Enn.* II.9.1. "Ὅταν δὲ δὴ ὁ νοῦς ὁ ἀληθινὸς ἐν ταῖς νοήσεσιν αὐτὸν νοῇ καὶ μὴ ἔξωθεν ᾖ τὸ νοητὸν αὐτοῦ, ἀλλ᾽αὐτὸς ᾖ καὶ τὸ νοητόν, ἐξ ἀνάγκης ἐν τῷ νοεῖν ἔχει ἑαυτὸν καὶ ὁρᾷ ἑαυτόν."

verb, its object is itself), but what is understood is the divine substance, which is *intus*, at least in comparison to divine *motus*.[147]

2.26-32. —*unde de deo atque ex eadem substantia est et substantia et vita et intellegentia, idemque motus, cum intus in se est, idem est quod substantia, qui, cum inde spectat et ut foras eminet, id est ut operetur atque agat, hic partus est, hic natalis, et, quia motus unus est, unigenitus filius. Motus autem unus sive illa vita sive intellegentia.*

Having expressed the exteriority of the two acts of God, Victorinus now explains his idiosyncratic perspective of the single generation of *vita atque intellegentia*, the second and third of the Trinity. Life and intelligence are two distinct activities, but comprise one sole movement and thus have one *nativitas*; they are *unigenitus filius*. This theological position is uniquely Victorinian. The use of *filius* here is the same as his use of *logos*. It is not the proper name of one of the three Persons. It refers to both the second and the third Persons, i.e., the second dyad. The question of how the two are to be differentiated if they both come forth from the Father and are of one *ousia* has not yet been raised so clearly for Victorinus as it would be for later authors. What's more, he refers to this twofold *filius* as *unigenitus*. The reason is that this second Dyad is one sole movement. Life and intelligence come forth from God at once in one movement, one act, with two operations. Thus Victorinus can say without hesitation "And this birth, because the movement is unique, is the only begotten Son. But this unique movement is either

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[147] "For all knowledge, insofar as it is knowledge, is outside of what it desires to know. I say: outside, as in the action of perceiving, as when it sees itself, which is to know or to see that preexisting and paternal power. Then in this moment, which is not to be conceived temporally, going forth, as it were, from that which was 'to be,' to perceive what it was, and because there all movement is substance, the otherness that is born returns quickly into identity. For it is not a luminous manifestation behind the back, but as eyes or faces mutually seeing each other by a reciprocal look, this same reality subsists in the one same way and perfect" *Adv. Ar.* IB 57 (Clark, *Marius Victorinus*, 183).

that life or that knowledge." The same movement can be taken as one or the other. It is not the case that two different movements can both lay claim to the title *unigenitus*—otherwise what would become of the *uni-*?—but rather that the same movement can be considered from the point of view of one or the other of its twin operations.

2.32-36. *Etenim vitam motum esse necesse est. Vivefacit enim omnis vita. Unde motus est vita qui, sive in se exsistens atque in se conversus, substantia ipse sibi est, sive foras spectat, unde magis dicitur motus; nam, intus motus cessatio est vel mota cessatio cessansque motus.*

Here is a succinct articulation of the *substantia-motus* model by which Victorinus explains how the triad is *homoousion*. It is related to Plotinus's theory of two acts which spans both metaphysics and physics.

There is activity which is activity of the substance (*energeia tes ousias*) and there is activity which arises from the substance (*energeia ek tes ousias*) of each thing. And the activity of the substance is the actuality that each thing is, while the activity which arises from the substance, which absolutely had to follow of necessity, is different from it. For example, in the case of fire, there is the heat which fills out its substantiality, and there is another heat deriving from it, which at once comes to be when fire is actualizing its native substantiality by remaining fire.[148]

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[148] *Enn.* V.4.2.26-33: "ἐνέργεια ἡ μέν ἐστι τῆς οὐσίας, ἡ δ᾽ ἐκ τῆς οὐσίας ἑκάστου· καὶ ἡ μὲν τῆς οὐσίας αὐτό ἐστιν ἐνέργεια ἕκαστον, ἡ δὲ ἀπ᾽ ἐκείνης, ἣν δεῖ παντὶ ἔπεσθαι ἐξ ἀνάγκης ἑτέραν οὖσαν αὐτοῦ· οἷον καὶ ἐπὶ τοῦ πυρὸς ἡ μέν τίς ἐστι συμπληροῦσα τὴν οὐσίαν θερμότης, ἡ δὲ ἀπ᾽ ἐκείνης ἤδη γινομένη ἐνεργοῦντος ἐκείνου τὴν σύμφυτον τῇ οὐσίᾳ ἐν τῷ μένειν πῦρ" (ET: *Plotinus: The Enneads*, ed. Lloyd Gerson, tr. George Boys-Stones, John M. Dillon, et. al. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017)).

The first movement or activity of anything is simply for it to be what it is. In God, according to Victorinus's *substantia-motus* model, the Trinity's motion is all essential activity.

Vita is the meeting point for the noetic triad and this *substantia-motus* model. *Vita* is an especially apt point of conjunction for these models since movement is a part of the very definition of life's *ousia* or *substantia*: *vita* is that which has movement from itself. While its very *substantia* is thus *motus*, its first activity, the motion of being itself, is called *substantia* more properly than *motus*; on the other hand, its transitive work of granting life to other things is not only *motus* but a *motus* continuous with its essence insofar as it grants to other things to have self-movement insofar as they are alive. Victorinus's argument for the relation of substance and motion is in agreement with Plotinus's explanation of how they are related in the noetic realm.

> Motion is certainly itself substance, and everything up there is substance. Why, then, is everything not substance here below too? There, in the intelligible world, everything is substance because all are one; here below the images are separated, and one is one thing, one another: just as in the seed all things are together and each is all . . . but here and now they are separated from each other; for they are images and not true realities.[149]

For Victorinus, the first act of *vita* is both motion and substance. When it comes forth in its second act of enlivening other things, its "activity from the substance" is called by

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[149] *Enn.* II.6.1.7-13: "Ἡ [i.e., κίνησις] καὶ αὐτὴ [ἡ] οὐσία καὶ τὰ ἐκεῖ πάντα οὐσία. Πῶς οὖν οὐ καὶ ἐνταῦθα; Ἢ ἐκεῖ, ὅτι ἓν πάντα, ἐνθάδε δὲ διαληφθέντων τῶν εἰδώλων τὸ μὲν ἄλλο, τὸ δὲ ἄλλο· ὥσπερ ἐν μὲν τῷ σπέρματι ὁμοῦ πάντα καὶ ἕκαστον πάντα καὶ οὐ χεὶρ χωρὶς καὶ χωρὶς κεφαλή, ἔνθα δὲ χωρίζεται ἀλλήλων· εἴδωλα γὰρ καὶ οὐκ ἀληθῆ" (ET: Boys-Stones, et al., modified).

predominance *motus*. This is so even though the substance is continuous with its act of vivification.

2.36-40. *Debet enim deus utriusque, cessationis dico et motus, et parens esse et ipsa substantia, quod quasi societate et quadam forma ad utrumque fons est, simplex ipse et unus semperque unus ac solus et, ut supra diximus, totus.*

We ascribe to God apparent opposites, for God is beyond all categories and is the source of all things, including antithetical pairs.[150] Being the transcendent cause of all, He both is in a manner all things—thus God is described as *fons* and as *totus*—and is none of them.[151] The *quasi societate* refers to the kind of intermingling of rest and motion in God; the two are discrete in manifestation, but must coinhere in the divine simplicity, so that Victorinus could call God *mota cessatio cessansque motus* just above. There are elements in this account of qualities in God both of Stoic mixture and of the Platonic plying of forms from *Sophist* 248ff.[152]

2.40-44. *Qui cum in cessante motu accipitur atque intellegitur, hoc est deus atque ipse pater est, semper atque ex aeterno pater, quia semper motus ex substantia et in substantia vel potius ipsa substantia.*

On the basis of his *substantia-motus* and *potentia-actio* models, Victorinus defends the pro-Nicene claim that the Father is always Father since he is never without his motion or action. The motion that God begets is both *from* the substance that God is, is *in* that substance in the sense that all activity is in power, and *simply is* that substance itself because *in divinis* there is no separation, but all things are one and simple. This is

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[150] Cf. Nicholas of Cusa, *coincidentia oppositorum* (*De visione Dei* VIII).
[151] Cf. *Adv. Ar.* IV.22, 8-9, quoting Plotinus, *Enn.* V.2.1; see Paul Henry, *Plotin et l'Occident*, 49.
[152] On Stoic *mélange* of substance and quality see Hadot, *Porphyre et Victorinus* I, 225-226.

nearly identical to the language above where Victorinus spoke of the relation between *potentia* and *actio*.

2.44-54. *Qui cum foras spectat—hoc est autem foras spectare, motum vel motionem esse, quod ipsum hoc illud est se videre, se intellegere ac nosse velle; cum autem se videt, geminus exsistit et intellegitur videns et quod videtur, ipse qui videt, ipsum quod videtur, quia se videt; hoc est igitur foras spectans, foris genitus vel exsistens, ut quid sit intellegat—ergo, si foris est, genitus est et, si genitus, filius et, si filius, unigenitus, quia solus qui est omnis actus atque omnis et universalis et unus est motus. Idem autem motus quod substantia. Ergo et pater et filius una eademque substantia. Consubstantiale igitur, id est ὁμοούσιον.*

Victorinus begins developing the metaphor of self-understanding and of vision. The one who sees and what is seen are not disparate in self-knowledge. Self-knowledge entails a kind of doubling.[153] Victorinus uses the term *geminus* to emphasize the unity-in-diversity of the one knowing and the one known. He equates *exsistens* with *foras spectans*, for in both cases the motion is externalizing with respect to the substance, substance that is a thing's first interior act of being what it is.

This passage reflects a debate among philosophers over Aristotle's account of self-knowledge and the self-knowledge that the first principle has.[154] The pertinent points are essentially two. First, Aristotle argued all thought require a phantasm, whereas Plotinus and others rejected this notion on the level of reflective and contemplative knowing—this is a question of cognitional theory. Second, Plotinus thought self-

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[153] Cf. Plotinus, *Enn.* VI.2.6.16. See Lavaud, "Substance et Mouvement," 166.
[154] See Aristotle, *De Anima* 3.4, 429a10–5, 430a26 and 3.7 431a1-431b19; *Metaphysics* 12.7, 1072b19-31 and 12.9, 1074b15-1075a12; Plotinus, *Enn.* V.1.8; V.3.13; Ps.-Simplicius, *In de Anima*. 211, 1-8 (6th c. CE).

knowledge as conceived by Aristotle compromised the simplicity of God. The *Anon. in Parm.* (whether written before or after Plotinus is uncertain) thought divine self-knowledge occurred on the level of the One-One (the One of the *Parmenides'* second hypothesis), but that the transcendent One was beyond even self-knowledge. Self-knowledge seems only to be possible when the thing to be known is in act, for it is through essential activity that a thing's essence is intelligible, and it is the activity of knowing that is humanity's most essential activity.

I admit I am of two minds about the interpretation of this passage, and so put forth cautiously a reading that is at odds with Hadot and Clark. I read *foris* as going out of God. The Father sees Himself in the activity of the Son—*filius* referring to both the Son and the Holy Spirit—an activity which is at once transitive and reflective. It is transitive in that the Logos (again, Son and Holy Spirit) gives life and knowledge to what before had neither. On the other hand, it is reflective in that the Father sees His life and His knowledge (which the Son and Spirit are) at work; because the Father is their power and they are His act, and He is their substance while they are His motion, in seeing them at work He sees His own power and His own substance as it were mirrored to Himself. The Holy Spirit is as the ray coming back from the mirror which informs the viewer (i.e., the Father) of what He looks like, what He is. At the same time, this reflection has as its content, so to speak, the created order itself in motion towards divine knowing. The Spirit knows in himself, and the Spirit makes creatures to know God with one and the same motion.

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§3. *Summary*

This section explains and argues for the universality of Logos as the principle of life and movement and thus the principle of all things. Victorinus focuses on *vivere*. The progression of his argument is from the nature of life to the power of life, *natura* or *substantia* to *vis*. He gives a metaphysical account of the Incarnation with an explanation of the relation of Logos to all created things. Christ is the principle of all and in the Incarnation raises all things to himself. Victorinus explains how this is done and what it means.

Commentary

3.1-6. *Omnia ergo filius, ut omnia pater. Sed quia potentialiter prior est substantia quam actus ac motus—prius autem ad vim dixi et ad causam, quia motui causa substantia, omnis enim motus in substantia—ergo necessario generator est pater, et item necessario omnia, quae pater habet, habet et filius.*

Having explained the relation "up there" between *imago* and archetype, act and power, motion and substance, and having ended §2 with the conclusion of his argument, that Father and Son are *homoousion*, Victorinus begins §3 with some implications that follow for the Son and further *adprobationes*. While Father and Son are the same substance and both are *omnia*, there is nevertheless a causal, atemporal order between them.[155] In one way they are both *omnia* as both being principle, cause, and power of all that is, but the Father is the remote source whereas the Son is the proximate principle of all both in being and in substance (making things to be and to be what they are). The argumentation is tight and rapid, Victorinus marking each new conclusion with *ergo* or

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[155] Cf. §10.32-40 (discussed in ch. 4).

igitur, and his *adprobationes* with *quia*. He claims this relation of Father to Son is necessary, and that, granted this relation, it is also necessary that the Son should have all that the Father has. This latter necessity is based on the fact that all up there is substantial, that even the motion that the Son is, is substantial movement.

3.6-10. *Omnia, inquit, quae habet pater, mihi dedit; et item: pater, ut ipse habet ex se vitam, ita dedit filio ex se habere vitam. Ergo ut pater, ita filius vita est et ex se vita. Ipsa est enim vita quae sibi et aliis est vis vivendi, non aliunde.*

Victorinus shores up his reasoned and necessary argument with proof from the Scripture, showing that the Son has all from the Father on the authority of Jn 16:15 and 5:26. The scriptural attestation feeds into his explanation of what precisely the Son has from the Father, and specifically what the Son has that proves him to be of the same substance as the Father. Being or having power of life for himself and for others emphasizes both his own self-sufficiency and his sovereign and creative relation to all things.

3.10-16. *Vita igitur motus et principalis motus et unus motus et a se motus et unigenitus motus. Hic est λόγος. Etenim vita est per quam vivunt omnia. Et quia vita est, ipse est per quem facta sunt omnia et in quem facta sunt omnia, quia purgata omnia in vitam aeternam redeunt et omnia in ipso facta sunt, quia quae facta sunt in ipso, vita sunt.*

Life is the principle of self-motion, so the first movement from God is the principial life, the principle of self-motion in all derivative things. While ontologically *Nous* is the highest principle after *Deus*, Life comes before Intelligence cosmogonically and in nature as the condition for Intelligence. Thus in relation to the cosmic scheme of

the Platonists *stasis-proodos-epistrophe* it corresponds to the phase of *proodos*.[156] Intelligence presupposes and depends on Life, for what is knowable and what is able to know presuppose what is (*esse*) and is in act (*vivere*, and *vigere*). This passage suggests that Victorinus's previous claim, *omnis autem vita vivificat*, should be translated "but life vivifies all things." Victorinus says explicitly here that *omnia vivunt*. They live specifically through that *vita* that is the *logos* in whom they all participate. *Vita* in this universal sense is the movement of things from their preexistence as a form in the Logos to their acquisition of particular being. The coming forth of all things into being is their flourishing (*vigere*) and life (*vita*), which are given to them by their form. For it is the intelligible form which determines what it is, while the soul of a thing is its form as source of activity (movement, life).

There are two curiosities in this passage. The first is the reference to things *returning* to eternal life, *quia purgata omnia in vitam aeternam redeunt*. Victorinus believed in the preexistence of souls.[157] His most elaborate articulation of his position is in his commentary on Ephesians 1:4.

> God chose us . . . implies that God chose us when we already existed, and chose us in Christ. So we were and Christ was *before*. But what does this *before* mean? Surely from eternity. . . . God did not choose us except from among the things that existed. Consequently when he [Paul] says *in Christ*, we can gather that Christ had existed and that we were in Christ. If God chose us in Christ himself, it cannot be that Christ would have existed and we would not have existed as well. Therefore we were spiritual beings (*spiritales*) if we were in Christ. And if we

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[156] See Plotinus, *Enn.* V.2.1.
[157] See Cooper, *Metaphysics and Morals*, 122-140, and *id.*, *Galatians*, 168.

were in Christ and were spiritual beings we existed (*fuimus*)—as Paul adds

afterward—before the foundation of the world.[158]

Humans existed as spiritual beings before they entered into material (*hylicus*) bodies in

the sensible world.

The second curiosity is Victorinus's soteriological framing of the return (*reditus*,

epistrophe) of souls to their source. Victorinus refers to this return as being "made in

him," thus suggesting a distinction between the first creation and the salutary recreation,

which is restoration to God in and through Christ.[159] The Son is responsible for creation,

the Holy Spirit for recreation. But recreation is worked in Christ, through faith and

baptism.[160] Perhaps the way to understand these two points together is that the movement

is from things that are to things that truly are; or even better, the movement starts from

things that were not truly not—that is, possibilities—to things that are, a movement that

marks our coming forth into the world from preexistence in God; finally, we become

things that truly are through our return to God through Christ.

Victorinus in *Adversus Arium* IA ascribed Paul's prepositional phrases "from

him," "through him," "in him," to the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit respectively.[161] He

acknowledged there that "in him" replaced "for him" in another Pauline passage.[162] To

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[158] Cooper, *Metaphysics and Morals*, 47; "*elegit deus nos*. Utique iam cum essemus elegit et elegit in Christo; ergo et nos et Christus *ante*. Et quid est *ante*? Utique ex aeterno. Hoc enim dixit: *ante constitutionem mundi*; *elegit*, inquit, *ante constitutionem mundi*. Non elegit nisi de his qui erant, et deinde, cum dixit in Christo, id est *in ipso*, ergo et Christus fuerat et nos in Christo. Neque enim fieri potest ut Christus fuerit et nos non fuerimus si elegit nos in ipso Christo. Ergo spiritales fuimus si in Christo fuimus, et si fuimus in Christo et spiritales fuimus, fuimus autem, ut postea subiungit, *ante constitutionem mundi*" (CSEL 83.2, 30-40).

[159] See *Adv. Ar.* IA 12: "Indeed the whole mystery is this: the Father, unacting act, the Son, acting act in respect to creating, but the Holy Spirit, acting act in respect to recreating" (Clark, *Marius Victorinus*, 105).

[160] Cf. *Adv. Ar.* IA 17: "The whole force of the mystery is in baptism, his power in the receiving of the Spirit, that is, the Holy Spirit" (Clark, *Marius Victorinus*, 112-13).

[161] *Adv. Ar.* IA 18, 1-6 (CSEL 83.1, 80), with reference to Rom 11:36 and Col 1:16-17.

[162] *Adv. Ar.* IA 18, 3-4 (CSEL 83.1, 80).

ascribe "through" and "in" to the Logos thus includes both the Son and the Holy Spirit. Afterwards, he noted how all three prepositions also apply to the Father alone, and to the Son alone. His conclusion is similar to that of Athanasius in his *Contra Arium* III: all appellations of Scripture apply to the Son as to the Father, with the exception of unbegotten.[163]

3.16-26. *Nihil est enim quod sit, cui non sit esse suum, ex quo ipsi vita sit esse quod sit. Ergo in Christo facta sunt omnia, quia Christus λόγος est. Vita autem et nec coepit, quia a se sibi semper est, unde numquam desinit, et infinita semper est et per omnia et in omnibus usque a divinis et a supracaelestibus adusque caelestia caelosque omnes, aetheria, aeria, humida atque terrena, omniaque quae oriuntur e terra, omniaque cetera. Ergo et corpus caroque nostra habet aliquid vitale omnisque materia animata est ut mundus exsisteret, unde eruperunt iussu dei animalia.*

The purpose of Victorinus's argument here is to establish the identity-in-diversity of being and life throughout all of creation. If he can establish their relationship among created things, from this natural conjunction he can argue *a fortiori* their identity *in divinis*. He argues that all things were made in Christ because Christ is the Logos—that is, the universal Logos, which is the principle of all principles, the source of all forms. The Logos, as we will see, Victorinus also calls the *semen* (= σπέρμα) of all things.

3.27-34. *In carne ergo inest vita, id est λόγος vitae, unde inest Christus, quare λόγος caro factus est. Unde non mirum quod mysterio sumpsit carnem, ut et carni et homini subveniret. Sed, cum carnem sumpsit, universalem λόγον carnis sumpsit. Nam idcirco omnis carnis potestates in carne triumphavit et idcirco omni subvenit carni, ut dictum est*

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[163] Athanasius, *Contra Arianos* III.36.

in Esaia: videbit te omnis caro salutare dei, et in libro psalmorum: ad te omnis caro veniet.

The next long series is Victorinus's digression on the metaphysics of the Incarnation. There is not scholarly consensus on what Victorinus means by the Logos taking up the universal logos of flesh and of soul.[164] Nor is there agreement on the soteriological implications. Scully's argument for Victorinus's "physicalist soteriology" sees the moment of incarnation as the primary event in which the "singular universal" mentioned above (p. 160) takes up the specific (and thus ontologically inferior) universals of flesh and soul and thereby restores them to their initial unity with and in the universal Logos. All the scholars mentioned agree that the universal Logos taking up lower universals amounts to some kind of diminution in the power and scope of activity available to the universal Logos (*qua* incarnate). But how it is metaphysically possible for the Word to take on an ontologically inferior universal remains an unresolved question.

Wendy Elgersma Helleman articulates the difficulties inherent in Scully's reading, insofar as it supposes a Platonic metaphysics which is contradicted by the ecclesial dogma concerning the particularity and reality of the human Jesus. Regarding *Adversus Arium* III.3 in particular, Helleman argues that the scriptural witnesses Victorinus adduces (lines 33-34) point to Christ's significance as representative of the human collective. Thus in both Isaiah and the Psalms, *omnis caro* refers to all particulars precisely as particulars, which are aided by the incarnate Lord's coming and suffering on

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[164] See Hadot and Henry, SC 69, 961; Lenka Karfiková, "Semet ipsum exinanivit: Der Logos-Erlöser nach Marius Victorinus" *in Für uns und für unser Heil: Soteriologie in Ost und West,* ed. Theresia Hainthaler (Vienna: Tyrolia, 2015) 127–150; Scully, "Physicalism"; and most recently Wendy Elgersma Helleman, "Victorinus' Soteriology as a Philosophical, Theological and Exegetical Project," *Vigiliae Christianae* (2021): 1-42.

the cross. What is more, rather than seeing the incarnation as immediately metaphysically effective for the salvation of all flesh as Scully argued, Helleman stresses the importance for Victorinus of the progressive aspect of the drama of salvation. For this and other reasons there is indeed a tension between Victorinus's Platonizing account of the incarnation and his adherence to the biblical and traditional witness of the Word's becoming flesh.

Potestates refers first to the spiritual powers of the air famously described by Paul as the enemies with whom Christians are in conflict (Col 2:15; Eph 6:12). Christ has triumphed over them and thereby opened the way for Christians to ascend through the air (cf. 1 Thes. 4:17). The "powers of all flesh" refers broadly to all worldly temptations and attachments, including the deceit of the senses, the allure of material pleasures, and the snares of ambition and vanity.[165]

The aid rendered to the flesh by the incarnate Christ (*omni subvenit carni*) is in fact the power to overcome the enemies seeking to corrupt (morally) all flesh. This passage thus reflects the tension inherent in the New Testament between the flesh as a morally neutral component of the human person, equivalent to *corpus*, and flesh as the congenitally debased and perverted desire for material satisfactions consequent upon Adam's fall.

3.34-46. *Item et universalem λόγον animae. Nam et animam habuisse manifestum, cum idem salvator dixit: tristis est anima mea usque ad mortem. Et item in psalmo: non derelinques animam meam in inferno. Quod autem sumpserit universalem λόγον animae,*

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[165] Victorinus's missing Romans commentary, on Paul's laments for the conflicting laws of mind and flesh and his gratitude for Christ having saved him from the body of this death, would no doubt shed light on this interpretation.

his manifestum in Ezechiele: omnes animae sunt meae, ut anima patris, sic et anima filii.

Item universalis animae λόγος et ex hoc ostenditur, quod et irascitur, cum maledicit et

arbori fici et dicit: Sodomis et Gomorris in illa die commodius erit quam vobis. Sic etiam

multis locis. Item et cupit, cum dicit: pater, si fieri potest, transferatur a me hic calix. Ibi

etiam ratiocinatur: sed fiat potius voluntas tua. Haec et alia multa sunt quibus ostenditur

animae logos universalis.

Victorinus proves the universality of the logos of the soul that Christ assumes on the basis of an argument *in partibus* in the argumentative style of numeration.[166] That is, he shows universality by giving evidence of key components of soul: sorrow, anger, desire, and reasoning.

Helleman interprets this passage as Victorinus indicating the universal representation of Christ's soul, by which she means in taking on sorrow, anger, and the rest, Christ has taken on all psychical states that individual humans experience.[167] Helleman also mentions Apollinarius's errant Christology as a possible provocation to which Victorinus is responding here.[168] In this last case, Helleman emphasizes the passibility of Christ's human soul in Victorinus's account over against the divinely impassible soul Apollinarius's thought implied. Perhaps the more obvious anti-Apollinarian aspect of this passage comes in the inclusion of the rational power of Christ's human soul.

3.46-52. *Adsumptus ergo homo totus et adsumptus et liberatus est. In isto enim omnia universalia fuerunt, universalis caro, anima universalis, et haec in crucem sublata atque*

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[166] *De definitionibus*, 13, 20 (in Hadot, *Marius Victorinus*, 343).
[167] Helleman, "Victorinus' Soteriology," 13.
[168] Helleman, "Victorinus' Soteriology," 15.

purgata sunt per salutarem deum λόγον, universalium omnium universalem—per ipsum

enim omnia facta sunt—qui est Iesus Christus deus et salvator et dominus noster. Amen.

Victorinus's claim that Christ took up the universal logos of soul also entails the raising up of all particular souls. I think Victorinus means something similar to what he had argued in his commentary on Ephesians 1:4 discussed above (pp. 207-208). All souls, and indeed the principle of all flesh, were in Christ before the foundation of the world. They had been in the Word as unindividuated *logoi*; then they were given existence and made to stand out from the Word as individuated beings; finally, the Word comes to be in their *logoi* (puts on these lesser universals) and thus gives them all the possibility to be restored to their initial unity, though now as consciously and existentially individuated beings. This return is the work of both Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. Jesus achieves in the flesh the objective work of redemption, while the Holy Spirit works in believers, enabling them to know Christ and thereby to make the contemplative and moral return to their origin beyond materiality.

Christ is called "totally life" in *Adv. Ar*. IA 20 in order to distinguish his relation to life from the relation soul has to life. For "the soul lives because it has life as substance," which makes the soul "'according to the image' of God. But Christ is the 'image of God.'"[169] Thus, by *totum* Victorinus means to distinguish whatever is in question by rendering it principial—the *idea* of the thing—from what merely has a share of that something. Christ is the *totus homo* not merely as having taken on a complete

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[169] *Adv. Ar.* IA 20, 35-37 (Clark, *Marius Victorinus*, 118): "Et quod totum vita Christus, anima autem vivit quod vitam substantiam habet, *iuxta imaginem* ergo dei anima. Christus autem *imago dei*" (CSEL 83.1, 87).

humanity, body and rational soul, but rather as having taken up the Platonic *idea* of human.[170]

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§4. *Summary*

Victorinus offers a more elaborate explanation of the significance of logos in his metaphysics. He introduces the Greek formula ἐκ μιᾶς οὐσίας τρεῖς εἶναι τὰς ὑποστάσεις.

In the second paragraph and the longer segment of this part he uses *tria* five times thus testifying to the movement from the Father-Son dyad to a consideration of the whole Trinity. Hadot sees this as the turning-point from the first part of *Adv. Ar.* III devoted to expounding the relation between Father and Son to the second part in which Victorinus argues for the consubstantiality of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Victorinus deals with the questions of threeness and oneness: how these three can be one; in what sense they are three; in what sense one; how they mutually implicate one another; and how they are inseparable but distinct.

Commentary

4.1-9. *Λόγος igitur, quae sunt quaeque esse possunt quaeve esse potuerunt veluti semen ac potentio exsistendi, sapientia ac virtus omnium substantiarum, de deo ad actiones omnes, deus potentia patris, actuque quo filius ipse cum patre unus deus est. Etenim cum sint ista exsistentiae viventes intellegentesque, animadvertamus haec tria esse vivere intellegere, ita tria esse, ut unum semper sint atque in eo quod est esse, sed in eo quod esse dico, quod ibi est esse.*

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[170] Cf. Scully, "Physicalism," 236 and 244; see also Clark's note on this passage (*Marius Victorinus*, 225, n. 21), to which Scully alludes at 226, n. 23.

Victorinus gives a rhetorically vigorous and concise treatment of the Logos as the divine seed and power from which all things are. All activity in the world is to be ascribed to the Father as remote cause, absolute first principle, and then proximately and more properly to the Logos "through whom" or "by whom" all things were made. He moves from the relation of Logos to existents to the relation of divine activity to divine power so as to show the equality of Son-Logos and Father.

Victorinus has explained how *to be* contains within itself *to live* and *to understand*. He has also shown that these three are all one substance, but distinguished each according to its predominant characteristic. He began in the last section to show that the Son has life from himself so that he is not living by participation in life but is himself life and the principle of life in all living things. Thus we can already see that this *vivere* must himself be and live. Now Victorinus treats each of the three as being, living, and understanding. This is one of Victorinus's more explicit presentations of predominance, which is usually expressed tersely by the comparative *magis*. This is the hermeneutical key to *homoousion* triads.

4.9-11. *In hoc igitur esse, hoc est vivere, hoc intelligere, omnia substantialiter ut unum subsistentia. Vivere enim ipsum id est quod esse.*

Victorinus elaborates on his explanation of how *esse-vivere-intelligere* are *trias* and *unum*, now describing them as one with respect to substance and in their being. He makes no distinction here between *substantia* and *subsistentia*, which is surprising given the way he will use *subsistentia* later in this same passage (see below, §4.43-35). Their synonymity here emphasizes the closeness of the identity between transcendent *esse, vivere,* and *intelligere*. The infinitive *vivere* is well suited to convey this life's

unqualified activity: it is timeless, inexhaustible, and not determined by a particular

agent, or a particular instance of the activity.

4.12-13. *Neque enim ita in deo ut in nobis, aliud est quod vivit, aliud vita quae efficit*

vivere.

Victorinus clarifies, once again, that things as they are with us are not as they are

with God. He explains that among us there is a difference between the thing that is alive

(*quod vivit*), i.e., the substance that has life as an attribute, and that life which is given to

something to make it live, which comes to the substance adventitiously. This distinction

does not apply to God for whom life (quality) and what lives (substance) are one and the

same. As Victorinus has said often, we must remember that God the Father gives to the

Son to have life *in se*, *ex se*, *a se*.[171] And to have life in and from and by himself is

indicative of his eternality, for whatever has its life from itself has neither a beginning nor

an end to its life or its being. The same argument that applies to the first principle applies

to the Son, on the authority of Scripture and ecclesial tradition and here also on the basis

of reasoned argument from metaphysical principles.

4.13-28. *Etenim si ponamus accipiamusque ipsam vitam esse atque exsistere quodque ei*

potentiae sit id ipsum sit ei esse, clarum fiet unum atque idem nos accipere debere esse et

vivere. Haec ratio est visque eadem intellegentiae est utique illi. Hoc ipsum ergo

intellegere hoc est quod est ei esse, idque esse quod est intellegere ipsum hoc intellegere

intellegentia est. Esse ergo esse et vitae et intellegentiae est, id est quod vita et

intellegentia. Unum igitur quod vita et idem esse quod est intellegentia. Quod si haec in

singulis atque in binis unum, sequitur ut ipsum vivere hoc sit quod intellegere. Nam si

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[171] See *Adv. Ar.* IA 41, 6; 52; 54-55; II 7, 18; III 3, 6; 8; 6, 5; 6, 25; 6, 30; 7, 46; 12, 1; 12, 8; IV 6, 43; 8, 16; 10, 10.

esse hoc est vivere atque esse id quod intellegere, fit unum vivere atque intellegere, cum

sit illis unum quod est esse. Huc accedit quod ipsum esse nihil est aliud quam vivere.

Quod enim non vivit ipsum esse ei deperit, ut quamdiu quidque sit, hoc sit ei suum vivere,

unde commoritur esse cum vita.

Most of this long passage Victorinus has already covered. What has one act of being is one substance. Life and intelligence are the enacted powers of one substance. They are *unum et idem* not as operations but in their single *esse* which both manifest. To live and to understand, having one *esse*, also have one *what it is to be*: one act of being, that is, one power of being, and therefore one essence, which is one substance. Life dies together with being in a thing which does not have life from itself.

4.29-32. *Sed nos, cum de aeternis loquimur, aliud vivere accipimus, hoc est ipsum scire*

quod vivas. Scire porro hoc est quod intellegere. Ergo scire intellegere est et scire quod

vivas, hoc est vivere. Id ergo erit intellegere quod vivere.

Not only do *vivere* and *intellegere* have one to be, and not only is *vivere*, which has its *to live* from itself, therefore eternal, but now, from the point of view of *intellegere*, understanding is implicitly also living.

4.32-35. *Quod si ita est, ut unum sit vivere et intellegere, et, cum unum sit esse quod est*

vivere atque intellegere, substantia unum, subsistentia tria sunt ista.

By distinguishing *substantia* and *subsistentia*, Victorinus has not contradicted himself. He mentioned above they are one with respect to substance, in a provisional way and in that portion of his argument where he was arguing for unity of the three. He has now defended his second portion of the argument, showing how there are in fact three distinct realities which mutually imply and entail one another and that coinhere. Having

completed those arguments and therefore assured that he won't be misunderstood, Victorinus is confident enough to introduce a potentially baffling theological formula: one in substance, three in subsistence. *Subsistentia* may apparently be used as either the synonymous term for *ousia* or for *hyparxis* and *hypostasis*. I discuss Victorinus's use of both below in ch. 4 commenting on §7.9-12.

4.35-39. *Cum enim vim ac significantiam suam habeant atque ut dicuntur et sint, necessario et sunt tria et tamen unum, cum omne, quod singulum est unum, tria sint. Idque a Graecis ita dicitur: ἐκ μιᾶς οὐσίας τρεῖς εἶναι τὰς ὑποστάσεις.*

Victorinus offers a rather compressed argument here. Major premise: each of the three has its own *vis* and *significantia*; minor: they are as they are called; conclusion: they are both three and one. Father, Son, and Holy Spirit each has its own "force," its own strength, or what we might call power-in-act, on the noetic triad model Victorinus has been using in this treatise. That each has its own *significantia* is to say its own way of being recognized and referred to. Victorinus's claim that *atque ut dicuntur et sint* specifies that the names indicate realities, as the Second Creed of Antioch (341) had also specified.[172] Three in *vis* does not undermine oneness in *potentia*, since the latter indicates the *ousia* while the former indicates the particular force attached to each of the "essential activities." Activity belonging to the essence (as opposed to the activity that proceeds from the essence explained above), finds expression in Victorinus's *vis* belonging in a

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[172] "And in the Holy Ghost, who is given to those who believe for comfort, and sanctification, and initiation, as also our Lord Jesus Christ enjoined His disciples, saying, 'Go, teach all nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost' Matthew 28:19; **namely of a Father who is truly Father, and a Son who is truly Son, and of the Holy Ghost who is truly Holy Ghost, the names not being given without meaning or effect, but denoting accurately the peculiar subsistence, rank, and glory of each that is named,** so that they are three in subsistence, and in agreement one," Second Creed of Antioch (341) quoted in Athanasius, *De syn*. 23.

proper way to each of the subsistences of the Trinity. The *potentia*, however, is the power of that essence's ἐνέργεια or *motus*. The claim must be understood in context—it is not a lapse by Victorinus into the confusion of modalism, as Voelker thinks, but a bold formulation rendered possible by the surrounding arguments.[173]

The *Graeci* are likely Meletians. Epiphanius, in his *Panarion* composed in 374, writes of Meletius and his followers in Antioch. There, he testifies to the presence among them of this Greek expression.

> He [Meletius] is still alive in his own country, honored and beloved especially
> because of the reforms which we now understand him to have instituted and on
> account of what those subject to him in Antioch now profess: they no longer
> mention the word "creature" at all, even in passing, but acknowledge as
> coessential (*homoousion*) the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, three hypostases, one
> essence, one divinity, according to the true faith which comes from our
> forebears.[174]

The formula is not attested *verbatim* in Epiphanius's notice. The distribution of *ousia* and *hypostases* in this precise way is uncommon in these years before Constantinople I, although earlier creeds, such as the Second Creed of Antioch (341), had spoken in similar terms. The formula is more striking to us with our ability to foresee the importance it

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[173] John T. Voelker, "The Trinitarian Theology of Marius Victorinus: Polemic and Exegesis" (Ph.D. diss: Marquette University, 2006), refers to Victorinus's supposed modalism at 68, 69, 78 n. 158, 79, 108-109, 185, 203, 215 n. 511, 225, 246.

[174] Epiphanius, *Pan.* 73.34.2–3: ὃς καὶ δεῦρο ὑπάρχει ἐν τῇ ἰδίᾳ πατρίδι τίμιος ἀνὴρ καὶ ἐπιπόθητος, μάλιστα δι' ὧν νυνὶ ἐνηχούμεθα κατωρθωκέναι καὶ ἀφ' ὧν νυνὶ οἱ ὑπ' αὐτὸν ἐν Ἀντιοχείᾳ ὁμολογοῦσιν, οὐκέτι ὅλως οὔτε ἐν παραδρομῇ μεμνημένοι κτίσματος ὀνόματος, ἀλλ' ὁμοούσιον ὁμολογοῦντες πατέρα καὶ υἱὸν καὶ ἅγιον πνεῦμα, τρεῖς ὑποστάσεις, μίαν οὐσίαν, μίαν θεότητα· καθώς ἐστιν ἡ ἀληθινὴ πίστις, ἡ ἀπὸ τῶν ἀνέκαθεν (K. Holl, *Epiphanius, Ancoratus und Panarion* GCS 37 (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1933), 309.34, 6-12).

would take on in the Greek-speaking church than apparently it was to Victorinus. He certainly makes little of the Greek expression, which surprises John Voelker.[175] This is a little less surprising when one recognizes his not altogether consistent use of *subsistentia*: in the current context it is the equivalent of *hypostasis*. In *Adv. Ar.* II 4, 51-53 he alluded to the formula in its Latin translation. "Et ideo dictum est: de una substantia, tres subsistentias esse, ut id ipsum quod est esse subsistat tripliciter: ipse deus et Christus, id est λόγος et spiritus sanctus."[176] But then in III 4, 9-11 he could say "In hoc igitur esse, hoc est vivere, hoc intellegere, omnia substantialiter ut unum subsistentia."[177] As a Nicene theologian, the only term to which Victorinus was bound to defend and explain was *homoousion*; apart from that terminological allegiance, he is not one to quibble over words. Without disapproving, he does not dwell on the formula, perhaps because it was not universal; it was a novel interpretation of *homoousion* involving an innovative distinction between *ousia* and *hypostasis*—whose synonymity Victorinus had in fact demonstrated in *Adv. Ar.* II.[178] By the time he is writing *Adv. Ar.* III, he has come to recognize the importance of maintaining the distinction between these terms, an advance on his linguistic usage that suggests his continually evolving knowledge of the theological scene.[179]

4.39-46. *Hoc cum ita sit, esse ut fundamentum est reliquis. Vivere enim et intellegere ut secunda et posteriora, ut natura quadam in eo quod est esse velut inesse videantur, vel ex eo quod esse quodammodo ut extiterint atque in eo quod est suum esse illud primum ac*

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[175] John Voelker, "An Anomalous Trinitarian Formula in Marius Victorinus' Against Arius," *Studia Patristica* 43 (2006): 517-522.
[176] CSEL 83.1, 178.
[177] CSEL 83.1, 197.
[178] See, e.g., *Adv. Ar.* II 6, 22-23 (CSEL 83.1, 180).
[179] Cf. Athanasius, *Tom. ad. Ant.*, V.

fontanum esse servaverint. Numquam enim esse sine vivere atque intellegere neque

vivere atque intellegere sine eo quod est esse iam probatum est.

He makes a brief argument that is in some ways distinctive from his noetic triad, which has been the object of his exposition throughout this section. When he speaks of a *natura quadam in eo quod est esse*, he means not to equate *esse* with that *mia ousia* from which are the three hypostases, but rather with the substance which is that *esse* qualified as *ita esse*. The phrase *velut inesse videantur* adds nuance to his immediately preceding phrase: the *natura* is not so much *in that which is to be*, as it is seen to belong to it. This is precise: *esse* itself is not seen, but what comes after it and makes it known is what is seen, and in seeing that nature one also sees that it belongs to *esse*. Thus the *actio* or *motus* in expressing the *substantia* shows that the *actio* itself was first hidden in its substance.[180] This is secured by the next clause, *vel ex eo quod esse quodammodo*, for the *natura* again is *esse* qualified. He then makes clear that these things "stand out" (*extiterint*): they stand out from *quod est suum esse*, but they also have their own "to be" preserved in it. *Vivere* and *intellegere* are taken, collectively, as *secunda* and *posteriora*, of course with respect to cause rather than to temporality.

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§5. *Summary*

Victorinus unfolds an example for the sake of understanding how being and its activity are all one. It is a simple and basic illustration taken from the act of vision. The underlying theory of vision is generically Platonist, so that while it does not demand from Victorinus's contemporaries any especially developed theories of optics or of light it

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180 Cf. Heraclitus, ἡ φύσις κρύπτεσθαι φιλεῖ (B123, DK).

nevertheless requires some elucidation for modern readers. Victorinus's careful and spare pedagogical rhetoric is on display. I draw attention to his use of language here as symbolic, proportional, and fluid, intended to give maximum clarity of expression while drawing connections across layers of reality.

Commentary

5.1. *Huius rei ad intellegentiam hoc sit exemplum.*

Victorinus provides an illustration of his trinitarian theology after much close argument and exegesis but no *exempla*.

5.1-6. *Ponamus visum vel visionem per se vi sua atque natura potentialiter exsistentem, hoc est eius esse, potentiam habentem vigere ad videndum, quod erit eius vivere, et item, potentiam habentem videndo visa quaeque discernere, quod est eius intellegere.*

His *exemplum* of the triad comes from the power and activity of vision. Victorinus posits three aspects of sight. By vision *per se* he refers to the ability to see. Its first act is simply to be what it is. He begins with its power and nature, that is, the force and nature of the *potentia* of *visio*. The *vis* of the *potentia* of *visio* he is carefully distinguishing from the *vis* of *vigere ad videndum* and of *videre* as *visa discernere*. The power (*potentia*) of vision is one singular and generic thing—indeed, one and the same for vision's *vigere* and *discernere*—while the force (*vis*) and *natura* of the power of vision belong to each specific aspect of the operation. The power is there even when it is in act because there would be no act unless the power remained, as argued above (on §1.33-36 pp. 160-161). Presumably, at least in the case of vision, one would not speak of *vis* having reality until the power is realized in and by act.

When its potency (in the Aristotelian sense) has been brought into act the natural power is said to flourish (*vigere*). This is nature doing what it is meant to do. This is living, acting in accordance with its nature. The assonance between *vivere* and *vigere* draws attention to the close relation Victorinus sees between the two. *Esse*, *vivere*, and *intellegere* appear as a set of relations which, whenever generalized, may be discovered among all physical things: *esse* refers to anything's first act of being, and *vivere* and *intellegere* refer to its flourishing and its perfection, respectively. Perfection depends on the flourishing as a condition for its possibility; flourishing might also be said to depend on perfection (the potentiality of perfection) insofar as perfection is the purpose for which flourishing occurs and as its final cause is logically prior.[181] But a thing's flourishing and perfection are determined by its *natura* and are therefore different in every specific case. We could define "living" then as having enacted movement and naturally proper movement.

5.6-17. *Haec si potentia sunt, nihil aliud quam esse dicuntur et manent et ut quieta sunt atque in se conversa, tantum ut sint operantur, solum visio vel visus exsistentia et idcirco solum esse numeranda. At, cum eadem visio operatione videndi uti coeperit, quasi progressione sui visio—quasi, inquam; non enim progreditur, nec a se exit, sed intentione ac vigore propriae potestatis, quod est ei vivere, omnia quae sunt ei obvia vel quibus incurrendo obvia conspexerit—officio cum videndi fungitur, vita ipsius visionis est, quae, motu operante, vivere indicat visionem tantum in eo quod videt puro videndi sensu, non discriminante nec diiudicante quod videt.*

As he elaborates his illustration, Victorinus explains that the enactment of *visio* is in some sense a going forth, but not as though its activity were outgoing in a transitive sense. Vision goes forth in continuity.[182] In reference to *intentio* Hadot points to a connection here between optics and tonic movement which Victorinus has taken from the Stoics.[183] The description of vision as outgoing, however, and the absence of any account of impressions or *phantasmata* points rather to a Platonic than Stoic influence for this passage. Victorinus's characterization of vision as a movement from the eyes to the object may just as well be an aspect of Platonist optics found, for example, in *Timaeus* 45b-c, which also characterizes vision as a going out from the eyes of the viewer.

He also distinguishes between the pure act of seeing and the logically and actually posterior act of discernment and judgment concerning the thing seen.[184] Victorinus seems to agree with Aristotle that while other animals have a share in imagination (*phantasia*) only rational beings make judgments (*hypolepsis*) which are the fulfilment of acts of thinking (*dianoiein*).[185] The reservation of judgment after receiving a first sense impression is a Stoic adaptation of Aristotle.[186] This Stoic doctrine may stand behind Victorinus's strong distinction between sensation and perception. Thus Platonic optics, Aristotelian judgment, and Stoic reservation of judgment are all being put to use by Victorinus here.

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[182] The use of *intentione* is a matter of a complex history of a metaphor—whether originally sensible then transferred to thought or the other way around is not easy to tell. *Intentio* occurs throughout Cicero's *De inventione* to mean the motive of an agent, and similarly in *Tusculanae Disputationes* 2.65.2 (and *passim*).
[183] Hadot, SC 69, 945.
[184] Regarding the relation of mental language and perception in Stoic thought see Sarah Catherine Byers, *Perception, Sensibility, and Moral Motivation in Augustine: A Stoic-Platonic Synthesis* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 6. Stoic impression: *phantasia*, *visum* (Byers, *Perception*, 7).
[185] See Aristotle, *De An.* 3.3, 427b11-428a22, and Lloyd Gerson, *Aristotle and Other Platonists*, 142-146.
[186] See Byers, *Perception*, 15, n. 58.

5.17-22. Quod quidem nos accipimus aestimatione, ut opinemur videre solum sine intellegentia. Cum autem videre, quod est vivere visioni, videre non sit, nisi capiat conprehendatque quod viderit, simul ergo est et iudicare quod viderit. Ergo in eo quod est videre inest diiudicare.

Victorinus explains that sight is not yet complete without recognition since the power of vision is to see *something*, that is to say, a recognizable object. This is the distinction between sensation and perception. Victorinus has adapted a passage from Plotinus. "Thinking, which sees the intelligible and turns towards it and is, in a way, being perfected by it, is itself indefinite like seeing, but is defined by the intelligible."[187] He has taken this statement of Plotinus and reworked it to accommodate the noetic triad. By making *vivere* to correspond with *vigere*, he has also rendered *vivere* the equivalent of Plotinus's second act and the Platonic *proodos*. Plotinus's second act goes out from the subject both to act in the world and to express the substance or essence of the thing which comes to be by the subject's first act (see the discussion above at §2.32-36).

The Platonic *proodos* is the necessary condition for the *epistrophe* because whatever returns must originally have gone forth from its source. *Epistrophe* in the Platonic cosmic scheme is the movement in which the proper activity of understanding is brought to perfection in its contemplation of its principle. But this simultaneously defines the outgoing ray as delimiting and actualizing its essential movement, which is to know itself. As Parmenides said—and the formula is fundamental to Platonism—it is the same to be and to know.[188] Vision is one operation brought about through the cooperation of

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[187] Plotinus, *Ennead* V.4.2.4-7: "νόησις δὲ τὸ νοητὸν ὁρῶσα καὶ πρὸς τοῦτο ἐπιστραφεῖσα καὶ ἀπ᾽ἐκείνου οἷον ἀποτελειουμένη ἀόριστος μὲν αὐτὴ ὥσπερ ὄψις, ὁριζομένη δὲ ὑπὸ τοῦ νοητοῦ."
[188] Parmenides, fg. 3 "τὸ γὰρ αὐτὸ νοεῖν ἐστίν τε καὶ εἶναι."

different parts of the seer. This shows how something can be simple under one aspect and complex under another, for many things may be brought under a unity. While this *exemplum* of Victorinus is meant to defend the notion of simplicity of substance uncompromised and in fact perfectly actualized in and through diverse operations, it is perfectly chosen to indicate his particular theological content.

5.22-31. *Neque enim, si viderit, quomodocumque viderit, non diiudicavit illud ipsum vel quod viderit. Ergo, ut diximus, in eo quod est videre est diiudicare, in eo autem quod est esse visionem inest videre. Inconexa igitur ac magis simplicia; in eo quod sunt, non aliud quam unum sunt, visio, videre, discernere. Quo pacto et in eo quod est discernere inest videre, et in eo quod est videre inest esse visionem atque, ut vere dicam, non inest, sed eo quod est visio, eo est videre atque discernere. Ita in singulis omnia vel unumquidque omnia vel omnia unum.*

This passage includes a further explanation of what it means to judge and to discern in the act of vision. Victorinus proves that vision is not truly vision without recognition, which fulfills and perfects vision's act. The three parts of vision are not related as different objects connected externally, but are rather three aspects of a single power. The power of vision is expressed and perfected through two phases of its activity, but the substance and its acts are not distinct substances, nor is the enactment of the substance accidental and adventitious to the substance.

Victorinus uses the important term *inest* to describe the relation of these powers. Here he uses it to show how one divine person or one act can be present in another without confusing the two beings, eliding their difference, or rendering their coincidence composite. The Son indwells the Father, and the Spirit indwells the Son. These

components of *visio* are not disparate, existing independently, nor are they results of diverse activities which when combined would accomplish some external deed. They are *inconexa*, and yet also simple, because one is the power, while the other two are the two operations of one movement; these two operations occur together, often simultaneously, but in fixed order, with their own force and purpose, and together they enact and complete the proper activity of the one power of sight.

Thus Victorinus concludes the first five sections of his treatise with an elaborate example taken from the realm of sense. We must admit the example itself is hardly less dialectical and intellectually demanding than the philosophical and theological points it is meant to illustrate. §5 will give way immediately in §6 to a more abstract mode of argumentation—more abstract, but not more rigorous. The next chapter of commentary, treating §§6-12, thus begins at this high level of philosophical abstraction. It is in this next chapter that we will begin exploring in earnest Victorinus's pneumatology as he turns in in §§7-8 to bring his arguments for *homoousion* to bear especially on the status of the Holy Spirit. As Victorinus sets out to offer proofs for the Spirit's divinity, the discourse will eventually (starting in §10) move on to doctrinally-moored biblical exegesis.

4.0   CHAPTER 4

Analysis of *Adv. Ar. III*. 6-12

In these seven sections (§§6-12) Victorinus argues with careful philosophical and
exegetical reasoning. He shows in his explanation of the consubstantiality and
distinctiveness of the members of the Trinity that there are other triadic relations
isomorphic to the model of the noetic triad, such as *verbum silens-verbum-verbum verbi*.
In the course of §8, Victorinus transitions from an emphasis on *vita* to an emphasis on
scientia or *intellegentia*, that is, from arguing about Christ to arguing about the divinity of
the Holy Spirit. The passage immediately following this transition offers perhaps the
most interesting treatment of the relation of the second and third divine subsistences in all
the treatise.

Philosophically, Victorinus equates the Holy Spirit with the *intellegere* of the
noetic triad and with the return movement of the Neoplatonic cycle *remaining-
proceeding-returning*. Theologically and exegetically, Victorinus argues for the identity
of all three subsistences by showing how the scriptures apply the same substantial names
to Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. He begins a serial exegesis of John's gospel in §9 (from
Jn 5:26), which he will continue into §16.

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§6. *Summary*

Here is Victorinus at his most meditative. Having brought the discussion down to the level of sense in his extended *exemplum* of §5, he now exhorts himself (and indirectly his reader) to raise his thoughts to the upper limits of contemplative and linguistic possibility. He draws attention to the dignity of the human mind and the divine gift of the Spirit, both as it was naturally at creation and as restored by the risen Christ.[1] He pursues his query dialectically by asking how the divinity ought to be categorized by human thought, appealing specifically to the assistance of the Holy Spirit, to whom he refers as *magister intellegentiae*.

Commentary

6.1-3. *Extolle te igitur atque erige, spiritus meus, et virtutem, qua a deo mihi es inspiratus, agnosce. Deum intellegere difficile, non tamen desperatum.*

Victorinus begins this new section with an apostrophe to his own spirit, rousing himself to the laborious and difficult pursuit of knowledge of God. His use of *extolle te* is unusual. There are many possible sources for the phrase, including the rhetorician Fronto, the *Chaldean Oracles*, the genre of philosophical protreptic and parenetic generally, and the Christian sources of Scripture or earlier teachers. Christian uses of *extolle* up to the time of Victorinus are transitive, taking as objects such things as the voice (*vocem tuam*) or the hands (*manus tuas*) in the service or attitude of prayer.[2] A closer parallel to Victorinus's particular phrase and intention comes in the Vulgate version of Ps. 27:9, "*salvam fac plebem tuam et benedic hereditati tuae et rege eos et extolle eos usque in*

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[1] Cf. *Adv. Ar.* IA 21, 1-9.
[2] Cf. Tertullian, *Adversus Marcionem*, IV.26; V.25.

aeternum." Victorinus may have known a similar translation of the Psalm in an earlier Latin text or may himself have provided the Latin *extolle* when he read the Greek text.[3] Finally, Jesus's words to the paralytic in John's gospel, "Ἔγειρε, ἆρον τὸν κράβαττόν σου καὶ περιπάτει," may be a scriptural inspiration. The Old Itala version and Jerome's translation both read *surget tolle crabattum tuum et ambula*.

The closest literary parallel for this self-admonition, however, comes not from Scripture but from the rhetor Fronto. Fronto encourages the emperor Antoninus to clothe his dialectical thoughts in the garb of eloquence. "*Quin erige te et extolle, et tortores istos, qui te ut abietem aut alnum proceram incurvant et ad chamaetorta detrahunt.*"[4] While such admonitions are rather common as a rhetorical device, the exact phrasing of *erige te et extolle* is unique enough to suggest literary relation.[5] Victorinus may have casually, perhaps unconsciously, imitated his predecessor's hortatory and hendiadystic phrase, though again the decision to apply it to himself rather than to his reader is a significant difference.

A similar admonition occurs in the *Chaldean Oracles*. "Let the immortal depth of the soul be opened up! Strain upward with all the power of your eyes!"[6] It is known that Victorinus knew the Oracles, perhaps by way of a commentary on them.[7] The literary

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[3] Victorinus evinces knowledge of the Greek OT in his appeal to Aquila's translation in *Ad Cand.* 27, 6-7 (CSEL 83.1, 42). Pierre Hadot is reluctant to see this as proof that he knew Origen's *Hexapla* (Pierre Hadot, *Marius Victorinus: Recherches sur sa vie et ses œuvres* (Paris: *Études Augustiniennes*, 1971), 238, n. 14).

[4] Fronto, *De Eloquentia* I.18, 5-7 (Fronto, *Correspondence, Volume II,* tr. C. R. Haines *LCL* 113 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1920), 70).

[5] This mode of exhortation is typical of ancient protreptic. Cf. Fronto II.15.1 (*LCL* 113, p. 66): "Evigila et attende, quid cupiat ipse Chrysippus."

[6] *Ch. Or.* fg. 112, Οἰγνύσθω ψυχῆς βάθος ἄμβροτον· ὄμματα πάντα ἄρδην ἐκπέτασαν ἄνω; *The Chaldean Oracles: Text, Translation, and Commentary*, tr. Ruth Dorothy Majercik (Leiden; New York: Brill, 1989); ET taken from Dillon, *The Middle Platonists*, 395. Cf. Iamblichus, *De mysteriis* V.25.

[7] Hadot, *Porphyre et Victorinus* I, 264ff.; Cooper, "The Platonist Christianity of Marius Victorinus," *Religions* 7 (2016): 1-24, here 2-3.

dependence is less striking than the biblical or especially the rhetorical example in Fronto. The concept of self-admonition to rise to higher contemplations, however, is closer to this exhortation insofar as the call seems given without any reference to an external power being bestowed for its accomplishment. This same self-exhortation also occurs, however, in the Psalms as in Ps. 42:5 ("Quare tristis es, anima mea? et quare conturbas me? Spera in Deo, quoniam adhuc confitebor illi"). Victorinus knows that the attempt to understand the spiritual and to pull the soul away from its sensible snares requires a kind of forcefulness of the mind. He rouses himself to the mental labor required for the attempt to transcend the spheres of sense and imagination and thrust the mind into the place of divinity.

His exhortation of the soul is not altogether self-reliant. The raising of the soul is the Christian's act of faith. Victorinus speaks of this at *In Eph* 1:4.

Christum enim credere et in Christum fidem sumere iam spiritaliter sentire est et iam tolli a desideriis carnalibus et materialibus et ex hoc veluti cognatio intellegendi nos jungit et societ Christo et, dum Christo sociaverit, iungit et Deo.[8]

While Victorinus understands that faith is a gift and the redeemed receive nothing by merit, the present passage qualifies the conclusion of Hadot that "Victorinus tend à une sorte de 'quiétisme.'"[9] In defense of his comparison to quietism, Hadot quotes the following passage. "*Quippe fidem in Christum habere et plenam fidem habere, nullus labor est, nulla est difficultas, animi tantum voluntas est commodata et credula*."[10] This is an account not of Christian *praxis* but rather a description of faith perfected. Victorinus

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[8] *In Eph.* 1:4, 96-100 (CSEL 83.2, 9).
[9] See Cooper, *Galatians*, 148-169; Hadot, *Marius Victorinus*, 295.
[10] *In Eph.* 6.13, 11-13 (CSEL 83.2, 87), quoted in Hadot, *Marius Victorinus*, 296.

does not say that acquiring this full faith is itself an easy matter, but that when once someone has taken up the *arma fidei* one is able easily to resist temptations and to live spiritually—what is easy for the trained soldier is a challenge for the novice in training. Victorinus's exhortation of his own spirit, as an admonition to a full and pure faith (*fides plena* [l. 15]; *sincera fides vel pura fides* [l. 17]), shows the ardor required to live spiritually. He says in his commentary on Gal 4:9 that the Christian is led by the Spirit. But he includes the necessity of the soul to enact its faith and stir itself to follow the Spirit. "Sed utique, ut cognoscantur a deo cognitique deo sint, aguntur iam principali illo spiritu qui datus est ut scripta sit anima divinis illis patris sui praeceptis, quae, cum se excitat, cognoscit eandem deus et sic anima cognoscit deum." The soul raises itself in a kind of synergistic response to the Spirit's prompting, so that knowing God and being known by God correspond as two sides of the same movement.

In his diagnosis of humans' epistemic limitations and contemplative possibilities in the opening of his letter to Candidus Victorinus was less optimistic than he is here. To know God is *difficile, non tamen desperatum*, just as at *Ad Cand.*, Victorinus says, in a closer reproduction of *Timaeus* 28c, *nunc in tali sita corpore difficile intellegere solum, edicere autem impossibile*.[11] Victorinus has the same concern in *Adv. Ar.* III to raise his mind and the mind of his readers beyond the confines of the sensual. He does not, however, speak of the impossibility of speaking about God. Why this change in tone from *Ad Cand.* to *Adv. Ar.* III? In the former work, Victorinus had the rhetorical intention of contrasting the knowledge of God that belongs to the saints (*Vides igitur beati cognitionem de deo* [1, 16]) with the audacious claims of those who have *magna*

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[11] *Ad Cand.* 1.11-12 (CSEL 83.1, 15).

intellegentia (1, 4) but lack due reliance on Scripture. The context of *Adversus Arium* III is not so polemical. He presumes agreement with his audience on the absolute authority of Scripture and the necessity of faith for secure knowledge of God. He is primarily instructing rather than correcting. He also takes for granted the ability to speak about God, so long as one relies on Scripture—a presumption he and his present audience share.

6.3-5. *Nam ideo <nos> nosse se voluit, ideo mundum opera sua divina constituit, ut eum per ista omnia cerneremus.*

Victorinus now explains why knowledge of God is *non tamen desperatum*. The first reason had already come tacitly in his opening lines. His spirit has been given power for rising through divine inspiration. There is in fact a distinction between Victorinus's own spirit and the *spiritus dei*. His own spirit is that which God inbreathed at his creation. It appears to be the equivalent of the *spiritus hylicus* of which Victorinus had written in *Adv. Ar.* IB 62, 34-37. At the reception of the Holy Spirit, however, one is instructed in the mysteries of God (see below §16.29-37).

The second reason why knowledge of God is possible is that God has constructed the natural world by his own activity. The *opera dei* are directly expressive of God whose "power and wisdom" are recognized through all aspects of creation. The account here in §6 seems distinct from what Victorinus had argued in *Adv. Ar.* IA. There he made it clear that the knowledge of God received through natural things is limited to a recognition of God's power and deity, echoing Rom 1:20. Such knowledge does not extend to the specificity of the Trinity itself.

For if he [the Son] were a creation, the Father would not be known through him, but the power of God and the divinity, as Paul said: 'For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made; his eternal power also, and divinity (Rom 1:20).'[12]

Here, on the contrary, Victorinus moves immediately from the knowledge of God at which one arrives through creation to the more profound knowledge humans have of the Logos himself. He is no longer addressing 'Arians' who believe the Logos is a creature, as he had been at the start of *Adv. Ar.* I. Hadot refers to Hermeticism for the claim that God desires for us to know Him.[13] The connection is circumstantial evidence corroborating our earlier reading of §2.23-26. God desires to be known and therefore creates.[14] This does not in itself demonstrate that God's knowledge of Himself comes through creation, but read in light of the expressive activity of the Son who imitates the internal activity of the Father it is rather suggestive.

6.5-6. *Λόγος certe, qui eius filius, qui imago, qui forma est, a se ad patrem intellegendi transitum dedit.*

This passage bears rhetorical features which indicate Victorinus has deliberately adorned this section. The *repetitio* involving three phrases beginning with *qui* draws special attention to the Logos, highlighting three characteristics of the relation of the Logos to God. The Logos is a bridge by which believers come to know the Father. The Logos here is the whole second dyad who comes down to creation in order to lead it back to the Father. Logos, son, image, form are all designations that apply to both the second

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[12] *Adv. Ar.* IA 2, 33-37 (Clark, *Marius Victorinus*, 92); cf. Origen, *Comm. Rm.* 1.16.6.
[13] Hadot, SC 69, 947.
[14] Nock-Festugiére, *Corp. Hermet.* XI 22.

and the third of the Trinity, the "Son" in the first dyad (of Father and Son) comprising

both Son and Spirit. *Certe* here and in lines 12 and 14 is indicative of the development of

Victorinus's argument.[15]

6.7-11. *Deum igitur, in qua natura, in quo genere, in qua vi, in qua potentia ponimus,*

intellegimus, aestimamus? Vel qua fantasi intellegentiae adtingimus atque in eum

provehimur? Et cum inintellegibilem esse dicimus, hoc ipso quodammodo intellegibilem

esse iudicamus.

      Victorinus introduces a classical question of negative theology using the device of

epanaphora (*repetitio*), repeating the phrase *in qua* four times, followed by three verbs of

the same declension. The question of how we are to understand the Father is directly

related to how we understand the Son who gives us knowledge of the Father from and

through himself.

      Anticipating the rejoinder that God is beyond intelligibility and therefore

frustrates any attempts at understanding Him, Victorinus subtly reverses the claim,

arguing that even this apophatic statement shows that we know something about Him. If

we had no notion of God at all, how could we make even negative judgments about Him?

We only make judgments about things of which we have some notion. This reflects a

Neoplatonic philosophical development in negative theology, though it appears first in

Plato.[16] The theological notion is consonant with what one finds in Tertullian. "*Hoc est*

quod deum aestimari facit, dum aestimari non capit."[17]

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[15] Noted by Hadot, SC 69, 947.

[16] Cf. Plotinus, *Enn*. V.3.14, 1-19; Plato, *Parm*. 142A5-6; *Comm. Parm*. fr. IV (Gerald Bechtle, *The Anonymous Commentary on Plato's Parmenides* (Bern: Haupt, 1999), 55-57.

[17] Tertullian, *apol.* XVII, 2 (quoted by Hadot, SC 69, 947).

Victorinus refuses to allow human thought to rest in the claim. Even our agnosticism yields insights. This is opposed to the obscurantist mode of agnosticism used by Arians as a subterfuge to theological argument.[18] The 'Arians' after Nicaea had sometimes claimed that the Son's generation could not be known and thereby attempted to undermine the claims of the Nicenes to know something specific about the divine generation.[19] This is one way of reading the Homoian creedal statements of 357, 359, and 360, which had argued for the complete rejection of language about God's *ousia*.[20] God's intelligibility to us indicates God's relation to us: He is not altogether removed but is innately and indelibly present to our understanding and makes Himself known through His works.

6.12-14. *Certe insufflatione dei anima nobis atque ex eo pars in nobis est, quae in nobis est maxima. Adtingimus igitur eum eo quo inde sumus atque pendemus.*

Victorinus answers his own questions he just posed regarding how we may know God. God is present to us because our soul has a share in divine nature. The highest part of humans is their spirit, their share in the *nous patrikos*.[21] It is both the highest component of the person and that which is in continuity with God by virtue of its having been given to humanity by God's direct action, metaphorically presented as God's inbreathing (*insufflatio*). Humanity's "hanging down" (*pendere*) from God is a common

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See Stephen Cooper, *Commentary on Galatians* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 145.
[19] *De hom. rec.* 4, 2-12; Hilary, *De Syn.* 11 (*PG* 10, 488B).
[20] See the Second Creed of Sirmium 357 (*Faith in Formulae: A Collection of Early Christian Creeds and Creed-related Texts*, ed. Wolfram Kinzig (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017): 404-408), the 'Dated Creed' (413-415), the creed of Acacius of Caesarea proposed at the Synod of Seleucia in 359 (416-420), the creed presented to the emperor at Niké and endorsed at Rimini later in 359 (420-423), the creed endorsed by a council in Constantinople in 360 (423-425), and the confession of faith presented by Meletius of Antioch in a homily (425-427).
[21] Cf. *Ad Cand.* 1, 6.

trope in Platonic, gnostic, and hermetic writings. Plato speaks of our root being in heaven, implying that we grow down, as it were, from God.[22] The metaphor of touching signifies directness, while subtly transposing Stoic sense-based epistemology into a noetic key.[23] It has replaced, for the moment, the sense of sight as the dominant metaphor for knowledge of God.

6.14-19. *Certe post salvatoris adventum, cum in salvatore ipsum deum vidimus, cum ab eo docti atque instructi sumus, cum ab eo sanctum spiritum intellegentiae magistrum accepimus, quid aliud tantus intellegentiae magister dabit, nisi deum nosse, deum cognoscere, deum fateri?*

Continuing his discussion of humanity's knowledge of God, Victorinus now explains the objective and subjective components of God's self-revelation through Jesus and the Holy Spirit. The *salvator* in the writings of Victorinus is specifically Jesus, whose name and specific economic activity suggest the appropriation. The Holy Spirit and the Father share the name, though in a less proper way.

Victorinus emphasizes that the Holy Spirit in the Johannine Paraclete passages is master of understanding for two reasons. First, he wants to extrapolate from his *exemplum* of §5, which connected the Holy Spirit with *discernere* and *intellegentia*. Second, he is emphasizing that God is knowable to us. God is knowable to us sensibly because God's nature and power are visible in his operations in the world; he is known to

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[22] Plato, *Timaeus* 90ab, "we declare that God has given to each of us, as his daemon, that kind of soul which is housed in the top of our body and which raises us—seeing that we are not an earthly but a heavenly plant—up from earth towards our kindred in the heaven. And herein we speak most truly; for it is by suspending our head and root from that region whence the substance of our soul first came that the Divine Power keeps upright our whole body." Hadot suggests that this trope, found also in Seneca and Tertullian, may have this passage from the *Timaeus* as its ultimate source (Hadot, SC 69, 947-8).

[23] Hadot cites Plotinus, Enn. V.1.11.13, in relation to *adtingimus* (SC 69, 948).

us intelligibly because he has inbreathed something of his own deity into our souls at the *insufflatio*. Besides and beyond both of these, he makes himself known in his own nature and in his trinity of subsistences when the Word becomes flesh and the Lord gives the Spirit, who, as the *magister intellegentiae*, bears witness to who Christ is (on the testimony of the Spirit see below, §8.30-37 and §§15.26-17.9). These are three distinct degrees of knowing in order from most external to most intimate, from most general to most specific, from most superficial to most profound. Between the second and third (intelligible and spiritual) comes a threshold dividing what is available to humans by nature and what is provided to them by the Spirit in the economy.

6.19-23. *Et maiores nostri quaesierunt quid esset aut quis esset deus. Et his, ab eo qui in eius gremio semper est, responsum est ita: me videtis et patrem meum quaeritis. Olim vobiscum sum. Qui me vidit, patrem vidit. Ego in patre et pater in me.*

This whole meditative introduction of section six has at once served as preface for the next line of inquiry; has established by assertion the condition for the possibility of knowing God; and has secured in his reader the proper disposition to approach and receive his sublime theme. By speaking of their common predecessors (*maiores nostri*), Victorinus situates himself in the context of a shared and ancient inquiry.[24] The *maiores* are unspecified. Hadot thinks they are the Apostles.[25] This interpretation has merit given the context of apostle Phillip's request of Christ to show the apostles the Father. Phillip asks Jesus (who is always in the bosom of the Father) to see God. Victorinus provides

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[24] At *Adv. Ar.* IA, 2, Victorinus quotes Jn 1:18 and comments: "What did he tell? That there is a God? But Jews and pagans had previously said this. What therefore did he say? That God is Father, but that he is Son, and that he is of the same substance and that he has come forth from the Father" (Clark, *Marius Victorinus*, 92).
[25] Hadot, SC 69, 948.

only Jesus's response and replaces Phillip's question with the broader query concerning who or what God (the Father) is. Also in favor of Hadot's reading is the fact that Victorinus is addressing Christians who situate themselves in the apostolic tradition and whose theology is grounded in the Biblical witness.

On my reading, however, Victorinus has removed this passage from its context and has generalized it so that it becomes a question asked by all throughout history who sought to know God. In his commentary on Gal 3:20 Victorinus refers to *maiores nostri* from whom we have been separated by original sin and to whom we are reconciled through the mystery of the cross.[26] There the *maiores* are at least all of humanity going back to Adam and may in fact be those belonging to the heavenly church (*ecclesia caelestis*).[27] Victorinus intentionally leaves the referent of *maiores* vague to make his point that specific knowledge of the trinitarian God as comes through the Logos who in his incarnation reveals the Trinity. The answer has come not merely from inferences from created things or from the *figurationes* inspired in us, but directly from the Logos, the Son, the image, the form of God himself, who "is always in the bosom of the Father." It is this one who alone has intimate knowledge of God and is capable of making Him known. From here to halfway through §16 Victorinus's arguments are made through a thorough and ordered exegesis of John's gospel.

The trinitarian controversy is about both the "who" and the "what" of God. The Nicenes argue that Christ himself is God, answering the *quis deus* question by including the Son of God as another divine person. They also address the *quid deus est* problem by insisting that God is in some sense substantial, an *ousia*. Even if it is impossible to say

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[26] *In Gal.* 3:20, 1-38 (CSEL 83.2, 131-132).
[27] *In Gal.* 3:20, 21 (CSEL 83.2, 131).

precisely what God's substance is, Christians can know *something* about the divine *ousia* thanks to the faithful reflection of the Father's *ousia* in the Son. Christians can also faithfully declare that the divine *ousia* is shared with perfect equality (*homoousion*) among the Trinity. Victorinus will begin his very next sentence asking *quid dicimus deum*.

This is the only place in Victorinus's corpus in which the whole of Jesus's response to Phillip is quoted. He may be making his own translation from the Greek, with *olim* for τοσούτον χρόνον. More common in Latin translations of the Greek phrase is *tanto tempore*, which is found in Tertullian, Novatian, Hilary, and Potamius and also will become the reading of Jerome's Vulgate.[28] A similar group of Johannine texts thus piled together is found in *Adv. Ar.* IA 29.

6.23-33. *Ergo quid dicimus deum? Nempe spiritum et spiritum vitae. Dictum enim est: vita pater est. Et item: Christus spiritus est. Et ipse rursus de se dixit: ego sum vita; et: ut pater habet ex se vitam, ita et filio dedit habere ex se vitam. Eodem modo spiritus sanctus spiritus est, utique et ipse vita. Nam omnia Christus accepit a patre et omnia, inquit, ei dedi; et item: quae habet, mea sunt. Ergo habet vitam et vitam a se esse. Quare istud? Quia ubi vita est, ibi est a se esse vitam. Et si istud ita est, ibi est et intellegere se vitam esse et quid esse sit vivere et quid esse quod vita est.*

Victorinus had asked about the genus of God, how we are to touch and be brought to a knowledge of God, and how Jesus and the Holy Spirit have brought to humanity divinely revealed knowledge of God. Now he is in a position to take up once again the

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[28] Tertullian, *Adv. Prax.* 24, 9; Novatian, *De Trin.* 28, 4; Hilary, *De Trin*. VII.33, 8; 35, 1; 38, 1; Potamius, *Ep.ad Ath.* 44; *Ep. de substantia*, 480. This is the reading of Ambrose, *Exp. Lucam* 1, 423; Faustinus Lucifer, *De Trin*. 10, 14; and the Latin translation of Irenaeus, *Adv. Haer.* III.13, 21.

question of what God is: *quid dicimus deum?* Victorinus defines the divine substance as spirit and life from the testimony of the inspired Scriptures. He finds the Scriptures refer to spirit and life as proper predicates for the Father, Christ, and the Holy Spirit, which in turn proves that these three are *homoousion*.

This searching for *epinoiai* of divine persons is a common practice in exegetically-based theological discourse. Origen and Athanasius had been primary examples of this kind of argumentation. Origen collects and interprets the *epinoiai* of Christ in his commentary on John and his *De princ*.[29] Athanasius, too, collected the various representations of Christ in the Scriptures to argue for the Son's consubstantiality with the Father.[30] Victorinus's use of this exegetical tactic is less sophisticated than theirs, drawing on a more limited range of biblical texts. His most extended engagement with the broadest range of biblical texts comes at *Adv. Ar.* IA 3-27, but it is all serial treatment of NT texts. He rarely weaves biblical passages from diverse books together and rarely interprets Scripture by Scripture.[31] Coming to the Bible late in life he does not know the Scriptures as comprehensively as these exemplary exegetes.[32] Philosophically, however, he knows well the distinction between what participates a substance and the substance which is participated. Origen presented this distinction by attending to scriptural instances of the definite article and its absence.[33] Athanasius and Didymus had done the

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[29] Origen, *Comm Jn* 1, *passim*; *De princ.* I.2; see also Matthew Kuhner, "The 'Aspects of Christ' (*Epinoiai Christou*) in Origen's *Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*," *Harvard Theological Review* 110 (2017): 195-216.

[30] Cf. Athanasius, *Contra Ar.* II.37.

[31] See Souter, *Earliest Latin Commentaries*, 22; Cooper, *Galatians*, 107.

[32] Jerome's comment on Victorinus in his preface to his *Galatians* commentary comes to mind. "Non quod ignorem C. Marium Victorinum, qui Romae me puero rhetoricam docuit, edidisse commentariae in Apostolum, sed quod occupatus ille eruditio saecularium litterarum scripturas omnino sanctas ignoraverit et nemo possit, quamvis eloquens, de eo bene disputare quod nesciat" (Jerome, *In Gal.*, prol., PL 26, 308).

[33] Origen, *Comm Jn* 2, *passim*.

same with reference to the Holy Spirit.[34] Although this expedient is not available to Latin writers whose language lacks the definite article, Victorinus finds other means to communicate the same idea.

6.33-35. *Coniuncta igitur omnia et unum omnia et una substantia et vere ὁμοούσια vel simul quod est ὁμοῦ vel una eademque substantia.*

Here we reach the conclusion to which Victorinus has been arguing for several lines: because the three have the same name and therefore the same reality belongs to each, all three are *homoousia*. The etymological interpretation of ὁμοούσια depends on how one takes the prefix. It may come from the adverb ὁμοῦ meaning "together with" or "together at once"; the term is properly the genitive neuter of ὁμός, though it can be used adverbially. This meaning Victorinus renders by *simul*. The nominative ὁμός, the second possible prefix, means "one and the same," "common," or "joint."[35] These three meanings are accounted for in Victorinus' choice of words in this sentence: *coniuncta* is the equivalent of "joint," and *una eademque* the exact phrase for "one and the same," while *unum omnia* may be said to imply "common." Victorinus leaves the possibilities open and exploits both for his theological purposes, as he had elsewhere in his theological treatises.[36] The end of this section is similar to that of section five: the three are either mutually indwelling, i.e., together, or are one and the same substance. These two etymological theories of *homoousion* amount to saying that all are in each one, or each one is all, or all are one.[37] All are in each one is the same as saying they are joined together (*coniuncta*) and at the same time (*simul*).

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[34] Athanasius, *Ep. ad. Ser.* I.8; Didymus, *De spir.* 72.
[35] LSJ, entries for "ὁμός" and "ὁμοῦ."
[36] E.g., *Adv. Ar.* II 10, 21-46 (CSEL 83.1, 186-187).
[37] Cf. *Adv. Ar.* IV 23, 12-13.

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§7: *Summary*

Victorinus emphasizes the order of principle (Father) and derivation (Son and Holy Spirit) while equally impressing on the reader that this ordering does not entail any inferiority or diversity of natures, the language of *prior* and *secunda* notwithstanding. He makes explicit the necessity of including the Holy Spirit in the discussion of the equal divinity of Father and Son. In an especially concise and dense passage, Victorinus summarizes many of the theological arguments he had presented in this work up to this point. This résumé includes a slew of coordinated appellations for the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit in which is highlighted the Father's immutable self-possession and the externalizing manifestation of the Son and Spirit.

Commentary

7.1-2. *Pater igitur esse est. Hoc enim ceteris principium et primum ad fantasian secundorum.*

      The *igitur* here marks the beginning of a discrete syllogism which, for variety's sake, starts with its conclusion and adds premises afterwards.[38] §6 had ended with a complex conclusion to an argument that in God to be, to live, and to understand are all one in substance. Whereas that argument had begun with *esse* and progressed to the identification of *esse* with *deus pater*, here he argues in reverse order. If God is Father, He must be identical to *esse*. The major premise is that the Father is the *principium* and prior to the appearance of the other two, *vivere* and *intellegere*. The minor premise had

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[38] On the rhetorical value of "variety" (*variatio*) see Victorinus, *In Cic. Rhet.* I.41 (CCSL 132, 162).

been established in the previous argument and thus goes unarticulated: *Esse* is the *principium et primum* of *vivere* and *intellegere*. Since the Father is *principium* and *esse* is *principium*, the conclusion follows that the Father is identical to *esse*. *Esse* is the metaphysical source of all the rest and logically prior to the manifestation of all secondary things.

7.2-9. *Hic deus, is cum duobus ceteris deus, hic unus deus, quia quod est vivere et intellegere hoc ipsum est quod est esse et duobus istis quod vivere atque intellegere ab eo provenit quod est esse—nemo igitur separet spiritum sanctum et profana blasphemia esse nescio quid suspicetur, quia et ipse de patre est, quia ipse est et filius qui de patre est— namque post id quod est esse.*

Victorinus turns his attention from the first dyad of Father and Son-Logos to the second dyad of Son and Spirit. The parenthetical clause *nemo . . . de patre est* interrupts the flow of the argument. I take this to indicate that it was a pressing concern for Victorinus's *Adv. Ar.* III. The repetition of *igitur* when the first subordinating clause has not yet been fully resolved also indicates the question's present pertinence. The jussive statement *nemo . . . separet spiritum sanctum* is direct, and *nemo* is personal even if indefinite. Victorinus seems to be aware that someone has in fact been separating the Holy Spirit from *hic deus*. *Separet* has by now become technical language for dividing created from divine things. Hadot notes the similarity to Athanasius's rebuke of the *tropici* in *Ep. ad Serap.*[39]

The ablative phrase *profana blasphemia* is especially strong language. Whereas Victorinus had frequently referred to the blasphemous denial of the divinity and

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[39] I.2 (*PG* 26, 533a9); I.9 (552b5); I.17 (572b10), listed in Hadot, SC 69, 949.

homoousion of the Son-Jesus in his earlier works against 'Arians,' his use of the phrase with respect to the Holy Spirit indicates that he saw refusal to recognize the divinity and *homoousion* of the Spirit as an equivalent affront to Christian dogma. The reference recalls the dominical injunction against slandering the Spirit (cf. Mk 3:28-30) on which Victorinus had commented in an earlier work.[40] Victorinus likely also has in mind Hilary's denomination of the Creed produced at the Council of Sirmium as "the Blasphemy of Sirmium."[41] The adjective *profana*, however, perhaps points in the direction of a source outside the Christian fold. It was used by Hilary to refer to an interpretation of *homoousios* supported by "external" philosophizing.[42]

Victorinus says the people he addresses in this portion of *Adv. Ar.* III are supposing the Holy Spirit to be he "knows not what" (*nescio quid*). He is likely employing this phrase, *nescio quid*, in combination with *suspicetur*, as a rhetorical stratagem to undermine the claims of these Christians (whoever they are) by making the claims seem ridiculous and nonsensical. On the other hand, Victorinus may be genuinely confused as to what they are supposing the Spirit to be; if Victorinus had come across Athanasius's letter to Serapion, the pneumatological perspectives circulating in the Egyptian desert that Athanasius addressed were varied and unusual enough to warrant this response.[43] Hadot thinks Victorinus's dubiousness is owed to the uncertainty (among

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[40] *Adv. Ar.* IA 16, 5-20.

[41] Hilary, *De Syn*. 11 (*PL* 10, 487A). Hilary, as we have seen, named it thus for the Homoian rejection of homoousia and of all language of ousia in theological doctrine (Hilary, *De Syn*. 11 (*PL* 10, 488)).

[42] Hilary, *De Syn*. 81 (*PL* 10, 534B). That *profana* here refers to external philosophizing is Johannes Zachhuber's suggestion in "The Antiochene Synod of AD 363 and the Beginnings of Neo-Nicenism," *Zeitschrift für antikes Christentum* 4 (2000): 83-101, 91.

[43] On Alexandrian perspectives on pneumatology outside of the mainstream view of the universal church, see Bogdan Gabriel Bucur, *Angelomorphic Pneumatology: Clement of Alexandria and Other Early Christian Witnesses* (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2009). Does he have Melchizidekians in view? See Epiphanius, *Panarion* II.5, 2-5; and Kellen Plaxco, "Didymus the Blind, Origen, and the Trinity" (Ph. D. diss., Marquette University and Catholic University of Leuven: 2016), 160-170.

whatever Christians Victorinus is addressing) as to whether the Holy Spirit should be taken as creator or creature.[44]

The final clause ties up the claim that the *duobus* come forth (*provenit*) from the Father who is *esse*. It is interesting to note Victorinus's use of a singular verb for the plural subject *vivere atque intellegere*. The incongruity owes to his treating *vivere atque intellegere* as though it were one noun, insofar as the coming forth is one singular movement in Victorinus's conception. There is one coming forth which afterwards carries out two distinct offices. The second dyad, as he will argue below, is *duo in unum*. 7.9-12. *Id est exsistentia vel subsistentia vel, si altius metu quodam propter nota nomina conscendas dicasque vel exsistentialitatem vel substantialitatem vel essentialitatem id est ὑπαρκτότητα, οὐσιότητα, ὀντότητα.*

Victorinus is continuing to explain what is meant by *id quod est esse*. He adduces further names by which it can be understood, an instance of the rhetorical device *adnominatio*. The pace is brisk, the tone vigorous with the repetition of words similar in form and identical in case. The antecedent of *id est* is *esse*, which is *pater* and *deus*. Victorinus chooses three abstract substantives in order to raise the minds of his readers— he is not afraid of neologisms if they serve his pedagogical and contemplative purpose. It is a rhetorical device similar in intent to the *exemplum* of §5 and the ejaculatory exhortation of §6, though all three differ in mode. The words are not abstract in the sense that they are mere logical ciphers, but in the sense that they are chosen specifically to help the reader avoid the temptation of mental complacency and the soft pull back to thinking in mundane terms. Victorinus is speaking of what is universal, principles, in this

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[44] Hadot, SC 69, 949.

case of existence and substance or essence. The trajectory of trinitarian theological language in this era is towards greater specificity and distinctiveness of the terms *hypostasis* and *ousia*, or *subsistentia* and *substantia* or *essentia*.

He provides the Greek for the Latin terms probably because he began with Greek ideas taken from Greek sources, or because he wants to avoid ambiguity by showing precisely that to which the Latin terms correspond. All three of the Greek substantives are formed by the addition of -τητ to adjective stems, which are themselves derivative of verbal nouns. There are a few possible sources for these specific Greek abstractions. Οὐσιότητα appears in the *Corpus Hermeticum* along with other abstract substantives formed with -τητ: καὶ ὕλης ἐνέργειαν τὴν ὑλότητα, καὶ τῶν σωμάτων <τὴν> σωματότητα, καὶ τῆς οὐσίας τὴν οὐσιότητα καὶ τοῦτό ἐστιν ὁ θεός, τὸ πᾶν. The Hermeticist is exalting the God-All as the essence of essences, the power of every class of thing's *to be*. This passage presents plainly the pattern for this practice: take a predicate belonging to a concrete object; add the abstracting qualifier; the resulting word describes the quality as it is present in essential form in God. If Victorinus is in fact under the *Corpus Hermeticum*'s influence here, he has added his own nuance in that he has made the One God who is pure *esse* to be the power of the Son's being, while the Son who is equivalent to the God-All has in himself all universals and bestows on all things their essential *potentia*. The word οὐσιότητα also occurs in Albinus. Michel Tardieu also gives reference to the Coptic version of *Three Steles of Seth* in which οὐσιότητα appears in its dative form. The source could thus be Hermetic, Platonic, or Gnostic. It is perhaps simply a part of the common philosophical vocabulary. The other two terms, ὑπαρκτότητα and ὀντότητα, may be neologisms of Victorinus. The tendency towards abstraction in this

Hermetic passage and in Middle and Neoplatonic thought would be enough to inspire a philosopher and rhetor to coin his own abstract terms.

Hadot suggests *subsistentia* is a mistake and that *substantia* is more appropriate here.[45] In favor of this reading is the fact that the normal noun forms and their abstract forms are parallel. There are three abstract substantives paired with only two absolute nouns because *substantialitas* and *essentialitas* both correspond to *substantia*. The proper Latin translation of *ousia* has not been settled by this time, so that *substantialitas* and *essentialitas* are both possible Lain equivalents of *ousioteta*. Another argument in favor of reading *substantia* in place of *subsistentia* is the fact that Victorinus can render *hyparxis*, *ousia*, and *ontos* abstractly. If *subsistentia* can be treated as the equivalent of Greek *hypostasis*, one would expect an abstract form of *hypostasis* in place of *hyparxis*. But *hypostasis* by now cannot be made abstract because it refers by definition specifically to a concrete thing in existence. Insofar as *subsistentia* refers specifically to a concrete thing in existence it likewise cannot be made abstract. There are, however, arguments against this reading.[46]

In §8:37-44 of this treatise, Victorinus treats *exsistentia* as the equivalent of *hypostasis* and *subsistentia*. *Essentia* is rare in Victorinus. Besides, above he had treated *subsistentia* as the equivalent of both *ousia* and *hypostasis*.

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[45] Hadot, SC 69, 950. It is unclear whether Hadot thinks the mistake was that of the scribe or of Victorinus himself, as Moreschini and Tommasi note (Moreschini and Tommasi, *Opere Teologiche*, 930, n. 51).
[46] See Hadot's note on *exsistentia* at SC 69, 954. In §8:37-44 of this treatise, Victorinus treats *exsistentia* as the equivalent of *hypostasis* and *subsistentia*. *Essentia* is rare in Victorinus (see §7.28-40 and commentary below).

7.13-16. Omnibus his hoc esse quod dico manens in se suo a se motu virificans potentia sua, qua cuncta virificantur et potentificantur, plena, absoluta, super omnes perfectiones omnimodis est divina perfectio.

Victorinus continues his account of the *pater* who is *esse* and *exsistentia*. The Father's motion is internal, but is the source of all other movement, life, power. Hadot takes the verb *virificans* as having a reflective significance: *esse* provides itself with its own power for living.[47] Divine perfection is full insofar as it bears within itself all *potentia*. The variegated potencies are distributed throughout created things, but are held principially, in fullness and in full concentration, in the divine triad.

7.16-21. Hic est deus, supra voῦv, supra veritatem, omnipotens potentia et idcirco non forma. Noῦς autem et veritas forma, sed non ut inherens alteri, inseparabilis forma, sed ut inseparabiliter adnexa ad declarationem potentiae dei patris eadem substantia vel imago vel forma.

Victorinus is explaining the Father's transcendence in order to show His relation to the Logos. The God and Father as pure *esse* is the power by which all things are given their own power of being and being what they are. Receiving strength or force (*virificantur*) means receiving their own proper activity and ability to flourish, whereas *potentificantur* (apparently a Victorinian neologism, along with *virificans* and its passive *virificantur*) is the gift of being that the *omnipotens potentia* gives to all without suffering diminution of itself.[48]

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[47] Hadot, SC 69, 950; Hadot refers to Porphyry, *Sententiae* XXXV, where a similar idea is articulated.
[48] See Lewis Ayres, "The Holy Spirit as Undiminished Giver: Didymus the Blind's *De Spiritu Sancto* and the Development of pro-Nicene Pneumatological Traditions," in Janet Rutherford and Vincent Twomey, eds., *The Theology of the Holy Spirit in the Fathers of the Church* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2010), 57-72.

While *autem*, which appears nineteen times in §§6-12, is typically Victorinus's way of indicating that he is providing proofs for one of his premises, it appears here to indicate the beginning of a minor premise. Major premise: The Father as *esse* is beyond substance and beyond form and beyond intelligibility.[49] Minor premise: The *Nous* and truth are form, though not as accidental forms that have no being apart from the substantial form in which they inhere. Rather, they are form as inseparably linked to the power of God the Father to reveal him; that is, they are inseparable on the analogy of acts to power, not as accidents to substances. The conclusion is that the *Nous* faithfully reveals the Father, being of the same substance as the Father and the Father's image or form. This general relation is presented in a variety of ways at §7:28-40 below.

Nous and truth are form because they are the two poles of intelligibility. *Nous* is what is capable of knowing, truth is the intelligible form as known. Intelligibility is characteristic of and coextensive with form; what is beyond form is beyond intelligibility. Truth in the true sense is a quality of eternal things (things *in divinis et aeternis*), a Platonic commonplace that is found in Victorinus's account of things that truly are (cf. *Ad Cand.* 13-16).

7.21-28. *Illud igitur primum quod esse diximus, quod deus est, et silentium dictum et quies atque cessatio. Quod si ita est, potentiae progressio—quae non quidem progressio sed apparentia est et, si progressio, non dimittens unde progreditur, sed cum conexione progressio, magis autem apparentia; non enim fuit aliquid extra, quod progressio fieret, ubique enim deus et omnis deus—ergo potentiae progressio actus extitit.*

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[49] Cf. Porphyry, *Sent.* XXV.

The Father whose transcendence Victorinus has been explaining also brings forth an *imago*. He explains here what that bringing forth means. There is nowhere for God to move toward, God being both omnipresent and immaterial; the Aristotelian accidents including "place" and "position" do not properly apply to the noetic, let alone to the divine. The halting, hesitant language of this passage is due to the limitations inherent to language itself. Victorinus is careful to avoid giving the impression that the going forth of the Son is a departure and wants to exclude any bodily imaginations of his derivation.

One could just as easily raise the same objections to *apparentia* as Victorinus does to *progressio*; it is no less sensual a metaphor. But *apparentia* is being used to correct the metaphor of *progressio* by emphasizing that there is no departure from the source, only manifestation. The Logos is the image, the manifestation of the hidden. What appears is readily recognized as being of the same nature though distinct, whereas *progressio* may have suggested to the hearer not only distinction but separation. The use of multiple metaphors, especially as they are used to correct one another, shows performatively that all metaphors are limited and inadequate to things *in divinis*. 7.28-40. *Is actus, si silentium deus est, verbum dicitur, si cessatio, motus, si essentia, vita, quod, ut docuimus, in eo quod est silentium est tacens verbum et in eo quod est quies vel cessatio inest vel occultus motus vel occulta actio. Necessario itaque et a cessatione natus motus et nata actio est vel a silentio verbum vel ab essentia vita. Ergo ista, essentia, silentium, cessatio, pater, hoc est deus pater. At vero vita, verbum, motus aut actio, magisque omnia ista motus aut actio; etenim omnia illa activa sunt; vita et verbum motu vigent et motu operantur.*

Now he describes the relation between the first principle (*primum esse*) and its divine procession. The predications of and appellations for God and each of the Persons of the Trinity are context dependent. While Victorinus does not think any name adequate or proper to God, there is a *ratio* for how the Persons are called because there is an order in God.[50] Theologically, God's quiescent movement is not a matter of undifferentiated latency, as though the original unity expands into a Trinity. We have seen this was the physical model of the Stoics, which Christians such as Marcellus erroneously applied to the Christian Trinity. Such an application was explicitly rejected at Sirmium in 351.

The order presented here is analogous to what we find among created things metaphysically, cognitionally, and physically. The metaphysical relation is that of the triad of being, living, and understanding. This triad applies most properly to the noetic realm (that of the intelligences) above the corporeal but below the divine realms. The cognitional order comprises a silence before all thought, a mind capable of thought but not yet activated; then a thought which is perfect before being expressed externally; and finally, that thought articulated.[51] Physically, a thing is said to be living insofar as it is enacting its essential power (*vigere*). Its life is from its essence both formally—the kind of life it has depends on its form—and efficiently in that the essence is a thing's first act which is the power (*potentia*) of its second act.[52]

Victorinus uses *essentia* in only two other places in his *oeuvre*, *Adv. Ar.* IV 6, 5 and in an oblique form at *In Phil.* 4:1.[53] Victorinus's reticence regarding *essentia* may be

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[50] Cf. Lactantius, *Divine Institutes*, IV.8.
[51] VIctorinus's use of *verbum* here is rare, as Hadot notes (SC 69, 951).
[52] Cf. *adv. Ar.* IV 8, 26-29 (CSEL 83.1, 236).
[53] The reference to *adv. Ar.* IV is noted by Hadot, SC 69, 951; he misses the second reference to the Pauline commentary.

explained by the lack of precedent in the Christian tradition combined with his own sensitivity (as was appropriate for *rhetor urbis Romae*) to *Latinitas* and the *vitii oratoriae*. Quintilian had criticized Plautus for adopting *essentia* as the proper Latin word for rendering Greek *ousia*. He passed on the authoritative judgment that Plautus's translations *essentia* and *queentia* for *ousia* were awkward.[54] Apuleius for his part had rendered *substantia* and *essentia* synonymous, translating *ousia* by both terms.[55] Few before Victorinus seemed to have followed Apuleius or Plautus in using *essentia* for *ousia*, for the Latin term is hardly in use among non-Christian authors and fared little better among Christians. Tertullian uses it only a couple of times, as does Hilary.[56] One of the occurrences in Hilary, however, is directly pertinent in that he places *substantia* and *essentia* side-by-side as apparent synonyms for Greek *ousia*.[57]

Victorinus has reason to use *essentia* here instead of *substantia* because he does not want to undermine his argument that the Son is the same *substantia* as the Father. Since he is explaining derivation and the *esse-vivere-intellegere* triad in various isomorphic relations, it makes sense to use *essentia* with *vita* to keep the differently articulated triadic relations clear. That the word was uncommon in Latin texts does not indicate that it would be difficult for Victorinus's theologically sensitive audience to

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[54] Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria*, ed. and tr. by Donald A. Russell, LCL 125 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002), II.14, 349 and n. 1; see also VIII.3, 33, in LCL 126, 359.

[55] Apuleius, *De Platone et eius dogmate*, I.6, 1 (*essentias*) and 8 (*essentiae*).

[56] An LLT search of "essentia" yields less than 20 hits before Ambrose, five belonging to Victorinus. Tertullian uses the word three times across his corpus (once in *De Carne*, and in *Adv. Val.* CSEL, 206, 2). Hilary of Poitiers uses it three times. Given the importance of *ousia* for Christian discourse, the paucity of instances of *essentia* is a strong argument that it was not seen as an important theological term until the last quarter of the fourth century. *Substantia*, on the contrary, occurs over 2600 times in fourth-century authors alone, including nearly five-hundred times in Victorinus's *oeuvre*.

[57] Hilary, *De Syn*. 12 (*PL* 10, 489-490).

understand its introduction here—the problem was its awkwardness, not its unintelligibility.

7.40-47. *Universalis autem motus, qui principalis est motus, a se oritur. Quid enim est motus, nisi a se sibi motus sit? Nam si ab alio movetur, est quiddam aliud quam motus, quod ab alio movetur. Et si illud quod hoc nescio quid movet motus non est, movere non potest; unde enim moveat, non habebit. Sin motus a motu nascitur. Motus ergo a se nascitur, sed hoc est: dedit ei pater [ut a se] ei vita esset.*

Victorinus now addresses the significance of motion in God—the primary theme of his fabricated correspondence with 'Candidus.' Victorinus provides here an essential definition for motion as what has movement "from itself for itself." The genus is "to be moved," whereas the specific difference is "from itself, for itself." This definition applies to the Father and the Son, since the Father has given the Son to have life from Himself, so that both Father and Son are the principle of motion in all things, the Father being the principle and power of the Son and giving to the Son to be principle and power of all else. Victorinus recalls the classical distinction between movement *a se* and movement *ab alio*.[58] The present argument shows that the Son as movement is identical to the Father as movement. The Son is universal and original movement properly speaking, which is to say movement in act, whereas the Father is movement before that movement has any effect (hidden movement) which must be movement as power-to-move. The Father gives to the Son to have life *a se* in that the Father is the power which is actualized in the Son. Victorinus has been favoring the verb "manifests" in these chapters to express this actualizing function. Thus the "*se*" in *a se* for the Father is the Father's own self.

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[58] As articulated by Plato in *Phaedrus* 245c-e. Cf. Cicero, *Res Publica*, VI.25: XXV, and Macrobius, *in Somn. Scip.* II 16,11 quoted by Hadot, SC 69, 952.

It is unclear whether the "*se*" from which the Son's movement is generated is the Son's own self or is the *se* of the Father.[59] The Son has his movement and being from himself, but this is to say from his own essential power. To say the Son has movement *a se* is not equivalent to saying the Son has *potentia* or *esse a se*. The Son's *potentia* is the Father, or is from the Father. Once he has his *potentia* from the Father, he has the power to move *a se*. That is, since this power to move is from the *potentia* which now belongs to him, then for the Son to have movement *a se* means at once to have from the Father (remotely) and from himself (proximately) the power to act. The Son's activity is not actualized by any other than himself. The fact that the soul has *vivere* as its essence— since all things that are in the most proper sense alive have in common the ability to move themselves without external impulse—is what makes the soul the *imago* of the Logos, as Victorinus had pointed out in the opening section of this treatise.[60]

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§8: *Summary*

Victorinus continues his discussion of *Logos* as life, motion, and the universal creative cause of all things who, in making all things, bestows on them being and life. He shows how the Son is of the same substance as the Father, and how the Son and Spirit are distinct yet identical and are both of one and the same *ousia* as the Father. He says here some surprising things about the relation of the Son and Jesus to the Holy Spirit. Given

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[59] The notion of self-generation (*motus ergo a se nascitur*) has an important place in Hellenistic and late antique philosophy. See John Whittaker, "The Historical Background of Proclus' Doctrine of the Αὐθυπόστατα," in *De Jamblique a Proclus*, ed. Heinrich Dörrie (Vandœuvres-Genève: Fondation Hardt, 1975), 193-230; and again, Whittaker, "Self-Generating Principles in Second-Century Gnostic Systems," in *Studies in Platonism and Patristic Thought* (London: Variorum Reprints, 1984), XVII, 176-189; Hadot, *Porphyre et Victorinus* I, 297ff.
[60] See also *Adv. Ar.* IV 13, 5-14.

the importance of §8 for Victorinus's pneumatology and recognizing that my reading of

Victorinus's pneumatology and trinitarian theology as set forth here will be controversial

among Victorinian scholars, I will address these discrepancies and clarify some of the

peculiarities of Victorinus's pneumatology in two excurses at the end of the dissertation.

Commentary

8.1-5. *Ergo motus et unus est motus et a se motus et, cum in patre occultus sit atque inde*

hic motus apparens, a patre motus et, quia a motu motus, ideo a se motus et unus motus,

unde unicus filius.

     Hadot sees this passage as a summary of §2.40-54.[61] The *ergo* indicates the

conclusion of the previous argument concerning what it means for the Son to be motion

and motion *a se*. This motion is only one in spite of motion's two aspects: hidden and

manifest. Because there is only one motion—which is the selfsame motion of the Father

and the Son—there can be no more than one Son who is this motion in act. All specific

movements come from this one universal movement, which is the genus of all activity.

8.5-8. *Hic λόγος universalis in omnibus, per quem facta sunt omnia. Hic vita omnibus,*

quia quae facta sunt, vivunt omnia. Hic etiam Iesus Christus est, quia ad vitam salvavit

omnia. Unus ergo motus et unus filius et unicus, quia unica vita et una vita sola quae

aeterna.

     The *unicus filius* who comes forth from the Father without being divided from the

Father Victorinus now explains as the creator of all things, receiving this creative

potentia from the Father who is unqualified *esse* and the *potentia* of the Son. He has thus

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[61] Hadot, SC 69, 952.

moved from the transcendent first principle, to the divine and exteriorized activity of God, now dealing with the way in which the Logos mediates between the Father and the world. Victorinus connects the Logos and Jesus Christ *via* the common term life on the basis of Scripture. The universal Logos is the cause of the life of all things, as is stated in John's Prologue, for the Logos made all and he was the life of all. Victorinus knows Jesus means savior. What he saved us for is eternal life. The phrase *ad vitam salvavit*, though by no means an unusual phrase, is strikingly similar in form to a passage in the second of *The Three Steles of Seth*: "Empower us that we may be saved to eternal life."[62] Thus the Logos and Jesus Christ are proven to be the same insofar as they both give life, specifically life that is eternal. Only one life is eternal, that which is unique and universal, just as in Plato the true forms of all things have the qualities of uniqueness, universality, and eternality.[63]

8.9-11. *Ergo ὁμοούσιος filius patri. Vita enim pater et vita filius, quae οὐσία est. Item motus pater et motus filius, quae etiam haec οὐσία est. Neque enim ibi aliquid accidens.*

      The Son is *homoousios* with the Father because the motion that the Son is is none other than the selfsame motion that the Father is. One motion defines and expresses the single substance. Both Father and Son are *vita*, and the *vita* that the Son is is also the *ousia* of God. *Motus in divinis* is the same as *ousia* and among divine and eternal things, there are no accidents, but God is *substantialiter simplex* and is altogether *substantia*, as Victorinus has frequently argued.

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[62] James M. Robinson (tr.), *The Three Steles of Seth* (*NHC* VII, 5.123.33-124.2), in *The Nag Hammadi Library in English*, ed. James M. Robinson (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 400.

[63] See *Adv. Ar.* IV 5, 31-41 (CSEL 83.1, 230-231).

8.12-16. *Ergo et verbum pater—licet tacens verbum, verbum tamen—et verbum filius et hoc* οὐσία. *Quicquid enim vel est vel agit atque operatur,* οὐσία, *et ubi magis* οὐσία *verbum. Non enim ut hic aer sonans verbum sed ut hic aliquid agens verbum.*

  Victorinus continues arguing for the *homoousia* of Father and Son by looking specifically at the *nomen* '*verbum.*' The Son is essentially *verbum* and the Son is of the same *ousia* as the Father. In fact, the Word properly speaking, that is by predominance (*magis*), is *ousia*; the Father is really beyond *ousia*. Thus the Father is also *verbum*. Victorinus qualifies how the Father and Son are each *verbum*. The Father is *verbum* reserved, not spoken. *Tacens verbum* is similar, but not equivalent, to the philosophical (and Marcellan, *apud* Eusebius) *logos endiathetos*.[64] Marcellus was accused of using the concept (though not necessarily the exact words) to explain the undifferentiated unity in the Godhead before the coming forth of the Word to become the incarnate Son of God, Jesus Christ.[65] The Stoic meaning is something more like the thought one has before it is expressed externally or which accompanies knowledge.[66] *Tacens verbum* has a meaning and function in Victorinus's thought that is distinct from either of these for two reasons. First, pro-Nicene orthodoxy had insisted on the hypostatic and eternal reality of the *verbum dei*. Thus by stressing that the Word is *ut hic aliquid agens verbum*, Victorinus confronts the Marcellan conception of the Word as internally identical to God and only

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[64] The origin of the distinction between *logos endiathetos* and *logos prophorikos* is uncertain, but is traditionally taken to be Stoic. See Adam Kamesar, "The Logos Endiathetos and the Logos Prophorikos in Allegorical Interpretation: Philo and the D-Scholia to the Iliad," *Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies* 44 (2004): 163–181, especially the list of scholarly positions given in n. 1, 163-164. See the section on Marcellus in ch. 1 §IV.2 (see Eusebius, *Eccl. Th.* 1.17.7; 2.15.2 and 4; ET: Eusebius of Caesarea, *Against Marcellus and On Ecclesiastical Theology*, tr. Kelley McCarthy Spoerl and Markus Vinzent, FC 135 (Washington, D. C.: Catholic University of America Press, 2017), 189, 249, 250).
[65] See the preceding note.
[66] Cf. Kamesar, "The Logos Endiathetos and the Logos Prophorikos."

differentiated economically. The *verbum* is *agens* as a substantive participle, indicating both a *verbum* that is efficacious (as Clark translates) and an agent.[67]

Second, Victorinus's *verbum* in the context of his cognitional theory is Platonic rather than Stoic: it is not a concept but the grasping of an intelligible form—as he has said at the beginning of *Ad Cand.*: the Spirit has given us figurations in our soul.[68] This cognitional meaning of *verbum* thus becomes an image that may be applied metaphysically to the relation of Son to Father, in the light of Nicene homoousian theology. Victorinus articulates a realist (as opposed to merely notional) definition of primary substance (*ousia*) as that which *est vel agit atque operatur*.
8.16-21. *Unus ergo filius, quia unus motus. Una vita, quia una sola vita quae aeterna. Nec enim vita quae aliquando morietur. Numquam autem morietur, si se sciat. Scire autem se non poterit, nisi deum sciat et deum qui vita est et vera vita est ac fons vitae.*

On *unus filius*, Hadot comments, "Cette insistance sur l'unité du Fils annonce le développement sur l'Esprit-Saint . . . le Fils est unique, mais le Logos est double."[69] There is only one begetting and only one actualization of divine power. The unique begetting produces a *geminus* and the single activity of the Logos comprises two operations (see above §2.44-54 and below at §9.1-8).

Self-knowledge is knowledge that returns to its source, it is in fact knowledge of one's principle, one's origin.[70] That origin is found *in divinis et aeternis*, where there is

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[67] Hadot points out the correspondence of *aer sonans* to George of Laodicea's letter preserved in Epiphanius *Panar.* 73, 12, 3 (Hadot, SC 69, 952). Cf. also Tertullian, *adv. Prax.* 7 "For you refuse to consider him [the Holy Spirit] substantive in objectivity for what, you will say, is a word except voice and oral sound and (as the grammarians' tradition has it) smitten air intelligible in the hearing."
[68] *Ad Cand.* 6-12.
[69] Hadot, SC 69, 953.
[70] On the nature of self-knowledge for intellectual beings see Plotinus, *Enn.* II.9.1, 47-49: "when the true Intellect thinks itself among its intelligible thoughts and its intelligible object does not come from outside

true being, true life, true intelligence. Thus, knowledge of self coincides with knowledge of the Logos who is the source of the soul. Knowledge of the Logos is knowledge of the Father whose image the Logos is, and simultaneously it is knowledge of everything since the Logos is the universal of universals. Hence the Hermetic saying, "Who knows himself, knows the All."[71]

This mention of knowledge (of self and of God) as the condition for true and eternal life is where Victorinus begins turning the corner to his treatment of the Spirit, the *magister intellegentiae*. For it is the Holy Spirit who enables true knowledge of Christ. Here he only adds a comparatively brief recognition of the Spirit as knowledge and the third of the triad after describing in great detail the nature and power (*natura et vis*) of the Son—as life, motion, image—and the Son's relation to the Father. He will begin now in earnest to differentiate the Son and the Holy Spirit while maintaining their identity in and as movement.

8.21-24. *Hoc si ita est, deo cognito, cognoscet omnia, quia a deo omnia et in omnibus deus et deus omnia. Hoc Iohannes clamat: haec est autem vita aeterna, ut cognoscant te solum et verum deum et quem misisti Iesum Christum.*

Victorinus is explaining the relation between knowledge and life, and the content of knowledge that is salutary. He has in view principial, not encyclopedic, knowledge; that is, knowledge of causes rather than familiarity with all particulars. To know the *fons vitae* is to have *vita aeterna*, and to know the Son and through Him to know the Father

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itself but rather it is itself its intelligible object, then it necessarily includes itself in its thinking and sees itself."

[71] Jean-Pierre Mahé, *Hermes en Haute-Égypte* II (Quebec: University of Laval Press, 1982), 393, quoted in English translation by Gilles Quispel, "Hermes Trismegistus and the Origins of Gnosticism," *Vigiliae Christianae* 46 (1992): 1-19, 1.

whom He manifests. Victorinus has repeated the same pattern from §§1-3: (1) establish the relation of *Logos* or Son to the Father, using more familiar likenesses along the way, but being careful to indicate the limitations of the likenesses and point the reader beyond them; (2) offer brief christological instruction that includes casting Christ as *vita* and the source of our *vita aeterna*; (3) highlight our epistemic limitations and how they are overcome both objectively through the economic work of Christ and subjectively through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit and the contemplative pursuit of true self-knowledge.

8.25-30. *Cognitio est vita. Porro autem sive vita, sive cognitio motus est unus et idem motus agens vitam et per vitam cognitionem et per cognitionem vitam. Idem ergo motus duo officia conplens vitam et cognoscentiam. Λόγος autem motus est et λόγος filius. Filius igitur unicus in eo quod filius. In eo autem quod λόγος, geminus.*

Victorinus identifies life and intelligence and explains that identity as well as the relation of the two things. Life and intelligence are one movement—in fact one and the same—filling two offices. These roles are two species of the genus movement. The two can be seen as ordered in two ways. (1) First, it is through life that knowledge is brought about, and this again in two ways. (a) Victorinus has already illustrated that the *cernere* which completes the act of vision is dependent upon the *vigere* of seeing which is sight's *vivere*. The act of seeing which precedes recognition is the *conditio sine qua non* of *discernere* and is sight's first flourishing, as *visio* is brought from *potentia* to a power in act. This is from the point of view of motive cause: life needs to be in motion in order for knowledge to be actualized because the latter cannot put itself into act in the absence of the motion of life (in the generic, quasi-symbolic way Victorinus used *vivere* in his illustration). (b) The second way in which knowledge is brought about through life is

found at the point at which *physike* (natural science) meets epistemology. A thing cannot

be known unless it is active, for the activity of a thing is what presents it outside of itself.

One reaches knowledge of the *potentia* through knowledge of the *actus*, and knowledge

of the *substantia* through knowledge of the *potentia*. These steps mark the subjective

conditioning of knowledge by life and the objective necessity of life for knowledge. Life

in both cases means effectively proper action.

(2) The second ordering is from knowledge to life. Knowledge is the perfection of

a thing's activity which presupposes a thing's flourishing (*vigere*). Perfection entails a

thing's restoration to its source, an activation that is absolute so as to allow no

declensions or cessations from its proper activity. Such perfection is true and eternal and

therefore everlasting life, because it will not admit of its opposite, death, and will not

change.

Victorinus takes *filius* and *logos* not always as proper names but frequently as

attributes. It is clear in this context that Victorinus thinks the two of the second dyad are

in fact the one *filius unigenitus* (explained above, ch. 3 under §2.26-32). The "Son" is

unicus because there is only one *motus* which is either at rest (the Father) or active

motion (the "Son"). There is only one begetting because the active motion which is born

(*nascitur*) from the Father is one motion, hence the *filius* is *unigenitus*.[72] Hadot comments

on this passage as follows. "Victorinus veut dire qu'il n'y a qu'un seul acte de génération,

mais que le mouvement ainsi engendré est double."[73] By "le mouvement," Hadot refers to

the two distinct *officia* which this single *motus* accomplishes. It is this double *officia* that

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[72] *Ad Cand.* 15, 1-4 (CSEL 83.1, 32): "Filius ergo Iesus Christus et solus natus filius, quoniam illud προὸν nihil aliud genuit quam ὂν ante omnia et omnimodis perfectum ὄν, quod non potest esse cum altero, et quoniam quod omnimodis perfectum est altero non eget."
[73] Cf. Hadot, SC 69, 953.

accounts for the economic distinction between Christ and Holy Spirit. Again, then, *in eo quod filius*—i.e., the quality of being derived from the first principle—the two are not distinct, but *in eo quod logos* the only-begotten "Son" is *geminus*. This helps us see that *filius* names a relation of origin, whereas *logos* names an act of (and from) a substance.

8.30-37. *Ipse enim vita, ipse cognoscentia, utroque operatus ad animarum salutem, mysterio crucis et vita, quia de morte liberandi fueramus, mysterio autem cognoscentiae, per spiritum sanctum, quia is magis[ter] datus et ipse omnes docuit et testimonium de Christo dixit, quod est cognitionem vitam agere et ex hoc deum cognoscere, quod est vitam veram fieri, et hoc est testimonium de Christo dicere.*

The mystery of Christ is twofold, involving the mystery of the cross and the mystery of knowledge. The first is the work of the incarnate Son, Jesus (discussed above, ch. 3, under §3.27-34); the second is accomplished by the Holy Spirit. The mystery of Christ includes our redemption and adoption as children of God: "This was what was accomplished in the Mystery: that he would redeem all who believe in him; that all who believe in him might become adopted sons."[74] Belief in Christ is the condition for the possibility of an individual's appropriation of redemption. Faith is the gift of the Spirit: "no one comes to know God without having been called." Christ sends the Holy Spirit "who, descending into our hearts, makes the Father easily known." To believers "is sent . . . the Spirit of the Son, meaning the Holy Spirit, so that they would hasten, hurry to the Father, and cry out with a kind of inner sanctification and an inner voice." Thus faith is individually or subjectively redemptive, prompted by the Spirit and enacted by our acceptance of Christ, "that he is the Son of God, that he himself saves us, and that he

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[74] Cooper, *Galatians*, 308; *In Gal.* 4.5, 15-17 (CSEL 83.2, 142).

carried out that mystery for our sake and did all those things in the gospel we have discussed." It gives knowledge which frees and brings justification. This faith is in Christ, in the mystery which Christ accomplished, and is therefore salutary because of what the Passion of Christ has achieved objectively.

8.37-44. *Ita dei filius Christus, id est λόγος et filius vita et, quia idem motus, etiam et cognoscentia filius est, opere quo vita est Iesus exsistens, opere autem quo cognoscentia est spiritus sanctus et ipse exsistens, ut sint exsistentiae duae, Christi et spiritus sancti, in uno motu qui filius est. Et hinc et a patre Iesus: ex ore altissimi processi et spiritus sanctus etiam ipse a patre, quia unus motus utramque exsistentiam protulit.*

Victorinus explains how the twofold activities of life and intelligence are properly ascribed to the distinct persons of Christ and the Holy Spirit. He quotes "from the mouth of the Most High I have come forth," from Sirach in illustration of the relation of Jesus to the Father, which he will then extend to the Holy Spirit on the basis of the identity of Jesus and the Holy Spirit's motion. This passage from Sirach was used by earlier Christians similarly to defend the eternality of the Son. To this end it occurs in Lactantius, Cyprian, and Pseudo-Cyprian.[75] There is not consensus, however, on the verb used to express the coming forth from the mouth of the most high. Lactantius and Cyprian give *prodivi*, while Ps.-Cyprian has *procreatus es*, compared to the *processi* found here. Victorinus reassigns the authorship from Jesus son of Sirach (Sir. 50:27) to Jesus Christ without comment. Despite this indirect indication that Victorinus knew the

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[75] Lactantius, *Divine Institutes*, IV.8, "ego inquit ex ore altissimi prodiui ante omnem creaturam"; Cyprian of Carthage, *Ad Quirinum*, II.1, "Item apud eundem in ecclesiastico: ego ex ore altissimi prodiui ante omnem creaturam"; Ps. Cyprian, *Or.* 2, "te inuocamus supplices pariter et deprecamur [fili unigenite], qui ex ore altissimi procreatus es ante mundi dispositionem et ex Mariae sanctae uirginis utero per mysterium editus."

author's name, he nevertheless mistakenly quotes Sirach in the name of Solomon at *Adv. Ar.* IV.18, 30. Augustine bears witness, however, that this was a common mistake in the Latin tradition.[76]

8.44-49. *Et quia quae habet pater filio dedit omnia, ideo et filius, qui motus est, dedit omnia spiritui sancto. Omnia enim quae habet de me habet, inquit. Etenim, quia et ipse motus est, de motu habet. Non enim filius illi dedit, sed ille, inquit, de meo habet.*

Victorinus offers an exegesis of Jn. 16:15, shoring up his argument concerning the internal motion of the Father and the twofold motion of the Son and Holy Spirit. *Filius* here clearly means the second divine Person, because the Son is giving to the Holy Spirit and thus the two are distinct. Although Jn. 16:15 presents the relation of Jesus and the Holy Spirit specifically as they cooperate in salvation, Victorinus takes the passage to be disclosing something of the ontological relation of Son and Spirit. That is, while the gospel seems to mean this as an economic claim that forms part of the narrative of the life and work of Christ, Victorinus takes it as having theological bearing. But Victorinus says in the very next line that the Son does not give to the Spirit, pointing out that Christ says "the Spirit has from me." Life does not give knowledge, but life in action is the means whereby knowledge is enacted.[77] The Spirit and Son are both *motus* and one *motus*, though the modes of each one's movement are different. The Spirit has *motus* from the Son insofar as the movement of the Spirit as *intellegere* depends on the movement of the Son as *vivere* as a condition of its own actuality.

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[76] See Augustine, *De civ. dei*, xvii.20, and *Retr.*, ii.4. This is carried forward in the seventh-century bishop of Toledo, Ildephonsus: "*Audi ipsum per Salomonem: 'Ego ex ore Altissimi processi'*" (Ildephonsus, *Liber de Virginitate Perpetua Sanctae Mariae*, III.5 (*PL* 96: 71C)). The same reading of the text without the ascription to Solomon (but rather *per Prophetam*) occurs in Beatus, *Elipandi Epistolae*, *Epistola Prima* 7 (*PL* 96: 863D).

[77] This relationship was explained above under §8.16-21.

This does not mean, however, that the Spirit has either its *potentia* or its particular mode of movement from the Son. Given two movements of which is one is the motive cause of the other, insofar as their modes of movement are qualitatively distinct, the second does not have the quality of its motion from the first movement; it has only that it is moved. But once it is moved, the mode of its activity will present it as distinct from the movement of the first. The two will be one in genus and will have a relation to one another, but their species being different, the second will not rely on the first for its formal characteristics. This means that while the Holy Spirit may be moved by the Son, it has its mode of being directly and immediately from the Father. Diverse species of movement cannot be causes for one another with respect to the quality of their movement.

8.49-50. *Principaliter enim motus vita est et ipsa vita scientia est et cognoscentia.*

Principaliter is another way of formulating predominance (*magis*). Movement is predominantly life and life is also knowledge. The concept of predominance qualifies this transitive argument; Victorinus is straining the limits of language in his effort to account for distinction, identity, and relation *in divinis*. The Spirit as predominantly knowledge is also life and movement, but if the *motus* is one and life is intelligence and intelligence is life, there is yet an ordered relation between *intellegere* and *vivere*.

8.50-53. *Ergo quicquid habet cognoscentia, de vita habet. Haec summa trinitas, haec summa unalitas: omnia quaecumque habet pater, mea sunt; propterea dixi: quia de meo accipiet et adnuntiabit vobis.*

The Spirit proceeds from the Father and receives from the Son on the testimony of Scripture and in accordance with philosophical reasoning. Victorinus emphasizes the

relation between knowledge and life, asserting that one who has *cognoscentia* receives it from *vita*. The *exemplum* of §5 gives the model for understanding this relation, for the perfection of knowledge requires the subjective going forth to know, the *vigere* corresponding to *vita*. His use of the neat formula *haec summa trinitas, haec summa unalitas* appears unique to Victorinus. A search of the term *unalitas* in the LLT returns seven instances in Victorinus, but nothing before him. He seems then to have coined the term. It fits with his general practice of rendering common nouns into abstract nouns when he wants to emphasize the transcendence of the object under discussion, as above §7.9-12.

Hilary, on the basis of Jn. 16:14-15, raised the question of whether procession and reception meant the same.[78] He did not come down either way, but concluded at least that the reception of the Son from the Father was the same as the reception of the Spirit Paraclete from the Son.[79] Indeed Jn 16:14-15 had been an important point of exegetical and theological disagreement from Origen through Eunomius and Didymus.[80] The question, so pertinent for later discussions of the *filioque*, is whether the Spirit's reception from Jesus in the economy implies, indeed reveals, that the Spirit receives from the Son in eternity. Is reception equivalent to procession? And more broadly, does the economy reveal such intimate details of who God is in Himself? These and other pneumatological questions raised so far require a sustained treatment in the form of an excursus found at the end of the dissertation.

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[78] Hilary, *De Trin.* VIII, 20 (*PL* 10: 251A-B).
[79] Hilary, *De Trin.*VIII.20: "But if one believes that there is a difference between receiving from the Son and proceeding from the Father, surely to receive from the Son and to receive from the Father will be regarded as one and the same thing" (*NPNF*, IX).
[80] See Kellen Plaxco, "Didymus the Blind, Origen, and the Trinity" (Ph. D. diss., Marquette University and Catholic University of Leuven: 2016).

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§9: *Summary*

Victorinus argues from Scripture that the Spirit is both knowledge and life. He establishes the distinctiveness of the Holy Spirit from Father and Son; then that the Spirit has the same essential qualities as the Son and the Father; finally, Victorinus concludes that there is in the Trinity consubstantial identity and existential distinctiveness.

Commentary

9.1-8. *Hoc igitur satis clarum faciet esse quod pater est et vitam quod est filius et cognoscentiam quod est spiritus sanctus unum esse et unam esse substantiam, subsistentias tres, quia ab eo quod est esse quae substantia est, motus, quia et ipse, ut docuimus, ipsa substantia est, gemina potentia valet et vitalitatis et sapientiae atque intellegentiae, ita scilicet, ut in omnibus singulis terna sint. Ergo spiritus sanctus scientia est et sapientia.*

Victorinus paraphrases the Greek formula this time in Latin and without prepositions: one substance in three subsistences. The twin power is indicative of a twofold capacity, a power capable of doing two distinct but related things. *Sapientiae atque intellegentiae* is another example of redundancy, seen above at §7.22 and §8.14, though now it has a bit more than rhetorical purpose. By pairing the terms, Victorinus provides himself with more tools with which to argue his point by finding synonymous terms used as predicates of the Spirit. Hadot points to the final clause as indicative of "la

grande préoccupation de Victorinus, en ce livre, est bien l'Esprit-Saint."[81] This "grande

préoccupation" became apparent in the previous section.

9.9. *Hoc ita esse probant sacrae lectiones*.

Having explained his trinitarian metaphysics with only sprinkled scriptural

allusions—largely brief expositions of John's gospel—Victorinus now turns to found his

teaching on the Holy Scriptures. The *hoc* seems to refer to the immediately preceding

statement, *ergo spiritus sanctus scientia est et sapientia*. In *Ad Cand.* he had deliberately

begun with the Scriptures in order to undermine Candidus's arguments by showing them

to be founded on the lesser authority of human reason rather than on the divine words. In

the absence of any polemical purpose in this treatise he is content to come to the

Scriptures for proofs and confirmations rather gradually.

9.9-12. *Quis dei mentem cognovit, nisi solus spiritus? Ipse spiritus testimonium reddet

spiritui nostro. Quis testis sine scientia? Et scientia ipsa, quia sapientia est, docet nos

esse filios dei.*

Victorinus explains the proper activity of the Holy Spirit as given in Scripture.

The Spirit bearing testimony with our spirit makes clear Victorinus's tripartite

anthropology. He had called upon his own spirit at the start of §6. We see starkly the

distinction between the spirit which is breathed into us, which belongs to us as our

highest point by which we touch the divine, and the divine Spirit by which the Christian

is inspired beyond the limits of human nature.

Victorinus the philosopher, before becoming Christian, defines wisdom as the

knowledge of things human and divine: "*Ostendit quid sit plena sapientia: sapiens est*

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[81] Hadot, SC 69, 955.

enim qui diuina atque humana optime nouit. Ergo studium rectae rationis ad diuina,

studium honesti officii ad humana referamus."[82] When Victorinus becomes Christian,

however, his understanding of wisdom becomes more biblical, specifically more Pauline.

He distinguishes between the *sapientia mundi* and that *sapientia et prudentia* that is from

God.

> *Reliqua enim vel mundana sapientia licet, alia huiusmodi extra mundum licet,*
>
> *sine Christo tamen, et vana et misera sapientia est et omnis prudentia, illa scilicet*
>
> *ratione quia qui Christum cognoscit Christum accipit, qui Christum accipit*
>
> *spiritus fit, spiritus cum fit spiritaliter omnia agendo, inter filios adoptione*
>
> *suscipitur et quodammodo et ipse exsistit.*[83]

Christian wisdom is knowledge of spiritual things; the knowledge of mundane things has

dropped out as the Pauline account of *sapientia* draws a firm line of differentiation.

Wisdom which is received from the Spirit of Christ teaches us to be children of God, for

we have been made into children of God already through Christ, now we must learn what

the life of a child of God entails. Victorinus explains the witness of the Spirit in forensic

terms, asking rhetorically *quis testis sine scientia*.

9.12-16. *Item: quis autem scrutatur corda, quis scit cogitatione? Spiritus. Item quomodo*

ad scientiam iunguntur ambo: veritatem dico in Christo. Ubi veritas, ibi scientia. Quia

veritas Christus, ideo et scientia, quod est spiritus sanctus.

Victorinus continues explaining the proper activity of the Spirit. As in §6

Victorinus proved the *homoousion* of the Trinity by showing that all three are *vita*, here

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[82] Victorinus, *In Cic. Rhet.* I.1, 148-149 (CCSL 132, 12); cf. Cicero, *De off.*I.153: "illa autem sapientia, quam principem dixi, rerum est divinarum et humanarum scientia" (Cicero, *On Duties*, tr. Walter Miller, LCL 30 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1913), 156.

[83] Victorinus, *In Eph.* 1:8, 66-72 (CSEL 83.2, 16).

he seeks the same conclusion by arguing that all three are *scientia*. Christ and the Holy Spirit are both knowledge. Christ is knowledge as truth, "science objective" in Hadot's phrase, as that which is known in knowledge.[84] Jesus is both *veritas* and *verbum*. Knowledge of the Father is *per Christum* because the Son as the Truth (not merely a truth) expresses the Father who is at once the most intelligible and the least intelligible of all reality: most because the source of all reality, therefore of all intelligibility and thus of all truth; least because being the cause of all—including all substance and all intelligence—the Father is beyond substance, intelligence, and truth. The Son then is the content of Christian knowing. The Holy Spirit is "science subjective," knowledge as the act of knowing.[85] The Spirit is that which knows and that which enables knowers to know.

9.16-21. *Et item: non mentior, testimonium mihi perhibente conscientia mea in spiritu sancto. Quid est enim aliud conscientia, quam cum altero scientia? Nunc nostra cum spiritu. Ergo spiritus scientia et Christus est scientia, quia veritas. Ergo et Christus et spiritus scientia.*

The same conclusion is drawn from further passages in Paul which Victorinus here exegetes grammatically. Moreschini and Tommasi comment that Victorinus's definition of the word *conscientia* derived from a typical etymology of the Latin term in antiquity among both Christians and pagans.[86] Tertullian does the same with the word *compassio*: "For what is 'compassion' except 'suffering with' another?"[87]

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[84] Hadot, SC 69, 956.
[85] Hadot, SC 69, 956.
[86] Moreschini and Tommasi, *Opere teologiche*, 931-32.
[87] Tertullian, *Adv. Prax.* 29.

Richard Sorabji explains that an early understanding of the concept of *conscientia* involved "a metaphor of one sharing knowledge with oneself, as if one were split into two"[88] But whereas in the thought of Victorinus's predecessors the two between whom knowledge is shared is usually a superior and inferior aspect of the individual person, here it is the knowledge shared between our spirit and the Holy Spirit as in Romans 8:16.[89] *Conscientia* then is not so much a faculty of the human individual, but the name of a knowledge shared by the Spirit who searches all things and bears testimony to the human spirit.

9.21-23. *At enim Christus vita. Quid si spiritus vita? Unus enim, ut dixi, motus est et eadem vita quae scientia.*

Having proved that the Holy Spirit and Christ are *scientia*, he reaffirms that the two are life; thus the two are one and the same motion. The two are coinherent and each is the other but predominantly itself.[90] This phrase *unus . . . et eadem* is the same he uses often in his conclusions that members of the Trinity are *homoousion*.

9.23-27. *Quid enim a Christo doctus, id est a deo et cum dico: doctus, a scientia dico, quod sive a Christo, sive ab spiritu, unum atque idem est, quid enim dicit Paulus, cum utrumque id ipsum esse declaret? Prudentia vero spiritus vita est.*

Victorinus shows how Paul identifies life and knowledge. Paul was taught by Christ, as Paul himself declares in Gal. 1:11-12. Victorinus identifies the knowledge that comes from Christ and the Spirit; he will argue below that Christ gave knowledge when

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[88] Richard Sorabji, *Moral Conscience Through the Ages* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2014), 12; for full discussion see 11-36. A similar phrase occurs in Lucretius in the context of moral guilt, where the *mens sibi conscia factis* afflicts itself with "goads" and "whips" (Lucretius, *De Rerum Naturam*, III. 1018, full context lines 1011-1023).

[89] Cf. Origen, *Commentary on Romans*, II.9.1-4.

[90] For the claim that life is knowledge see above §8, 25-27.

he was in the flesh, but the Spirit teaches in Christ's place after Christ's ascension to sit at the right hand of the Father (below, pp. 328-329). The message is one and the same, for the Spirit declares what Christ gives the Spirit to preach. Knowledge and life are equated in Rom. 8:6, so the Scriptures themselves explicitly make the Spirit and Christ one with respect to their shared predication and distinct—at least this is how one reads the Scriptures in light of the *homoousion* noetic triad. *Prudentia* is a species under the genus *sapientia*, as Victorinus explains elsewhere.[91]

9.27-30. *Aestuat enim et rebellat ac repugnat secum error, inprudentia, inscientia. Et ex hoc prudentia carnis, quae inprudentia est, et quia deum nescit, mors est. Ergo prudentia spiritus, vita atque pax est.*

Victorinus describes the effects of ignorance in Ciceronian terms.[92] The inept leadership of the soul's *hegemonikon* breeds agitation and self-rebellion. He draws the Pauline distinction here between *prudentia carnis* and *prudentia spiritus*. Victorinus's Platonic and Christian epistemology sees the *nous* as impeded in its ability to know spiritual realities so long as it is bound to earthly concerns and sensual interests. Ignorance of God is death, as can be seen both theologically and philosophically. Knowledge of Christ is eternal life, as Victorinus will say in the following passage.

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[91] Victorinus, *In Eph.* 1:8, 72-74 (CSEL 83.2, 16), "Hac igitur in nos abundavit deus gratia et omni sapientia et omni prudentia: ut genus sapientia, ut species prudentia."

[92] Cf. Cicero, *De finibus bonorum et malorum*, I.14.46: "quodsi vitam omnem perturbari videmus errore et inscientia sapientiamque esse solam, quae nos a libidinum impetu et a formidinum terrore vindicet et ipsius fortunae modice ferre doceat iniurias et omnis monstret vias, quae ad quietem et ad tranquillitatem ferant, quid est cur dubitemus dicere et sapientiam propter voluptates expetendam et insipientiam propter molestias esse fugiendam? Eademque ratione ne temperantiam quidem propter se expetendam esse dicemus, sed quia pacem animis afferat et eos quasi concordia quadam placet ac leniat."

Ignorance of Christ (which is also ignorance of God) is death in this life insofar as eternal life is a mode of being available even during one's earthly existence.

Philosophically, the present embodied life is a kind of death insofar as one lives bound by the chains of the conditions of *becoming*. For in *becoming* change is the law, manifest in generation, corruption, and death itself, and every change is itself a kind of death.[93] Contemplative knowledge sets one free. The person whose vision has not gone beyond the limits of this life is afraid of death. Because of this fear, the person is in rebellion against the things that befall him or her. The one with knowledge of divine providence and of the goodness of God, the person of faith whose mind is set on spiritual things, is not greatly affected by what befalls him or her and does not blame God for earthly sufferings. As Victorinus states in his *Commentary on Ephesians*: "*Quod si quid hic in mundo patimur malorum, si quid etiam extra, non adscribamus deo, sed nobis magis. Tunc enim benedictionem consequimur, si spiritales simus et spiritaliter sapiamus et spiritalia bona quaeramus.*"[94] This is the spiritual knowledge given by Christ and the Holy Spirit.

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§10: *Summary*

This section includes scriptural references posited as proofs, especially from Paul's epistles and John's Gospel. From Paul, Victorinus proves Christ is the *scientia* and *sapientia* of God as he had proved the same of the Holy Spirit in the previous section. Victorinus illustrates both that and how Christ is *vita* from John's Gospel and then

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[93] Cf. Lucretius, *De rerum natura* I.665, repeated at 790; II.749; III.517: "*nam quod cumque suis mutatum finibus exit, continuo hoc mors est illius quod fuit ante.*"
[94] Victorinus, *In Eph.* 1:3, 27-31 (CSEL 83.2, 5-6).

continues expounding the Gospel to argue the Son is also *verbum* and *voluntas* of God. The beginning of this scriptural exposition appears nearly unintentional, as though Victorinus slipped into it in the course of argument rather than deliberately changing methods from reasoned proofs to exegetical arguments. He alludes twice in this section to the *totum mysterium*.

Commentary

10.1-3. *Quoniam iam iuncti isti sunt et unum sunt, doceamus quod deus et scientia sit et vita, quamquam ab ipso ista.*

Victorinus calls God (*deus*) both knowledge and life not in a proper sense but insofar as He is the cause of knowledge as such and life as such. These are qualities predominantly characteristic of Spirit and Son, respectively, though Victorinus is arguing that *deus*, *Christus*, and *spiritus sanctus* all possess *scientia* and *vita* essentially. That is, God, Christ, and the Spirit possess the essence of knowledge and life, and all three have knowledge and life as a defining characteristic of their own essence.

10.3-8. *Paulus: o, inquit, altitudo divitiarum sapientiae et scientiae dei. Sic dictum ab eodem: multiformis sapientia dei. Hinc et secretum dei, hinc et Christus dictus sapientia. Hinc et illud: ut possitis comprehendere cum omnibus sanctis quae sit latitudo, longitudo, altitudo, profundum, scire etiam supereminentem scientiae caritatem Christi.*

In a rapid succession of Pauline references to Romans 11:33, Ephesians 3:10, and 1 Corinthians 1:24, Victorinus establishes the biblical warrant for calling Christ *sapientia*. Christ and the Father are *sapientia*, so they are of the same *ousia* as the Holy Spirit. The *caritas Christi* is the content of the *sapientia* given by God; it entails that he

should redeem and free humanity by emptying himself and undergoing his passion, as Victorinus explains at *In Eph.* 2:4.[95]

10.8-11. *Ita et scientia deus est et nos scientia liberat, sed per Christum tamen, quia ipse est et scientia et ianua et vita et λόγος et omnium per quem facta sunt omnia.*

Hadot cites the creed of Antioch 341 as behind this passage.[96] Victorinus provides this listing of *epinoiai* of Christ as a recognizable allusion to a creedal statement in which knowledge, life, and Logos have been identified. *Ianua*, though introduced primarily as part of Victorinus's allusion to the creed, is pertinent as an illustration of the freedom given by Christ as *scientia* and therefore *vita*. Christ is the door through which we pass from the captivity of the senses into the freedom of spiritual knowledge and eternal life. Victorinus adds to the creedal statement, in characteristic fashion, that Christ is not only Logos, but is the logos of all things (taking the *et* in λόγος *et omnium* as an intensifying conjunction) as their source and as the one through whom all things are made.

10.11-18. *Ergo et scire ista et etiam caritatem in Christum habere debemus. Haec atque alia plurima et deum scientiam esse et Christum et spiritum sanctum satis clarum. Etiam vitam esse uno, licet satis, probatur exemplo. Nam in aliis libris uberius adprobavimus. Sicuti enim pater vitam habet in semet ipso, sic dedit et filio vitam habere in semet ipso. Item dicit: sicut me misit vivus pater, ita et ego vivo propter patrem.*

Having established that *sapientia* and *scientia* apply to all three of the Trinity, Victorinus now goes on to explain how they are common attributes *in divinis*. Our own

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[95] *In Eph.* 2:4, 1-10 (CSEL 83.2, 32).

[96] *Fides in Encaeniis* 341 as preserved in Hilary, *De syn.* 29, "verbum, sapientiam, vitam . . . ianuam . . . per quem facta sunt omnia" quoted in CSEL 83.1, 207.

caritas in and for Christ is the proper response to the knowledge of Christ's love for the world.

10.19-23. *Sunt igitur ista sic singula, ut omnia tria ista sint singula. Una omnibus ergo substantia est. Pater ergo, filius, spiritus sanctus, deus, λόγος, παράκλητος, unum sunt, quod substantialitas, vitalitas, beatitudo, silentium, sed apud se loquens silentium, verbum, verbi verbum. Quid etiam est voluntas patris, nisi silens verbum, et apud se loquens verbum? Hoc ergo modo, cum verbum pater sit et filius verbum, id est sonans verbum atque operans, ergo, inquam, si et pater et filius verbum est, una substantia est.*

The purpose of Victorinus's account of *scientia* was to lead here, to show how the first dyad of Father-Son, *substantia-motus*, *potentia-actio*, plus the second dyad of Christ and Holy Spirit, *vita* and *intellegentia*, are in fact all one coinherent triad. Four sets of three distinctive names all following the same order and all in the context of intellectual activity are set in a continuous passage: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are one triad; God, Word, and Paraclete are another set, this one combining Latin and Greek terms; the third is substantiality, vitality, blessedness; fourth a kind of speaking silence, the Word (*Verbum*), and the *verbum* of the *verbum*.

Victorinus takes the association of Logos and Paraclete from the Gospel of John, in which *Logos* primarily means Christ and *Paraclete* first arises when Christ says he will send another *Paraclete*, namely the Holy Spirit. We have seen Victorinus rarely uses the word *verbum* in his theological treatises, so his use of it here is deliberate. I treat the significance of *verbum*, especially as it is differentiated from Logos, just below. It is curious that he includes the third triad *vitalitas, beatitudo, silentium* here, for he has not yet spoken of blessedness (*beatitudo*) in this treatise.

10.23-32. *Quid etiam est voluntas patris, nisi silens verbum, et apud se loquens verbum?*

Hoc ergo modo, cum verbum pater sit et filius verbum, id est sonans verbum atque

operans, ergo, inquam, si et pater et filius verbum est, una substantia est. Deinde: iustum,

inquit, meum iudicium est, quia non quaero facere voluntatem meam, sed eius qui me

misit. Ergo una voluntas, unde una substantia, quia et ipsa voluntas substantia est.

Verbum autem ipsum vitam esse sic ostenditur: non vultis ad me venire, ut vitam

habeatis.

Victorinus presents a compressed interpretation of the *voluntas dei* to argue that the single divine will shared by the Father and the Son is proof that the two have one *substantia*. He uses the *voluntas* of human psychology as the basis for his analogy. Elsewhere Victorinus equated *voluntas*, *velle*, and *cupiditas*. It would seem then that *voluntas* is for Victorinus a non-rational desiring power of the soul. As in Aristotle's account of *boulesis*, however, Victorinus's understanding of *voluntas* may be more ambivalent.[97] The connection with *verbum* seems to indicate that *voluntas* is not only a desire for some apparent good, but a faculty whereby the person discerns and decides between apparent goods. In the latter case, what one wills is the result of an internal deliberation whose product is the thing willed. So we have the substance doing the deliberating, the act of deliberation, and the product. The *voluntas dei* as a *silens verbum* and *apud se loquens verbum* refers to the act of deliberation. It seems to belong to the Father as this passage is set in parallel with the description of the Son as *sonans verbum atque operans*. The *verbum* is thus the deliberative will as conceiving and as conceived. As *verbum silens* it is conceiving, an interior motion having not yet resulted in a product;

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97 For Aristotle's multiple understandings of "will" see Richard Sorabji, *Emotion and Peace of Mind: From Stoic Agitation to Christian Temptations* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 322-323.

as a *verbum* proper it is the will as conceived, that is, as a deliberation that has terminated in a definite choice. Victorinus's interpretation of Christ's words *iustum meum iudicium est, quia non quaero facere voluntatem meam, sed eius qui me misit* appear at odds with his interpretation of a similar passage at §3.44-45 (discussed in ch. 3). There he had used Christ's words *fiat voluntas tua* as an indication that Christ had his own *cupiditas* which he set aside by use of reasoning (*ratiocinatur*). Here he seems to understand Christ's claim that he does not do his own will to mean that his will is in fact not his own but the will of his Father. This indicates Victorinus's awareness that the Son *qua* Son has one and the same will with the Father, whereas Christ *qua* human has all of the powers of a human soul, including a human will which may be subjected to the single divine will of God.

This triad around the concept of the *verbum* is a triad discovered on the level of cognition and intention, and is thus distinct from the Johannine triad featuring Logos. The latter is metaphysical and cosmological. In *Adv. Ar.* IB Victorinus referred to the Spirit as voice of the *verbum* and as the ἠχώ.[98] There logos and *verbum* had worked together as two terms in a triad in which logos was ascribed to the Father. Logos was treated as the meaning which becomes crystalized or precipitates, so to speak, into a concept, that is, a *verbum*, the meaning made internally articulate. Thus, the Son is the *verbum* as that meaning defined. The Holy Spirit was called *vox* as what makes manifest the *verbum*, what makes the *verbum* known outside of the mind in which it was conceived. The *verbi verbum* may then be the resonance of this will as revealed in its accomplishment, or else the will as not only conceived but as expressed, as the *echo* and *vox* in other contexts. *The*

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[98] *Adv. Ar.* IB 55, 31 (CSEL 83.1, 153).

Trimorphic Protennoia presents a similar triad in which the Voice proceeds through Thought from Silence.[99] Victorinus also presents the Holy Spirit as the *echo* of the voice insofar as the Spirit Paraclete speaks what it itself has heard. The soul, too, Victorinus can call an *echo* in relation to the *vox* and *verbum* that the Spirit is.[100]

It is surprising for Victorinus to offer another biblical proof for the significance of *vita* since he had just said one sufficed. But there he was showing *etiam vitam esse uno*; life was the object of the argument. Here, however, life is brought in as an argument whose purpose is to show the oneness of the divine *verbum*. This helps explain some of the frequent repetitions in Victorinus's treatises. He says similar things, but is putting similar points, proofs, arguments to distinctive uses. He also repeats for a pedagogical purpose, as he says explicitly below (14.19).

10.32-40. *Deinde, et in hoc totum mysterium est quod expono: omne quod mihi datum est a patre, apud me habeo. Quia vero idem motus est quod esse et quod est esse motus est, et quia quadam intelligentia prius esse ab eo quod moveri, sed prius κατὰ τὸ αἴτιον, id est secundum causam, ideo dedit pater filio et motum qui et quod est esse habet. Ergo motus esse est. Λόγος igitur, qui motus est, habet et esse. Esse autem vita est et scientia. Habet igitur omnia, quia patris habet esse.*

Victorinus continues his argument concerning the relation of *pater* and *esse* to the *filius* and Logos. The *totum mysterium* is that the Son and Logos is derived from, yet identical with, the Father. The Logos has all from the Father, motion from being. What

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[99] John D. Turner (tr.), *Trimorphic Protennoia* (*NHC* XIII, 35), in *The Nag Hammadi Library*, 511-522. See also Chiara Tommasi, "Silenzio, Voce, Annunzio: La Trinità secondo Mario Vittorino," *Silenzio e parola - XXXIX Incontro di Studiosi dell'Antichità Cristiana* (Roma: Institutum Patristicum Augustinianum, 2012): 521-536.

[100] *Adv. Ar.* IB 56, 1-10 (CSEL 83.1, 153-154).

the Son has is being, life, intelligence. The whole Trinity is *homoousion*, for all three

have one being, life, and intelligence, the Father as power and rest, the Son (including

Christ and the Holy Spirit) as power enacted and moving.

Hadot suggests the Greek phrase κατὰ τὸ αἴτιον is an editorial gloss from a

different hand.[101] I expect it went the other way: Victorinus provided the Greek and a later

hand provided a Latin translation including the explanatory *id est*. The distinction

between temporal priority and causal priority to which Victorinus is alluding here is

common currency in philosophical and theological circles. The phrase κατὰ τὸ αἴτιον

occurs in texts ascribed to Christian authors before and roughly contemporaneous with

Victorinus. A text from Ps. Justin contrasts considerations of causality and temporality in

pagan and Christian accounts of cosmogony: μὲν κατ' αἰτίαν, οὐ κατὰ χρόνον δέ, πῶς

λέγουσιν οἱ Ἕλληνες τὸν κόσμον γεγενῆσθαι κατ' αἰτίαν καὶ οὐ κατὰ χρόνον;[102] A TLG

search collects similar uses of the phrase from two pseudo-Athanasian works and a work

by Didymus, all of which were likely composed later than Victorinus.[103] The passage in

Didymus contains the same contrast between *kata chronon* and *kat'aitian* as in the Ps.

Justin text.[104] And again, though a little less directly, the Neoplatonic philosopher

Iamblichus, writing on the mathematicals, describes them as being in the Platonic

paradigm in a causal mode, "κατ' αἰτίαν προηγουμένην ὡς ἐν παραδείγματι."[105] A cause

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[101] Hadot, CSEL 83.1, 209.

[102] J.C.T. Otto, *Corpus apologetarum Christianorum saeculi secundi*, vol. 4, 3rd edn. (Jena: Mauke, 1880): 100-222, here 199.1-4.

[103] The references to Athanasius are to two spurious works, *Sermo in annuntiationem deiparae* and *De trinitate*, both preserved in Migne, *PG* 28. The latter looks to have been influenced by the Cappadocians so was likely composed late in the fourth century, if not later. It refers to God as Μίαν δ' οὖν τὴν φύσιν εἰδότες τῶν τριῶν ὑποστάσεων (*PG* 28, 1604).

[104] Didymus the Blind, *Comm. in Eccl.* 3-4.12.

[105] U. Klein, *Iamblichi de communi mathematica scientia liber* (Leipzig: Teubner, 1891), 3-99, 61.29 (for full context see all of 61.17-29).

may be simultaneous with its effect and yet have a particular order of dependence. Victorinus's distinction is thus a common conception among philosophers and Christians in antiquity. It is of primary importance for the pro-Nicene understanding of the relation of Father and Son.

10.40-50. *Ergo voluntatem patris implet filius. Quae autem voluntas nisi quia, cum pater vita sit, motus est vita eius? Haec voluntas est vivere facere alia. Haec ergo et τοῦ λόγου, id est Christi. Quae est, inquit, voluntas patris qui me misit? Ut ex eo quod mihi dedit, nihil perdam, sed resurgere faciam id ipsum postrema die. Haec enim voluntas est patris mei, ut omnis qui videt filium et in ipsum credit, habeat vitam aeternam et in die novissima resurgat. Videre autem est Christum, scire deum, dei filium, vitam et vitae deum et hoc est accepisse spiritum sanctum.*

Victorinus elaborates on the meaning of *voluntas dei* and what it reveals theologically of the relation of Father and Son. The Logos does not fulfill the will of the Father in the sense of a second agent carrying out the orders of a superior. He is himself the will in act.[106] The will for Victorinus is both life in motion and the effect that life in motion causes, namely, that other things should be made living. The Logos is life as the cause of living in others. So we have three modes of life: life as the transcendent power of living; life as alive in act and as the participated cause of life in others; and the participating life of creatures, life as being made alive by the Logos.[107]

10.50-56. *Verbum id esse quod vitam hinc probatum est: post quem ibimus? Verbum vitae aeternae habes et nos credidimus et cognovimus quod tu es Christus filius dei. Totum mysterium, Christus dei filius, Christus verbum et ipsum verbum, vitae aeternae*

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[106] Cf. Cooper, *Galatians*, 144-145.
[107] Cf. Hadot, SC 69, 976.

verbum. Ergo hoc verbum quod vita et hoc qui audit et credit, utique cognoscit deum,

ergo et spiritum sanctum habet.

Now that Victorinus has established that the *verbum* is the *voluntas dei*, he offers further proof that the *verbum* is *vita*. The *totum mysterium*, mentioned for the second time in this section, is Christocentric, with theological and economic significances. Theologically, Christ is the Son of God and *homoousion* with the Father; economically, Christ the divine *verbum* is the cause of eternal life in believers. The whole mystery, by which Christ causes believers to have eternal life, entails the cross, by which Jesus frees us from death, and the teaching of salutary knowledge by the gift of the Holy Spirit, the *magister intellegentiae*. It is by the Spirit that the one who hears (*audit*) also is enabled to believe (*credit*), and believing, to be saved.

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§11: *Summary*

Victorinus carries on with his program of expounding Nicene theology by way of an exegesis of John's gospel. Here he is discussing John 8 in order to establish the Son's identity to the Father and simultaneously his distinctiveness from the Father as the mediator between the Father and the world. The Son's twofold work between Father and world is to provide the image by which God is known and to supply people with the power to recognize Christ as indeed the true image of the Father—these are the works of Christ and the Holy Spirit who are both Son. Victorinus begins to discuss the relation of Spirit to soul in the final third of this section, a theme carried forward in §12.

Commentary

11.1-11. *Pronuntiata hic plena fides est, quippe a discipulis. Item ad Iudaeos dicit: me si sciretis, sciretis patrem meum. Neque me scitis, neque patrem meum. Et recte. Quamquam enim et in patre filius et in filio pater, exsistentia vel substantia in vita et vita in substantia, invisibilis tamen cum sit substantia, non intellegitur nisi in vita. Magis autem vita Christus, quamquam et substantia. Ergo pater in filio cognoscitur. Unde: quia non scitis me, nec patrem. Si sciretis me, sciretis et patrem meum. Ipsum hoc quod est, sciretis a me, esse quia ipse et scientia, quod est spiritus sanctus.*

The full announcement of the faith is awareness that knowledge of God means primarily knowledge of Christ. Substance is not known alone or in repose, but is known through its outgoing activity, through its life. The invisible is made visible through *vita*—as Irenaeus had called the Son the visible of the Father who is invisible.[108]

When Christ is called *magis vita*, the Father is taken as *magis substantia*; but when the Father is considered *esse puro*, the Son must be seen as *magis substantia*, because then the Son is seen as *esse ita*, a specification of being as a form. The Son is also *magis vita* relative to the Holy Spirit who is *magis scientia*. Thus the noetic triad is again used to explain the Trinity: the knowledge of the divine substance is the Holy Spirit, the content of that knowledge is the *vita* that expresses the *substantia*. The *vita* is in the *substantia* as an act is rooted in its essence; the *substantia* is in the *vita* as its power and its essence.

11.11-21. *Item ad illos, quia verbum est et verbum pater, ergo una substantia, item: qui me misit, verus est, et ego quae audivi ab ipso, ea loquor. Pater filio loquitur, filius mundo, quia pater per filium et filius virtute verbi patris facit omnia, id est secum*

108 Irenaeus, *Adv. Haer.* IV.6.6.

loquens verbum per verbum in manifesto loquens facit omnia. Secum autem loquens

verbum deus est cum filio, quia pater et filius unus deus. Ipse praeterea dicit: amen,

amen dico vobis, si quis verbum meum custodierit, mortem non videbit. Et ipse rursum:

novi enim patrem et verbum eius custodio. Uterque verbum, sed ut dixi.

Victorinus proves that the Father is *verbum* by adducing Scriptures in which the

Son testifies to hearing from the Father. Although Victorinus had called the Father

verbum tacens, he here explains that this means the Father speaks internally: the Father is

loquens verbum cum filio and *secum loquens verbum*. The meaning of *secum* is difficult

to render into English because it includes both "with himself" and "with each other." The

Father appears silent in relation to us which is why the Father can be said to speak "with

himself," but this is not the soliloquy of a solipsist, for He is speaking with the Son. Clark

draws this out by translating the phrase *sed apud se loquens silentium* as "silence

conversing with themselves."[109] The Father's interior discourse is not apprehended

outside of himself. It is the Son who hears from the Father and then speaks to the world.

11.22-29. *Illud vero quantum aut quale est in Johanne: propterea me pater amat et ego*

pono animam meam ut iterum sumam eam. Nemo illam a me tollit sed ego eam pono a

me ipso. Licentiam habeo ponere eam et licentiam habeo sumere eam. Christum

numquam dictum esse animam satis manifestum est, sed nec deum dictum animam.

Etenim pater deus dictus, spiritus dictus, item filius λόγος dictus, spiritus dictus et sine

dubio deus, quippe cum ambo unus deus.

Victorinus explains the greatness (*quantum*) of the Logos on the basis of the

Word's power over his soul. Greatness is comparative by definition, for greatness implies

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[109] Clark, *Marius Victorinus*, 237.

relative smallness as its antithesis. Spirit is greater—in power, wisdom, being—than soul as whatever has its being, its living (or flourishing), its understanding from itself is greater than that which has each of these derivatively. Since the soul is among the greatest of created things, the Logos's power to take up and put off soul—soul not only as principle of life but as the full human soul of Jesus with its passions and conditions— shows its transcendent potency. The greatness and quality of the Logos is shown most spectacularly in its power over death.

John's Greek has ἐξουσία, which Victorinus renders *licentia* in contrast to the Vulgate's *potentia*. The reading *licentia* for this passage seems to appear only in Victorinus, so he must have provided his own translation of ἐξουσία. It is surprising that Victorinus does not appeal to this verse earlier in *Adv. Ar.* II when he was putting forth scriptural instances of *ousia*. Perhaps he draws the term *licentia* from the philosophy of Plotinus; the term occurs frequently in the *Enneads* (as in VI.7.1, 35). This authority is to be contrasted with the impaired freedom of embodied souls who neither choose their births (or choose *de facto* by their infatuation with materiality) nor are easily able to escape their bondage to the body. One wonders whether he deliberately avoided *potentia* here as creating confusion in the light of the vast philosophical importance *potentia* has had in his arguments for the relation of Father and Son. On the other hand, the word may have suited his purposes well and in fact brought together his philosophical point and exegetical purpose.

11.30-33. *Ergo haec: λόγος, πνεῦμα, supra animam sunt sua superiore substantia, longe alia substantia animae et inferiore, quippe a deo insufflata et genita et sola vere substantia dicta, quod subesset suis in se speciebus, et eodem pacto ut hyle.*

Having distinguished the Logos from the Father, Victorinus now argues from a different angle distinguishing the Logos from all created things. As matter (*hyle*) is ontologically and essentially susceptible of form, so the soul is intellectually receptive of intelligible forms. The soul becomes intelligent when it understands intelligible forms; it is not in and of itself intellectual. Aristotle calls the soul the place of forms.[110] Victorinus made allusion to this idea at the beginning of his letter to Candidus.

> [B]ecause the *nous patrikos* is innate to our soul and the spirit sent from heaven
> arouses analogies of ideas which have been engraved within our soul from all
> eternity, our soul by a kind of spiritual elevation wishes to see ineffable things
> and the inscrutable mysteries of the will or works of God.[111]

The soul is receptive of intellectual forms because it possesses innate potencies to form (*figurationes*). It is because the soul underlies form and spirit that it is properly called "substance" (*sub-* + *stare*). God is, properly speaking, beyond substance, for he stands under nothing but above all. He is called substance insofar as He exists and is the cause of existence in others.[112] Soul stands under intellectual forms as matter stands under

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[110] Aristotle, *De Anima*, 429a28-29: "those who say that the soul is a place of forms are right, except that it is the intellectual soul, not the whole soul, which is – potentially, not actually – the forms."

[111] *Ad Cand.* 1, 6-11 (CSEL 83.1, 15; ET: Clark, *Marius Victorinus*, 59-60). "[Q]uoniamsi inditus est animae nostrae νοῦς πατρικός et spiritus desuper missus figurationes intellegentiarum inscriptas ex aeterno in nostra anima movet, ineffabiles res et investigabilia mysteria dei voluntatam aut operationum quasi quaedam mentis elatio animae nostrae vult quidem videre."

[112] "Do we not confess that God is? What then? This *esse* of God, do we speak of it as *anousion* or as *enousion* . . .? As *anousion* some say. I agree, but I ask: *anousion* in what way? Is it that he is not absolutely substance or that he is above substance, that is, *hyperousion*? . . . For his *esse* is his substance, but not that substance known to us; but he himself, because he is *esse* itself, is not from substance but is substance itself, the parent of all substances, giving himself *esse* from himself, first substance, universal substance, substance before substance. On account of this, therefore, because he is *hyperousios*, some have called him *anousios*, not that he is without substance, since he truly is" *Adv. Ar.* II 1, 23-34 (Clark, *Marius Victorinus*, 196-197).

qualities, so is like matter as receptive. Victorinus has distinguished soul and matter clearly in his *Ad Cand*.:

> For some do say that the soul is *hyle*, because subject and quality are one same identical substance both for soul and *hyle*. But there is a difference . . . because the soul, since it is intellectual, knows itself through itself. But in fact *hyle*, since it is absolutely and totally unknowing, has neither knowledge nor feeling in sensation. . . The soul is the nourisher of all things and *hyle* is nourisher of all things. But the soul by its own power is the nourisher (*nutrix*) of all things and the begetter (*generatrix*) of life. *Hyle*, however, without soul, rarified and condensed, always awaits animation, having soul from soul.[113]

So we should understand this to be a likeness that obtains in particular respects, though analogously (for soul does not underlie what is above it or nourish what is below it in the same way *hyle* underlies and nourishes). They are neither identical, nor related as species (soul) to genus (matter).

<p align="center">*   *   *</p>

§12: *Summary*

Victorinus carries on his efforts to distinguish Spirit from soul by focusing on Christ's power of taking up and putting off soul at will. He argues that all three of the Trinity are spirit and therefore they are *homoousia*, all transcending the created order and having divine power over it.

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[113] *Ad Cand*. 10, 24-36 (CSEL 83.1, 28; ET: Clark, *Marius Victorinus*, 68): "Dicunt enim quidam, quod anima ὕλη est, quod subiectum et qualitas eadem ipsa sit substantia et animae et ὕλη. Sed differt . . . quoniam anima, intellectualis cum sit, intellegit et semet semet ipsam. At vero ὕλη omnimodis omnino inintellegens cum sit, neque intellegentiam neque sensum in sensu habet. . . . Omnium nutrix anima et ὕλη omnium nutrix. Sed anima propria virtute omnium nutrix est et vitae generatrix, ὕλη autem sine anima effeta et densa facta in aeternum manet animationem ab anima animam habens."

Commentary

12.1-6. *Huc accedit quod vita deus, vita Christus et ex se vita utique, sed ut, patre dante, Christus habeat ex se vitam. Ergo vita superior ab anima. Prior enim ζωή et ζωότης, id est vita et vitalitas, quam anima. Ergo illa ὁμοούσια, deus et λόγος, pater et filius, quippe ut ille spiritus et hic spiritus, et hic vita et ille vita, item verbum et verbum et cetera.*

This passage continues Victorinus's explanation of how the Logos receives all things from the Father and is superior to creation. Because Christ had *vita* from himself—a power which he had been given by the Father—he therefore did not rely on soul for life. Soul is life in its own essence, but it is not the essence of life. It has a share in life, and it is its participation that makes soul to be what it is, but life is the essential power soul has been given, not what it has from itself. The Father and Son are distinguished as *hic et ille*, but are united in being the same substantial forms which are here distinguished from derivative and participatory essences. Victorinus treats of the first dyad here, but clearly intends for Logos and *filius* to stand for the whole second dyad of Son and Holy Spirit. Thus *spiritus* should be taken as *vita* and *verbum* are, that is, as common predicates belonging to the whole *ousia* of the Trinity.

12.7-10. *Spiritus igitur habet potestatem animam sumendi, ponendi et resumendi. Etenim vita et a se vita potestatem habet sumendi, ponendi illud quod sua potentia, sui participatione, facit vivere.*

Spirit as a class or genus has power over soul because it is the source of soul and is thus before it and above it as its cause. Spirit by its power makes to live and even gives soul its own power of living. It also gives it the power of making other things to live, the

soul standing to body as *vivifacens*, just as the principle of soul, life itself, stands to soul

insofar as it gives it the power to live. He used *licentia* for ἐξουσία above (§11.22-29),

but shifts to the more familiar *potentia* here.

12.10-15. *Etenim anima ad imaginem imaginis dei facta: faciamus hominem ad*

imaginem et similitudinem nostram. Ergo inferior et a deo atque λόγῳ magis orta vel

facta, numquam ipse deus aut λόγος, sed quidam λόγος, non ille qui filius, generalis vel

universalis atque omnium quae per ipsum facta sunt semen, origo, fons.

Victorinus argues now that the soul relates to the Logos as the Logos relates to the

Father. He makes the point that the soul is according to the image of the image in a few

places throughout his theological corpus, including *Hymn* 2, 30-33:

Miserere domine! Miserere Christe!

Si ad similitudinem tuam deus pater,

Et ad imaginem filii homo factus sum,

Vivam creatus saeculis, quia me cognovit filius.[114]

This doctrine that the soul is the image of the image is a popular teaching in the Latin

west, especially notable in Ambrose and Augustine.[115] It is worth noting, however, that

the phrase *imago imaginis* occurs four times in Victorinus's theological corpus, but

seems not to occur *verbatim* in either Ambrose or Augustine.[116] Their awareness of this

teaching may be influenced by Victorinus, but it may just as well come from their Greek

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[114] CSEL 83.1, 291.
[115] The theme is frequent in Ambrose; see, *inter alia*, *Expos. ps. cxviii* X.16, 28; *Exam.* VI.7.43, 13; and that it is the soul and not the body of the human that is according to the image see *Exam.* VI.7.43, 22. For Augustine and on the question in general see Gerald Boersma, *Augustine's Early Theology of Image: A Study in the Development of Pro-Nicene Theology* (New York; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016).
[116] See Victorinus, *Adv. Ar.* IA 20, 5; IB 61, 1; 63, 16; IV 28, 16.

sources.[117] Ambrose certainly came across it in Origen's homilies on Luke.[118] According to both Greek and Latin authors, the human (especially with respect to the rational soul) is an image of the Logos or of Christ, who is the image of God.[119] Novatian distinguishes between the image and the form of God, claiming humanity is "ad imaginem, non ad formam dei factum." Rather it is the Son and Word of God, says Novatian, who is "ad formam dei patris ex ipso genitus atque prolatus."[120] Plato's notion that artists deal in images of images so that their products are thrice removed from real substances is a similar conception.[121] According to this logic, the soul is at two removes from God the Father, an idea that occurs in the Latin translation of Irenaeus and again in Augustine.[122]

12.15-21. *Illius vero λόγος anima quomodo aut qui, et dixisse memini et suo loco esse dicturum.*[123] *Ergo universalis, quia spiritus et vita, non anima, habet potestatem a semet ipso animam ponere et rursum animam sumere. Deus igitur et λόγος, vel quia vita sunt, vel quia spiritus, vivunt et semper vivunt, quippe qui a se vivunt. Ergo illa ὁμοούσια. Anima vero ὁμοιούσιος.*

The soul is like in essence to God.[124] Victorinus had been at pains in his earlier treatises to correct the Basilian homoiousians by arguing the logical incongruity between likeness and substance. He had argued that substances are not properly speaking like one

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[117] The phrase occurs in Origen, *De Princ.* IV.4.9, 4 and IV.4.10, 17; and in Gregory of Nyssa, *De opicifio hominis* 12, 11 (PG 44:124–256), in this exact phrasing in Eriugena's translation, 13, 3.

[118] Origen, *Homilies on Luke*, Homily 8, 2, 33-34. Ambrose's *expositio* on Lk 1:46, though it shows the influence of Origen, does not include the phrase *imago imaginis* (Migne, *PL* 15: 1562A).

[119] See Tertullian, *De res. mort.* 9; *Adv. Marc.* V.5.

[120] Novatian, *De Trin.* 22, 13.

[121] Plato, *Rep. X,* 595a-602b.

[122] Irenaeus, *Adv. Haer.* I.14.5; II.16.1; IV.19.1; Augustine, *De Musica*, VI.11.32.

[123] Hadot and Henry suggest the genitive anima<e> for the anima in the initial phrase, *logos anima* (Henry and Hadot, CSEL 83.1, 211). I have preferred to keep the text as it stands in the nominative. Victorinus is creating a phrase, the soul-logos. The two readings amount to the same thing semantically.

[124] Cf. *Adv. Ar.* IA 32, 1–33 (CSEL 83.1, 111-113).

another, but simply are the same or different.[125] The exception he makes for the soul is not strictly correct on his own principles, but it is *more* appropriate to the relation of soul to Logos than it is for Logos to the Father; in this case speaking of likeness in essence is not only a logical incongruity but a metaphysical error.

12.21-26. *Haec, cum adsumitur a divinis—id est a λόγῳ; neque enim a deo, λόγος enim motus est, et motus anima, et motus a semet ipso motus, unde imago et similitudo anima τοῦ λόγου est—ergo, cum adsumitur, nihil adicitur vitae, quippe cum ex vita, id est ex vivendi potentia, animae vita sit.*

The Logos adds nothing to the life of the soul when it takes up soul because the life of the soul is life from life, the Logos being the power of the life. *Adiectio* is a technical term in grammar and predication.[126] "Nothing is added" means there is no accident or quality which accrues to life itself by virtue of being taken up by God. This is a remarkable insight, a reflection of Platonic, especially Plotinian, philosophy: what is below the One beyond being relates to it as effect to cause, while the One itself properly speaking has no relation whatever to what comes from it.[127]

12.26-35. *Animam igitur cum adsumit spiritus, veluti ad inferiora traicit potentiam atque actiones, cum mundum et mundana complet. Ergo spiritus, et maxime λόγος, spiritus qui vita est, in potestate habet et sumere animam et ponere. Cum autem sumit, mundo veluti nascitur et potentia eius cum mundo colloquitur. Cum vero ponit, a mundo recedit et non operatur in mundo carnaliter, nec tamen spiritaliter. Hoc nos mortem eius nominamus et tunc esse dicitur in inferno, non utique sine anima.*

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[125] *Adv. Ar.* IA 23, 1-47 (CSEL 83.1, 93-95) and 30, 1-17 (CSEL 83.1, 107).
[126] See Manuela Callipo, "Quintilian, Inst. 1, 5, 40 on solecism and Apollonius Dyscolus," *Journal of Latin Linguistics* 17 (2018), 147-175.
[127] Cf. Plotinus, *Enn.* V.2.1.

The taking up of soul by spirit takes place by the bestowal of the power of the superior on the lesser. Spirit is active in the world, having converse with the world, in being born into it. The taking up is a coming down, the Logos entering the world's own sphere according to its own conditions.

We see that "death" is an equivocal term for Victorinus. It is applied in the fields of biology, psychology, and even, as presently, in soteriology, all *mutatis mutandis*. There are four modes of activity of God in the world, three that are particular to the economy and one that attains by necessity to the whole period of created existence. The latter is divine activity as cause. Victorinus must envision God as still at work as He had been before the economic work of the Logos incarnate, though he does not have this mode of relation in view here and does not mention it. The other three are the carnal, the psychical, and the spiritual. All three of these modes of activity are through the incarnation. The Logos as Christ no longer works in the world carnally because the instrument of the flesh has been withdrawn. Because the Word has taken on a rational soul with his body, God's activity in the world through Christ is also psychical. Putting down the soul is not for the Logos to leave the soul, but for the Logos with soul to separate from the body and to leave the world. The Logos brings the soul with him down into Hades. We see only Christ's descent here without any mention of the harrowing of Hell. Victorinus offers no reason why Christ should descend into the lower regions, content merely to pass on the biblical and creedal claim. While the soul is in hell, his agency performs deeds there, under but not upon the earth.

Christ, after putting off the flesh, takes it up again in the resurrection. This body, having been dead and among the dead, Victorinus thinks is yet unclean after his taking it

back up. The body itself must be purified. Victorinus seems to think this means it must be made spiritual. Christ's spiritual activity is by way of the Holy Spirit and through grace. The Logos as Holy Spirit does not work spiritually because the Spirit has yet to be given to the disciples by the risen Christ.

12.35-46. *Hinc petit ne deus animam suam relinquat in inferno. Ergo eam, quia rediturus ad mundum est et ad eius actum, secum ab inferis ducit. Quasi resumit ergo animam, id est ad actus mundi iterum accipit. Et quia actus in mundo plenus ac totus λόγος agit et qui spiritus est et anima et corpus, rursus ergo sanctificandum fuit, quia rursus ista susceperat. Ivit igitur ad spiritum et sanctificatus redit, cum apostolis egit, post, sanctum spiritum egit. Quis igitur est spiritus sanctus? Id est λόγος. Unus enim motus. Et ideo dictum: et si discedo, et praeparo vobis, rursus revenio. Quis enim venit post abitum Christi, nisi spiritus sanctus paraclitus?*

Here Victorinus explains the theological significance of the narrative of Christ's descent into hell, return to the world, and sending of the Spirit. Christ's descent into Hell had been discussed and interpreted by Victorinus's Christian and Gnostic predecessors.[128] It is in fact related to the larger theme of the "descent of divine luminaries" into the underworld.[129] Victorinus would of course have been familiar with this theme from pagan poetry and philosophical writings.[130] It is possible that he had also come across

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[128] Robert Bell provides a helpful table charting the various Christian contributions to the *descensus ad inferos* or *ad inferna* motif from the first through the fifth centuries (Robert Bell, "The Harrowing of Hell: A Study of Its Reception and Artistic Interpretation in Early Medieval European Literature" (Ph. D. diss. University of Maryland: 1971), 137-140 and see 70-73 for a list of pertinent works from the patristic authors mentioned).

[129] J. H. Charlesworth, "Exploring the Origins of the *descensus ad inferos*," in *Earliest Christianity within the Boundaries of Judaism: Essays in Honor of Bruce Chilton*, ed. Alan Avery-Peck, Craig A. Evans, and Jacob Neusner (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 372-395.

[130] Cf. Virgil, *Aeneid*, VI; Plato, *Republic* X. See also Porphyry, *Sent.* XXIX, though there the soul is weighed down to Hades with its pneumatic vehicle due to its attachment to material things.

Christianized Gnostic accounts. *The Trimorphic Protennoia*, whose likely influence on Victorinus was discussed above (p. 279), includes a version of the descent of Christ.[131] In this Gnostic account, apparently dependent on John's Gospel, the souls in Hades are freed and drawn up with Christ.[132] Victorinus's account, though similar in its emphasis on the liberation of souls from Hades, is notably more reserved in its narrative. It therefore remains unclear whether any specifically Christian version of Christ's postmortem itinerary has informed Victorinus's understanding.

Before Nicaea, "the details of the descent are known, but the sequence of events is not firmly established."[133] Part of this sequence is what happens before Christ ascends to heaven on the fortieth day. The *descensus ad inferna* (or *ad inferos*) may have been a part of the creed he would have learned as a catechumen, though this is unlikely. The earliest Latin creed to include the descent appears to be that of Aquileia preserved by Rufinus (404), who also acknowledges that it did not appear in the Roman Creed. The Dated Creed of 359 "stands out as being the first to give official recognition to the Descent to Hell."[134] Though it comes down to us in Greek from Athanasius, if Socrates is correct that it was originally produced in Latin it would then also take from Aquileia the distinction of being the earliest Latin creed to include the *descendit* clause.[135] In the Dated Creed, Christ is said to go down beneath the earth and set things in order "τὰ ἐκεῖσε

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[131] Turner, *The Trimorphic Protennoia*, 36, 4-5 (and see above, 47).
[132] Turner, *The Trimorphic Protennoia*, 36, 5-15; on its relation to John's Gospel see Craig A. Evans, "On the Prologue of John and the Trimorphic Protennoia," *Journal of Theological Studies* 27 (1981): 395–401.
[133] Bell, "The Harrowing of Hell," 62.
[134] J. N. D. Kelly, *Early Christian Creeds*, 2nd edn. (New York: David McKay Co., 1960), 290.
[135] Rufinus's witness to the Apostle's Creed is reproduced in *Faith in Formulae* II, 228 "descendit in inferna." See also Kinzig's reconstruction of the creed presented in Ps. Athanasius, *Ennaratio in symbolum apostolorum*, which says "descendit ad inferna" (*Faith in Formulae* II, 241). Socrates, *Hist. eccl.* II, 37 (PG 67: 305).

οἰκονομήσαντα, ὃν πυλωροὶ ᾅδου ἰδόντες ἔφριξαν."[136] Victorinus's elaboration of the theme is less colorful, making no reference to the shuddering of Hell's doormen, and focusing merely on the salutary effects of Christ's work beneath the earth. The same brevity characterizes his treatment of the descent of Christ at *in Eph.* 4:8, 19-21: "Lectum est enim quia in infernum descendit salvator passione illa crucis ut omnem animam liberaret et ex omnibus locis redimeret membra sua."[137] In both his Pauline commentary and the present passage from *Adv. Ar.*, Victorinus seems less interested in painting a picture and more interested in the specifically theological importance and the soteriological effects of the descent.

Even allowing for the relatively "wider latitude" of possible itineraries after Nicaea, Victorinus has a rather idiosyncratic reading of what happens once Christ's body is placed in the tomb.[138] In his account Christ ascends sometime between his meeting with Mary at the tomb on the morning of the third day after his crucifixion, and his engagement with his disciples that evening. He goes to the Spirit, that is, to the place of the divinity generally, not to a specific member of the Trinity. It may be that Victorinus is bearing witness to an early version of the Pilate Cycle in which Christ ascends to Paradise after raising up Adam.[139] Christ returns sanctified, which state Victorinus appears to envision as a condition for the possibility of sending the Paraclete, the Holy Spirit, to be with the apostles. He identifies Christ's promise of returning (*revenio*) with

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[136] Athanasius, *De syn.* 8 (PG 26: 692).
[137] CSEL 83.2, 61.
[138] "Even though the Council of Nicaea accepted the descent by adding it to their discussion as a simple statement without details, this permitted wider latitude for interpreting the descent through patristic commentaries" (Bell, "The Harrowing of Hell," 62).
[139] J. K.Elliott, *The Apocryphal New Testament: A Collection of Apocryphal Christian Literature in an English Translation* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), 185–204.

his promise to send another Paraclete, although the promise to return is more frequently said to refer to Christ's own second coming. That Christ should send the Spirit indicates an order at least in the economy; but that Christ should speak in the first person of coming again and that this should be fulfilled in the sending of the Holy Spirit illustrates just how closely Victorinus identifies Christ and the Spirit who are to him one Logos and one motion.

The descent clause becomes increasingly frequent in creedal statements toward the end of the fourth century. While Kelly is right to caution against reading this trend as a response to Apollinarian thought—by emphasizing Christ's participation in all aspects of human life, including going down into the realm of the dead as all mortals do, the full humanity of Christ is defended—the present case may be an exception. Just as Victorinus had defended the whole humanity of Christ in explicit detail in his early treatise, so here he highlights the full movement of Christ through all human activities as well as into every region of the cosmos.

Victorinus has a difficult time reconciling the Johannine account of Christ's taking on soul, putting it off, and taking it up once more, with the belief that Christ descended into Hell upon dying. The soul goes with him, so in once sense he did not put it off at all! He explains that his death is a putting off of his soul insofar as its efficacy was removed from the *mundus*. It had continued to be operative *in inferno*, where Christ was liberating all the other *animae* and restoring his members from all places—in the context of the Ephesians commentary *ex omnibus locis* seems to mean all the places below, the different chambers of the underworld.

5.0   CHAPTER 5

Analysis of *Adv. Ar.* §§13-18

§§13-18: Summary

These sections are the fullest treatment of the Holy Spirit Victorinus gives in this treatise.

Having argued at length (earlier in this treatise and elsewhere in his works) for the

identity and distinction of the first dyad of Father and Son, he here turns to an exposition

of the second dyad. Victorinus treats the identity and the distinctiveness of Jesus and the

Holy Spirit. Since the first dyad and the second dyad are identical, Victorinus argues the

two dyads amount to a triad in which the three are one.

Victorinus sees John the evangelist treating of the Holy Spirit thoroughly in an

extended passage of his gospel from chapter 14 through 15, especially focused on

Paraclete. These chapters Victorinus expounds with careful attention, introducing them in

§13 with his quotation of Jn 14:6. Beginning in §14 he gives a theological exegesis of Jn

14:15-16—here he begins in earnest to show how Jesus and the Holy Spirit are identical

yet differentiated by their activities. In §§15-16 he shows how the Spirit bears witness to

Christ and thus is economically distinct from Christ. In §16-17 he adds further details

about the witness of the Spirit concerning sin, justice, and judgment as he expounds Jn

16:8-11. He concludes §18 with a summary of his pneumatological arguments, though they center almost exclusively on the mystery of salvation. This raises the important question of how Victorinus conceives the relation between theology and economy. Victorinus's arguments and positions on the Holy Spirit are idiosyncratic and will require careful attention.

§13: *Summary*

Victorinus declares the oneness of the first and second dyads through the transitive property. Having left off with a reference to Jn 14:3 in the last section, he turns his attention now to a continuous exposition of John's gospel from Jn 14:6, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." In this section Victorinus has the first dyad in view as he explains how the Logos as life is also the way to the Father who is *esse*. On the basis of this insight, he will move in later sections to discuss the second dyad, explaining the unity, distinctiveness, and relation of Jesus and the Holy Spirit.

This section is rhetorically interesting due to Victorinus's ambiguous use of some equivocal terms. His use of *filius*, *Iesus*, and *spiritus* are all rather fluid and will require explanation. His argumentation here is largely exegetical.

Commentary

13.1-3. *Id ita esse quod dico, ut pater et filius unum sint, itemque Iesus et spiritus sanctus unum sint, ac propterea omnes unum sint, iuncta lectione, Iohannes declaravit.*

The two dyads of Father-Son and Son-Holy Spirit are here clearly if tersely expressed. Victorinus argues to the *homoousion* triad by combining these two dyads in a

transitive argument, an argument signaled by the causal *propterea*. All are one because the first dyad is one and the second dyad is one.[1] There is an ambiguity, however, in how the second dyad is precisely related to the first. Is Jesus to be identified exclusively with the *filius* so that it is because the Father and Son are one, and because the Son and the Spirit are one, that all three are one? Or, is *filius* a name for the whole second dyad so that because the Father and Son are one, and Jesus and the Holy Spirit are themselves the one Son, Jesus and the Holy Spirit and the Father are all one? This is among the primary questions that will occupy this last chapter of commentary.

By writing of the *iuncta lectio* from John's gospel, Victorinus prepares the reader for an extended exegesis following from John 14:6. He thinks John's intention is precisely to explain what he himself is in the midst of expounding, in other words, that his philosophical insights into the nature of the Trinity is not foreign to his biblical exegesis because it is not foreign to the biblical authors themselves. Tertullian had provided a similar continuous treatment of John's gospel in the midst of his polemics against Praxeas (*Adv. Prax.* 21-25).

13.3-5. *Coepit namque a λόγῳ. Ego sum, inquit, via et veritas et vita. Nemo venit ad patrem, si non per me.*

Here begins Victorinus's exposition of the "continuous passage" from the gospel of John. The Logos is both one and two for Victorinus, as we have seen throughout the earlier sections of this treatise (cf. e.g, §7.2-9; §8.25-30). With his focus on the Logos as *via*, *veritas*, and *vita*, Victorinus is clearly thinking of Jesus in particular, not of the Logos

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[1] Clark misses the phrase *ac propterea omnes unum sint* in her translation (Clark, *Marius Victorinus*, 241).

as both Jesus and Holy Spirit, for *vita* and *veritas* are predominant characteristics of Jesus as can be seen above (§11.1-11).

13.5-10. *Quis enim ad id quod est esse et verum esse pervenit, quod pater est, nisi per vitam? Vita enim, quae vera vita est, quia aeterna est, hoc est vere esse. Nihil enim mutatur, nihil corrumpitur, quae genera mortis sunt, vita. Esse verum vita est. Vivit, inquit, deus. Ergo vitam esse deus est.*

The Life that the Logos is and gives is shown to be identical with *esse verum* by its having the qualities being real (*vera vita*) and eternal (*aeterna*). All that is truly what it is is itself simply and fully. These qualities of simplicity, reality, unity, completeness are all qualities of Being rather than of becoming. This is what excludes this *vita* from entailing any change whatsoever, and insofar as all change is a kind of death and this *vera vita* does not admit of its opposite, neither will it admit of any change whatsoever.[2] *Vita* is the mediator of knowledge throughout Victorinus's theological treatises (see above §5 especially).

13.10-15. *Et ego, inquit, vivo. Quicumque ad Christum venit, ad vitam venit, et sic per vitam ad deum. Ergo iuncti sunt deus et λόγος. Et hinc illud est: qui me cognovit, cognovit et patrem. Et: qui me vidit, vidit et patrem. Et hinc et illud: non credis quod ego in patre et pater in me.*

The biblical references in this passage are to John 14: 7, 9, and 10. Victorinus argues for the unity of Logos and the Father on soteriological grounds. By the *catena* or *gradatio* of *ad Christum*, *ad vitam*, *ad deum*, Victorinus presents with brevity and vigor the movement of sanctification and effectively joins the Logos and *deus*.[3] Coming to

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[2] Cf. *Cand.* 3.26-9.18 (CSEL 83.1, 4-11)
[3] On the rhetorical device of *gradatio*, *catena*, or κλῖμαξ see *Rhet. ad Her.* IV.25.

Christ is to come unto the Father, for to know and to see Christ is to know and to see the Father. The triple use of *ad* expresses the single direction of the itinerary, for the movement *ad Christum* is the same movement *ad deum*. The use of *per* emphasizes the order of operations and the indispensable necessity of Christ as mediator. Christ is *via* as earlier he was *transitum* and *ianua* (§6.5-6; §10.8-11), as one through whom one is granted passage. Finally, the preposition *in* expresses the identity of God and the Logos, who are so related that the vision of Christ is the vision of the Father who is nevertheless seen *through* and *in* Christ.

13.15-22. *Hinc et illud mystice: et si quid aliquando petieritis in nomine meo, istud faciam. Quid est petere in Christi nomine? Animam aeternam fieri, lucem dei videre, ad ipsum videndum venire, aeternam vitam habere, non divitias, non filios, non honores, nihilque mundanum, sed spiritale omne atque omne quo uniti deo Christo iungamur. Hoc enim est: ut glorificetur pater in filio, id est in vita aeterna quam petentibus dabo.*

Victorinus explains what Christ means in Jn. 14:13 when he says he will do whatever is asked in his name. His explanation of what it is to ask in Christ's name shows that Victorinus saw this as the possible stumbling-block and for this reason hints to his readers with the adverb *mystice* that something of theological and soteriological significance is being said. To ask *in Christi nomine* is related to what Victorinus says about the coming of the Spirit in Christ's name (cf. 14.41-49 and 15.25-33 below). In the latter passage, Victorinus offers several explanations for what it means for the Spirit to be sent *in nomine meo*, which is in the name of Christ. The name of Christ is the name over every name, at whose mention all knees shall bow. Victorinus comments on Phil. 2:10 entails explanation of the name given to Christ. "Quod si tanta haec eius opera et tanta

misericordia dei, per hoc ab illo munus inpletum est, in reditu atque reversione hoc nomen accepit et hinc exaltatus est et hanc gratiam consecutus est ut filii nomen acciperet, quod nomen supra omne nomen est."[4] This name was given after Christ had emptied himself, took on the form of a servant, and underwent the death of the cross: "videtur propter istam passionem exaltatus esse et accepisse se hanc gratiam ut hoc nomen acciperet quod supra omne nomen est."[5] Specifying further that the Word of God had had the name of *filius* from eternity, he explains that the name was what he received *propter opera, propter mysterium, propter passionem*.[6] This name of *filius* Victorinus says is the name above every name, and so it was indeed given to Jesus but with respect to his humanity *post passionem, post crucem*.[7]

To ask in the name of Christ includes both the manner and the object of one's request. One asks in the name of the *filius* which seems to be something like *in the presence of Christ*. To ask for spiritual things presupposes some knowledge of spiritual things, so it is to ask having already attained faith in Christ. The Father is glorified in the Son when the Son fulfills the will of the Father, which is to bestow eternal life on those whom the Father gave to the Son.

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§14: *Summary*

We come now to Victorinus's sustained discussion of questions concerning the Holy Spirit. It is initiated by the Paraclete passage of John 14:15-16. On the basis of these verses Victorinus distinguishes between Jesus and the Holy Spirit, treats the Spirit's

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[4] *In Phil.* 2.9-11, 12-13, 23-27 (CSEL 83.2, 192)
[5] *In Phil.* 2.9-11, 37-39 (CSEL 83.2, 192-193).
[6] *In Phil.* 2.9-11, 46 (CSEL 83.2, 193).
[7] *In Phil.* 2.9-11, 62 (CSEL 83.2, 193).

origin, emphasizes the two modes of activity of Jesus and the Holy Spirit, and identifies the two insofar as they are one motion and one presence. This passage in particular raises many unresolved questions for Victorinus's pneumatology and its relation to Nicene pneumatology more broadly. The idiosyncrasies of Victorinus's treatment of the Spirit can be seen especially here by comparison with other authors on the Paraclete. Many creeds from the 340s to the late 350s included some pneumatological statement which relied on the Paraclete passage of John.[8] So, too, did Tertullian and Origen's treatment of this passage yield a distinction between Son and Spirit. Victorinus's use of the Johannine Paraclete passage is unique in that it is the basis for Jesus and the Holy Spirit's distinction and identity.

Commentary

14.1-4. *Subiungitur deinde plenissime de spiritu sancto, quid sit, unde sit quod ipse sit: si enim, inquit, me amatis, mandata mea custodite. Et ego rogabo patrem meum et alium paraclitum dabit vobis, ut vobiscum sit in omne tempus.*

Here Victorinus shows the direction of his chapter. The phrase *plenissime de spiritu sancto* serves to introduce the relevant questions for pneumatology, indicate that his earlier treatment of the Holy Spirit had not been dealt with in a full and focused way, show that the Holy Spirit had been discussed explicitly in the gospel, and emphasizes that

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[8] See the Third Creed of Antioch 341: *Faith in Formulae*, 1.342-343, §141a; Fourth Creed of Antioch 341: *Faith in Formulae*, 1.346-348, §141d; *Ekthesis* of Serdica (Phillipopolis) 342: *Faith in Formulae*, 1.349-354, §143; Doctrinal Statement of the Western Council of Serdica 342: *Faith in Formulae*, 1.352-362, §144; Macrostich Creed Antioch 344: *Faith in Formulae*, 1.362-369, §145; First Creed of Sirmium 351 *Faith in Formulae*, 1.371-376, §148; Second Creed of Sirmium 357: *Faith in Formulae*, 1.404-408, §154; Fourth Creed of Sirmium 359 (The Dated Creed): *Faith in Formulae*, 1.413-415, §157; The Creed of Acacius of Caesarea presented at the Synod of Seleucia 359: *Faith in Formulae*, 1.416-420, §158; Synod of Niké 359: *Faith in Formulae*, 1.420-423, §159; Creed of Constantinople 359-360: *Faith in Formulae*, 1.423-425, §160.

Victorinus's discussion of trinitarian theology is consciously biblical. Victorinus will continue expounding John 14 (up to verse 28) through the middle of §15.

He asks of the Spirit *what is it*? and *where does it come from*? The answer to both questions Victorinus finds explicitly if inchoately in Jn 14:15-16. To the question *quid sit* which seeks a definition Victorinus calls the Spirit *alius paraclitus*. It is a descriptive rather than proper definition (*ennoematic*), explaining what the Spirit is based on the role that the Spirit plays on our behalf before the Father.

Tertullian had used this passage in his polemic against the patripassian Praxeas. By the term *alius* he was able to distinguish the two: "Thus he calls the Paraclete other than himself, as we say the Son is other than the Father, so as to display the third sequence in the Paraclete as we the second in the Son, and so to preserve the economy."[9] Tertullian expresses what remains only implied in Victorinus's biblical exegesis. "Surely all facts will correspond with their designations, and diversity of designation can by no means be confused, since neither can the diversity of the things of which they are the designations."[10] What Scripture treats as distinct is truly distinct, not merely verbally but ontologically. Victorinus usually expresses this by saying "is said [to be] and is."[11]

Origen had compared 1 Jn 2:1 with the Paraclete passages in John's gospel and had considered the former to have more to do with advocating and the latter more to do with consoling.[12] Although Victorinus knows the first letter of John (he quotes 1 Jn 1:1 below, although he apparently confuses it with a passage from Acts), he does not appeal to 1 Jn 2:1 to distinguish the two meanings of *paraclitus* as Origen had. He does,

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[9] Tertullian, *Adv. Prax.* 9.
[10] *Adv. Prax.* 9.
[11] Cf. *Adv. Ar.* IB 57, 8 and 12 (CSEL 83.1, 155): *est et dicitur*.
[12] Anthony Casurella, *The Johannine Paraclete in the Church Fathers* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1983), 4-5.

however, appeal to Rom 8:34 to emphasize how Christ serves as *paraclitus* through his activity *interpellare* (see below 16.65).

Victorinus reads *amatis* instead of the more common *diligitis*, another sign that he had made his own translation of the Greek ἐὰν ἀγαπᾶτέ με. His *custodite* is also rarer than *servate*, though it is an attested reading.[13] Victorinus's text has *in omne tempus* as opposed to both the *Vetus Latina* and the Vulgate's *in aeternum*.[14] Indeed his earlier text in *Adv. Ar.* IA had read *in aeternum*.[15] If he has made his own translation from the Greek it is not perfectly aligned with the text as we know it, which shows no significant variants from εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα. It is possible he is quoting from memory. Victorinus's present translation emphasizes the temporal character as opposed to the eschatological—the Spirit will be with his disciples for all of time. Both the temporal and eschatological are joined in Mt 28:20 which he quotes in *Adv. Ar.* IV as "ecce ego vobiscum sum omnibus diebus usque ad consummationem saeculi."[16] There he gives a similar interpretation, nearly verbatim, as he does in the passage immediately following the present: "Ex hoc ostenditur quodammodo idem Iesus, idem spiritus sanctus, actu scilicet agendi diversi, quod ille docet intellegentiam, iste dat vitam."[17]

14.4-12. *Quid est paraclitus? Qui adserat adstruatque apud patrem homines omnes fideles atque credentes. Qui iste est? Unusne solus spiritus sanctus? An idem et Christus?*

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[13] http://itseeweb.bham.ac.uk/iohannes/transcriptions/index.html?witness=VL6&language=latin#K14V15 (Codex Colbertinus: Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, lat. 254); http://itseeweb.bham.ac.uk/iohannes/transcriptions/index.html?witness=VL8&language=latin#K14V15 (Codex Corbeiensis: Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, lat. 17225); http://itseeweb.bham.ac.uk/iohannes/transcriptions/index.html?witness=VL14&language=latin#K14V15 (Codex Usserianus primus: Dublin, Trinity College, 55)
[14] http://itseeweb.bham.ac.uk/iohannes/vetuslatina/edition/index.html
[15] *Adv. Ar.* IA 11, 23 (CSEL 83.1, 69).
[16] *Adv. Ar.* IV 18, 17-19 (CSEL 83.1, 251).
[17] *Adv. Ar.* IV 18, 19-21 (CSEL 83.1, 251).

Etenim ipse dixit: alium paraclitum dabit vobis deus. Dum dixit alium, se dixit alium.

Dum dixit paraclitum, operam similem declaravit et eandem quodammodo actionem.

Ergo et spiritus paraclitus et spiritus sanctus alius paraclitus et ipse a patre mittitur.

Iesus ergo spiritus sanctus.

These many questions concerning the Paraclete passages show that this aspect of trinitarian theology in general, and of Victorinus's theology in particular, required clarification. He had offered a brief exegesis of Jn 14:15-16 at *Adv. Ar.* IA 11, but then he had been focused especially on the *homoousia* of the Father and Christ.[18] He had asserted *a Christo sanctus spiritus sicuti Christus a deo* (12.3-4) and that *in Christo deus et in sancto spiritu Christus* (12.10-11). Tertullian's treatment of this passage shows marked similarities to Victorinus's earlier account.

He promises that when he has ascended to the Father he will also request of the Father the Paraclete, and will send him, \<specifying\> another. . . . Moreover he says, He will take of mine, as I myself have taken of the Father's. So the close series of the Father in the Son and the Son in the Paraclete makes three who cohere, the one attached to the other: And these three are one \<thing\>, not one \<person\>, in the sense in which it was said, I and the Father are one, in respect of unity of substance, not of singularity of number.[19]

Victorinus's earlier discussion as with Tertullian's here presents the relations of Father and Son and Son and Holy Spirit rather simplistically. Victorinus's discussion in the

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[18] *Adv. Ar.* IA 11, 21-30 (CSEL 83.1, 69).
[19] Tertullian *Adv. Prax.* 25.

present treatise moves away from these interpretations of the ordered relations to offer more nuanced and expansive engagement with the paraclete passages here.

He repeats the two distinct questions, *quid sit* and *qui sit*? To the question *quid sit* which seeks a definition Victorinus calls the Spirit *paraclitus*. It is a descriptive (ἐννοηματική, *notio communis*) rather than proper definition, explaining how the *paraclete* serves as our defender—advocate—before the Father.[20] This definition of what a *paraclitus* is applies just as much to Christ as to the Spirit, as can be seen in Rom 8:34, Heb 7:25, 1 Jn 2:1, in each of which Christ is in view.[21] The phrase *alius paraclitus* had of course also indicated that the word itself was a common notion not a proper name.

The question *qui sit* allows Victorinus to express that difference between Christ and the Spirit, who are otherwise identical as to their role as *paraclitus*. Victorinus uses the philosophical model of a single *motus* with two *opera* to a similar effect as the *substantia-persona* model of Tertullian ,according to which multiple *personae* may share the same *substantia*, or the *status-gradus* model according to which multiple *personae* may share the same *status* although at different ranks within that single category.[22]

Victorinus had set out at 13.1-4 to explain how Father and Son are one and Jesus and the Holy Spirit are one. His statement here that *Iesus ergo spiritus sanctus* is the conclusion of that argument. Victorinus seeks a specific way of differentiating the two through careful exegesis of Scripture. Here his exegesis involves paraphrase and

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[20] Victorinus, *De def.* 17, 9-10 (Hadot, *Marius Victorinus*, 347).
[21] Rom 8:34: ὃς καὶ ἔστιν ἐν δεξιᾷ τοῦ Θεοῦ, ὃς καὶ ἐντυγχάνει ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν, Vulgate: ad dexteram Dei, qui etiam interpellat pro nobis; Heb 7:25: εἰς τὸ ἐντυγχάνειν ὑπὲρ αὐτῶν, Vulgate: ad interpellandum pro nobis; 1 Jn 2:1: ἐάν τις ἁμάρτῃ, παράκλητον ἔχομεν πρὸς τὸν πατέρα, Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν δίκαιον, Vulgate: et si quis peccaverit, advocatum habemus apud Patrem, Jesum Christum justum.
[22] See above ch. 1 §I.3.

narratio.[23] His conclusion, *Iesus ergo spiritus sanctus*, may be logical given his premises, but it is certainly surprising and idiosyncratic. After quoting this passage John Voelker registers concern that in his work "describing the Son-Holy Spirit dyad," Victorinus's articulations are "dangerously Modalistic."[24] The explanation he offers is that "as a Neo-Nicene, Victorinus was coming out of a tradition of a miahypostatic milieu, where the Western Latin understanding of speaking about three subsistences in God as a tool for trinitarian reflection was still rather new."[25]

So long as "Jesus," "Son," and "Logos" are understood as proper names of the second member of the Trinity, this whole segment until the end of *Adv. Ar.* III must sound modalistic. According to this reading Victorinus is having difficulty seeing the Holy Spirit as a distinct third subsistence eternally coming forth from the Father. The Spirit is seen as subsisting only insofar as it acts "in the mystery." Apart from this economic activity, the Spirit does not seem to have an independent *raison d'être* nor any means of being adequately differentiated from the Son-Word. The context here, however, shows that the two are not to be taken as identical in a modalistic fashion. They are eternally distinct on the model of the noetic triad as two qualitatively diverse modes of motion. This distinction is manifest in the economy by their hidden and manifest modes of movement.

14.12-19. *Motus enim spiritus. Unde et spiritus motus eo quod spiritus: spirat enim ubi vult. Et ipse nunc dicit: spiritus veritatis. Et ita ei nomen est spiritus sanctus. Spiritus*

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[23] On paraphrase in Victorinus see Cooper, *Galatians*, 101; on *ennaratio* see Stephen A. Cooper, "*Narratio* and *Exhortatio* in Galatians According to Marius Victorinus Rhetor," *Zeitschrift für die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der Alteren Kirche* 90 (2000): 107-135.

[24] John Voelker, "The Trinitarian Theology of Marius Victorinus: Polemic and Exegesis" (Ph.D. diss.: Marquette University, 2006), 238.

[25] John Voelker, "The Trinitarian Theology of Marius Victorinus," 238.

etiam Christus. Spiritus et deus. Omnes ergo spiritus. Verum deus substantialiter spiritus.

Inest enim in eo quod est substantia et motus, vel potius substantia ipsa qui est motus, sed

in se manens, ut saepe iam diximus, et retinendi causa saepe repetemus.

Now the question *unde sit* is raised. The answer may either be Jesus since it is he who gives to Christians (*dabit vobis*) the Holy Spirit, or the Father who as the first principle is the *unde* of the *Logos*. In this passage he emphasizes it is the Spirit-Paraclete's Father who sends Him (*a patre mittitur*). Thus with respect to both what the Spirit is and whence the Spirit is, there appears no discernible difference between the Spirit and Christ. But the two are distinct insofar as Christ speaks of *alius paraclitus*.

Elsewhere Victorinus had spoken of *spiritus* generically as a *nomen* of God's substance (*Adv. Ar.* IB 55, 1-11);[26] *nomen* here refers to a specific name.[27] The argument which immediately follows takes spirit again as a predicate applicable to the whole Trinity. *Christus* and *deus* must be understood within this context as specific names, just as *sanctus spiritus* is being used. Jesus calls the *alius paraclitus* the *spiritus veritatis*. This appellation Victorinus apparently takes as an adequate explanation as to why he is named the Holy Spirit (*ita ei nomen est spiritus sanctus*). The reader is left to make the connection between truth, spirit, and sanctity or else to wait until §16.18-37.

It is true that Victorinus has often said these things, not only in other works but even in this treatise. Now he gives us a hint that his intention has been pedagogical. The often-repeated point is that *substantia* and *motus* are one *in divinis*. This point is thus seen as of paramount importance for Victorinus's defense of Nicene *homoousion* theology. It had been ever since his dispute with Candidus in which Victorinus explained how the

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[26] CSEL 83.1, 152.
[27] On *nomen* see Cicero, *De inv.* I, 34.

Father's begetting was indeed a movement but it did not constitute a change in the divinity.

14.20-24. *At vero Iesus et spiritus sanctus motio, vere mota motio, unde foris operans, sed Iesus spiritus apertus, quippe et in carne, spiritus autem sanctus occultus Iesus, quippe qui intellegentias infundat, non iam qui signa faciat aut per parabolas loquatur.*

By emphasizing that the motion of Jesus and the Holy Spirit is a motion truly moved, Victorinus distinguishes their real movement from the analogous movement of the Father. The Father in reality transcends movement; He is said to move only by concession and improperly. The movement of Jesus and the Holy Spirit in transitive, working outside of their substance. Victorinus has argued that Spirit and Logos are one motion, and that the Logos has become incarnate as Jesus. Perhaps this section is the greatest stumbling block for readers. What could Victorinus mean by *Iesus occultus*? Who or what is Jesus that one could speak of him as manifest and hidden while referring each of these apparently to two distinct hypostases? Has Victorinus confused the Son and Holy Spirit? Do they have distinct *hypostases*? Can Jesus be both? Jesus and Holy Spirit here are two distinct things, but one motion. They are motion truly moving, thus Victorinus distinguishes this motion which works outside with that still motion of the Father which moves internally. Jesus in the flesh (Jesus, recall, is "salutary *Logos*") makes manifest and is therefore open spirit, even to the point of showing himself in the flesh. The Holy Spirit is Jesus ("salutary *Logos*") hidden, as filling human understanding, not as teaching from outside.

Jesus is the spirit out in the open, but he does not say he is *spiritus sanctus apertus*. It is unclear whether this distinction is theological or economic. Victorinus is

explaining that the two are distinct on the basis of Scripture and is showing how John's expressions show them to be identical. The distinction is economic insofar as their activities in the world differentiate Christ and the Holy Spirit; it is theological insofar as the distinction between this second dyad is an eternal feature of God. The two are used as personal names throughout this section; their coinherence is stressed rather than their difference. Their difference has been secured by the discussion of the twofold Logos. That Victorinus prioritizes their coinherence is evidence that the problem he was facing was how to express the consubstantiality of the Holy Spirit. The specific way in which Victorinus differentiates the two by the open and hidden modes of their activity may be better understood by an appeal to rhetorical modes of expression.

Something may be said in two ways, openly (*aperte*) or hiddenly (*occulte*).[28] An *exordium* is made hiddenly and subtly (*insinuatione*) or by a kind of winding speech (*quibusdam circuitionibus*) "cum animi iudicum erunt vehementer offensi."[29] Signs and parables are both used in the Scripture in order to convince the doubtful and to conceal teaching from those without eyes to see and ears to hear. Victorinus sees the ministry of Christ as taking place in both hostile and friendly circumstances and recognizes the various pedagogical strategies Christ adopted depending on his audience. Then there is the additional distinction between an external method of teaching, which is by necessity the way human teachers communicate to pupils, and the internal mode of teaching, which belongs to the *magister intellegentiae* who is not constrained by the conditions of material existence. He had said in his *Ad Cand.* that we have spirit within us, the gift of God, the *patrikos nous* and *scintilla dei*, by which we may have some notion of divine

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[28] Victorinus, *In Cic. Rhet.* I, 17, 4-6 (CCSL 132, 79-80).
[29] Victorinus, *In Cic. Rhet.* I, 17, 6-8 (CCSL 132, 80).

things. The pedagogue may exploit and engage these by *exempla* and explanations. The Holy Spirit, however, gives knowledge not by speech but by an intimate and direct act of illumination (see below 16.1-4).

14.24-37. *Ipsum autem se esse ipse sic docet: nos vos dimittam orfanos, veniam ad vos. Ipse autem in spiritu sancto esse occultum sic docet: mundus me iam non videbit, vos autem videbitis me, quoniam vivo ego et vos vivetis. Hoc etiam sancto spiritui datum: ut penes vos sit in aeternum spiritus veritatis; et de se dixit: ego sum veritas. Deinde adiecit: quem mundus non potest videre; et de se dixit: iam me mundus non videbit. Deinde adiecit: quoniam ipsum non videt, neque cognoscit ipsum. Sed et Christum nemo cognovit: in sua venit et mundus eum non agnovit. Adiecit: vos cognoscetis ipsum, quoniam manet in vobis et in vobis est. Et ipse de se ita: vos videbitis me. Et quoniam Christus vita est, de se adiunxit: quoniam vivo ego et vos vivetis.*

This passage is a continuation of the answer to the question *unde sit*. Victorinus expresses the closeness of Jesus and the Holy Spirit by parallel constructions running through this passage. It is just like other passages in which Victorinus proves that a *nomen* of Scripture applies to each of the Trinity so that all are *homoousia*. The constant refrain is basically "Jesus said this of himself, but attributed something similar to the Spirit."

The points he is arguing are (1) that Jesus and the Holy Spirit are the same. He adds proofs with the phrases *ipsum autem. . . ipse autem*. (2) Then he argues that the two are so related that Jesus is hidden in the Holy Spirit. The identification of Jesus and Holy Spirit is not at odds with their differentiation but rather supposes it. For just as *alius* distinguished Christ and Holy Spirit while *paraclitus* identified them, so *Iesus ergo*

spiritus sanctus is offset by the coinherence whereby Jesus is the Spirit openly and the Spirit is Jesus hidden, or Jesus is hidden in the Spirit. The proofs for this second point are presented by repetitions of *deinde adiecit*. *Deinde* tends to indicate developing *adprobationes* whereas *adiecit* and similar terms "signal transitions of thought or connections between verses."[30]

To answer *unde sit*, first, he quotes Christ to establish the identity of the one who sends and of the one who is sent. For Christ says he will come to his disciples, and Victorinus think this is fulfilled in the coming of the Spirit. What is meant that Christ is hidden in the Spirit? For how is it that the disciples "see" the Holy Spirit and thus see Christ hidden therein? The vision is one of recognition and knowledge. The one who "sees" the Holy Spirit is the one who by the Spirit knows the mystery of the sacraments, who knows Christ not according to the flesh but as the true Son of God.

We ought to join this passage concerning *visio* (*quem mundus non potest videre*) to §5 in which *cernere* of what is seen is the completion of the act of vision. The Son is seen in the world but is neither known nor received. Not being recognized we can also say he is not *really* seen, his nature not being discerned. This discernment is empowered by the Spirit. On the other hand, the Spirit who is seen insofar as he descends on the apostles as tongues of fire, is typically not the object of knowledge but rather the agent of knowledge. Christ is present to the apostles and to succeeding generations of Christians by the mediation of the Holy Spirit. Christ remains the object of knowledge for Christ is the truth, as Victorinus will emphasize shortly. The Holy Spirit is the communication of that truth which is perhaps what is meant by calling him *spiritus veritatis*.

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[30] Cooper, "*Narratio* and *Exhortatio*," 113.

14.37-42. *Et quia spiritus sanctus intellegentia est—utraque autem mundus ipse caret—ideo adiecit: quoniam apud vos manet et in vobis est. Unde autem aut est in illis, aut iam manet spiritus sanctus, si adhuc postea venturus est, et non iam per Christum apud illos esse coepit? Ergo iuncti atque ex uno sunt, qui motus est.*

Victorinus loops back to explain the second half of Jn. 14:17 in light of his assertion that the Holy Spirit is *intellegentia*. The Holy Spirit dwells with the disciples as knowledge, and apparently does not dwell in those of the world who "are deprived of both life and knowledge."[31] His exegesis involves drawing distinctions on the basis of the differences in verb tenses. The Holy Spirit is to be sent and will abide with the people as Christ's own presence among them; but the Spirit Christ has said is already with them. But it is Christ who is with them as he speaks these words. So, the Holy Spirit is present with them through Christ, and Christ will be present to them once more in the Holy Spirit once he sends the Paraclete. The Spirit and Christ are *iuncti* in the closest possible bond, being two qualifications or modes of the same *motus*.

14.42-49. *Id apertius in sequentibus declaratur. Ait enim: haec vobis dixi apud vos manens. Paraclitus autem spiritus sanctus, quem mittet pater in meo nomine, vos docebit omnia, quaecumque dico. Ego, inquit, in vobis maneo. Data est enim vita, nec ab illis iam Christus abscedit. Sunt igitur et spiritali motu, quod est Christum in illis manere, ipsi autem animae in quibus spiritus manet nec aliquando discedit.*

The *iuncti* of Christ and the Holy Spirit Victorinus says is declared "more clearly" (*apertius*) in Jn.25-26.[32] The open (*apertus*) mode of discourse is used when one has

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[31] Clark, *Marius Victorinus*, 244.
[32] Clark, *Marius Victorinus*, 244.

secured the good will of one's audience.[33] It is appropriate here as Christ speaks specifically to his disciples, whose good will has secured by Christ's very person or character.[34] Christ dwells in his disciples before he departs from them—what this departure means and how it does not contradict the last phrase of this passage *nec aliquando discedit* will be seen just below. He is present to them as eternal life in which they have a share. The disciples seem not to be aware that life is in them until they have received the *spiritus veritatis*, but Victorinus does not address the question of how the disciples knew that they had the life of Christ within them before Pentecost. Once they receive the "baptism of knowledge" at Pentecost they will have boldness and knowledge to bear witness concerning the person and work of Christ as Victorinus discusses below (§16.38-45).[35]

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§15: *Summary*

Victorinus explains how Christ's return to the Father refers to the economy. He explains what it means to be sent "in my name," in the name of Christ. The movement of Christ's sending the Holy Spirit, or the Father sending the Spirit in Christ's name, is shown to correspond with the ordered movement of *vita* and *intellegentia* from *esse*. The effects of receiving the Spirit are briefly mentioned. The work of the Holy Spirit in attesting to the mystery of Christ is what distinguishes the Spirit from Christ whose own work was to accomplish the work of salvation objectively. Victorinus offers exegesis on Jn 15:26, an

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[33] Victorinus, *In Cic. Rhet.* I, 15, 156- 16, 69 (CCSL 132, 77-79).
[34] Victorinus, *In Cic. Rhet.* I, 16, 2-18 (CCSL 132, 77-78); see Alain Petit, "Existence et manifestation: Le Johannisme platonicien de Marius Victorinus," *Les études philosophiques* 2 (2012): 151-162.
[35] For the reference to a "baptism of knowledge" see Clark, *Marius Victorinus*, 245, n. 131.

especially important Johannine text for pneumatology. He also introduces Jn 16:8-14, which sets up his more elaborate exegesis in the following chapter.[36]

Commentary

15.1-7. *Dictum tamen: nunc ibo ad patrem. Quid istud sit, facile intellegi potest, si accipiatur ex mysterio dictum et corporali mysterio. Nam spiritaliter, cum et ipse in patre sit et pater in ipso, quo aut quare ibit? Ex eodem mysterio est, quos ad Christum spiritus, columbae similis, venit et quod nunc spiritus mittetur a patre et mittetur, ad patrem Christo eunte et petente ut mittatur.*

Victorinus's exegesis here of Jn. 14:28 becomes an occasion for him to distinguish explicitly between theology properly speaking and the economy. In doing so, he shows that the sending of the Spirit is to be taken as a relation within the economy. The Spirit did not come to Christ at the baptism in the Jordan in such a way that Christ did not already have the Spirit, that is not spiritually, according to the same logic: the Spirit and Christ are one and the same, distinct in subsistence but identical in essence and never spiritually separated. The Spirit being sent is again not a movement of the Holy Spirit as such, who is without any limitations and without material accidents; it is a new mode of the Spirit's presence in the community of believers belonging to the economy. When he is sent, he appears as tongues of fire or as the breath of Christ.

Christ asking the Father to send the Spirit is perhaps equivalent to Christ's work of advocating on behalf of the faithful as in Rom 8:34, Heb 7:25, and 1 Jn 2:1. The proper way of understanding Christ's movement to the Father is with respect to the economy in the flesh, for Christ did not depart from the souls to whom he had given life

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[36] This combination is found in Athanasius, *Ep. ad Ser.* 1, 33; see Casurella, *Johannine Paraclete*, 31-32.

(see above 14.49). In saying this, Victorinus shows that the soteriological effects of the economy are distinct from the economy proper, the means of salvation and salvation achieved are two things. Christ's going to the Father is also not a movement from the divine Son to the divine Father, *cum et ipse in patre sit et pater in ipso, quo aut quare ibit?*

15.7-12. *A morte enim vita revocata et vita, non ipse vita, quia logos est—haec enim mortem nescit, magis haec ipsa interficit mortem—sed vita, quae in hominibus, resurrexit a morte, quam utique induit simul cum corpore, et eam ab inferno resumpsit.*

Victorinus explains how Christ's return to the Father is *ex mysterio dictum*. The life in question here is the participatory life of the body given to it by the soul. Christ is the universal and eternal life which, as substantial, does not admit of its opposite, death. The soul, too, has life as its essence life (though it is not the essence of life).[37] The soul in some sense suffers insofar as it vivifies other things which are themselves subject to change and even to death. "Indeed this is passion according to life because life always has need of the other which it wishes to vivify, and for that reason, according to that which is a participant in it, it also undergoes other passions even unto death."[38] The life which *utique induit simul cum corpore* is a mode of being susceptible to suffering and which Christ adds to himself (for a second time) upon leaving hell. So Christ is present *corporaliter*, but refuses to work *corporaliter* until the very body and soul He has taken back up is rendered holy and returns to identity with its source so that it no longer is susceptible of suffering (see below 15.15-22).

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[37] *Adv. Ar.* IA 32, 42-50 (CSEL 83.1, 113).
[38] *Adv. Ar.* IA 32, 65-68 (CSEL 83.1, 114; ET: Clark, *Marius Victorinus*, 143).

15.12-15. *Propter hanc igitur sanctificandum, eundum fuit ad patrem, sed corporaliter atque animaliter, id est in id quod in se pater fuerat penetrandum potentialiter atque exsistentialiter.*

Victorinus is explaining why Christ told Mary Magdalen not to touch him, what it means for him to return to the Father, and how he was sanctified after his resurrection. The meaning of the passage poses difficulties. First, who is the *pater* in this passage? Hadot suggests, though rather modestly, that the Father here may be that in Jesus which is of the divine substance. Moreschini and Tommasi likewise write "per penetrare con il corpo e con l'anima nella realtà divina," but diverge from Hadot in claiming that this divine reality "nel Figlio era constituita dal Padre." As a result, they conclude that the statement is flawed in that it seems to suggest that during the incarnation "il Padre non fosse stato nel Figlio."[39] Hadot's association of *pater* with divine substance rather than with the Father as such I think is closer to the mark. This makes good sense if the Logos is the *potentia* and therefore the *pater* of all soul and all body. The Logos is the universal principle of all things, and is thus the logos of flesh and the logos of soul. So Christ with the flesh and the soul is "to penetrate by his power and his existence in that which in himself was the Father."[40] In returning to its source the soul and the body no longer suffer because the soul no longer acts through a body which is susceptible to suffering. Rather both act together spiritually, soul and body having been made spiritual—or is it that the *hylicus spiritus* and *hylica anima* have been left behind, as Victorinus had interpreted Mt. 24:40-41? On the other hand, 15.1-7 makes it clear that *pater* is indeed the Father properly speaking, since Christ goes to the Father and the Spirit is sent by the Father at

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[39] Moreschini and Tommasi, *Opere teologiche*, 746, n. 138.
[40] Clark, *Marius Victorinus*, 245.

Christ's request. I am not sure what Victorinus had in mind—nor am I altogether sure Victorinus himself had clarity on this point. There is the further question of what Victorinus means by *penetrandum*.

Tertullian and Origen had envisioned the "physics" of penetration oppositely. Victorinus seems rather in agreement with Origen than Tertullian on this point. For Tertullian, it is Spirit which, as a divine and subtle body, penetrates the "thicker" forms of materiality. He says the corporeal substance underlying the Spirit in Gen. 1:3, over which the Spirit hovered, "borrowed a holiness" from the Spirit. He thinks it is to be expected that "an underlying material substance should catch the quality of that which overhangs it, most of all a corporeal of a spiritual, adapted (as the spiritual is) through the subtleness of its substance, both for penetrating and insinuating."[41] Tertullian does something similar when he talks about the resurrection of the flesh. "Now, if life thus extirpates death from the body, it can accomplish this only by penetrating there where that is which it is excluding."[42] He then turns to Rom. 8:11 to clinch his point, that the mortal body itself is raised. In both passages, Tertullian envisions a lower being penetrated by a higher, what is denser by what is more rarified. There is something not unlike this Stoic pneumatics in Victorinus's account of the subtle intersubjective working of the Holy Spirit. Nevertheless, the directionality of the movement of penetration has more similarity to what Origen says.

Origen writes of the lower penetrating to the place of the higher. He follows Heb. 4:14 in which Jesus is said to enter the heavens: "penetravit caelos, Iesum filium dei." "Si potes mente et animo penetrare caelos et sequi Iesum qui penetravit caelos et assistit nunc

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[41] Tertullian, *De bapt.* 4.
[42] Tertullian, *De res. carn.* 46.

vultui Dei pro nobis . . ."[43] The Latin translation has a similar construction of the verb with an ablative of respect (in this case adjectives serving as adverbs). Origen presents Jesus's movement as an invitation for us to follow. This corresponds to Clark's reading, that he penetrates "by his power and existence in that which in himself was the Father."[44]

15.15-22. *Hoc igitur modo ivit ad patrem. Denique nec absentiae tempus edictum, sed contra dictum, quod nocte quae sabbatum sequitur apparuerit Mariae, tangi noluerit, priusquam iret ad patrem. Nuntiavit Maria discipulis, eadem nocte ad ipsos venit, ostendens manus et latus, utique tangi iam non prohibens. Post, Thomas palpavit, tetigit, ipso quidem hortante, quia ille desperabat, quod significat sanctificatum iam fuisse.*

Victorinus, being ever close to the text, sees the incongruity in Christ appearing to Mary and refusing to her what he offered to the disciples later that same evening.[45] He thinks this must mean that Christ has returned to His Father just as Christ said to Mary, "I go to my Father." It is by virtue of this return that Christ has been sanctified. Sanctification in general, both with respect to Christ and to all humanity, means returning to the divine source. But what is it that keeps Mary from touching the as of yet unsanctified flesh?

15.22-25. *Quam ergo breve hoc tempus est! Sed propter mysterium dictum: ibo ad patrem. Nam cum ipse in patre et in ipso pater sit, quo ibit?*

The time is brief between Jesus' meeting of Mary and his presence in the upper room with his disciples, only the span of a day. But Victorinus heightens the brevity by drawing attention to the substantial unity of the Son and Father. In doing so, however, he

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[43] Origen, *De prin.* II.11, 6.
[44] Clark, *Marius Victorinus*, 245.
[45] Hadot notes a similarity between Victorinus's exegesis of this passage and that of Origen in his *Dialogue with Heraclides* (Hadot, SC 69, 967).

leaves open the question of how we are to understand this return. Does Victorinus understand the Son to return to the Father in body and soul? If so, does the body *go somewhere*?

15.25-26. *Eodem ergo mysterio: quem vobis mittit pater, quia pater mittit, cum Christus mittit.*

The Father sends when Christ sends because everything Christ does is also the activity of the Father. For the Son is the act of the Father and does all that He (and no one else) sees the Father doing. Victorinus has concluded the argument begun at 15.2 explaining Christ's movement is for the sake of the mystery; he now explains that the same logic applies to the sending of the Spirit, which is in continuity with the mystery of salvation. He had introduced the Spirit's cooperation in the *mysterium* in the same words at 15.4-5 (*ex eodem mysterio*).

15.26-33. *Denique sic ait: mittit pater in nomine meo, id est pro me, aut in nomine meo, quoniam spiritus Christus et ipse spiritus sanctus, aut in nomine meo, quia spiritus sanctus ipse de Christo testimonium ferret. Sic enim dictum: ille testimonium dicet de me. Quid ille? Quem vobis ego mitto a patre. Iuncti ergo omnes: ego mitto, a patre mitto, spiritum veritatis mitto. Medius ergo λόγος, id est Iesus, ipse mittit.*

We have another dense and rapid passage similar to §14.24-37 above. The proliferation of possible interpretations of *in nomine meo* emphasizes the rawness of Victorinus's engagement with the question and perhaps is evidence of a paucity of adequate Christian pneumatologies generally.

This whole passage purports to be speaking of the mystery, that is, of the economy. Victorinus identifies the Logos and Jesus here, specifying that it is the second

of the Trinity that sends the Holy Spirit. The Logos as Jesus or the Son (the second person of the Trinity) also plays this role as *medius* in the Trinity itself according to Victorinus, as he explains elsewhere.[46] The Logos is also mediator in the Trinity itself.

> [I]gitur et vox filius est, ipse vita, ipse λόγος, ipse motus, ipse νοῦς, ipse sapientia, ipse exsistentia et substantia prima, ipse actio potentialis, ipse ὂν primum, vere ὂν ex quo omnia ὄντα et per quem et in quo, qui est medius in angulo trinitatis, patrem declarant praeexsistentem et conplet sanctum spiritum in perfectionem.[47]

Theology and economy are distinct in Victorinus's thought. Nevertheless, the outward work of the Trinity reflects the inner reality of God. This is in accordance with, and perhaps is due to, Victorinus's understanding of the relation of correspondence between the heavenly and earthly realities. Jesus is the mediator because he sends the Holy Spirit according to the will of the Father. The Father only sends, the Son sends and is sent, the Holy Spirit only is sent. Victorinus connects the three passages, concluding each clause with *mitto* thereby emphasizing the close links binding all three and giving an image of the single ordered operation connecting Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

15.33-40. *Motus enim principalis universalisque, qui vitalis ac vita est, mittit intellegentiae motum, qui, sicuti docui[t], ex vita atque ipsa vita est. Scire enim quid sis, hoc est vivere, hoc est esse. Hoc autem esse, quid est quam ex dei substantia esse, quod est spiritum esse? Unde nos spiritales efficimur, accepto spiritu a Christo, et hinc aeterna vita. Spiritus ergo appellata est ista trinitas. Nam dictum: deus spiritus est.*

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[46] Clark takes *medius* here as "the one who is found *in the midst of you*" (Clark, *Marius Victorinus*, 245), perhaps with Mt 18:20 in mind: "Ubi enim sunt duo vel tres congregati in nomine meo, ibi sum in medio eorum."

[47] *Adv. Ar*. IB 56, 15-20 (CSEL 83.1, 154).

The accounts of sending prompt Victorinus to expound again his understanding of divine movement. Life is principal and universal motion—it is the source of all other motion as formal and motive cause. Motion's final cause is its perfection in knowledge, which is the second aspect of motion, motion from motion. This sending is economic. The close relation between the earthly and heavenly may suggest that Victorinus slips into a kind of modalism, as Voelker contends, by making the distinction of Son and Spirit one merely belonging to the activity of God in the world. Victorinus's theological account of the distinction among persons of the Trinity *in se* may appear as nothing more than an economic differentiation which is protologically and eschatologically reduced into the latent and simple deity beyond *esse*.

If Victorinus's theological distinction of persons collapses into the economic manifestation of those distinctions through diverse modes of activity, the grounds of Victorinus's disagreement with Marcellus's trinitarian thought and his and Photinus's christological confusion would be undermined.[48] Victorinus does move fluidly between the movement *in divinis* and the movement *ex mysterio*, but this is due to the close correspondence he saw between things *up there* and things below. The Son and Spirit are assimilated to *vivere* and *intellegere* in the godhead, but that same distinction is made manifest in the economic work of Christ and the Holy Spirit which follows the same pattern according to which each has its proper mode of activity: Christ gives life and the Spirit gives knowledge.

The noetic triad is again reprised to show the identity of the Trinity—all coinhere and all are of the same substance, that of *spiritus*. The spiritual Trinity makes believers to

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[48] *Adv. Ar.* IA 28, 38-40 (CSEL 83.1, 104).

be spiritual, raising them above their own nature as embodied souls. There are a great many variations on *spiritus* throughout these sections. We have seen the many uses of *spiritus* by which the substance of God, the faculty of the human, and the proper name of the Holy Spirit are all called. It appears also as an adverb in two forms: *spiritale* (13.20) and *spiritaliter* (15.3); as an adjective qualifying the "motion" which Christ gives to believing *animae*: *spiritali motu* (14.47); and finally as a noun here, *spiritales efficimur* (15.38). The work of the Spirit in rendering believers *spiritales* may be compared to Athanasius's discussion of deification and salvation as operations in which the Holy Spirit is involved, although the discussion here is quite different and the term deification does not occur.[49]

15.40-45. *Item dictum a Paulo ad Corinthios secunda: dominus autem spiritus est. Ubi autem spiritus Domini, ibi libertas. Utique ista de Christo. Ipse vero spiritus sanctus dictus, quod sanciat sanctos, id est sanctos faciat. Et certe ipse est spiritus dei; dictus est enim: prudentia, sapientia, omniumque rerum scientia.*

Victorinus adduces further scriptural passages in defense and explanation that God is spirit. But the Holy Spirit, qualified and thus specified by *sanctus*, fulfills a particular role: that of sanctifying, or making saints. The knowledge of all comes by the Spirit through the Logos, while the object of that knowledge is the Logos-Son who is the image of the Father. Knowledge of what really is is also to become holy according to Victorinus's wedding of Platonic contemplation, gnostic liberation, and Christian salvation.

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[49] See Athanasius, *Ep. ad Ser.* 22.

15.46-47. *Ita enim de eo subiungit: ille convincit mundum de peccato et iustitia et de iudicio.*

Victorinus begins an extensive exegesis of Jn. 16:8-11 to explain the Spirit's primary activity of bearing witness to Christ. *Subiungit* is a technical term, like *adiecit* and *adiungit*, which Victorinus uses to "signal transitions of thought or connections between verses" as seen above (p. 17 and n. 31).[50] Here Victorinus uses it to connect the various epistemic terms associated with the Spirit with the juridical activity of the Spirit in the economy. The discussion of the activity of the Holy Spirit will occupy the bulk of Victorinus's argument concluding at §17.9.

15.47-49. *De peccato, inquit, quoniam in me non credunt, vel quod vita sit Christus vel quod dei filius et a deo missus et qui peccata dimittat.*

Victorinus, prompted by the connection between sin and disbelief, proposes what precisely about Christ is to be believed and what may constitute an incomplete (or rejection of) faith in Christ. He distinguishes in an earlier treatise between the natural order of events and the order presented to humanity. "[Y]ou have loved me and believed that I came forth from God" is the natural first step to recognizing that Christ proceeded from the Father and is Son from eternity.[51] And indeed to believe in Christ is to have life (ibid).

15.49-52. *De iustitia autem, quoniam ad patrem pergo. Tot enim in mysterio passionibus, quia fidem mandatorum servavit et implevit, quippe cum dixerit, cum aliud vellet: fiat voluntas tua.*

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[50] Cooper, "*Narratio* and *Exhortatio*," 113.
[51] *Adv. Ar.* IA 14, 9-37 (CSEL 83.1, 73-74); Clark, *Marius Victorinus*, 107.

Victorinus explains the connection between Christ's *iustitia* and his departure to the Father. Hadot notes that by *iustitia* Victorinus here intends merited glorification.[52] What Christ suffered he underwent as a voluntary act of submission to the will of the Father. His *iustitia* is that he preserved and fulfilled the commandments despite the suffering that doing so would entail. The word *pergo* is unusual here. It is unattested in the *Vetus Latina* and Vulgate.[53] Victorinus does not follow up on the significant phrase *cum aliud vellet*. He had made reference to the same passage above when he was emphasizing the complete human soul of Christ, though there he had used *cupit* for *vellet* here (3.43-44). It is not a part of his argument here to tackle Christological questions, only to show the knowledge the Spirit gives of the justice of Christ. This justice is manifest in the willing submission of the individual will to that of God, as Victorinus pointed out at 10.23-32. He subjected his cupidity to his reasoning power, as Victorinus alluded at 3.44-45: "Ibi etiam ratiocinatur: 'sed fiat potius voluntas tua.'" As human, his subjection of his will to the Father has merited that he should go to the Father and receive the name above every name.[54] Insofar as He is divine, Christ is himself the will of the Father. Victorinus had asserted this perhaps in opposition to creedal statements of the 350s in which the Logos and Son was said to come forth as an act of the Father's will (as opposed to coming forth as a necessary, involuntary, uncontrolled emanation from God).[55]

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[52] Hadot, SC 69, 969; on *iustitia* in Victorinus see Cooper, *Galatians*, 148-169.
[53] http://itseeweb.bham.ac.uk/iohannes/vetuslatina/edition/index.html
[54] See *In Phil.* 2.9-11 (CSEL 83.2, 192-193).
[55] For the divine will as an act of manifestation see Alain Petit, "Existence at Manifestation," 156. The creeds refer to the Son as coming forth by an act of the Father's will.

15.53-56. *Itemque, quia monitos derelinquens, iam non ita videndus relinquebat, iustitiae fuit, his actis omnibus, ire ad patrem, nec ire ad patrem tantum, sed cum illo iam esse. Nam idcirco dicitur: sedet ad dexteram patris*.

Continuing to explain Jn. 16:10, Victorinus says the Spirit bears witness that it is right that Christ goes to the Father. Going to the Father is the proper destination for one whose acts are righteous, where righteousness is to do the will of the Father rather than following one's own cupidity or velleity. The return to the Father is here presented in the Christian sense as the act of divine judgment. It has a philosophical sense, too, in that the contemplative is freed from the "weight" of the body.

Victorinus's thought is in harmony with Porphyry's on the attachment of the soul to the body. The soul which is not morally separated from the body in this life through the practice of virtue and contemplation is still attached to the body even after death.[56] The practice of virtue and contemplation frees the soul from its bondage to material things, so that when death separates soul and body ontologically the soul is truly freed from the body and will not follow the body down into Hades.[57]

Victorinus distinguishes between going to the Father—which Christ did shortly after his resurrection (see 15.15-25)—and remaining with the Father. At his ascension on the fortieth day, Christ goes and abides, indicated symbolically by his sitting at the right hand of God. Christ is there with his flesh and soul which have been made spiritual.

15.56-59. *De iudicio vero, quoniam princeps huius mundi iudicatus est. Mysterio enim crucis omnes adversae Christo ab eodem Christo triumphatae sunt potestates*.

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[56] Porphyry, *Sent.* XXIX and VIII-IX.
[57] Porphyry, *Sent.* XXIX and VIII-IX; see Wallis, *Neoplatonism*, 112.

Victorinus's interpretation of Jn. 16:11 is especially inspired by Victorinus's reading of Paul. He combines Col. 2:15, Gal. 4:3, Eph. 6:12 in an allusion to the victory of the mystery of the cross. Commenting on Gal. 4:3, Victorinus explains what were the *elements of the world*—overlapping with the *potestates* through his treatment of the stars— and what it means to be their servants.

> In truth, the elements of the world bring with them their own motions and create certain necessities, so to speak, from these motions. We see this in regard to the stars, by whose rotation the life of human beings is drawn into necessity: thus humans beings serve the elements, doing as the stars have commanded and the course of the world has ordained. From all of these things are released all those who, having faith in Christ, have received the Spirit as Lord of their life from Christ, so as to escape and evade every necessity of the world and every elemental force and avoid serving the world. Serving Christ instead, they have liberty in their actions under the Spirit's ruling.[58]

The pagans, Victorinus says in his comments on Galatians 4:9, had made the elements (here he refers to earth, water, air, fire) into gods.[59] The Spirit bears witness to the judgment of the powers of the world and to Christ's victory, a victory in which Christians share through their freedom from their former enslavement.

15.59-60. *Haec, inquit, docebit spiritus sanctus*.

Victorinus earlier raised the question of what the Holy Spirit would teach. He thinks John has provided an answer in this brief passage. Victorinus keeps himself close to John's text and does not speculate here beyond what is given in 16:8-11. The mystery

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[58] *In Gal.* 4:3 (CSEL 83.2, 138-139; ET: Cooper, *Galatians*, 302-303).
[59] *In Gal.* 4:9 (CSEL 83.2, 144-146; ET: Cooper, *Galatians*, 312-314).

of Christ entails the remission of sins, the accomplishment of justice, and the condemnation of evil.

15.60-64. *Quid eligitur? De salute mysterium paraclitus complet et non completa Christus abscedit an, quia idem ipse Christus est et spiritus sanctus, vel quia ipse eum mittit vel quia spiritus habet omnia Christi, habet omnia quae per Christum celebrantur?*

Victorinus raises these questions so as to reprise the questions concerning the Holy Spirit posed at the start of §14. The beginning of a response to them has been initiated in §§14 and 15 but have not been answered definitively. Questions of the relation of Christ and Spirit appear to have given Victorinus serious trouble, or else, he found that the Church in Rome had not yet adequately treated the subject, for in his treatment of the Spirit and Christ as paracletes here and similarly in *Adv. Ar.* IA 12, his explanations begin with a series of questions. The impression is that he is pointing out a problem for Nicene Christian theology, whose inquiry has not yet been adequately articulated. He then is working out his own answers by carefully reading John's gospel and bringing Platonic and gnostic (perhaps Origenian) thought to bear on the issue.

Victorinus offers four possibilities concerning the relation of Christ and the Holy Spirit with respect to the mystery of salvation and in light of Jn. 14:16, 15:28, and 16:13. This series of questions sets up Victorinus's treatment of Jn. 16:8-11 in the following passage.

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§16: *Summary*

Victorinus continues expounding the distinctiveness of the Holy Spirit as *scientia* and as one bearing testimony of Christ. He gives a more proper exegesis of Jn 16:8-11 about the Spirit's testimony concerning sin, justice, and judgment, which he had introduced briefly in §15. His account of sin and of justice is biblically based; he clarifies the meaning of both through scriptural exegesis.

Commentary

16.1-4. *Et tamen videamus, quid acturus est spiritus, scientiam daturus gestorum et insinuatione scientiae quasi vim testimonii ac magis iudicii habiturus vel ad paenitentiam vel ad poenam.*

Victorinus speaks of the Holy Spirit's power of testimony but then intensifies the spirit's epistemic characteristic by referring to his office as judge. This fits well with the earlier *exemplum* of vision, in which the *cernere* and *iudicare* by which the act of vision was fulfilled were assimilated to *intellegentia* and thus were seen to be analogous to the Holy Spirit. Victorinus brings in judgment here in its eschatological sense as judgment either unto the restoration of repentance or unto punishment. Repentance was interpreted by Tertullian as a purification of the mind and preparation for the reception of the Holy Spirit.[60] Neither penance nor punishment are given much attention by Victorinus throughout his theological and exegetical works. The notion of repentance does appear interestingly in *Hymn II*.

Miserere domine! Miserere Christe!

    Succurre lapsis, domine, succurre poenitentibus,

Quia divino et sancto iudicio tuo,

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[60] Tertullian, *De rep.* 2.

> Quod peccavi mysterium est.[61]

The fallen are those who have sinned in the usual sense and perhaps also all those who have fallen from the *superior ecclesia* in heaven.[62] Victorinus perhaps was among the *poenitentibus* when he wrote this, if this is a technical term for those who are joined to the Church but not yet or are temporarily not communicating members. Sin is a mystery, perhaps because the separation (*discreta sunt*) of the many after God is itself a kind of mystery (*quodam mysterio*) as Victorinus explains at *In Gal.* 3:20.[63] Repentance for Victorinus means a turning away from the things of the world and a preparation to return to the heavenly church. His Platonic cosmology is combined with a Platonic pedagogy according to which Christian *metanoia* (*paenitentia*) is the equivalent of *periagoge* (*Rep.* 521c).

Christ justly went to the Father, but seems to have avoided the judgment of the Spirit which awaits all other humans.[64] Actually, Christ took on all our *poena*, as Victorinus explains in his commentary on Ephesians. "Hoc actum est mysterium crucis, ut in poenam tollerentur omnia quae inimica sunt animis et spiritui nostro, id est desideria mundana, carnis cupiditates ipsaque caro quodammodo corrupta atque vitiosa."[65]

The way in which the Spirit teaches is not by words but by direct enlightenment of the mind (*insinuatione* in the sense in which Tertullian used it at *De bapt.* 4, quoted above p. 320), perhaps what Aquinas would later refer to as infused knowledge (although Aquinas's epistemology is more Aristotelian than Platonic whereas Victorinus's is the

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[61] *Hymnus* II, 39-42 (CSEL 83.1, 292).
[62] *In Gal.* 3:20 (CSEL 83.2, 132); *In Eph.* 1:4 1:8.
[63] *In Gal.* 3:20, 29 (CSEL 83.2, 132).
[64] See *In Eph.* 4:30, 8-12 (CSEL 83.2, 73-74).
[65] *In Eph.* 2:16, 11-15 (CSEL 83.2, 38).

inverse).[66] This mode of teaching was set off against the teaching of Christ to the people which was both *apertus* insofar as it was preached aloud, but was *occultus* in that it consisted of parables and enigmas.[67]

16.4-12. *De peccato, inquit, quod in me non crediderunt. Ergo, ut sciat mundus iam poenam suam. De iustitia autem, quod ad patrem vado. Et hoc potest esse de peccato, quod iniuste fecerunt qui eum in crucem sustulerunt, quia se filium dei dicebat. Et nunc pergit ad patrem. Quod item erit omnium, si in deum credant et faciant dei iussa, ut et ipsi ad patrem pergant. Iustificantur enim. Nam Abraham credidit et reputatum est ei ad iustitiam.*

Victorinus elaborates his discussion of the Spirit's testimony *de peccato*. The sin of unbelievers remains because they have not received the remission of sins through baptism. As Victorinus says elsewhere, "we are not turned back to spirit by our power, and it is through the blood of Christ that we have received the spirit. Therefore our sins are remitted and forgiven us through God's grace; it is not by our power that we abandon them."[68] Belief in Christ entails penitence, the turning of the soul back to its origin, which is empowered by the reception of the Spirit.

He uses *vado* in place of *pergo* here (cf. above 15.49), the former corresponding to all the early *VL* and the Vulgate text. It is difficult to know whether Victorinus's account of *iustitia* here is specifically biblical or if he combines the pagan and Jewish senses of the concept.[69] For while Victorinus clearly teaches that no human is made righteous by works and that works of the law do not save, yet the case of Christ is

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[66] Cf. Aquinas, *ST* III, q. 11, a. 1.
[67] See §14.20-24 above.
[68] *In Eph.* 1:7, 20-23 (CSEL 83.2, 14; ET: Cooper, *Metaphysics and* Morals, 53).
[69] See Cooper, *Galatians*, 148-169.

exceptional. In any case, the *iustificatio* of humans comes by putting on Christ and thus by the *iustitia dei* such people go to the Father as Christ himself did.

16.12-20. *Deinde, in iudicio, inquit, quod princeps mundi iudicatus sit. Haec, ut cernitur, non ad salutem, quae iam a Christo completa est, sed pertinent ad scientiam rerum gestarum. Est enim pater loquens silentium, Christus vox, paraclitus vox vocis. Ergo spiritus sanctus, in isto actu alter paraclitus, in salutis mysterio cooperator, ut Christus, in spiritu vero sanctificationis, quod deus. Si igitur et hoc et hoc modo Christus quod spiritus, sed deus, in mysterio aeternae vitae Christus, in sanctificatione spiritus sanctus.*

Victorinus answers the question he had posed at the end of section 15: the witness of the Spirit does not achieve salvation, for Christ had accomplished this himself through the mystery of the cross. *Est enim pater loquens silentium, Christus vox, paraclitus vox vocis* is offered as a proof. As an explanation, *vox vocis* equated with *scientia rerum gestarum*.[70] In an earlier treatise he constructed a similar triad.

> Sanctus igitur spiritus, si loquitur, a filio loquitur, ipse autem a patre. Vox igitur et λόγος et verbum isti tres, propter quod unum tres. Sed pater quidem in silentio loquitur, filius in manifesto et in locutione, sanctus spiritus non in manifesto loquitur, sed quae loquitur, spiritaliter loquitur.[71]

Tommasi considers this triad to be an archaizing manner of expressing the relation of Father and Son: "precisamente quelli della cosiddetta teoria del doppio logos, che va probabilmente intesa come evoluzione della dialettica di ascendenza stoica tra logos

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[70] "*Narratio est rerum gestarum aut ut gestarum expositio*" Cicero, *De inv.* I, 19 (and MV's treatment 85-88).
[71] *Adv. Ar.* IB 55, 30-35 (CSEL 83.1, 153).

endiathetos e logos proforikos."[72] If so, Victorinus shows the same freedom of adaptation of this Stoic scheme as he does in his adoption of other modes of thought. For here the outgoing logos enables the logos corresponding to the *endiathetos* to return to the interior. Tommasi is probably closer to the mark in associating this passage with *The Trimorphic Protennoia*: "I am the Thought of the Father and through me proceeded [the] Voice, that is the knowledge of the everlasting things."[73] Victorinus calls the Holy Spirit *prudentia, sapientia, omniumque rerum scientia* above (15.45). As we have seen, the Spirit bestows knowledge in a quiet and hidden manner.

Another way to understand the *vox vocis* is to consider its isomorphic relation from its third place in this triad to those other ordered triads in Victorinus's works.[74] A comparison to these reveals something of the purpose of *vox vocis*. In triads such as *fons-flumen-inrigatio* and *semen-arbor-fructus* it is seen that the third term has an effect ordered to something outside of itself. It is the same as *esse-vivere-intellegere* in which the *esse* is known by another through the activity of *vivere*. While the sequence is from origin to the perfection of its activity, its activity is perfected in production. In a similar way, the *loquens silentium* is enacted by the voice (*vox*) but its intelligibility is perfected in its being made known in another. The content of the message will then appear as a kind of echo in the other, which might be described as the *vox vocis*, just as the Spirit had been called an echo in an earlier treatise.[75] This is especially clear in comparison to triads

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[72] Chiara Tommasi, "Silenzio, Voce, Annunzio: La Trinità secondo Mario Vittorino," *Silenzio e parola - XXXIX Incontro di Studiosi dell'Antichità Cristiana, Institutum Patristicum Augustinianum, Roma 6-8 maggio 2010* (Roma: 2012): 521-536, 534.
[73] *The Trimorphic Protennoia*, 36, 17.
[74] The following triads are collected and presented by Tommasi, "Silenzio, Voce, Annunzio," 534.
[75] *Adv. Ar.* IB 56, 1-10 (CSEL 83.1, 153-154); see above 10.23-32 and commentary.

potentia-actio-agnitio and *substantia-forma-notio* in which recognition of the original power and substance comes through its movement (*actio*) and appearance (*forma*).

Victorinus distinguishes between salvation and sanctification. Salvation was achieved on the cross when death was put to death and the air was purged of its elemental powers and Christ descended into Hell and was resurrected. The Spirit is given to bear witness to what Christ has done and who Christ is. By receiving this knowledge, believers are rendered holy, spiritual, freed by knowledge of the truth through their reception of the spirit of truth.

16.20-29. *Sanctificat autem deus, ut dictum: sanctifica eos in veritate. Patri filius dicit. Ergo sanctificat pater. Item Christus sanctificat, ut dictum: et pro his santifico me ipsum, ut sint ipsi sanctificati in veritate. Item sanctificat spiritus sanctus. Nam et baptizare ad sanctificationem pertinet. Dictum ergo in actis apostolorum: Iohannes baptizavit aqua. Vos autem spiritu sancto tinguemini, quod superfudit se illis ad scientam. Nam iam sanctificati fuerant baptismo, invocato deo, Christo, spiritu sancto.*

This passage is reminiscent of Athanasius's arguments in favor of the divinity of the Holy Spirit.[76] Victorinus cites the baptismal formula as Scriptural and ritual proof of the divinity of the Trinity. In his later summary he writes Christ was sanctified through his baptism (*ex ipso sanctificatur in baptismo Christus in carne*). He then distinguishes the baptism in the Holy Spirit from Acts with the baptism Christians receive in the threefold name. He does not reproduce the Matthean formula perfectly, but places *deus* in place of *pater* and *Christus* in place of *filius* to fit the nomenclature of his present treatise.

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[76] Athanasius, *Ep. ad Ser.* 1, 33 (PG 26, 608)—see *Johannine Paraclete*, 31-32 and 62, n. 19.

16.29-37. *Etenim sic dictum est: santifica eos in veritate. Et veritas Christus est, paraclitus etiam spiritus est veritatis. Ergo omnis qui baptizatur et credere se dicit et fidem accipit, spiritum accipit veritatis, id est spiritum sanctum, fitque sanctior ab spiritu sancto. Et ideo dictum in actis apostolorum: sed accipietis virtutem, adveniente in vos spiritu sancto, non ad sanctificationem, sed scientiam, et ad ea quae promisit in evangelio Christus, de spiritu sancto, id est de paraclito.*

Continuing his discussion of sanctity by which Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are shown to be *homoousion*, he here draws attention especially to *veritas* by which Christ and the Holy Spirit are intimately connected. This account of sanctification is not altogether clear. The Holy Spirit is meant to render the people more holy, presumably more holy than when they had initially received life from Christ. The coming of the Spirit at Pentecost is treated as an outpouring of knowledge rather than of sanctity. One assumes that the apostles were made *sanctior* through their increased knowledge. What follows is an account of what knowledge the Spirit gave and how the Spirit fulfilled what Christ promised.

16.38-45. *Primum ut testimonium de Christo dicat. Sic enim ait: accipietis virtutem adveniente in vos spiritu sancto, et eritis mihi testes in Hierusalem. Sed et Lucas dicit: nondum quidem misso spiritu, iam tamen testimonium dicit. Paulus tamen in omnibus epistolis suis, quid aliud agit, nisi Christo testimonium dicit? Et post abscessum Christi, solus Christum vidit et soli apparuit. Spiritus ergo per Christum et Christus per spiritum sanctum adfuit.*

Victorinus makes use of a kind of 'concordance method' of exegesis in which a given word or concept is interpreted through a collation of texts bearing that word.[77] In this case, the various contexts in which testimony is given to Christ are explained by the power of the Spirit working in the apostles. Luke does speak of the apostles preaching and bearing witness to Christ's suffering and resurrection, but Christ is foretelling this before facing his passion. The Spirit's first work is to bear witness to Christ. That the apostles, including Paul, bear witness to Christ is indicative of their having received the Holy Spirit so that they are as instruments for the Spirit.

16.45-56. *Item dicit testimonium Iohannes et Petrus: quod audivimus, quod vidimus quod palpavimus. Et in actis apostolorum et ipsi et Lucas, qui scripsit de his, de David ita dicit: propheta cum esset, et sciens quia iureiurando iurasset illi deus, ex fructu ventris eius sedere super thronum illius, providens locutus est de resurrectione Christi, quia neque relictus est in inferno, neque caro eius vidit corruptionem. Hunc ergo Iesum resuscitavit deus, cuius nos omnes testes sumus. Quando ista dicunt? Cum iam factus esset de caelo sonus et tanquam vi magna spiritus ferretur, qui replevit totam domum et repleti sunt spiritu sancto et coeperunt loqui variis linguis.*

Victorinus confuses the testimony John and Peter give in Acts with 1 Jn 1:1. He supplies a brief barrage of Scriptural citations from Acts and Luke in which the apostles by the power of the Spirit bear testimony to Christ. He will add further citations from

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[77] H. A. G. Houghton, *Augustine's Text of John, Patristic Citations and Latin Gospel Manuscripts* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 77. Concordance exegesis is associated with the strategy of interpreting scripture by scripture which, Souter noted, is not the typical strategy of Victorinus. "What especially distinguishes [Victorinus's biblical commentaries] from other (later) commentaries is that scripture is rarely quoted in illustration of scripture" (Alexander Souter, *Earliest Latin Commentaries*, 22).

Acts and from Paul in the next passage. All of this for the sake of showing the joint but distinctive divine operations of Christ and the Holy Spirit.

16.57-60. *Deinde dicunt apostoli de peccato mundi, quod non credidit Christo. In actis ita: sicut vos scitis, hunc decreto consilio et praescientia dei traditum per manus scelestas et suffixistis eum cruci et occidistis quem deus suscitavit.*

This is the second point to which the Spirit was to bear witness, namely, *de peccato*. That sin of disbelief which he has now mentioned three times (15.46-49, 16.4-5) was made manifest through the crucifixion of Christ. The witness concerning sin is to convince the world that the one who was crucified was the Lord of glory (1 Cor. 2:8). Its working is to show that God raised the one who was put to death.

16.60-69. *Item in actis apostolorum, referente Petro: David non ascendisse in caelum, sed dixisse ita: dicit dominus domino meo, sede ad dexteram. Hoc etiam Paulus dixit: qui resurrexit, qui est in dextera dei. Ergo docuerunt quod post resurrectionem ad patrem ivit. Idem mox adiecit: qui et interpellat patrem. Ergo si et Christus interpellat, paraclitus etiam ipse. Item, in actis, quod ad patrem ierit, testimonium est: videntibus ipsis, elevatus est et nubes suscepit eum ab oculis ipsorum. Cumque intuerentur ineuntem illum in caelum et reliqua.*

Victorinus here explains the third aspect of the Spirit's testimony, namely *de iustitia*. He does not announce the transition, but we infer it from Victorinus's earlier discussion of justice which likewise involved the ascension of Christ and his sitting at the right hand (15.49-56, 16.5-11). These are both are manifestations of justice since righteous souls return to God and the right hand is the hand of justice. He had also made a close connection above (16.5-11) between sin and justice, because the righteousness of

Christ is what manifests the injustice of his persecutors. The allusion to Christ as *paraclitus* from Rom. 8:34 seems to be brought in incidentally as it happens to occur in the same verse in which Paul alludes to Christ's sitting at the right hand. The ideas are connected, for Christ ascends to the right hand of the Father where he makes intercession, but the point presently at issue is the Spirit's testimony to Christ's righteousness not to Christ's being another paraclete.

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§17: *Summary*

Whereas §16 had focused on the testimony born by the Holy Spirit to Christ concerning sin and justice, Victorinus begins §17 with the testimony regarding judgment. He finishes his account of the Spirit's witness at 17.9. Satisfied that he has now "proved that these three powers . . . constitute the unity of divinity," Victorinus shows how it is legitimate for Christians to refer only to Father and Son; such references do not exclude the Holy Spirit, for references to the Son entail a reference to the Holy Spirit.

Commentary

17.1-2. *Dicta sunt iam tria de testimonio in Christum, de peccato, de iustitia.*

I punctuate the Latin differently than the CSEL and translate differently than Clark. Henry and Hadot's text reads *Dicta sunt iam tria de testimonio in Christum: de peccato, de iustitia.*[78] (CSEL 83.1, 222). Clark translates according to that punctuation: "Three things have already been said concerning testimony in regard to Christ: concerning sin, concerning justice."[79] Victorinus has clearly spoken of that testimony the

[78] CSEL 83.1, 222.
[79] Clark, *Marius Victorinus*, 249.

Spirit bears first to Christ, *Primum ut testimonium de Christo* (16.38); then concerning

sin introduced by the transitional *deinde*, *Deinde dicunt apostoli de peccato mundi*

(16.57); and finally concerning justice, which is admittedly ambiguous because of how

closely Victorinus associates *de peccato* and *de iustitia*, as I explained. On the CSEL and

Clark's reading only two things have been said "concerning sin, concerning justice." The

point is significant insofar as the witness which the Spirit gives to Christ is meant to

emphasize the continuity of Christ's presence through the Holy Spirit, as is seen at 16.44-

45.

17.2-9. *Nunc de iudicio. Sic per spiritum sanctum, locutus Paulus ad Romanos: deus*

autem pacis conteret Satanan sub pedibus vestris velociter. Item ipse ad Ephesios: qui,

cum ascendisset in altitudinem, captivam duxit captivitatem. Item in Apocalypsi ipse

dixit: et habeo claves mortis et inferi. item ibi: et factum est proelium in caelo, Michahel

et angeli eius bellare adversus draconem. Et totus locus demonstrat diabolum iudicatum.

Here is the transition from the three things to which the Spirit has born witness to

a fourth thing, *nunc de iudicio*. Satan is judged, captivity led captive, the keys of death

and hell are in the hands of Christ, against the dragon Michael and his angelic host wage

war—in every case the sacred page testifies that the devil is judged. Judgment has to do

with eschatology and here (as in John's gospel) concerns condemnation specifically,

despite the fact that he included *paenitentia* along with *poena* earlier. Victorinus does not

give any indication of an *apokatastasis* in which all rational beings shall be restored to a

blessed unity with their divine source; rather, the enemies which kept the church here

below apart from the *superior ecclesia* are overthrown and the reconciliation between

heaven and earth is achieved through the mystery of Christ's passion.[80] The judgment of the devil is a condemnation of the world, which had been Satan's dominion.

17.10-13. *Cum igitur adprobatum sit tres istas potentias et communi et proprio actu et substantia eadem unitatem deitatemque conficere, non sine ratione rerum in duo ista revocantur: in filium ac patrem.*

Victorinus uses a phrase similar to the present *unitatem deitatemque* in his commentary on Galatians: *totus ordo trium istarum potentiarum per unam virtutem unamque deitatem.*[81] Cooper translates "Behold the full array of these three Powers, operant through their one power and one Godhead."[82] In the present case they together comprise the same single godhead in three ways: by their common acts, by their proper acts, and by their substance. Their proper acts (e.g., of sanctification) may be resolved into the common externalizing movement of the Logos. That activity manifests the common substance. From these steps the whole triad may be reduced to a dyad of *substantia-actus*. This relation of substance to its activity Victorinus has consistently used as the equivalent of the relation of Father to Son. By reducing the Trinity to the first dyad he comes full circle in explaining how his primary focus on the primary dyad of Father and Son does not preclude acknowledging the Trinity. The reduction of the three to two is reasonable provided one recognizes that the *filius* is twofold.

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[80] See *In Gal.* 3:20 (CSEL 83.2, 131-132). On this topic see Ellen Scully, "Universal Salvation as a Soteriological Implication of Marius Victorinus's Soteriology," in *New Narratives for Old*, ed. Anthony Briggman and Ellen Scully (Washington, D.C.: CUA press, forthcoming 2022).
[81] *In Gal.* 4:6, 2-3 (CSEL 83.2, 142).
[82] Cooper, *Galatians*, 308.

17.13-17. *Etenim, cum quasi geminus ipse pater sit: exsistentia et actio, id est substantia et motus, sed intus motus et αὐτόγονος motus et, hoc quo substantia est, motus, necessario et filius, cum sit motus et αὐτόγονος motus, eadem substantia est.*

Victorinus is continuing to explain why it is legitimate to reduce the triad to a dyad of Father and Son, now emphasizing their identity in substance through their similarity in motion. It is surprising that the Father himself is spoken of as *quasi geminus*. The qualifier *quasi* suggests that there is a more proper application of the term *geminus*— and indeed there is in the second dyad. The Father as *esse* has an interior activity which has no products. His activity is only first act, not second act, as we have seen from Plotinus before. The reference to *autogonos* motion is related to the gnostic and Platonic notions of emanation and self-constitution.[83] The Tripartite Tractate had spoken of the first principle as self-begotten.

> He has his Power, which is his will. Now, however, in silence he himself holds back, he who is the great one, who is the cause of bringing the Totalities into their eternal being. It is in the proper sense that he begets himself as ineffable, since he alone is self-begotten, since he conceives of himself, and since he knows himself as he is.[84]

The Father's self-begetting is not externally productive, but means only that God's existence is not caused by any other, nor is God moved to act by any other. The internal movement of God is akin rather to the first act of Plotinus's two acts. The Father's

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[83] See John Whittaker, "Self-Generating Principles in Second-Century Gnostic Systems," in *Studies in Platonism and Patristic Thought* (London: Variorum Reprints, 1984), XVII, 176-189; and Whittaker, "The Historical Background of Proclus' Doctrine of the Αὐθυπόστατα," in *De Jamblique a Proclus*, ed. Heinrich Dörrie (Vandœuvres-Genève: Fondation Hardt, 1975), 193-230.
[84] *NH* I.5, 56, 1-6.

second act is none other than the Son's self-begetting. That is, the Son constitutes himself and moves himself as the *actio* of the Father who is *potentia*. This is why it is possible to say that both Father and Son have *motus a se* and are *autogonos*.

Something similar occurs in *Zostrianos*.

> The self-begotten Kalyptos pre-exists because he is an origin of the Autogenes, a god and a forefather, a cause of the Protophanes, a father of the parts that are his. As a divine father he is foreknown: but he is unknown, for he is a power and a father from himself.[85]

See John Dillon: Plotinus in Dialogue with the Gnostics, Study Six

The Father's self-begetting motion requires some qualification.

The term *autogonos* is rather risky in the context of the trinitarian controversy, for it suggests a necessary and involuntary generation of the Son, which sounds rather Valentinian or Neoplatonic. On the other hand, Victorinus had specifically rejected Valentinian emanation.[86] As we have remarked, he rejects the horns of the dilemma according to which the Son is either generated by the will of the Father (and thus resembles a creature) or else pours forth from the Father automatically, as it were. The Son is the very will of God and comes forth as the act of the *potentia* that the Father is. 17.17-21. *Eadem enim haec inter se sine coniunctione unum sunt et sine geminatione simplex, suo ut proprio exsistendi <di>versum—vi autem potentiaque, quia numquam sine altero alterum, unum atque idem—tantum actu*

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[85] *NH* VIII.1, 20, 4-14.
[86] See *Adv. Ar.* IA 16, 1-4 (CSEL 83.1, 77).

In an earlier passage Victorinus had also rejected the idea of *geminatio* in the

Trinity. To call God *quasi geminus* but *simplex sine geminatione* is to say and unsay,

thereby highlighting the limitations of human language in discussion of God. To see his

"saying and unsaying" as a sign of incoherence is to misunderstand his pedagogy, for

Victorinus often uses language for the purpose of sparking insights into things which are

beyond materiality and sometimes even beyond human speech altogether. Another

example of Victorinus's fluid use of language is in his rejection of the term *coniunctio*

here.

Victorinus sometimes writes of the Holy Spirit that it is the *connexio* or *nexus* of

Father and Son. He writes this way when his theological model is dynamic and he is

depicting the remaining-proceeding-returning schema. He said above regarding the first

dyad: *Ergo iuncti sunt deus et λόγος* (13.12); concerning the second dyad of Christ and

Holy Spirit: *Ergo iuncti atque ex uno sunt, qui motus est* (14.42); and emphasized the

intrinsic logical connection between the different instances of the Paraclete's mission:

Iuncti ergo omnes: ego mitto, a patre mitto, spiritum veritatis mitto (15.31-32). He moves

between using terms by which the persons of the Trinity are drawn together and, when

his point has adequately made in these discursive terms, the rejection of such language

insofar as it suggests multiplicity. The whole Trinity is simple—the Son has no need of

being connected to the Father, for he is one and the same with the Father.[87] Insofar as the

Son distinguishes himself by his proper act of being and his proper activities he is said to

go out from the Father, and then his return is by the ascending movement of the Holy

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[87] See Petit, "Existence et Manifestation," 156-157.

Spirit. [88] Theology and economy are so deeply intertwined for Victorinus that it is not always easy to determine which he has in mind.

Hadot puzzles over the parenthetical passage from *vi* to *idem* between *<di>versum* and *tantum actu*. He suggests it is an editorial gloss. He reads the passage then as *suo ut proprio exsistendi diversum tantum actu*.[89] Clark follows his suggestion to take *tantum actu* with the phrase preceding the parentheses and translates "different only by their own act of existing."[90] It is surprising to see Victorinus use *exsistendi actus* as what differentiates the three since he had used *exsistentia* as synonymous with *substantia* and as distinct from *actio* just a sentence before. He had also seemed to equate *potentia* and *exsistentia* above when he said of Christ's ascent: *id est in id quod in se pater fuerat penetrandum potentialiter atque exsistentialiter* (15.14-15). He had in *Adv. Ar.* IA referred to created beings in this way: "Confitemur igitur filium unigenitum Iesum Christum . . . potentiam activam a patria potentia et generantem et facientem omnia, et substantiam exsistendi omnium et generationem et reviviscentiam."[91] In this case *exsistendi* was the equivalent of Greek ὄντων. In referring here to each of the Trinity's proper act of being he has effectively anticipated Boethius's distinction between being (*esse*) and essence (*essentia*) and a being (*id quod est*) as well as Basil of Caesarea's distinction between *ousia* and the *tropos hyparxeos* by which the *hypostases* in God are individuated.[92]

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[88] Cf. Plotinus, *Enn.* V.1.7, on how the One turning towards and knowing itself constitutes *Nous* (discussed in Petit, "Existence et Manifestation," 157-158).
[89] Hadot, SC 69, 972.
[90] Clark, *Marius Victorinus*, 250.
[91] *Adv. Ar.* IA 47, 2, 13-16 (CSEL 83.1, 139, 140).
[92] On his anticipation of Boethius see Cooper, "Marius Victorinus," 548 (who notes the conception of *actus essendi* was put to distinct use by Aquinas, and we might add by medieval authors in general) and below 18.11-15. On Basil's *tropos hyparxeos* see

17.21-24. *sed qui foris est, in passiones incedente, alio autem interiore semper manente atque aeterno, quippe originali et substantiali, et idcirco semper patre, qua ratiocinatione, et semper filio.*

The interior act is always the father of the exterior act. The act which moves outside of itself confronts and enters into suffering, for it places itself into external conditions which qualify its activity. This idea is expressed thoroughly at *Adv. Ar.* IA 22.

> And that is why it is said of the Son that he is both impassible and passible, but this suffering occurs only in his progression and, above all, in his extreme progression, that is, when he was in the flesh. For these things are not called passions: begetting by the Father, first movement and being the creator of all things, for these things, since they are substantial, are more of the order of substance; for the *logoi* of existents, according to power, are the substances of these things; they are not therefore passions.[93]

The substantial internal activity of the Father is the Father's act of being. This helps explain how the Son as original and universal Logos and *motus* may be father of all things that have a *logos* (a substantial form making them to be what they are) and their own activity.

He leaves out for the moment how the second term of the dyad is itself capable of distinction into two. For now, after he has pushed so heavily the triadic nature of God that he is able to appeal to the commonly observed duo of Father and Son. To speak of the

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[93] *Adv. Ar.* IA 22, 48-55; ET: Clark, *Marius Victorinus*, 124. "Et idcirco de filio dicitur quod et inpassibilis et passibilis, sed in progressu passio, maxime autem in extremo progressionis, hoc est cum fuit in carne. Illa enim passiones non dicuntur: generatio a patre, motus primus et creatorem esse omnium, ista enim, substantialia cum sint, magis autem substantiae; λόγοι enim exsistentium iuxta potentiam substantiae sunt ipsorum; non igitur passiones" (CSEL 83.1, 92-93).

two is not to be metaphysically or theological binitarian; the distinction of Son and Spirit is implicit. *Semper pater, semper filius* is the Nicene rallying cry against the Arians, found in Alexander of Alexandria before Nicaea. It is a reasonable (*ratiocinatione*) defense of *homoousion* theology just as *non sine ratione rerum in duo ista revocantur: in filium ac patrem* (17.12-13).

17.25-29. *Paulus in omnibus epistolis: gratia vobis et pax a deo patre nostro et domino nostro Iesu Christo. Item: non ab hominibus, neque per hominem, sed per Iesum Christum et per deum patrem. Item in evangelio: ego et pater unum sumus. Ego in patre et pater in me.*

Victorinus adduces examples from Paul and John to show how Christians can reduce the Trinity to a dyad. The common Pauline salutation refers only to God the Father and Jesus Christ. Paul was taught the gospel by Jesus Christ and God the Father. Christ refers only to himself and the Father in some passages. Both Paul and John, however, also attest to God as Trinity as Victorinus has often argued. Thus, the Trinity is spoken of as two even by the chief authorities of the Church. The reason for this, according to Victorinus, is that *Iesus Christus* comprises the second and third of the Trinity and the whole Trinity, therefore, is asserted in the otherwise "binitarian" formulations involving Father and Son or Father and Christ.

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§18: *Summary*

This final passage is primarily summary of the specifically pneumatological dimension of Victorinus's treatise. As a kind of peroration, it completes the impression that this treatise was well and deliberately planned. It began with a summary, then argued in two distinct

parts for the relation of Father to Son and then of Son and Holy Spirit, concluding with this section highlighting what Victorinus considered the theological advances made in *Adv. Ar.* III.

Commentary

18.1-2. *Nos quoque patrem et filium religiose semper usurpamus et recte secundum rationem supra dictam.*

Victorinus continues giving evidence for his claim that the Trinity can be, and indeed often is, reduced to two in Christian practice. Christians primarily use the names Father and Son *religiose*, that is, perhaps, in their liturgical practice and doctrinal elaborations. Victorinus may also have in mind the creedal statements of Christians on the comparison of the Christian *symbolon* to the pagan Roman religious oath. Cicero had called a forensic act of judgment religious "if it has been rendered by judges under oath in accordance with law."[94] Victorinus's explanation is a paraphrase of Cicero's words. "Religiosum est, inquit [i.e., Cicero], si quid de re aliqua iurati iudices iudicarunt, et ideo religiosum quia iurati iudicarunt, quod adsentiari nos necesse est."[95] It seems likely then that what Victorinus means by saying Christians use *pater et filius religiose* is that Father and Son feature in their official professions of faith.

18.3-10. *Etenim motus, ut supra docuimus, filius, atque ipse motus vita et scientia vel sapientia. Certe Paulus plenissime expressit, quod intellegi volumus: gratias ago, inquit, deo meo, semper pro vobis in Christo Iesu quod omnes locupletati estis in illo, in omni*

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[94] Cicero, *On Invention; The Best Kind of Orator; Topics* tr. H. M. Hubbell, *Loeb Classical Library* 386 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1949), 88-89: Iudicatum est res assensione aut auctoritate aut iudicio alicuius aut aliquorum comprobata. Id tribus in generibus spectatur, religioso, communi, approbato. Religiosum est quod iurati legibus iudicarunt (Cicero, *De inv.* I.XXX.48).
[95] *In Cic. Rhet.* I 30, 83-86 (CCSL 132, 146-147).

verbo et in omni scientia. Verbum Christum diximus, id est vitam, scientiam, spiritum

sanctum. Ergo unum. In Christo enim, ait, locupletati estis.

What Paul applied to Christ Victorinus sees as being distributed to both Christ

and the Holy Spirit. Clark translates "we have said that the Word is Christ, that is, life,

knowledge, Holy Spirit."[96] I understand the passage rather to mean "the Word is Christ,

that is life, and [we have said that] the Holy Spirit is knowledge."[97]

18.11-15. *Quod cum ita sit, si deus et Christus unum, cum Christus et spiritus unum, iure*

tria unum, vi et substantia. Prima tamen duo unum diversa hoc, ut sit pater actualis

exsistentia, id est substantialitas, filius vero actus exsistentialis.

The three are one in their work even if their operations can be distinguished into

such things as their giving of things their capacity for *esse*, *vivere*, and *intellegere*. We

note again that the Father is spoken of in abstract terms (*substantialitas*) as he was in 7.9-

12. *Actualis exsistentia* means something like existence in its purest mode, the realest of

all existences compared to which created existences are as nothing, or existence as such.

Actualis is a rare word: it is attested in Victorinus alone—and this passage uniquely—

before the fifth century in an LLT search. The distinction between *actualis exsistentia*

and *actus exsistentialis* takes place before the distinction between *esse* and *id quod est* or

esse and *ita esse*.[98]

18.15-18. *Duo autem reliqua ita duo, ut Christus et spiritus sanctus in uno duo sint, id est*

in motu, atque ita duo, ut unum duo. Prima autem duo, ut duo unum. Sic, cum in uno duo

et cum duo unum, trinitas exsistit unum.

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[96] Clark, *Marius Victorinus*, 251.
[97] Cf. Hadot, *SC* 69, 973: "Pour Victorinus, 1 Cor. 1, 4-5 signifie que dans un seul, le Christ (*in illo*), il y a deux termes: le Logos-vie et la science, c'est-à-dire le Christ proprement dit et l'Esprit-Saint."
[98] See Cooper, "Marius Victorinus," 548.

This is the key to this whole work: the first dyad of Father and Son is the "One which Is" of the *Parmenides*.[99] The second dyad of Christ and the Holy Spirit are two modes of the same movement and so are primarily one (two-in-one). It is something like a father and child if that child were androgynous: the child and the father are two but of the same essence and of the same blood, but the child is one with two features which equally belong to the essence (are essential characteristics) of the human person. The example is grossly material, but gets at the two degrees of intimacy attaining in the two dyads.

18.18-28. *Nam quid ego de spiritu sancto, de quo tractatus est plurimus, multa commemorem? Ex ipso concipitur Christus in carne; ex ipso sanctificatur in baptismo Christus in carne; ipse est in Christo qui in carne; ipse datur apostolis a Christo qui in carne est, ut baptizent in deo et in Christo et spiritu sancto; ipse est quem Christus in carne promittit esse venturum; quadam agendi distantia idem ipse et Christus et spiritus sanctus et, quia spiritus, idcirco et deus, quia Christus, quod spiritus, ideo deus. Unde pater et filius et spiritus, non solum unum, sed et unus deus.*

Here is a neat summary of Victorinus's whole doctrine of the Holy Spirit insofar as the Spirit works in the mystery. It is clearly modeled on rhetorical *anakephalaiosis*, described by Quintilian.

The repetition and grouping of the facts, which the Greeks call *anakephalaiosis* and some of our own writers call enumeration, serves both to refresh the memory of the judge and to place the whole case before his eyes, and, even although the

[99] Hadot, *SC* 69, 973.

facts may have made little impression on him in detail, their cumulative effect is considerable.[100]

It is remarkable that the whole of it has to do with the Spirit's activity in relation to the incarnation of Christ. It certainly makes the differentiation between persons appear as an economic affair. This is only a matter of emphasis, however, since we have seen the theological distinction between Christ and the Holy Spirit insofar as Christ is *vivere* and the Spirit is *intellegere*.

How does Victorinus say here that Christ is sanctified in his baptism but above he had said Christ was not yet sanctified immediately after his resurrection (which is why he told Mary not to touch him)? If the Holy Spirit makes the apostles holier (*sanctior*), then sanctity admits of degrees. The flesh of Christ was holy insofar as it had been anointed by the Holy Spirit, but his flesh and soul were not yet made completely spiritual before he ascended to the Father and returned on the first day of the week.

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[100] Quintilian, *Inst.* VI.1.1.

CONCLUSION

In this dissertation I have shown that Victorinus's pro-Nicene pneumatology as articulated in *Adversus Arium* III is surprisingly advanced, independent, original, and well-developed. Victorinus identified and distinguished between the Spirit and Christ on the basis of John's Paraclete passages. They are identical as *paraclitus*, for they both act *in divinis* and in the world by one movement. They are different as John calls the Spirit *paraclitus alius*. They are distinct, according to Victorinus, insofar as each has its proper *opera*. *Actio* is the genus of all specific activities so that the *Logos* that is both Christ and the Holy Spirit is one *actus*, one *motus*, these being names for the genus of universal motion. Their action is one and the same as the original (*principalis*) and universal movement. While they are both Jesus and both Paraclete in the manner in which Victorinus takes these names—that is, as names of qualities rather than as proper denominations—they perform separate works towards the same end. That end is the single mystery of salvation. The Spirit's activity in the economy is to grant knowledge, declare what He has from the Son, and provide the ascending movement of return from earth to heaven.

Before drawing out some of remaining historical and systematic questions for Victorinus's pneumatology, I would like to draw attention to how my interpretation of

Adversus Arium III has resolved pneumatological problems and corrected some positions found in Victorinian scholarship.

First, I have explained Victorinus's understanding of Christ and the Holy Spirit as one Son. According to Pierre Hadot's reading of *quia ipse est et filius qui de patre est* (*Adv. Ar*. III.7, 7-8), Victorinus is claiming "il n'y a qu'un Fils, et dans ce Fils, il y a le Christ et l'Esprit-Saint. L'Esprit-Saint est donc du Pére, dans le Fils."[1] Of course, if Christ and the Holy Spirit are both in the Son, then the Holy Spirit must be in the Son. But how would it make sense for Christ to be "in the Son"? Christ simply is the Son. Is the Holy Spirit in the Son in a different way than Christ is? The language is confusing if we take Son to be one unique "Person" of the Trinity. We have seen, however, that both Christ and the Holy Spirit are one Son.

Victorinus moves between using *filius* as a common predicate for Son and Spirit to using it to refer specifically to the second person as distinct from the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit receives from the Son as the Son receives from the Father, but with this important difference: the Father gives to the Son whereas the Spirit has from the Son without the Son Himself giving. This is both careful reading of John and precisely in keeping with the model Victorinus has developed. The Son and Spirit are one motion coming forth from one source, which is the *potentia* of this one *motus* with twofold *officia*. The Son as *vivere*, the first *officium* of the *actus*, is not the *potentia* of the Spirit and so is not the Spirit's principle or source. The Son is, nevertheless, the condition for the possibility of the Spirit's working as *intellegere* depends on *vivere*. I do not think Victorinus understands the Holy Spirit to have a different procession from the generation

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[1] Hadot and Henry, SC 69, 949-950.

of the only-begotten Son. This is why Victorinus can say that Christ is the *medius in*

angulo trinitatis (*Adv. Ar.* IB 56, 20).

In his chapter in *Marius Victorinus* dedicated to the Holy Spirit, Mathias Baltes

emphasizes the analogical relation between Father and Son and Son and Holy Spirit.

"Wie der Sohn aus dem Vater stammt, so stammt der Heilige Geist aus dem Sohn."[2]

Baltes applies this analogy first to the relation of hidden and manifest: as the Son is

hidden inside the Father, so the Spirit is hidden inside the Son. A similar relation applies

to Victorinus's account of the coming forth of Son and Spirit: the Son is born from the

Father, and the Spirit is also from the Father but through the Son. The Spirit has all the

Father has just as the Son does, but the Spirit has it from the Son. All of this Baltes

corroborates with pertinent passages in Victorinus theological corpus. He states, "Und

wie der Sohn aus dem Vater geboren ist, so auch der Geist, aber durch den Sohn; denn

wäre dem nicht so, dann wäre der Sohn nicht der *eingeborene* Sohn." I find, however,

that Baltes has missed an important nuance in the trinitarian thought of Victorinus that

would qualify Baltes's exposition. It is a peculiarity of Victorinus that he includes the

Holy Spirit in this title "only-begotten Son." This is not the point of differentiation

between Son and Spirit and does not determine the doctrine of the procession of the Son

or the Spirit. For while the Son (in the proper sense) is sometimes treated as the sender of

the Spirit and as the *medius in angulo trinitatis*, Victorinus sometimes alters the roles.

That is, at times he treats the Spirit as cause of the Son and thus as a kind of

medius between Father and Son. This is seen in Victorinus's reference to the Spirit as the

mother of Jesus both above and below (*subintellexerit sanctum spiritum matrem esse Iesu*

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[2] Matthias Baltes, *Marius Victorinus: zur Philosophie in seinen theologischen Schriften* (Munich and Leipzig: K. G. Saur Verlag, 2002), 64.

et supra et deorsum (*Adv. Ar.* IB 58, 11-14)), that is theologically and economically. I have explained this inversion of relations by appealing to final causality. *Vivere* depends on *intellegere* as *intellegere* depends on *vivere*. While *intellegere* requires *vivere* as a *conditio sine qua non*, *vivere* depends on *intellegere* as the means depend on the end, as activity depends on the final cause. *Intellegere* is the "that-for-the-sake-of-which" there is procession from the Father. For Victorinus, both the second and the third members of the Trinity are Son and are Logos. When Victorinus wants to distinguish the two he speaks of them most often as Christ and the Holy Spirit. Christ and the Holy Spirit are the one Jesus, differentiated by their distinct operations and modes of activity; Christ is Jesus acting openly, in the flesh while the Holy Spirit is Jesus acting internally, spiritually. Even "Jesus" may be a common name for the second and the third in that both are the savior. In *Adv. Ar.* II. Victorinus distinguishes between those names which are predicated substantially and those predicated qualitatively.

> For if one says 'God from God, light from light,' then the substance of the Father is the substance of the Son because God the Father himself is the very substance from which the substance of the Son comes. *Logos*, light, Spirit. Indeed, when one says 'Son,' likewise 'Savior,' likewise 'Jesus,' Christ is spoken of according to quality not according to substance.[3]

According to this distinction between substantial and qualitative predications, "Jesus" is neither a substantial nor a proper name. It is a name given in virtue of one's role. The

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[3] *Adv. Ar.* IA 10, 12-17 (CSEL 83.1, 186; ET: Clark, *Marius Victorinus*, 213): "Si enim de deo deus et lumen de lumine, utique patris substantia substantia filii est, quia ipse deus pater ipse substantia est, de qua substantia filius, λόγος, lumen, spiritus. Etenim, cum dicitur filius, item salvator, item Iesus Christus, secundum qualitatem, non secundum substantiam dicitur."

Logos in the flesh is named "Jesus" because He accomplishes God's work of salvation. The Holy Spirit is "Jesus" insofar as the Spirit also participates in this salutary activity.

I have called Victorinus's pneumatology precocious. The extent and nature of his awareness of the pneumatological currents of his day, and the nature of his involvement specifically in the earliest phase of the Pneumatomachian controversy, however, remain unclear. He does not name his sources and his philosophico-theological argumentation is so distinctive that it is difficult to determine Christian influences and theological impetuses for the robust articulation of homoousion pneumatology he offers in *Adv. Ar. III*. He may have been prompted to do so by hearing about the heterodox opinions of Egyptian monastics which Athanasius addressed in his *Epistula ad Serapionem*, or by his awareness of the theological rapprochement the Alexandrians attempted with the Antiochenes in 362. It is at least possible, in the light of new suggested dates for its composition, that Victorinus knew Didymus the Blind's *De spiritu sancto*. As scholars reassign to earlier dates of composition theological texts previously thought to postdate Victorinus, the question of what sources may have been at his disposal will continue to require reevaluation. Victorinus's pneumatology may fill in some of the gaps in our knowledge of Roman theology in the 360s, but this, too, requires further study.

His precociousness may simply stem from the completeness and internal coherence of Victorinus's trinitarian theology. That is, the development—or at least the explicit articulation—of his pneumatology may have no other cause than his own elaboration of the logical entailments of his original trinitarian theology articulated with the aid of various "metaphysical models." While there are suggestions in *Adv. Ar.* III that

Victorinus is responding to erroneous positions really held by living Christians (see especially III.7), his arguments for the Spirit's consubstantial divinity do not appear to be dictated by the specific arguments of adversaries but rather as the outworking of his own theological principles. He may, too, have been responding to the Paraclete passages so frequently appearing in creedal statements with some Antiochene provenance. Still these suggestions are no more than conjectures.

Victorinus anticipated the determination of Constantinople I that God is one *ousia* in three *hypostaseis*. It is unclear where this phrase originated and its sudden appearance in the writings of Victorinus is striking. It may indicate a rather intimate knowledge of current theological trends. More research is necessary to determine the provenance of this Greek phrase *ek mias ousias tres hypostaseis*. It would be interesting to conduct further research into the pneumatology of Roman writers after Victorinus to determine whether this same phrase appears in Victorinus's Latin translation. It would also be interesting to determine whether younger contemporaries of Victorinus in Rome make use of any of his pneumatological and trinitarian ideas—the present study was circumscribed to Victorinus's predecessors and his exact contemporaries.

So far, we have supposed that Victorinus's idiosyncratic theology was hardly known to other Latin writers, with the notable exceptions of Augustine and Boethius whose own geniuses allowed them to rework Victorinus's theology significantly in the light of other historic theological developments. This lack of overt influence on the theological tradition is the downside of Victorinus's theological uniqueness. It is worth asking, however, whether there is an upside. Might Victorinus's trinitarian theology in

general, and his pneumatology in particular, be useful for systematic theological reflection today?

The uniqueness of Victorinus's pneumatology, so intimately connected with his whole trinitarian conception, may benefit modern theology in two ways. First, it has the potential to spark our own theological speculation, to rejuvenate properly theological discussion of the Trinity by casting the conversation in new light. It would do so by suggesting a third way by which the distinction of the Son and Holy Spirit may be understood. This is of course one of the key problems in *homoousion* trinitarian theology and two basic strategies for getting the distinction clear in human thought and speech is the model of "subsistent relations" and the simple reliance on distinct Greek biblical words for the modes of coming forth of the Son and the Spirit. Victorinus's account of *how* the distinction is understood is philosophical, though not Aristotelian; his authority for insisting *that* there is a distinction between the two is the Scriptures, especially the Paraclete passages in John's gospel.

Second, it would certainly be interesting to raise the evaluative questions of the orthodoxy of Victorinus's pneumatology, that is, of its metaphysical and dogmatic adequacy. I did not address this aspect of his theology of the Holy Spirit in this dissertation, having focused more on historical and expository questions. While there have been points at which Victorinus's theology can clearly be seen to be unusual in approach and formulation, this does not necessarily amount to conceptual insufficiency. So sophisticated and systematic an exposition of the Holy Spirit's origination, nature, and activity as we have found in Victorinus's treatise cannot easily be dismissed. Its very uniqueness may raise theological questions of a more principial kind, such as whether the

traditions of Latin West and Greek East are the only paradigms by which trinitarian theology can be articulated or if there is room for further metaphysical accounts of the sameness and difference found in the one consubstantial Trinity.

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