

The Filioque

Revisiting the Doctrinal Debate between
Catholics and Orthodox

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Introduction

At the heart of the division between Catholics and Orthodox is the doctrine that says the Holy Spirit has His hypostatic¹ origin and subsistent being eternally from the Father and the Son (*Filioque*). The doctrinal divergence on this matter is held by some to be quite severe and merits to be considered the *primary cause* leading up to the break in communion between the Latin West and Greek East many centuries ago. In the eyes of the Orthodox, the Catholic West fell into heresy by subscribing to the *Filioque*. In a nutshell, it is claimed that the West disqualified itself from being orthodox by “giving dogmatic authority to an *incorrect concept of the Trinity*.”²

The famous 9th century Patriarch Photius of Constantinople referred to the *Filioque* as the “crown of

¹ hypostasis = person.

² John Meyendorff, *Byzantine Theology: Historical Trends & Doctrinal Themes* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1979), 92; [emphasis added].

all evils,”³ a doctrine espoused by “bishops of darkness,”⁴ a “blasphemous term, which militates against God,”⁵ and even the “summation of all theological error...”⁶ The 11th century Patriarch Michael Cerularius of Constantinople referred to the *Filioque* as a “blasphemous dogma” and a “machination of the evil one!”⁷ The 13th century Patriarch Gregory II of Cyprus, later to become Patriarch of Constantinople, referred to it as an “alien doctrine” and a “foreign plague,”⁸ and proceeded to say that it was for the

³ Photius, *Epistulae et Amphilochia*, ed. B. Laourdas and L.G. Westerink (Leipzig, 1988), 1:43, as cited in Tia M. Kolbaba, “Byzantine Perceptions of Latin Religious ‘Errors’: Themes and Changes from 850 to 1350,” extract from *The Crusades from the Perspective of Byzantium and the Muslim World*, ed. Angeliki E. Laiou and Roy Parviz Mottahedeh (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks, 2001), 120.

⁴ Andrew Louth, *Greek East and Latin West: The Church AD 681-1071* (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 2007), 185; *The Church in History*, Vol. III.

⁵ *Eastern Orthodox Christianity: The Essential Texts*, (eds.) Bryn Geffert and Theofanis G. Stavrou (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2016), 235.

⁶ Joseph Farrell, “A Theological Introduction to the Mystagogy of Saint Photios,” in *The Mystagogy of the Holy Spirit*, trans. Joseph Farrell (Brooklyn, MA: Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 1987), 18.

⁷ Edict of Michael I and the Synod of Constantinople (1054), as cited in *Eastern Orthodox Christianity: The Essential Texts*, 247-48.

⁸ Gregory, *Exposition of the Tomus of Faith Against Beccus*, as cited in Aristeides Papadakis, *Crisis in Byzantium: The Filioque Controversy in*

sole sake of the *Filioque* that the Latins “were, from the beginning, accused by our Church, and for which the schism occurred.”⁹

If anyone wishes to understand the historical divide between East and West, they will have to study the theological details surrounding the Trinity, and the procession of the Holy Spirit in particular. The first question that should be asked is whether the Orthodox Church has an official judgment on the doctrine of the *Filioque*? According to Orthodox historian Aristeides Papadakis, the Orthodox Council of Balcharnae (1285) “*finally discussed and dogmatically settled*”¹⁰ its condemnation of the *Filioque* doctrine and excommunicated all who hold to it. This has been the Orthodox position from that point going forward.

For example, the 14th century theologian Gregory Palamas, Archbishop of Thessaloniki, “vehemently maintained that the Latin teaching on the *Filioque* was in

the Patriarchate of Gregory II of Cyprus 1283-1289 (New York: Fordham University Press, 1983), 155.

⁹ *Tomos of Gregory*, PG 142.244D; as cited in Papadakis, *Crisis in Byzantium*, 39.

¹⁰ Papadakis, *Crisis in Byzantium*, 3; [emphasis added].

error.”¹¹ For him, it was “perverse”, “fighting against God,” a “Latin innovation,” and an “evil belief.”¹² The 15th century theologian Mark of Ephesus also said in his famous Encyclical to All Orthodox Christians the following:

Run from them *as one runs from snakes... as from those who have sold and bought Christ... For we, along with the Damascene and all the fathers,*¹³ do not say that the Spirit proceeds from the Son; but they, joining the Latins, *say that the Spirit proceeds from the Son.*¹⁴

¹¹ A. Ed. Siecienski, *The Filioque: History of a Doctrinal Controversy* (Oxford University Press, 2010), 146.

¹² Dimitrios Tselengides, “The Theological Presuppositions of the Filioque in the Work of St. Gregory Palamas,” in *Triune God*, ed. Constantinos Athanasopoulos (Tyne, UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2015), 39.

¹³ It is important to take note that Mark of Ephesus understood the “Fathers” as a primary source of his anti-Filioquist stance.

¹⁴ Mark of Ephesus, *To All Orthodox Christians on the Continent and the Islands*, 6-7. Cited from Metropolitan Hilarion Alfeyev, *Orthodox Christianity, Vol. 1: The History and Canonical Structure of the Orthodox Church*, trans. from the Russian by Basil Bush (Yonkers: St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 2011), 134; [emphasis added].

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The 4 great Eastern Patriarchs who met in Council with many bishops in 1848 drew up a monumental encyclical wherein they state that the *Filioque* is “essentially heresy, and its maintainers, whoever they be, are heretics...”¹⁵ According to the late Fr. Vladimir Lossky (1903-1958), the “filioque was the primordial cause, the only dogmatic cause, of the breach between East and West.”¹⁶ In the liturgical Synodikon of Holy Orthodoxy, chanted by the Orthodox each year in celebration of the victory of the Orthodox Faith in the 9th century over iconoclasm, it is said that those who do not say that “the Holy Spirit proceeds out of only the Father, essentially and hypostatically, as Christ said in the Gospel, shall be outside of our Church and shall be anathematized.”¹⁷

¹⁵ *Encyclical of the Eastern Patriarchs: A Reply to the Epistle of Pope Pius IX, 'To the Easterns'*, 5, Modern History Sourcebook (Fordham University),

<https://sourcebooks.fordham.edu/mod/1848orthodoxencyclical.asp> ; [emphasis added].

¹⁶ Vladimir Lossky, *The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church* (Crestwood: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1957), 56; [emphasis added].

¹⁷ “The Synodikon of Orthodoxy,” *Mystagogy Resource Center: An Orthodox Christian Ministry of John Sanidopoulos*, Feb, 2010, <https://www.johnsanidopoulos.com/2010/02/synodicon-of-orthodoxy.html>. It should be noted that this condemnation seems to apply to those who were already members of the Orthodox Church.

The late Fr. Joseph Gill, S.J., a well-known Jesuit historian on the Latin and Greek schism, gives an accurate description of the Greek contention:

The theologians of the Eastern Church rejected the *Filioque*, not merely because it was an addition to the Creed, but because *they were convinced that it was doctrinally erroneous*. Anchored in the old truth enunciated by so many of the Doctors of the Church that the Father is the sole source of divinity, they saw in the *Filioque* a derogation from that fundamental principle and an *undermining of the whole economy of the Blessed Trinity*. Hence their opposition.¹⁸

Thus, while the insertion of the *Filioque* clause into the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed (381/451) certainly established a major canonical cause for the split between East and West, the *Filioque* was primarily a theological division rather than simply one of canonical criminality.¹⁹

¹⁸ Joseph Gill, *Byzantium and the Papacy 1198-1400* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press), 159.

¹⁹ Papadakis, *Crisis in Byzantium*, preface.

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In other words, the Churches of the West, under the leadership of Rome, were primarily accused of *adopting a false doctrine of God*, and thereby injuring their status as being part of the one true body of the Lord Jesus. In a very real sense, therefore, the veracity of the Eastern Orthodox Church stands or falls on whether she has rightly or wrongly condemned the doctrine of the *Filioque*. Similarly, the veracity of the Catholic Church stands or falls on whether she was correct in teaching the *Filioque*. The theology of the *Filioque* is, therefore, at the very crux of the theological divide that caused the schism.²⁰ For that reason, most of this text will be devoted to the theological elements of the *Filioque* controversy.

²⁰ While this book is devoted to an investigation into the Patristic doctrine of the Trinity and the *Filioque*, some readers might anticipate some disappointment at the fact that the “unlawful” act of the Latin West in interpolating this addition to the creed is not emphasized as the unjust cause of the schism, effectively situating the Catholic Church in the wrong. However, even if the Latin West broke canonical rules adding to the creed, it will be argued that the Greek condemnation of the *Filioque* doctrine is a greater problem which requires immediate attention even before we ascertain which side broke canonical rules. For if the *Filioque* is a biblical and patristic doctrine, then its anathema is a far more egregious act than adding an orthodox statement to the Church’s creed, however much the latter might be considered unjust.

Before diving into a summary of the theological divide between Catholics and Orthodox on the Spirit's procession, a brief note on terminology is in order. Since at least Tertullian (2nd century), the Latin West taught that the Spirit has His origin from the Father and the Son.²¹ The Latin terminology is *ex Patre Filioque procedit* (proceeds from the Father and the Son). The *Filioque* teaches that the Holy Spirit, just like the Son of God, is eternally produced by the Father *and the Son* together as from one single causal principle.

This doctrine was most famously taught by St. Augustine whose influence continued to ripple into Latin thinking on the matter for over a thousand years. According to renowned Byzantine historical theologian Dr. A. Ed Sicienski, since "the sixth century the doctrine had achieved widespread acceptance in the West, *taught not only by great saints and local councils, but by the*

²¹ Tertullian writes: "Now the Spirit indeed is third *from God and the Son*; just as the fruit of the tree is third from the root, or as the stream out of the river is third from the fountain, or as the apex of the ray is third from the sun." *Against Praxeus*, 8, *New Advent*, <http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/0317.htm>. Tertullian himself, however, did not believe in the co-eternality of the Son and Spirit with the Father, but held that there was a temporal coming into existence of the Son and Spirit from the substance of God the Father, c.f. *Against Hermogenes* 3.

Bishop of Rome, who (following the lead of Leo the Great) increasingly came to see himself as a unique guarantor of orthodox teaching,” and therefore “the history of the *Filioque* in the West is a relatively well-documented phenomenon.”²²

This note on how great saints defended the *Filioque* is extremely significant in light of how the Latin West and Greek East relied primarily on their understanding of the Fathers. Siecienski’s comment on how Rome held to the *Filioque* is further noteworthy for the sole reason that even the Eastern Orthodox admit that first millennium Rome, as the pre-eminent Apostolic See, was *orthodox*. The Orthodox Patriarchs asserted the model orthodoxy of elder Rome in the 1st millennium in the Patriarchal Encyclical of 1848: “Who denies that the ancient Roman Church was Apostolic and Orthodox? None of us will question that it was a *model of orthodoxy*.”²³

²² Siecienski, *Filioque*, 51; [emphasis added].

²³ Encyclical of the Eastern Patriarch 1848, *Orthodox Christian Information Center*,

http://orthodoxinfo.com/ecumenism/encyc_1848.aspx; [emphasis added]

On the other hand, since at least the 9th century,²⁴ “the Eastern tradition has been virtually unanimous in holding that the Spirit ‘proceeds from the Father *alone*.’”²⁵ This can be referred to, in short, as *Monopatristism* (from the Father alone) with regard to the hypostatic origin of the Spirit. However, as will be explained later, there is a significant strand within the Greek Fathers that says the Spirit eternally proceeds from the Father “through the Son,”²⁶ and it is this idea of the Son as a sort of 2nd subject *somehow* involved in the Spirit’s procession that leaves a small wedge to make just enough room for a possible bridge to the Latin *Filioque*.²⁷

The above entails that the Catholic position on the *Filioque* claims to be the faithful development of the pneumatology of *both* the Latin *and* Greek Fathers, and

²⁴ To be more precise, a theological objection to the concept of the *Filioque* was first seen in the record by the 5th century Theodoret who accused St. Cyril of Alexandria of saying the Spirit has His existence either from or through the Son, and once again in the 7th century against a statement of faith by Pope St. Martin I. However, the matter erupted in such a significant way in the 9th century that it has a unique mark as the launch of the Greek and Latin divide on the matter. More details on this further down.

²⁵ Brian E. Daley, S.J., “Revisiting the ‘Filioque’: Roots and Branches of an Old Debate,” *Pro Ecclesia*, Volume X, 2001, #1, 34-35.

²⁶ Siecienski, *Filioque*, 34.

²⁷ This will have to be unpacked in further down

that the Orthodox opposition to it (from the 9th century forward) has been at variance with said Fathers by their opposing it. However, as we'll see further below, there are reasons to question whether that is the case, especially since, *prima facie*, the Greek Fathers are, at least in terminology, saying the opposite of what the Latin Fathers are saying. Significant Greek Fathers such as St. Maximos the Confessor and St. John of Damascus are found resolutely saying that the Son is *not* the cause of the Spirit's person. This is undeniable.

There is also the dispute over terminology. It is important to recognize that when the Greeks used the term "proceed" (ἐκπορευόμενον) they are working with a specific meaning which allows no deviation.²⁸ Procession, in this particular instance, refers to the timeless and eternal production of the Spirit from the Father as the absolutely unoriginate²⁹ cause of all deity. This detail comes out most clearly in the attempted refutation of the *Filioque* by Photius in his famous *Mystagogy of the Holy Spirit*. His arguments, which still matches the official objection of the Orthodox today, can be summed up in the

²⁸ This may not necessarily reflect the literature prior to the 6th century.

²⁹ Unoriginated=having no cause.

words of Catholic Patristics scholar Fr. Brian E. Daley (D.Phil, Notre Dame):

The only thing we know about the characteristic properties of the three divine Persons... is that the Father is source and cause of the whole divine substance, that the origin of the Son is through what we call “begetting” or generation, and the origin of the Spirit is through what—for lack of a more concrete image—we call “procession,” and to suggest that the Son is causally involved in the personal origin of the Spirit [...] is either to suggest *two primordial springs* of the divine mystery, or to *confuse the persons of the Father and Son*.³⁰

There we have it. The *Filioque*, argues Photius, logically results in (1) two primordial springs, i.e., two causes, or (2) it fails to distinguish the Father and the Son in their unique hypostatic properties. Therefore, to say that the Spirit eternally proceeds from the Father *and the Son (Filioque)* is to say that, in the eternal life of God, the

³⁰ Brian E. Daley, *Ibid.*, 47; [emphasis added].

person of the Spirit is eternally *caused by two principles* (i.e., two causes added together to produce the Spirit), or it is to attempt to make one cause from both Father and Son, when the Father alone is the single cause, thereby *confusing the hypostatic particularities of the Father and Son*.

Photius claimed that this creates an enormous amount of problems for a coherent Trinitarianism. It would transform the *Monarchy* of the Trinity into “a dual divinity,”³¹ i.e., *two Gods* in Father and Son, or a *Diarchy*. Secondly, it would take away the unique hypostatic properties of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit by taking the first two and confusing their unique properties. Third, it would render the Son another Father of the Spirit. Lastly, by fusing the Father and Son together in spirating (breathing out) the Spirit, the Spirit becomes subordinate to them, thereby effectively dethroning the Holy Spirit from the Godhead.³²

One can see how this was perceived by the Greek East as a massive grenade explosion to the fundamental coherence of Trinitarian theology. On the other hand, the

³¹ *Ibid.*, 101.

³² I here summarize into short points the extended summary of Photius given by Siecienski, *Filioque*, 101.

Latin West, in defense against Eastern criticisms, insisted that with a proper interpretation of the authentic meaning of the *Filioque*, none of these “consequences” yielded. In fact, in St. Thomas Aquinas’s works on the procession of the Spirit, he was emphatic that without the *Filioque*, the Spirit and the Son could not be distinct considering the need for opposed relations (*oppositas relationes*) as a pre-condition³³ for any real distinction within God.³⁴ In other words, for Aquinas, the absence of the *Filioque* yields an incoherent Trinity.

³³ Not all Catholic theologians reached this conclusion, e.g., Blessed John Dun Scotus.

³⁴ If I could spare a moment here to clarify a possible misunderstanding. Some might look at this concept of relations in God and think that the Catholic Church is defining divine Personhood has simply a relation. However, that is incorrect. The Catholic Church, following St. Thomas Aquinas, understands the definition of the divine Person as “subsistent relation” (*relatio subsistens*). In other words, what subsists is that which exists and have a proper act of existence. What exists as the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are not just relations, but “subsisting” relations that eternally exist. Another way to put this is that the Persons are not just relations but relations as subsisting in real existence. For a good summary, and from which I drew the above, see Fr. Mauro Gagliardi, *Truth is a Synthesis: Catholic Dogmatic Theology* (Steubenville, OH: Emmaus Academic, 2020), 460-461.

As already mentioned, it is very clear to many historians and theologians that the Latin West, from very early on, held firmly that the Holy Spirit has His timeless origin equally from the Father and the Son. This means that the *Filioque* was held by a Patristic heritage that the Orthodox venerate as holy and without heretical corruption.³⁵ Another way of saying this from the perspective of the Orthodox is that the men who proposed the *Filioque* doctrine as part of the deposit of faith were venerable Saints of, at least, the Orthodox Church of the *pre-schism West*.

Yet, it seems equally clear that the Greek East, especially in later formulations, developed a theological model of the Trinity that speaks of the Father alone as the sole *hypostatic origin* and cause of the Holy Spirit, totally excluding the Son. We have here what appears to be a theological contradiction between the two theological conceptions of the Spirit's eternal origin *already within the window of time when East and West were in the bond of peace and communion*. Faithful Catholics and Orthodox should be disposed against this possibility and should work to find a harmony between the Fathers. If, as claimed above, it is true that the *Filioque* is truly Patristic,

³⁵ The contemporary Eastern Orthodox Church holds both the undivided West and East as their own heritage of Saints and Fathers.

there are several precautionary observations that should be considered.

First, the division between the Latin and Greeks can potentially yield a tremendous blow to the credibility of the Patristic witness. This calls to mind the mentality of St. John of Damascus who thought it was *impossible* that the Fathers of the Church could contradict each other.³⁶ He could not fathom such an idea being upheld together with Patristic credibility. The underlying logic is that the Spirit fills all things, especially the Churches of both East and West, and the true Church of the Greeks and Latins could only venerate Saints who were free from doctrinal corruption. But if the Greek and Latin spheres of the Church had an irreconcilable contradiction on the *hypostatic origin* of the Holy Spirit, such that they both would have mutually anathematized each other back then if only they could have visualized their differences, then

³⁶ St. John of Damascus says that the Fathers must be reconciled even if they aren't apparently so: "They are patristic and we will not contravene. But we must prove the holy Fathers and teachers to be in agreement with each other. And [we must prove the holy Fathers and Teachers to be] neither in contradiction to themselves not at all, not fighting one another." George Metallidis, "Theology and Gnoseology and the Formulation of Doctrine in St. John Damascene", in *Studia Patristica* vol. xlii (Leuven: Peeters, 2006), 344.

that seems to result in a destruction to Patristic credibility.

It would do no less than severely damage the veracity of either Catholicism or Orthodoxy, both of which hold to the Patristic East and West as their Sainly heritage of faith. But even here one should be cautious. It just so happens that *even theologians within the Patristic era* recognized the possibility of mistakes in their own community. However, because of the amount of positive testimony proving that the Western Fathers, at the very least, held to the *Filioque* doctrine, it couldn't be said to be something that a couple of Saints fell into as a slight error unintentionally made.³⁷ Consequently, if we set the stage such that the East and the West, much like the issue of Papal primacy, were operating on different wavelengths as to the meaning and content of theology, pneumatology, and the procession of the Holy Spirit, then we have a sort of ideological civil war that has to be discussed and debated within the Body of Christ.

The Council of Florence (1439) chose a different method of reconciling these tensions. Rather than be

³⁷ Photius argued that certain Saints could be capable of certain errors from ignorance or careless writing. See Fr. Seraphim Rose's *The Place of Augustine in the Orthodox Church* (St. Herman of Alaska Brotherhood, 2007).

satisfied with admitting a fundamental division within the bride of Christ in the 1st millennium, the bishops present came to the resolution that both the Eastern and Western Fathers of the Church were striving to teach the same exact doctrine, albeit with a different theological model. Even the well-known Greek delegate Bessarion (1403-1472), who was the Archbishop of Nicaea, came to realize this:

The saints must mutually agree. They cannot oppose and contradict each other, for the power and illumination of the same one Spirit have brought it about that their opinion in matters pertaining to the faith is one and the same.³⁸

Bessarion was joined by others, such as Isidore of Kiev, and they came to see that the Catholic doctrine of the *Filioque* of the Latin Fathers had to be reconciled to the Fathers of the Greek East:

It was not the syllogisms or the cogency of proofs or the force of arguments that led me to believe [...] but the plain words of the doctors. For I judged that the holy

³⁸ Fr. John Erickson, *Challenge of Our Past* (Crestwood: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1991), 167.

fathers, speaking as they did in the Holy Spirit, *could not have departed from the truth [...]*³⁹

The Catechism of the Catholic Church today encapsulates the resolution quite well:

At the outset the Eastern tradition expresses the Father's character as *first origin* of the Spirit. By confessing the Spirit as he "who proceeds from the Father," it affirms that he comes *from the Father through the Son*. The Western tradition expresses first the consubstantial communion between Father and Son, by saying that the Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son (filioque). It says this, "legitimately and with good reason," for the eternal order of the divine persons in their consubstantial communion implies that the Father, as "the principle without principle," is the *first origin* of the Spirit,

³⁹ *De Spiritus Sancti processione ad Alexium Lascarin Philanthropinum*, ed. E. Candal (Rome, 1961) 40.11-41.5; Eng. Trans: Fr. John H. Erickson, *The Challenge of our Past*, 159.

but also that as Father of the only Son, he is, with the Son, *the single principle from which the Holy Spirit proceeds*. This legitimate complementarity, provided it does not become rigid, does not affect the identity of faith in the reality of the same mystery confessed.⁴⁰

Of course, there has not been widespread agreement on this by the Orthodox Church, even if there is a minority within that seems to be willing to dialogue. The Orthodox theologian Rev. Fr. John P. Manoussakis found that if the Greek and Latin concepts of the Spirit's procession are rightly understood in their own terms, "the two views, Greek and Latin, on the procession of the Holy Spirit *could become harmonized*."⁴¹ Such an admission is quite remarkable. Some late modern to contemporary thinkers have come to a slightly different resolution. They say that the divergence between East and West on the Spirit's procession is rooted in the different methods of theologizing

⁴⁰ (CCC) *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 248 (New York: Doubleday, 1995), 73-74; [emphasis added].

⁴¹ John Panteleimon Manoussakis, *For The Unity of All: Contributions to the Theological Dialogue between East and West* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Book, 2015), 19; [emphasis added], foreword by Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew.

about the Trinity as is shown by the Augustinian versus Cappadocian⁴² models. It has been claimed that they really cannot be harmonized, *as is*. Nevertheless, it can be held that they represent two legitimate ways of capturing the Trinitarian mystery. Russian Orthodox theologians such as Boris Bolotov,⁴³ Alexander Kireev, and Rev. John Leont'evich Janyshv, and others came to this conclusion.⁴⁴

Orthodox theologian Rev. Fr. Theodore Styliani-poulos states the following: "The *filioque* marks not a decisive difference in dogma due to the differing Cappadocian and Augustinian approaches to the mystery

⁴² When referencing the Cappadocians models, what is specifically meant is the gradual specificity of the Father as the first principle of deity, with the Son and Spirit eternally coming forth from the Father, without any involvement of the Son in the Spirit's hypostatic procession.

⁴³ In his *The Comforter*, trans. Boris Jakim (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2004), 130, Sergius Bulgakov reports the following about Bolotov: "And the judgment of the dispassionate Russian historian V.V. Bolotov, whose voice can be considered the testimony of conscience, both scholarly and dogmatic, has already been rendered: the Filioque does not constitute an impedimentum dirimens [an obstacle that divides] for the re-unification of the divided church."

⁴⁴ Siecienski, *Filioque*, 190.

of the Trinity.”⁴⁵ Metropolitan Kallistos Ware states that “the problem is more in the area of semantics than in any basic doctrinal differences.”⁴⁶ Elsewhere, he says that Orthodox “doves”, as opposed to “hawks” who outright condemn the Filioque, “do not consider that the Latin doctrine of the Double Procession is in itself heretical... it is capable of being interpreted in an Orthodox way [...]”⁴⁷ The late Sergius Bulgakov wrote: “Dogmatically, the ‘question’ of the procession must yet be a subject of further investigation. But in and of itself the divergence expressed by the two traditions, Filioque and *dia tou Huiou*, is not a heresy or even a dogmatic error. It is a difference of theological opinions which was dogmatized prematurely and erroneously.”⁴⁸

Nevertheless, there are those, perhaps the majority of Orthodox, who insist that the different Trinitarian theologies that surround the *Filioque* controversy

⁴⁵ Theodore Stylianopoulos, “The Filioque: Dogma, Theologumenon or Error?” in *Spirit of Truth: Ecumenical Perspective on the Holy Spirit*, (Eds.) Theodore Stylianopoulos & S. Mark Heim (Brookline, MS: Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 1985), 58.

⁴⁶ Timothy Ware, *Diakonia* quoted in Elias Zoghby, *A Voice from the Byzantine East* (Educational Services – Diocese of Newton, 1992), 43.

⁴⁷ Timothy Ware, *The Orthodox Church* (London: Penguin Books 1997) 213.

⁴⁸ Sergius Bulgakov, *The Comforter*, 148.

illustrates a difference that is rooted in something far deeper, namely, in a *theology of God Himself*. According to the late Fr. John Meyendorff, perhaps one of the greatest Orthodox theologians of the 20th century, “the real significance of the *Filioque* quarrel consisted in the fact that the two sides held to a different approach to God. The East refused to identify God’s being with the concept of ‘simple essence,’ while the West admitted this identification on the basis of Greek philosophical presuppositions.”⁴⁹ In other words, Greek philosophies which had been built off Platonic thought influenced Christian thinkers, e.g. St. Augustine, into focusing on God as an absolutely simple essence, thereby misaligning the West from the more “biblically faithful” Cappadocian Fathers.⁵⁰ Those different approaches, namely, the Augustinian versus the Cappadocian, had “in the course of the Middle Ages... established themselves in East and West.”⁵¹ Ultimately, this led to the theology of St. Anselm

⁴⁹ Meyendorff, *Byzantine Theology*, 188.

⁵⁰ It has been well accepted in modern Patristic Scholarship that Platonism, Middle Platonism, and Neoplatonism influenced both St. Augustine and the Cappadocian Fathers, c.f. Fr. Thomas Weinandy, O.F.M., *The Father’s Spirit of Sonship: Reconceiving the Trinity* (Eugene: Wipf & Stock, 1995; previously published by T&T Clark, 1995).

⁵¹ Papadakis, *Crisis in Byzantium*, 63.

and St. Thomas Aquinas on the Western side and Gregory II of Cyprus and Gregory Palamas on the Eastern side.

Although I do touch on these matters, this work is not geared towards explaining the philosophical differences regarding the Augustinian approach as opposed to the Cappadocians as much as listening to what the Scripture and Tradition bears witness to. Moreover, it has been recognized that this divide between St. Augustine and the Greek Cappadocians has been overblown by theologians.⁵² The intention of this book has more to do with answering the question of whether the *Filioque* doctrine can be sustained as an orthodox teaching judging from the standards of the *Sacred Scripture* and the *Holy Tradition of the Church* of the 1st millennium. Consider this an extensive response to the question that Photius asked in his *Mystagogy*:

Which of our common and holy Fathers said that the Spirit proceeds from the Son? Did any ecumenical confession establish it? And which of the great priests or bishops inspired of God,

⁵² See footnote 82.

affirmed this understanding of the Holy Spirit?⁵³

Photius shows here the normal Patristic habit of simply assuming that the Church Fathers were orthodox in their confession. Elsewhere, he tries to give some flexibility in order to explain how some of the Fathers could have erred on the procession of the Holy Spirit. Much of all this hinges on whether we are reading the Fathers correctly in their context, which is the focus of this book. Before finishing this introduction, it would be most useful to the reader to get an outline of the chapters.

The **1st chapter** (*The Trinitization of Monotheism*) will be a summary of the classical theology of the Trinity and how this required both philosophical and theological development by key figures in the Church. The *Filioque* doctrine is one that is couched within the larger structure of Trinitarian theology and knowing the basics will be required to understand the doctrine, let alone test its veracity.

The **2nd chapter** (*Theological Defense of the Filioque*) will be dedicated to the question of whether the *Filioque* is doctrinally sound.

⁵³ *Mystagogy of the Holy Spirit*, sec. 5, 61.

The **3rd chapter** (*The Filioque in Sacred Scripture*) will select primary texts that speak to the Spirit's procession or His origin.

The **4th chapter** (*The Filioque in the Church Fathers*) surveys the conciliar and patristic statements on the eternal origin of the Person of the Spirit, with a particular emphasis on highlighting whether an eternal hypostatic procession of the Spirit from the Father and Son is in mind, or whether an alternative reading could be given, such as the oft mentioned "eternal manifestation" (*ad intra*) or "energetic manifestation" (*ad intra/extra*) as further developed in late Byzantine theology.⁵⁴

The **5th chapter** (*The Filioque & the Late Byzantine Response*) will explain the theological debates that occurred in the 2nd millennium between Gregory of Cyprus and John IX Bekkos, culminating in Gregory Palamas. I attempt to show that the Cypriot and Palamas, while both accepting the temporal procession of the Spirit from the Son towards creatures, have a "Patristic synthesis" on the Spirit's hypostases (Person) as *eternally* "manifested", "illuminated", or "flowing forth" from the

⁵⁴ For a brief overview of the Eastern Orthodox doctrine of the Spirit's eternal manifestation, see David Bradshaw, *Aristotle East and West: Metaphysics and the Division of Christendom* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 214-20.

Son. This *ad intra* “procession” of the Spirit through the Son is an attempt to account for the Spirit’s eternal relationship with the Son in the Triadic unity. I argue that it is a rather late development and fails to accurately describe what the Greek and Latin Fathers were speaking about when they either affirmed an eternal procession of the Spirit from the Father and the Son, or from the Father *through the Son*. This is key.

Now, this Byzantine attempt to come up with a certain eternal “flowing forth” of the Spirit from the Son comes in two distinct forms or interpretations. First, some Orthodox theologians have interpreted this eternal procession of the Spirit from the Son to be on the order of God’s natural activity, i.e., energy. Some call this an “energetic procession”, to be contrasted with the “hypostatic procession” that is included in the *Filioque* doctrine. The 2nd interpretation sees that God’s energy is not an adequate mode to describe the Spirit’s procession through the Son, because it takes the procession from the hypostases (person) of the Spirit and relegates it to what is of the common nature. That is simply not specific enough. Rather, in this 2nd interpretation, the Holy Spirit does hypostatically proceed from the Father in His hypostatic origin, but that this procession comes through the mediation of the Son, in some sense, but not in a way

that would situate the Son as part of the cause of His hypostatic production. Interpretations and explanations abound.

Eastern Orthodox scholarship today predominately takes the 1st interpretation, but a minority has opted for the 2nd interpretation. In either case, they both reject the *Filioque* doctrine of the Latins, i.e., that there is a hypostatic procession of the Spirit from both the Father and the Son as from one productive principle, and they affirm this alternative *ad intra* theological procession of the Spirit eternally *through the Son* in a wholly non-causative manner. The goal, it seems, is to use this alternative model as a way to explain how the Greek and Latin Fathers can speak of an eternal relationship between the Spirit coming from or through the Son, and yet without the hypostatic *Filioque* of the Latin West.

It will be especially argued in this book that this “energetic” motif (the 1st interpretation of contemporary Orthodox scholars) ends up seizing hermeneutical control over the real context of the Church Fathers and consequently isogetically imposes itself upon texts that, in their proper context, are truly speaking of the Spirit’s hypostatic origin. Those espousing such arguments against the *Filioque* doctrine were refuted by the convincing arguments of the pro-unionist John IX Bekkos

(1225-1297), of whom I have more to say. Moreover, those who take the 2nd interpretation (that the Spirit eternally exists through the Son but does not proceed through Him) have a difficult time trying to exclude the Son from partaking in the production of the Spirit. They insist that Spirit proceeds only “through” the Son, but not “from”, and yet “through” and “from” must be identical in the Spirit’s production in order to maintain the singularity of His principle of being. In fact, even this 2nd interpretation denies that the Spirit proceeds through the Son because they argue that the Spirit exists through the Son as an entirely different ontological aspect of the Trinity than the procession. More details on this will be investigated in the chapters.

The **6th chapter** (*Critical Examination of Gregory II of Cyprus and the council of Blachernae 1285*) will be devoted to giving a description and a critique of the pneumatology of Gregory II of Cyprus (1241-1290) and specifically why his position of “through the Son” as excluded from the cause of the Spirit’s procession and rather pertaining to the mere manner of existing, is inadequate.

The **7th chapter** (*Answering the Late Byzantine Objections*) will consist of a brief answer to the charges

The Filioque

against the Latin *Filioque* from the developed theology of late Byzantium.

Finally, the ***Conclusion*** will wrap up a final reflection on the orthodoxy of the *Filioque*, as well as how this controversy could be resolved between Catholics and Orthodox.

Chapter 1: The Trinitization of Monotheism

The early Christians inherited the holy doctrine of God's divine oneness: "Hear, O Israel, the LORD our God, the LORD is one!" (Deut 6:4). And yet, with the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Church has been directed to worship the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, *each* having the fullness of deity. The famous 5th century *Quicumque Vult* text, or the *Athanasian Creed*, states the assertion very clear: "[...] the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Ghost is God; *and yet* there are not three Gods, *but* one God." Early Christians knew they worshiped God the Father, but they also knew that the Son and the Holy Spirit were to be worshiped equally. That part was not as difficult to know. The difficulty came with how to explain the mystery of God as *three-in-one* or *one-in-three*.⁵⁵ Three is logically different than one, and

⁵⁵ A neat little book covering a basic introduction to the concept of Trinitarianism is Neil Ormerod's *A Trinitarian Primer* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2010).

vice versa. A triad is three, not a monad. Conversely, a monad is one, not three. Nevertheless, Christians made the daring claim of worshipping a Monad who is at once a real Triad, and a Triad which is a real Monad. When faced with this *Monad-Triad* problem, natural reason historically tended towards one of two beliefs that the Catholic Church condemned: *Modalism* and *Tritheism*. Modalism says that there is one God, but He manifests Himself in three different modes. Tritheism says there are three gods. You can see how modalism and tritheism are seemingly quick solutions to the *three and one* problem.

Another error that had intruded in early Christian thought was to recognize three, but to measure degrees of deity, such that the Father is fully God, and then the Son is a subordinate god from the Father, and likewise the Spirit is further subordinate to the Father and Son as a creation of the latter (i.e., 3rd in order). This is *subordinationism*, and the Catholic Church condemned it as well. The most famous early subordinationist was Arius (256-336), presbyter of Alexandria, Egypt. In what appears to be a method to make Christianity more palatable for incoming pagans, or one just aimed at resolving the *three and the one* tension,⁵⁶ Arius sought to

⁵⁶ E.L. Mascall, *Via Media: An Essay in Theological Synthesis* (London: Longman's Green & Co., 1956), 57-58.

make the Son of God as an unequal derivative from the Father, such that the Son deserves a certain worship, but He is not to be identified with the same substance as God, the eternal Father. Of course, true Christians held that the Son was of the same substance (*ousia*) as the Father, i.e. *the same essence*. The theological terminology took some development for that to become clearer.

The basic starting assumption on the part of Arius was “that the Son could not derive his being from the Father without being inferior to him.”⁵⁷ Of course, the result was that the Council of Nicaea (325) ruled in favor of seeing the Father and Son as of one and the same substance together. Father and Son are equally God. However, that is still “seemingly” compatible with ditheism, and tritheism if we add the Holy Spirit. The Church would, yet once more, strongly avoid any polytheism. So, what we have here is an equality of substance, i.e., *literally same stuff*, within a certain kind of plurality, the Father and Son. This emphatic assertion led many theologians to hesitate upon the doctrine of the Council of Nicaea. Put another way, we have a plurality with one single substance. And yet, these aren’t two eternal Gods, but one eternal God. One way to assist in

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 58.

understanding this is that within the one God, as Nicene theologians understood, there is a certain *order*.

The Nicene Creed begins with “We believe in one God, the Father Almighty...” After describing the Father, it moves to say, “We believe in one Lord Jesus Christ...*eternally begotten* of the Father, *God from God, Light from Light, True God from True God*, begotten, *not made, consubstantial with the Father*.” It then moves on to say, “And we believe in the Holy Spirit.” Thus, the Church Fathers espouse “We believe” in Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, that is, the order within the Godhead, each being equally God. However, there is some detail given about the deity of the Son which bears the significance of how Christian Unitarianism conceptualized a workable Trinitarianism. The Son is (1) *eternally born of the Father*, (2) *is God from God*, and (3) *Light from Light*. An eternal birth? God from the same God? Light from same Light?

According to the late Anglican theologian Eric L. Mascall, the Nicene Creed puts us “faced with the notion of *derived equality*...”⁵⁸ The Son is eternally derivative of the Father but is also His equal in being, existence, eternity, and deity. Quite contrary to Arius, being

⁵⁸ E.L. Mascall, *The Triune God: An Ecumenical Study* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 1986), 16; [emphasis added].

begotten does not imply a temporal starting point, but simply means to derive His being from the Father, and thus you have a certain *ordering* within the one God. It just so happens that this can be the case *eternally*. As St. Athanasius the Great argued, this was already implied in the idea that God the Father was *eternally Father*. Logically, if you have an eternal Father, you must have an eternal Son. And so, the Son is born of the Father timelessly. Thus, the Son is eternally *from His Father*, i.e., *eternally derived equality*. The Fathers of Nicaea give the Holy Spirit the grand “We believe...”, but with no further details at this point until the late 4th century at the Council of Constantinople (381).

It would be for the later 4th century theologians, particularly St. Basil, St. Gregory Nazianzen, and St. Gregory of Nyssa, who would articulate the Trinity, and describe the Spirit as an eternally derived equal with the Father and the Son, deriving His essence from the Father [*through the Son*].⁵⁹ The revised Creed of Nicaea at the Council of Constantinople (381) states it like this: “We believe in the Holy Spirit, *the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father. With the Father and the Son He is worshiped and glorified.*” The Spirit is said to be

⁵⁹ This is reflected in their writings despite not making it into the Creed.

one who “proceeds” from the Father. Again, we have here the idea of *God from God, Light from Light*, just like the Son, but proceeding out of the Father. Both the Son and the Holy Spirit are eternal derivations from the Father, and yet, as derived equals, equally share in one substance, nature, life, existence, and deity. Another way of putting this is that you have a theology of one universal Godhood and three instantiations of the one universal. The late Anglican Patristics scholar J.N.D. Kelly has a remarkable summary of how these 4th century Fathers reconciled the problem of *the three and the one*:

To explain how the one substance can be simultaneously present in three Persons they appeal to the analogy of a *universal and its particulars*. “Ousia and hypostasis”, writes Basil, “are differentiated exactly as universal and particular are, e.g., animal and particular man.” From this point of view each of the divine hypostases is the ousia or essence of Godhead determined by its appropriate particularizing characteristic [...] or identifying peculiarity [...] just as each individual man represents the universal “man” determined by certain chara-

cteristics which mark him off from other men. For Basil these particularizing characteristics are respectively “paternity” [...] “sonship” [...] and “sanctifying power” [...] The other Cappadocians define them more precisely as “in-generateness” [...] “generateness”, and ‘mission’ or “procession” [...] *Thus the distinction of the Persons is grounded in their origin and mutual relation.*⁶⁰

Interesting to see how in the effort to find a real distinction of Persons in the Godhead, the term *relation* comes up. St. Augustine is famous for utilizing Aristotle’s notion of “relation,” *whereby a subject is related to*

⁶⁰ J.N.D. Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines*, revised (San Francisco, CA: Harper & Row Publishers, 1978), 265; [emphasis added]. Citation originally read from Mascall, *The Triune God*, 17, fn. 2. Fr. Gilles Emery explains St. Basil in different terms but with the same idea: “St. Basil of Caesarea explains that our grasp of the mystery of the triune God requires the ‘combination’ of the two following aspects: first, what is common to the Father, Son, and Spirit (their operation, power, nature, essence, divinity), second what is proper to each in a distinct way (the distinctive property of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, which involves a relational mode of being.” See his *The Trinity*, 86.

something else, as a way to describe the three Persons of the Godhead.⁶¹

However much St. Augustine drew from the toolbox of Greek philosophy, he Christianizes Hellenistic thought (to borrow from Neil Ormerod)⁶² by taking the concept of relation and posits that the three eternal divine Persons are *eternally subsistent relations towards each other in the one divine being, God*.⁶³ This concept of relation helps to further define what St. Basil referred to as the *particular*, or the *peculiar characteristics* of the Three within the Godhead. For, especially in Roman Catholic Trinitarian theology, it is not simply particularity that sufficiently describes real distinctions within the Godhead, but rather *relational particularity* where each relation makes for an *opposing relation with the other based on origination*.⁶⁴

⁶¹ Mascall, *The Triune God*, 11.

⁶² Neil Ormerod, *A Trinitarian Primer*, 48.

⁶³ Mascall, *The Triune God*, 12.

⁶⁴ Blessed John Dun Scotus is known to have been aware of the distinction between seeing the real distinctions within the Triune God according to relational opposition versus simply distinctive modes of being, i.e., unique hypostatic properties. While he thought both views were valid, he didn't think the dictum "all things are equal save for what is relationally opposed" was a necessary construct of Trinitarian faith, c.f. Congar, *I believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol. 3, trans. David Smith

All things in God are one and equal, save for relational opposition *which alone arises from* the fact that one divine person either causes the other, or a divine person is caused by another. Notice the stress on unity. This is especially important in light of the ancient and Patristic doctrine of God's simplicity, i.e., *being without parts*. Certain kinds of distinctions in God would invalidly multiply Him, thereby compromising God's divine oneness. According to Neil Ormerod, Professor of Theology at the Australian Catholic University, the Church Fathers "ruled out various forms of distinction between Father, Son, and Spirit." He goes on:

For example, we cannot say they are in different places, because God is not

(New York: The Seabury Press, 1983), 180-81. Franciscan theology is known to have followed in this same line of thinking. Nevertheless, at the Council of Florence, the following stated emphatically: "These three persons are one God, and not three gods, because the three have one substance, one essence, one nature, one divinity, one immensity, one eternity and all these things are one, *where no opposition of relationship interferes.*" Citation from Denzinger, H., & Rahner, K. (Eds.). (1954). *The Sources of Catholic Dogma* (R. J. Deferrari, Trans.) (p. 225). St. Louis, MO: B. Herder Book Co.; [emphasis added]. This distinct way of framing the three-in-one and one-in-three doctrine of the Trinity of relational opposition will play a major role in distinguishing Catholic dogmatic triadology with mainstream Eastern Orthodox triadology.

locally contained, or in different times, because God is eternal; they do not differ in quantity because each is equally and fully divine, nor in quality because of the equality of their substance. After exhaustive examination the fathers concluded that what differentiates Father, Son, and Spirit from one another are the relations which define them. And so to modify the formula of Athanasius, whatever is true of the Father is true of the Son, except that the Father begets the Son, and the Son is begotten by the Father. Everything else about them is identical. And similarly with regard to the Spirit. Again we have no image to hold on to here, just a statement about statements. In the later tradition this will be expressed by saying that the Persons are 'subsistent [i.e., distinctly existing] relations.'⁶⁵

Because of God's simplicity, the three persons must share in all things except for where there exists *converse* relations. The Son is *from* the Father. The Father *begets*

⁶⁵ Ormerod, *A Trinitarian Primer*, 52.

the Son. There is a *from-to* relationship, such that the relation makes a distinction between source and the endpoint from where the source proceeds to. Similarly, the Holy Spirit *proceeds* from the Father [and the Son] and the Father breaths out the Spirit. And since these divine processions are eternal and arise from eternally subsistent relations, none of this implies a kind of divine complexity that would compromise God's divine oneness, nor would it change His essential simplicity.

As already briefly mentioned, these relations also posit endpoints that are *conversely opposed*. The Father *is not* the Son, and the Son *is not* the Father. That much is clear, but they are not absolutely synonymous because the Son *comes from* the Father and the Father *generates* the Son from Himself. Likewise, the Son and the Father *are not* the Spirit, and the Spirit *is not* them, precisely because the Spirit *comes from* both, and the two *spirate* the Spirit. Where these oppositions do not exist, there is absolute unity, one God forever and ever, because of the requisite simplicity that pertains to God.

St. Basil the Great speaks to this when he attempted to explain the distinction between Father and Son in light of their equality of substance and their essential simplicity:

As it is, the difference between the unbegotten and the begotten is not in terms of a more or a less, as if between a lesser and greater light... they stand apart from one another (so to speak) in *diametrical opposition*... At any rate, *it is unfeasible that contrariety exists in the substance*... The distinctive features, which are like certain characters and forms observed in the substance, differentiate what is common by means of the distinguishing characters and do not sunder the substance's sameness in nature. For example, the divinity is common, whereas fatherhood and sonship are distinguishing marks... Consequently, upon hearing 'unbegotten light' we think of the Father, whereas upon hearing 'begotten Light' we receive the notion of the Son. Insofar as they are light and light, *no contrariety exists between them*, whereas insofar as they are begotten and unbegotten, *one observes*

*the opposition [ἀντιθέσεως/antithesis]
between them.*⁶⁶

The Greek ἀντιθέσεως (from ἀντίθεσις), meaning “antithesis”, is translated into Latin as *oppositio*. It is vital for the reader to understand this notion of “relative opposition” as defining the only kind of distinction within God, for not only will this be essential to an orthodox *Trinitization of the one God*, but it also explains the rationale behind the *Filioque* doctrine (which will be treated further below). The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are each fully God, and therefore there is a sense in which each is fully within the other. The Father is “in the Son” and the Son is “in the Father” and the Spirit is “in both”, and vice versa. This mutual indwelling is called *perichoresis* or *circumcincension*, i.e., reciprocal existence in each other. If the three Persons are fully within each other, then this would devolve into a strict Unitarianism that might further result in modalism.

However, the Church has upheld that there remains three real distinct persons, and so the Fathers of the

⁶⁶ Basil, *Against Eunomius*, 2.28; Eng. Trans: St. Basil of Caesarea: *Against Eunomius*, Mark Delcogliano & Andrew Radde-Gallwitz (Washington, D.C.: Catholics University Press of America, 2011), 174; [emphasis added].

Church had to conceptualize a configuration that maintains a real plurality in the one God, and this was done by identifying real distinctions from the *relational opposition* between the Father, Son, and Spirit *according to their distinct origin*. Besides the opposition caused by relational origins, there is no distinction in the Godhead whatsoever. The doctrine of absolute divine simplicity is what drives the necessity of this equality.

St. Gregory of Nyssa, in his *Contra Eunomium*, gives his definition of simplicity in God,⁶⁷ and further draws

⁶⁷ "For who does not know that, to be exact, *simplicity in the case of the Holy Trinity admits of no degrees*. In this case there is no mixture or conflux of qualities to think of; we comprehend a potency without parts and composition; how then, and on what grounds, could any one perceive there any differences of less and more. For he who marks differences there must perforce think of an incidence of certain qualities in the subject. He [Eunomius] must in fact have perceived differences in largeness and smallness therein, to have introduced this conception of quantity into the question: *or he must posit abundance or diminution in the matter of goodness, strength, wisdom, or of anything else that can with reverence be associated with God: and neither way will he escape the idea of composition*. Nothing which possesses wisdom or power or any other good, not as an external gift, but rooted in its nature, can suffer diminution in it; so that if any one says that he detects Beings greater and smaller in the Divine Nature, he is unconsciously establishing a composite and heterogeneous Deity, and thinking of the Subject as one thing, and the quality, to share in which constitutes as good that which was not

from this that the only kind of real distinction that could arise in God is the strict opposition that comes from being “cause” to an origin between the three divine Persons through a sort of *ordered emanationism*. Here are his words, where “order” signifies the place of one divine Person in the distinction of relative origination:

Our account of the Holy Ghost will be the same also; the *difference is only in the place assigned in order*. For as the Son is

so before, as another. If he had been thinking of a Being really single and absolutely one, *identical with goodness rather than possessing it*, he would not be able to count a greater and a less in it at all. It was said, moreover, above that good can be diminished by the presence of evil alone, and that where the nature is incapable of deteriorating, there is no limit conceived of to the goodness: the unlimited, in fact, is not such owing to any relation whatever, but, considered in itself, escapes limitation. It is, indeed, difficult to see how a reflecting mind can conceive one infinite to be greater or less than another infinite. So that if he acknowledges the supreme Being to be 'single' and homogenous, let him grant that it is bound up with this universal attribute of simplicity and infinitude. If, on the other hand, he divides and estranges the 'Beings' from each other, conceiving that of the Only-begotten as another than the Father's, and that of the Spirit as another than the Only-begotten, with a 'more' and 'less' in each case, let him be exposed now as granting simplicity in appearance only to the Deity, but in reality proving the composite in Him." *Contra Eunomium*, 1.19, *New Advent*,
<http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/290101.htm>.

bound to the Father, and, *while deriving existence from Him, is not substantially after Him, so again the Holy Spirit is in touch with the Only-begotten, Who is conceived of as be-fore the Spirit's subsistence only in the theoretical light of a cause.* Extensions in time find no admittance in the Eternal Life; so that, *when we have removed the thought of cause, the Holy Trinity in no single way exhibits discord with itself; and to It is glory due.*⁶⁸

It is important to catch that last line: when the idea of causation between the Trinitarian persons is logically removed, there is absolutely no discord within itself, i.e., divine simplicity. Such is how strong St. Gregory understands the simplicity of the one God. Elsewhere, he states:

⁶⁸ Gregory of Nyssa, *Contra Eunomium*, 1.41, *New Advent*. St. Gregory saw a need to modify the kind of absolute simplicity which could invite no kind of distinction between Persons who share one equal divine nature, such as held by the Jewish monotheism, as well as to maintain absolute simplicity so as to ward off the idea of a polyarchy or polytheism, c.f. Lonergan, *The Triune God*, 435; he cites Gregory, *Oratio Catechetica*, 3; MG 45.17D and 29A.

The persons of the deity are not divided from one another either in time or in place, or in will or intention, or in course of action, or in operation, or in any human feature that could be considered, but solely by the fact that the *Father is the Father and not the Son*, that the *Son is the Son and not the Father*, and similarly that the *Holy Spirit is neither the Father nor the Son*.⁶⁹

This basic dictum is what characterizes the Latin emphasis that all things in God are one and the same, save for where relational opposition prevents it. By saying “Father is not the Son” and “Son is not the Father” and “the Holy Spirit is neither Father nor the Son,” you couldn’t get a clearer statement to an *opposing set of relations* as the means of distinction to make a Trinity within the single-substance deity. Moreover, St. Gregory, who is followed by St. Augustine later, does not think that there is simply a relational opposition between the Father

⁶⁹ Gregory of Nyssa, *Tractatus adversus Graecos ex communibus notionibus*, MG 45, 179 CD; Eng. Trans: Bernard Lonergan, *The Triune God: Doctrines*, translated from his *De Deo Trino: Pars dogmatica* (1964) by Michael G. Shields, ed. Robert M. Doran & H. Daniel Monsour (University of Toronto Press, 2009), 475.

towards the Son and Spirit only, *but also between the Son and the Spirit*. And here is where we see an integration between what could be called an *ordered emanationism* and *relational opposition* as the only mark of distinction in God, for here St. Gregory moves to explain the opposing relation of the Spirit from the Son. In his work *Ad Ablabius* (Not Three Gods), St. Gregory the following description relevant to our topic:

If, however, any one cavils at our argument, on the ground that by not admitting the difference of nature it leads to a mixture and confusion of the Persons, we shall make to such a charge this answer — that while we confess the invariable character of the nature, *we do not deny the difference in respect of cause, and that which is caused, by which alone we apprehend that one Person is distinguished from another* — by our belief, that is, that one is *the Cause*, and another is *of the Cause*; and again in that which is *of the Cause* we recognize another distinction. *For one is directly from the first Cause, and another by that which is directly from*

the first Cause; so that the attribute of being Only-begotten abides without doubt in the Son, and the interposition of the Son, while it guards His attribute of being Only-begotten, does not shut out the Spirit from His relation by way of nature to the Father."⁷⁰

Here we see the "order" of divine Persons also signifying an order of causation, which alone makes for relational opposition, and thus real distinctions within the Godhead. But one will notice here that St. Gregory is clearly making a parallel-distinction between the Son's being "of the Cause" (Cause=Father) and the Spirit's being, like the Son, "of the Cause" (Cause=Father) but "by way" of the Son who is "directly" caused by the Father. The Son is being viewed as an *immediate product* of the Father, and the Spirit is a *mediated product* coming through the Son but rooted back to the Father (Cause). Thus, this is a clear indication that the Holy Spirit is not to be understood as purely and immediately from the Father alone in His eternal hypostatic origination but is through the Son who acts as mediator to communicate deity to Him. While this has a distinct theological form,

⁷⁰ St. Gregory of Nyssa, *Ad Ablabius*, "Not Three Gods," *New Advent*, <http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/2905.htm>.

this way of thinking has far more in common with the Augustinian understanding of the procession of the Spirit from the Son than is typically realized. The renowned Eastern Orthodox theologian, David Bentley Hart, accurately summed this point up:

In fact, I would go so far as to claim that the understanding of the generation of the Son and the procession of the Spirit found in Augustine is not only compatible, but identical, with that of the Cappadocian fathers—including Gregory's and Basil's belief that the generation of the Son is *directly from the Father*, while the procession of the Spirit is from the Father only *per Filium* (*sed*, to borrow a phrase, *de Patre principaliter*). I have no wish to dwell very long upon the matter here, but I might observe that both Augustine and Gregory of Nyssa even distinguish generation and procession within the Trinity *in terms primarily of the order of cause*: that is, both claim that the procession of the Spirit differs from the generation of the Son principally in that *the former occurs*

*through the Son*⁷¹... This is the very argument—made by Augustine in *De Trinitate*—that scores of Orthodox theologians in recent decades have denounced as entirely alien to Eastern tradition.⁷²

Fr. Giulio Maspero, one of the foremost contemporary scholars on the Trinitarian theology of St. Gregory of Nyssa, makes the following remarks on *Ad Ablabius*:

The end of the work, which is of particular historical relevance to the question of the Filioque, is exceptionally intense as Gregory must make it clear that his reasoning does not lead to a confusion of the Persons. *The immutability of the divine nature does not exclude the distinction between that*

⁷¹ This precise claim, that the Spirit proceeds (i.e. is hypostatically produced) eternally through the Son was condemned by the Council of Blachernae (1285), c.f. Papadakis, *Crisis in Byzantium*, 160.

⁷² David B. Hart, "The Myth of Schism," in *Clarion: Journal for Religion, Peace, & Justice*, June 13, 2014, https://www.clarion-journal.com/clarion_journal_of_spirit/2014/06/the-myth-of-schism-david-bentley-hart.html; [emphasis added].

which is cause and that which is caused. Further, one must distinguish between that which is *caused immediately* and that which is *caused through that which is caused immediately*... The Nyssen continues to present the dynamics of the divine Persons according to ἐκ—διὰ —ἐν schema, *distinguishing them according to relation* (σχέσις). He starts with the monarchy of the Father and gives the mediation of the Son a central role, a mediation which guarantees that the Son remains Only Begotten, without excluding the Spirit from relation with the Father.⁷³

Even Orthodox theologian, John Zizoulas, Metropolitan of Pergamon, while reserving to the Father the property of “cause”, says that St. Gregory of Nyssa here in *Ad Ablabius* “does look like a kind of *Filioque* in the eternal God.”⁷⁴ That is quite remarkable. Never-

⁷³ Giulio Maspero, *The Brill Dictionary of Gregory of Nyssa*, (Eds.) Lucas F. Mateo-Seco & Giulio Maspero, trans. Seth Cherney (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 4-5; [emphasis added].

⁷⁴ John D. Zizoulas, *Lectures in Christian Dogmatics*, ed. Douglas H. Knight (London: T&T Clark, 2008), 81.

theless, he adds, “the cause of the Holy Spirit is always the Father for, though the Son mediates, he is no second cause.”⁷⁵ That precautionary note is in perfect harmony, theoretically speaking, with the Latin West whose decrees upon the *Filioque* have insisted that the Father and Son are, despite their being 2 insofar as they are distinct Persons, only 1 productive principle of the Spirit.

Undoubtedly, therefore, St. Gregory is positing an eternal procession of the Spirit from the Father but a procession which is also “through the Son,” albeit in the form of being a mediated product through an immediate product traceable back to the Father as cause. The question is what is the nature of that procession? Now, some caution must be had. St. Gregory here would not say that the Son is the “cause” or “principle” of the Spirit as the Father alone is “cause” in Nyssen thought. With that said, he also understood the Son to be a mediation from that *first Cause* in relation to the Spirit. As Bernard Lonergan aptly described the similarity and difference between the St. Gregory of Nyssa and St. Augustine:

As to the first step, they do not differ, since they both distinguished between “principle” and “originated.” But in the

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

second step they do differ: where Augustine divided 'originating' into 'unoriginated' and 'originated.' Gregory divided 'originated' into 'immediately originated' and 'mediately originated.' Hence in Augustine the unbegotten Father is the unoriginated principle, the begotten Son is the originated principle, and the proceeding Spirit originates from both. But in Gregory the Father [alone] is the principle, the Son is immediately originated, and the Spirit is mediately originated.⁷⁶

And:

For Gregory of Nyssa posited only one principle, but divided it into immediate and mediate, which concords with the formula 'from the Father through the Son' *and favors the same understanding*

⁷⁶ Bernard Lonergan, *The Triune God*, 515; [emphasis added]; [brackets mine].

*of the expression 'from both' as taught by
the Council of Florence.⁷⁷*

Both St. Gregory of Nyssa and St. Augustine understand that the hypostatic origin of the Son and Spirit cannot simply be thought of as being solely and uniquely from the Father alone, pure and simple. They both recognize that between the Son and Spirit is a certain involvement of the former in the hypostatic production of the latter in light of the *intra-Trinitarian order*. St. Gregory says the Spirit comes from the unoriginated principle (Father) through a mediated and originated Son, while St. Augustine simply says the Father and the Son is the single principle of the Spirit. Admittedly, the conceptual structure of St. Augustine and St. Gregory are different, but the main thrust of the *Trinitizing* aim is basically equivalent. And herein lies the potential solvent to the theological divide.

In the form of an illustration, St. Gregory compares the three divine Persons as three successively lit torches, each having its bright flame showing forth, where the 3rd torch (Holy Spirit) in order received its flame from the 2nd torch (the Son), which itself received its own flame from

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 565; [emphasis added]. See a similar explanation in Siecienski, *The Filioque*, 44.

the 1st torch in triadic order (the Father).⁷⁸ The late Catholic theologian, Fr. Francis Spirago, nicely conveyed this concept by picturing a fire (#1), the light (#2) that this fire creates, and the warmth (#3) that comes from both the fire (#1) and the light (#2). If there is an eternal fire, there would be an eternal light, and with both being eternal, you have an eternal warmth.⁷⁹ Analogically, the fire (1st), light (2nd), and warmth (3rd) all refer back to one and the same substance with three distinct instantiations in a certain order. As will be shown below, there is a good number of testimonies in the Greek Fathers to this idea that the Holy Spirit receives His essence and deity from the Father as the sole cause (*aitia*) but by means of the Son, and with specific reference to the eternal *origin* of the Spirit, and not merely to his *manner of existing* being through the Son. This is an extremely dense point of contention between Catholics and Orthodox, and more space will be given to explore this in Chapter 6 (*Critical Examination of Gregory II of Cyprus and the council of Blachernae 1285*).

⁷⁸ Gregory of Nyssa, *De Spiritu Sancto adversus Pneumatomachos Macedonianos*; Eng. Trans. Siecienski, *The Filioque*, 44.

⁷⁹ Francis Spirago, *The Catechism Explained: An Exhaustive Exposition of the Christian Religion*, (ed.) Richard F. Clarke, S.J. (New York: Benzinger Brothers, 1921), 130.

Therefore, both the Cappadocians and the Augustinian West constructed theological models to sustain the eternal, absolute, and divine oneness of God while also configuring three eternally subsisting relations that make for real distinctions between themselves, but who nevertheless share equally in the essential life as one God, and which all maintained the singularity of the Father as the absolute beginning of all deity. Thus far, the *one in three* or *three in one* dilemma that so easily caused untrained minds to espouse either modalism, tritheism, or subordinationism was apophatically resolved. However, as is reported by many historical theologians, there was still a different model of *Trinitizing* between significant schools in the East versus the Latin West, and those differences would not be visible until many centuries down the road. For most of the 1st millennium, both Latin and Greek Churches were blissfully left to the peace of adoring the Holy Trinity, one God in three distinct persons.⁸⁰

⁸⁰ In many ways, the great Anglican historian of antique theology R.P.C. Hanson was entirely correct in his gloss on the historical development of the Trinity in the first four centuries: "The doctrine of the Trinity as we accept it today emerged as the result of the Arian controversy and the impetus which that controversy gave to the theologians of the Christian Church. The controversy compelled the defenders of orthodoxy to ask themselves searchingly how they could

Theologians have sought to attempt to explain how the Cappadocian and Augustinian models came to be framed differently, and some have rooted this in the manner in which Neoplatonic thought came to influence St. Augustine in one way, and the Cappadocians in another way.⁸¹ Another frequent explanation is to show

reconcile belief in the divinity of Christ with monotheism, and the answer was not achieved without strife, uncertainty on all sides, long-lasting confusion in the use of terms, and the aid of late Greek philosophy called in as an essential though perhaps eclectically used companion. The full doctrine of the Trinity was developed as the conclusion of a search, and the end was not fully understood while the search was continuing." Citation from Hanson, *Studies in Christian Antiquity* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark Ltd, 1985), 283.

⁸¹ In his *The Doctrine of God* (Downer's Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1993), 168-69, Gerald Bray sees the Neoplatonist thinker Marius Victorinus and Porphyry as influencing St. Augustine, where the Cappadocians were by disciples of Lamblichus, a thinker seemingly closer to Plotinus's own thought. Augustine was probably more eclectic and willing to modify a bunch of ideas in order to work at theologizing what he understood to be divine revelation and the tradition of the Church. St. Augustine, to my knowledge, doesn't appeal or refer to Neoplatonists explicitly, nor do the Cappadocians. With that said, that doesn't mean influence is not apparent. As I've quoted from St. Gregory of Nyssa on divine simplicity, it appears both St. Augustine and the Cappadocians were of the belief that God is absolutely simple, which is why they were careful to signify real distinctions within God as only permitted by eternally subsisting relations that make for distinguished oppositions within a simple subject. See also Gordon Leff, *Medieval Thought: St. Augustine to*

how the Western Trinitarian theology begins charting out a resolution to a solution for the eternal *three in one* and *one in three* by starting with the oneness of the God's divine essence, and working conceptually from there to Trinitize, whereas the Greeks began with the Trinity itself and worked back to explain their unity. Fr. Vladimir Lossky put it like this:

As we have already observed... western thought most frequently took as its starting point the one nature, and thence passed to the consideration of the three persons, while the Greeks followed the opposite course—from the three persons to the one nature. St. Basil preferred this latter way, which in conformity to Holy Scripture and to the baptismal formula which names the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, started from the concrete. Human thought does not run the risk of

Ockham (Middlesex, England: Penguin Book Ltd., 1965), 34-46; A.H. Armstrong, *An Introduction to Ancient Philosophy* (Totowa, NJ: Rowman & Allanheld, 1983), 205-222. Recently, well known scholar Thomas Weinandy, O.F.M. stated that both East and West have traces of "Middle and Neo-Platonic emanationism, especially within Eastern Trinitarian thought..." Citation from *The Father's Spirit of Sonship: Reconceiving the Trinity*, 10.

going astray if it passes from the consideration of the three persons to that of the common nature.⁸²

This sort of description goes back to theological investigation of a French Jesuit, Théodore de Regnon (1831-1893), who is famous for saying that Latin theology of the Trinity began with nature or essence, whereas Greek theology began with the three persons.⁸³ However, in recent studies, much of Regnon's scholarship, borrowed by Orthodox neo-Palamites such as Fr. Lossky and Fr. Meyendorff, has been called into question.⁸⁴ The

⁸² Lossky, *The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church*, 56.

⁸³ Relevant citations from de Regnon are provided in Yves Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol. 3, xvi-xvii.

⁸⁴ One example includes even a well-known Orthodox theologian Fr. Nikolaos Loudovikos who argued that St. Augustine could not be justly termed an "essentialist" Trinitarian as his basic arguments align well with the Cappadocian Fathers, c.f. *Ἡ Κλειστή Πνευματικότητα καὶ τὸ Νόημα τοῦ Ἐαυτοῦ* (Ἀθήνα, 1999), 59-72. Both the explanation and the citation were found in Fr. Loudovikos's lecture delivered at the Oxford Patristics Conference in 2015 "Consubstantiality Beyond Perichoresis: Personal Threeness, Intra-divine Relations and Personal Consubstantiality in Augustine's, Thomas Aquinas' and Maximus the Confessor's Trinitarian Theologies," now accessible *Studia patristica* vol. 89 (2017) p. 33-46. See also Fr. Gilles Emery, OP, "Essentialism or Personalism in the Treatise on God in Saint Thomas Aquinas," *The Thomist* 64 (2000): 521-63.

Trinitarian theology of the Greek East is not as discordant with St. Augustine as it is claimed to be, and that appears to be in accordance with above observations.⁸⁵

⁸⁵ Michael R. Barnes, "De Regnon Reconsidered," in *Augustinian Studies* 26-2 (1995), 51-79; D. Glenn Butner, Jr., "For and Against de Regnon: Trinitarianism East and West," in *International Journal of Systematic Theology*, Vol. 17, No. 4, October, 2015, doi:10.0000/ijst.12117; Lewis Ayres, *Nicea and Its Legacy: An Approach to Fourth-Century Trinitarian Theology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), chs. 14-15; Lewis Ayres, *Augustine and the Trinity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010); E.L. Mascall, *The Triune God*, chs. 1-2; Edmund Hill, O.P., *The Mystery of the Trinity*, (London: Cassell Ltd, 1985), 115-21. See the wonderful review of Orthodox and Augustinian theology by Byzantinist theologian Dr. Marcus Plested who also calls into question the rigid dichotomy between Augustinian essentialism versus Cappadocian personalism, c.f. *Orthodox Readings of Aquinas*, 29-44.

Chapter 2: Theological Defense of the *Filioque*

Although the Greek Fathers imply a role of the Son in the eternal production of the Spirit's person, it is predominately in the West that it came to be unmistakably taught that the Spirit has His eternal origin from both the Father and the Son together as one single principle. Aside from the witness of the Bible, the documentary evidence of this traces back to the triadic form of theology that we can see in the writings of St. Hilary of Poitiers, St. Ambrose, and principally in St. Augustine's *De Trinitate*. The Augustinian theology of the *Filioque* was absorbed into Latin pneumatology and remains so to this day.⁸⁶ Though not being the origin of

⁸⁶ St. Augustine is also famous for introducing the analogical comparison between the motions of the soul as a spiritual being with both intelligence and will with the divine missions. This was brought in to attempt to explain how within God there can be one single absolute unity while also processions from it and terminating within itself. The intellection of the mind producing a Word or logical conception of something, and then the will choosing to love that object was used to analogically describe Christ the divine Word or intellectual Word that comes forth from the mind of God as the Father thinks and begets Wisdom, and following this the faculty of will

the doctrine, there are good grounds to believe the *Filioque* clause was added into the Western usage of the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed through efforts in 6th century Spain to refute strands of Arianism. This Arianizing doctrine held that the Son is not essentially consubstantial with the eternal Father, but was adopted as Son in time.⁸⁷

But if the Spirit proceeds from the Son, as He does from the Father in timeless eternity, then the Son is surely and unquestionably the eternal God, and not some created adoptee. Likewise, if the Spirit eternally proceeds from the Father and the Son, who themselves are eternal, then the Spirit must also be consubstantially God. This was the 6th century Hispanic manner of defending the Trinity. Thus, the consubstantial unity of the Father and

binding the Father and the Son as a spiritual being loves the conceived intellectual word in itself. These are all motions proceeding from one spiritual being but returns to itself. In other words, these are processions of knowledge and will that make for an internal motion in a simple being, i.e. the soul. In the same way, God remains one but within Himself there is procession of knowledge and will.

⁸⁷ Jaroslav Pelikan, *The Christian Tradition: A History of the Development of Doctrine*, vol. 2: *The Spirit of Eastern Christendom 600-1700* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1974), 185-186.

the Son was thought to be further demonstrated through the *Filioque* doctrine.

A small treatment should now be given as to the theological rationale of the *Filioque*, and why it is a perfectly healthy statement of orthodox confession according to theological reasoning. Of course, the final judge on the matter between Catholics and Orthodox will be whether, as provided through plentiful citations further below in chapter 3, *the Scripture and the Holy Fathers upheld it faithfully*. If not, it matters not how logically coherent or intellectually satisfying the doctrine may sound, it would be falsified by the chief criteria of God's word and the Sacred Tradition of the Church. But if it is supported by the aforesaid criteria, and still retains coherence and intellectual persuasiveness, then more power to it.

In providing a definition of *ex Patre filioque procedit* (proceeds from the Father and the Son), the Latin West, even unto this day, allows for some difference of approach. One might be thinking of the different styles of theological reasoning between the Dominican and Franciscan schools. I take it that the nuts and bolts of *Filioque* theology in the Catholic Church, as provided by the Councils of Lyons (1274) and Florence (1439), can best be explained by the articulation of this doctrine by St.

Thomas Aquinas.⁸⁸ The treatment on the *Filioque* provided by the great Latin theologian St. Anselm is well worth a careful study, but in consideration of space, the articulation of the doctrine as formulated and reasoned by Aquinas alone will be here shortly summarized as representative.⁸⁹ Moreover, Aquinas's defense against the Greek accusations are also considered.⁹⁰ Therefore, the Anselmian or Thomistic model serves well to useful representations of Catholic doctrine, and they both take a great deal from the Scriptures and the Fathers.

⁸⁸ For a thorough defense of the Thomistic understanding of the *Filioque* against the more developed criticisms by 20th century Orthodox writers Sergius Bulgakov and Fr. Vladimir Lossky, see Matthew Levering, *Engaging the Doctrine of the Holy Spirit: Love and Gift in the Trinity and the Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2016), 113-168. Levering gives an in-depth overview of the distinct ways of reaching the *Filioque* doctrine within the different schools of the Catholic Church.

⁸⁹ I take St. Thomas's doctrine of the Spirit's procession from the Son to be substantially the same as St. Anselm's, though there are some differences. For those readers who might feel that omitting Blessed John Dun Scotus's treatment of the Trinity leaves more to be desired, I would simply say that I lack the competence to provide this. Therefore, no matter how much I would like to include Scotus, I can't pretend to do it with any justice, let alone what it deserves.

⁹⁰ St. Thomas has further theological reasoning for the *Filioque* that won't be explored here.

It should be emphasized here, then, that the sources from which St. Thomas derived his *Filioque* theology are not merely an exercise of human reason and philosophical deduction,⁹¹ the abuse of which the Orthodox have classically shunned as the “evils of scholasticism”. Rather, according to Fr. Gilles Emery, O.P., God’s Word maintained the primacy source of the *Filioque* for St. Thomas, and only after this comes Church Fathers, Councils, and theological reasoning.⁹² Aquinas, in other words, was very much a Bible-man who sought to harmonize Scripture with the Patristic data, and who submitted *a priori* to the decrees of the Church’s magisterium.

St. Thomas understood the biblical witness of the Spirit’s being “of the Son” to be an indication of a common source from Father and Son. Also, the wondrous statements from the mouth of Christ Himself that the Spirit receives of Him in the economy of salvation (John 16:12-15). More importantly, St. Thomas, like St. Augustine, understood the economic missions of the Son

⁹¹ Dr. Matthew Levering emphasizes this point in a public lecture available for viewing – “Holy Spirit & Trinity,” *WheatonCollege*, YouTube, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wul2VxQcEQQ>.

⁹² Gilles Emery, O.P., *The Trinitarian Theology of St. Thomas Aquinas*, trans. Francesca A. Murphy (Oxford University Press, 2007), 272.

and Spirit in time (*ad extra*) to manifest the eternal missions within the *ad intra* life of God.⁹³ Speaking of which, the theological reasoning of St. Thomas comes directly from the Patristic principle laid out above, namely, that because of God's infinitude and simplicity, only relational origins (forming opposition) make for a real distinction in the one God. Furthermore, since causation or origination is the kind of distinction that is asserted, there must be a *from/to* relationship between the Son and the Spirit, and not just from the Father vis-à-vis the Son and Spirit.

In other words, it is not enough to simply say that the Son is generated from the Father and the Spirit proceeds from the Father and close shop with Trinitarian theology. Why? Because that merely speaks to the relationship between the Son and Spirit to the Father as their cause. But what about between the Son and Spirit? If there is no relational opposition between the Son and the Spirit, argues St. Thomas, then the Son and Spirit become merged into one undistinguished person. Again, only relational opposition makes for distinction, otherwise you have absolute unity.⁹⁴ The Greeks eventually responded

⁹³ *Ibid.*, 275.

⁹⁴ See Congar's excellent summary of this in *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol. 3, 72-76.

The Filioque

by saying the unique word for “procession” (ἐκπορεύεται) versus the Son’s “generation” were good enough to signify hypostatic distinction. They understood the Father alone as cause, and the Son and Spirit as both caused from the Father in two different ways, *generation* and *procession*. However, this conception comes with some problems or at least reveals certain inadequacies.

First, that unique word for *proceed* (John 15:26) as a special code reference for the Spirit’s eternal origin does not appear to have explicit Scriptural precedent (c.f. below chapter *The Filioque in Sacred Scripture*). As will be shown below, the Scriptures do not use ἐκπορεύεται in the manner in which later theologians codified it, which manifests that this usage by the Fathers was more on the side of *theological development*, rather than something St. John the Apostle specifically had in mind when he recorded the words of Christ in John 15:26. Secondly, two distinct ways of coming forth out of the Father doesn’t sufficiently make for a relational opposite (or a converse relation), since the Son and Spirit stand side by side simply as two who came forth from the Father, and not in any opposing relation *towards each other*. In other words, what is “contrary” or “opposing” between the Son and Spirit?

St. Thomas would argue that without that relational opposition, the unifying absolutism of God collapses the Son and Spirit into one person, which is a sort of “Sabellian Monarchianism.”⁹⁵ There is, at least, a hint of recognition of this point in St. Gregory of Nyssa in his statement that only “cause” makes distinctions in God, and he outlines the Spirit as coming from the Father and *mediately* through the Son who Himself is *immediately* caused by the Father. Therefore, St. Thomas is not wasting time with theological speculation, but rather is driven by a motive to protect the coherence of the dogmatic and Patristic Trinitarian doctrine. Therefore, to preserve the notion of relational opposition, as it posits a cause/caused relationship, the Spirit either must give cause (in some sense) to the Son or vice versa (in some sense). Since the Scripture’s clear testimony on the 3rd order of the Spirit in the Holy Trinity, His divine mission in the economy of salvation from the Son, His being “of the Son” rather than “Son of the Spirit,” and the Johannine record of the Spirit receiving from the Son all things delivered to Him by God the Father, St. Thomas understands that the Spirit must eternally come from the Son and the Father together *as one principle and single spiration*.

⁹⁵ Gilles Emery, *Ibid.*, 286.

Following the arguments of Photius, the main objections to this from the Eastern Orthodox have always been as follows [margins left wider for notes]:

- (1)** That this equal sharing between Father and Son of being the single principle that eternally produces the Person of the Holy Spirit *abrogates the sole Monarchy of the Father as the sole cause (aitia) of divinity in the Godhead*. The Son merges together with the Father, and thus you have a *Diarchy or two principles* instead of the sole Paternal Monarchy of the Scriptures and the Fathers, which is absurd.

- (2)** Any property shared by two of the divine persons must be shared by all three *as a natural property of the shared essential communion*, and since, per the *Filioque*, the Father and Son equally share in the spiration of the Spirit, either the Spirit partakes in his own origin by proceeding from Himself or the Spirit is subordinated to something outside the divine Godhead.

- (3)** If the Father gives to the Son the power to produce the Holy Spirit with Himself, then that would mean that giving the divine essence from one to another necessarily entails the giving of the power to produce another person in the Godhead. If that is true, then the Father and the Son, when they give the divine essence to the Spirit, give to the Spirit the power to produce another person, and this would necessarily imply a 4th person produced from the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and the process would go on ad infinitum.

In answer to these objections, as well as a Catholic might answer in the following manner.

Answer to the 1st objection

- (1)** The Father is the sole principle without principle who causes both the Son and the Spirit, and thus this Monarchical principle is maintained. However, by the Father begetting the Son, the Father gives “all things” to the Son, and they are completely one with each other except for

that which marks a relational opposition. Since the relations are Fatherhood and Sonship, the Son receives everything that the Father has except for that which is of Fatherhood (Paternity). Now, since the Son is in the receiving position, He doesn't abrogate the Monarchical position of the Father because the Father eternally stands as the one principle *without principle*. Further, since the Father is in the giving position, He likewise maintains the Monarchical position because the Son eternally stands as the One who received from the absolute source to have the power to spirate the Spirit.

When all is traced back to its first source, the Father stands alone as Monarch and primordial cause of all divinity, and ever retains that priority. For this reason, it can be said that the Spirit is eternally caused by the Father *through the Son*. St. Thomas writes: "It is said that 'the Holy Spirit principally proceeds from the Father', because the *auctoritas* [auth-

orship] of the spiration resides in the Father, and since it is from the Father that the Son receives the power to breath the Spirit... One accurately says that 'the Spirit proceeds from the Father (*a Patre*)', mainly because for the Greeks, the preposition 'a' designates the relation to the primary point of origin (*prima origo*)..."⁹⁶ Aquinas, therefore, clearly distinguishes the Father and the Son in the active spiration of the Spirit by relegating to the former alone the *authorship* (*auctoritas*) of that spiration (*in Patre est auctoritas spirationis*), and it is from this prior principle that the Son has any spirative power. Thus, the spirative power to eternally produce the Holy Spirit can be traced further back from the Son to the Father who has that power inherently, and therefore the objection of Photius does not stand.

⁹⁶ *Commentary on the Sentences*, 1 Sent. d. 12, q. 1, a 2, ad 3; Eng. Trans: Gilles Emery, *ibid.*, 281.

But one might press the fact that the Father and the Son, being two distinct Persons, add up to make two principles. The answer to this is as follows: while the Father and the Son are two with respect to their personal identities, the act of spiration which eternally produces the Holy Spirit is absolutely singular and indivisibly shared equally by the Father and the Son, and therefore they do not make up a sum addition between their persons.

Here, St. Thomas distinguishes between the “agent” and the “action.”⁹⁷ If speaking about the one “who acts or operates, the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and Son in the plural [that is: two hypostases], and in so far as they are distinct persons, since he proceeds from them as from many [distinct] persons...” However, if speaking “to the condition of the principle of action, then I answer that the Holy Spirit proceeds from them *in so*

⁹⁷ Gilles Emery, *The Trinitarian Theology of Thomas Aquinas*, 289.

far as they are one. Since the operation comes from one single principle alone, it is necessary that there be in the Father and Son something which is singular and which will be the principle of that action,⁹⁸ which is spiration, an act which is *one and simple*, and by which the single and simple person of the Holy Spirit proceeds.”⁹⁹

The unity of the spirative act, that act by which the Spirit is eternally produced, does not require the absolute identity of the Persons who are involved in said spirative act. Orthodox Christians know of this concept. As aptly observed by Jesuit theologian Joseph M. Dalmau, S.J., “... the unity of the operative principle does not necessarily require the unity of the operating suppositum [i.e. the Persons of the Father and Son spirating]. Therefore the three persons of the Most Holy Trinity are one principle of

⁹⁸ Here the word “action” is used analogously.

⁹⁹ *Commentary on the Sentences*, 1 Sent. d. 11, q. 1, a, 2; Eng. Trans: Gilles Emery, *ibid.*, 290; [emphasis added].

creation, as Florence teaches.”¹⁰⁰ In other words, just like the three divine Persons of the Father, Son, and Spirit each are the Creator of all things, that doesn’t mean that there are three principles (causes) of creation between them. Rather, creation as one principle, God. In the same pattern of thought, the Father and Son retain their Personal distinctiveness but insofar as the spirative action is concerned, they are one and without real distinction as principle of the Spirit.

To this, one might further object:¹⁰¹ The Filioque doctrine still makes for two principles of the Spirit because it posits that the spiration of the Spirit from the Father is in a different than the spiration from the Son since the Father has the producing principle of the Spirit *in*

¹⁰⁰ Joseph M. Dalmau, S.J., *Sacrae Theologiae Summa, II. De Deo Uno et Trio* (Spain: Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos, 1955), 356; republished and translated by Fr. Joseph Baker for *Keep the Faith, Inc.* in 2016.

¹⁰¹ Objection taken from Joseph M. Dalmau, S.J., *Sacrae Theologiae Summa, IIA*, 359.

Himself and the Son has it *from the Father through generation*. Ergo, the objector might say, it cannot be one principle. But here again we simply reiterate the answer to the previous objection. We distinguish between the spirative action itself from the way in which the Father and the Son have this spirative action. The Father has it in Himself as the font of all deity, and the Son has it from His Father as the one born to have all things from the Father. Therefore, the difference is not in the spirative principle itself, which maintains its unity, “but the way in which they have the spirative power.”¹⁰² As Dalmau states, “The Father and the Son possess the divinity and the creative power in the same way, without thereby being two gods or two creators.”¹⁰³ In other words, the Father and Son as Creator or singular in the power to create does not render two creators, i.e. two

¹⁰² *Ibid.*

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*

principles of creation, since they are united in the creating the world. In the same way, the Father and Spirit are one in spirating the Spirit, but that does not render two causes of the Spirit.

Answer to the 2nd Objection

- (2) While it is true that when it comes to the shared substance of God, anything shared by two of the divine Persons are necessarily shared by all Three (since what is of nature is had by each of them seeing as each is fully God), this does not yield when we focus on the aspect of relational opposition within God, which is to be distinguished from that which is absolutely equal and united between the three Persons of the Godhead. Because the Holy Spirit's subsistent relation to the Father and the Son is *defined* as proceeding from the Father and the Son, He stands on the opposing end of active spiration, *which is passive spiration*. Active spiration and passive spiration are

necessarily a converse relation that cannot collapse into equality, and thus the objection to the *Filioque* does not stick. The Spirit cannot participate in the active spirating of His own being since it is that very active spirating that situates Him as passively spirated from Father and Son.

The producing principle of the Spirit's Person is the active spiration of the Father and the Son, and it leaves the Spirit as the terminal product of said active spiration. Therefore, when it comes to relational opposition, the very means by which the three divine Persons are distinguished, the rule of "shared by 2, shared by all" does not yield, since the very logic of the oppositional distinctions cannot render the spiration equally shared by all three divine Persons. The underlying theological construction here hinges upon the dictum that in God "all things are one and equal where there is no relational opposition," and since said relational opposition are made in God by

way of the relation of origination, i.e. one is the origin of the other, and the other is originated from the origin, the Father and Son are one in the spirative production of the Spirit, whereas the Spirit cannot share in that, as if it were a common attribute of God's substance, i.e. His being on the opposite side of the origin relation renders himself necessary distinct.

The Orthodox objection would hold if we failed to distinguish substance from relation. If we relegate the procession of the Spirit and the spirative action by which He is produced to the category of relation, then the objection is wholly avoided. In this way, the three divine Persons are truly and really distinct, maintaining each of their hypostatic particularities, while also sharing together only in that which is of the substance or essence of deity. Lastly, the hypostatic property of the Father as being the sole font of deity is retained exclusively for the Father, and this fontal

Monarchy is not communicable to the Son, despite the latter merging together with the Father as one in actively spirating the Spirit's existence. This is because, while the active spiration itself is one and singular, the Father and the Son, in their Persons, are still two and have a share in that active spiration in two different manners. The Father has it "as a principle without principle", which is due to his being the sole fontal Monarch from which springs the cause of all deity, and the Son has it "as a principle from a principle" since He Himself is caused in being begotten of the Father, and thereby receiving the active spiration of the Spirit. Therefore, there is no merging of *paternity* (fatherhood) and *filiation* (sonship) in the singular spiration of the Spirit, as if paternity and sonship were not relatively opposed.

Reply to Objection #3

- (3)** This reasoning driving this objection would yield true if it were not for the

simple fact that divine revelation, to which all Christians must give unquestionable assent, and the doctrine of relational origins being the sole cause of real distinctions in God. The Holy Scriptures and Divine Tradition tell us that God is in three persons. Moreover, the same revelation tells us those three are a Father, a Son, and a Spirit. Now, the converse relationship of Father and Son is quite straightforward. However, Spirit could be something common to both in a unique way, and this matches the Scriptural references that can picture the Spirit as the “Spirit of the Father” or the “Spirit of the Son”, which shows that the Spirit is the common possession of the Father and the Son.

When you have the genitive “of”, it leads strongly to the concept of derivation. For example, when we say the “Word of God”, “Power of God”, “Wisdom of God”, “Grace of God”, “Israel of God”, “Righteousness of God,” or “Mercy of God”, just to name several examples, we

clearly intend to mean that the Word, Power, Wisdom, Grace, Israel, Righteousness, and Mercy are something that God possesses in Himself and issues forth from Him. Interestingly enough, divine revelation teaches us that the Spirit is “of the Son” and “of the Father”, but we never read “Son of the Spirit” or “Father of the Spirit”, showing that the only posture for the Spirit is one of being the commonly derived possession of the Father and the Son, albeit in timeless eternity. The “of” (genitive) for the Spirit only works one way, and that way implies the Spirit issues forth from both the Father and the Son.

If one reads the Gospels, it is evident that the Father is never sent by either the Son or Spirit, which indicates that the temporal or economic missions of the Trinity demonstrate a picture of the *ad intra* theological order of God. The Spirit does not send anyone, and yet the Son sends the Spirit. Ergo, the Father and

Son send the Spirit, and this language illustrates the *ad intra* order.

One might object that the argumentation thus far still does not close the way for new persons in the Godhead who are the possession of the Father, Son, and Spirit, and *ad infinitum*. Such is true, and the above logic was only mentioned because it is determined by the mind of God as seen in Divine Revelation, and such authority has the right to be mysterious and unknowably arbitrary.

A Catholic could simply turn this question around and simply ask why God the Father is only fertile enough to produce 2 persons, the Son and Spirit? Why not an infinite number of persons. Why is the Father's fertility limited to only 2, and that, why a Son and a Spirit? If the property of producing another person in the Godhead were supposed to be *ad infinitum* if given by one to another, then the same reasoning would have it that the Father should produce

more persons *ad infinitum*, and yet Catholics and Orthodox are content to accept that the production of divine persons stops at 3, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Divine Revelation reveals what we cannot know by reason alone. It is as the late Fr. Leo J. Trese remarked one, if we cannot explain nuclear physics to a young 5-year-old, how do we expect any human being to understand the depths of God?¹⁰⁴ If the fertility of the Father yields 2 divine persons in medieval and contemporary Orthodox triadology, then it can be the case that the fertility of the Father and the Son yield only 1 other divine person.

On top of this, the dictum which has it that relational origins alone making hypostatic distinctions within the God has it that the Spirit is common to the

¹⁰⁴ Leo J. Trese, *The Faith Explained*, 3rd ed. (New York: Scepter Publishers, 2008; originally published 1965), 27.

Father and Son, and this can be compared to the three faculties in a spiritual being: mind, intellection, and will. If the Father is the mind, the Son the intellection of the mind, and the Spirit the will that is the mutual bond between the mind and the intellection, then the three divine persons can, by analogy, exhaust the fullness of mind, intellection, and volition (will) without the need for further production of new persons. This is the well-known psychological analogy provided famously traced back to St. Augustine.

Chapter 3: The *Filioque* in Sacred Scripture

Having provided the basic summary of the Orthodox objections to the *Filioque*, as well as a developed Catholic response to them, it is now fitting to move forward and investigate the sources of divine revelation to test what has been said. The doctrine of the Spirit's procession should be defined by the Biblical and Patristic rules of faith. Below I begin surveying the Biblical data and then proceed to analyze the Greek and Latin Fathers individually. However, due to the limited size of this treatment, selections from the Bible and the Fathers will be restricted to the most prominent and significant instances.¹⁰⁵ Below I discuss how the economic missions of the Holy Trinity are illustrative of the God's immanent theological life, and how this is shown by the Patristic interpretation of selections of the Bible. In particular, the Johannine teaching that the Holy Spirit "receives" from the Son in a way that compares with the Son's receiving from the Father. Towards the end of this section, it will be

¹⁰⁵ For an extensive study into the Biblical and Patristic testimonies of the Holy Spirit, see Henry B. Swete, *The Holy Spirit in the New Testament*; Swete, *The Holy Spirit in the Ancient Church: A Study of Christian Teaching in the Age of the Fathers* (London: Macmillan & Co. Ltd., 1912).

shown how Photius, the chief opponent of the *Filioque*, had to defy the Patristic majority on this interpretation of St. John's witness in order to stave off the *Filioquist* implications.

Immanent and Economic Missions

In the Catholic and Orthodox debate on the procession of the Holy Spirit, it is often said that both sides can talk past each other because one side might be speaking to the Trinitarian relations as temporally related to the world (*Economic Missions*)¹⁰⁶ while the other is speaking to them as they relate within the timeless and

¹⁰⁶ *Economy* or *oikonomia* "means literally 'housekeeping' or 'household administration.' ... with particular reference to the salvation of mankind. Hence the theological expression 'the economy' (sc. of salvation) means God's plan of salvation, or rather his execution or administration of that plan in such a central mystery, for example, as the incarnation. Thus this mystery, and the doctrines of creation, the Church, the sacraments, grace, eschatology, will all be called mysteries or doctrines of the economy" Edmund Hill, O.P., *The Mystery of Trinity*, 45. See also Catherine Mowry LaCugna, "God's Economy Revealed in Christ and the Holy Spirit," in *God For Us: The Trinity & Christian Life* (Harper Collins Publishers, 1993), 21-52.

eternal life of God (*immanent order*).¹⁰⁷ Another short way of contrasting these concepts is to speak of the missions of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit *ad extra*, i.e., related outside of God in creation, versus their missions *ad intra*, i.e., related within God Himself. I am using the word mission since its meaning is simply “to send” or “go forth from”. In the *ad intra* life of God, the Father begets the Son, and so the Son has a sort of mission or sending-off from the Father and the Son. If the *ad extra* economic missions of the Trinity correspond to the *ad intra* theological missions of the inner life of the Trinity, the parallelism would end up supporting the doctrine of the *Filioque*.

All Trinitarian Christians understand that there is a certain *order* (τάξις) in God. We see this when Christ says to baptize every human being in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. The Father is 1st, the Son is 2nd, and the Spirit is 3rd. This τάξις reflects something about the immanent life of God as well, and this will play a huge role in the theology behind the *Filioque*. In the first place, we can recognize that the New Testament teaches that the Father has sent the Son into

¹⁰⁷ By Immanent Missions, what is meant here is the realm of theology versus the realm of economy. That is, by “theology” the immanent nature of God and the relationship of the intra-Trinitarian persons.

the world, and that the Father and the Son have sent the Spirit into the world. Also, it is clear that the New Testament has no place for the expression of the Spirit sending the Son, or the Spirit and the Son sending the Father into the world. The Father being the primordial commissioner stands for his position as the source of all deity and divine action. Does this dynamic provide a clue into understanding the *ad intra* life of the three divine Persons? According to the late and renowned Catholic dogmatic theologian Fr. Joseph Pohle (1853-1922), there are 3 aspects of any mission:

- (1) A real distinction between the sender and the person sent, for it is obvious that no one can send itself.¹⁰⁸
 - (2) A certain dependency of the "sent" in regard to the "sender."
 - (3) A relation on the part of the "sent" to some terminus (place or effect).
- It follows that every "missus" enters into a twofold relation: a relation to the

¹⁰⁸ When it comes to the divine persons of the Trinity, all share equally in (*ad extra*) operations towards creation, and thus the Spirit sends Himself as well as the Father and Son sending Him. However, the theological expressions avoid saying that the Spirit is sent by Himself, and reserve this for the Father and Son so as to match the *ad intra* signification of the Spirit being from the Father and Son in eternity.

sender (mittens) as his terminus a quo, and a relation to the goal of his mission, which constitutes his terminus ad quem. In applying the concept of “mission” to the Divine Persons we must first purge it of all human imperfections. In the Divinity any influence of the “Sender” on the “Sent,” other than the relation of origin, would be repugnant to the Essence of the Triune God. The eternal Procession of one Divine Person from another may be called Internal Mission (mission ad intra). *The Temporal Mission is external and merely reflects the internal.*¹⁰⁹

That last sentence is the summation to this section. In the words of Karl Rahner, “the Trinity that is manifested in the economy of salvation is the immanent Trinity and vice versa.”¹¹⁰ Or in the current Catechism of the Catholic Church: “The eternal origin of the Holy Spirit is revealed

¹⁰⁹ Joseph Pohle, *The Divine Trinity: A Dogmatic Treatise*, 2nd ed. (St. Louis, MO: B. Herder, 1915; republished Kerry, Ireland: CrossReach Publications, 2019), 64.

¹¹⁰ Yves Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, 11.

in his mission in time.”¹¹¹ In the *ad extra* mission of the Trinity towards creatures, it is never said that the Father is the one who is “sent.” Rather, He “sends”. Likewise, the Son both as “sending” and “sent”;¹¹² and the Holy Ghost always as “sent,” but never as “sending.” This *ad extra* order signifies the *ad intra* order.

The North African Saint and theologian, Fulgentius of Ruspe (460-533), venerated in both Catholic and Orthodox communions (Jan. 1), described this mirroring relationship between the *ad extra* and *ad intra* missions:

The Son is sent by the Father, but the Father is not sent by the Son *because the Son is born from the Father*, not the Father from the Son. Similarly, the Holy Spirit, as we read, is sent by the Father

¹¹¹ CCC, 244; [emphasis added].

¹¹² The exception would be the Incarnation where Jesus is said to be the object of the co-operative work of all three divine Persons, c.f. Yves Congar, *ibid.*, 12. See Fr. Aidan Nichols, O.P, for the objections against this in light of the Holy Spirit sending forth the Son in His earthly mission, c.f. *Rome and the Eastern Churches*, 2nd ed. (San Francisco, CA: Ignatius Press, 2010), 251.

and the Son, *because the Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son.*¹¹³

St. John the Apostle is clear in teaching that the Son sends the Spirit to creation: “But when the Helper comes, *whom I shall send to you from the Father...*” (Jn 15:26). The Orthodox agree that the Father and Son can be said to “send” in the *ad extra* mode, but they would say that the only *ad intra* mission of the Spirit’s Person, or his hypostatic origin, would be the Spirit’s unique procession from the Father alone (*ex Patre solo*). However, this seems to break the parallel between the *ad intra* and *ad extra* missions, as if the latter were not a manifestation of the former. The economic mission of the Spirit would then be fundamentally different than His internal mission *ad intra*. Fr. Gilles Emery, O.P., a prominent Thomistic

¹¹³ Fulgentius, *Contra Fabianum*, fragm. 29.18-19 (CCSL 91a.823; Eng. Trans. Thomas L. Humphries, Jr.), cit. from Thomas L. Humphries, *Ascetic Pneumatology from John Cassian to Gregory the Great* (Oxford University Press, 2013), 150. It should be noted from the same passage that St. Fulgentius understands that, insofar as the Son became man, it could be said that the Father and Spirit “send” the Son: “But because there is more than one way of using *missio* in Sacred Scripture, in the mystery of the Incarnation the Son is sent not only from the Father, but indeed from the Holy Spirit, as well; *the man Christ Jesus, the mediator of God and man* is formed by the operation of the entire Trinity,” *ibid*. St. Fulgentius actually just takes from St. Augustine here, c.f. *De Trinitate*, Book IV, Ch. 20, *New Advent*.

theologian, writes that the Scriptural foundation of the *Filioque* doctrine rests firstly herein:

The first foundation consists in the correspondence between, on the one hand, the action of God the Trinity in the economy, and, on the other hand, the eternal being of God the Trinity... Now the mission of the Holy Spirit manifests his personal being: the sending of the Holy Spirit makes known his eternal procession. Put otherwise, the economy, in which the Holy Spirit is poured out by the Father and the Son, is the *expression* of what the Holy Spirit is from all eternity... The economy of divine persons in time is conformed to the eternal order of origin of these persons.¹¹⁴

Therefore, it is argued here that the *ad extra* signification of the Father as the one who alone “sends,” the Son as the one “sent” by the Father, and the Holy Spirit as the One “sent” by the Father and the Son show forth the immanent processions within the *ad intra* life of

¹¹⁴ Gilles Emery, O.P., *The Trinity: An Introduction to Catholic Doctrine on the Triune God*, 142.

God. it will be further argued that *Photian Monopatrism* (The Spirit is from the Father alone), at least, tends to disrupt this parallel signification.

However, since contemporary Orthodox have, since at least the 20th century, developed a distinct relationship between the Son and the Holy Spirit in the *ad intra* life of God in the mode of natural action (energy), truly and really distinct from God's essence, which says the Spirit energetically proceeds from the Father through the Son, the rejection of *Photian Monopatrism* doesn't wholly exclude the Orthodox position from consideration. There is also the Orthodox conception of the Spirit proceeding eternally from the Father through the Son, albeit the latter in no way causative, and this might be a candidate for an *ad intra/ad extra* matching. More investigation will have to be had upon this latter notion before a preference to the Latin *Filioque* can be considered successfully achieved but suffice it to say for now that even if the temporal missions of the Trinitarian Persons reflect the *ad intra* life of God, it will need to be inquired into whether said life of God is according to the order of hypostatic origin versus the natural activity of God.

It should not be overlooked also that the Holy Spirit in Scripture is always said to be "of" the Son or Father, but there is never a case of the Son or Father being "of" the

spirit. There is something to be gleaned by “of”. As already mentioned in the previous chapter, when we use “of” we typically mean that there is a subject that has something issuing forth from it. The “mercy of God” would be His mercy issued forth. The “wisdom of God,” likewise. It can also signify possession. That the Scripture only knows the Spirit to be “of the Father” or “of the Son” shows that He is a common possession of the two persons, issuing forth from them. But now we must move on to consider explicit exegesis of the Biblical texts.

John 15:26 & Revelation 22:1

The clearest expression in the Bible about the procession of the Holy Spirit is by the pen of St. John the Apostle:

But when the Helper comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth *who proceeds from the Father*, He will testify of Me. (John 15:26)

That seems very simple enough. The word “proceeds” is there, and the Spirit is said to only proceed from the Father. The Eastern Orthodox have for centuries insisted that their doctrine of the Spirit’s procession from the

Father alone is simply what the Scripture plainly says. At face value, this may seem to score a victory for the Eastern *Monopatrism* perspective. However, with some deeper study, that certainly is not the case. According to the late and renowned Scripture scholar Henry B. Swete (1835-1917), former Regius Professor of Divinity at Cambridge, even John 15:26 is not a proof-text for either the Cappadocian¹¹⁵ or the Augustinian model of the Spirit's procession:

The question will be asked whether the New Testament recognizes an eternal relation between the Only-Begotten Son and the Holy Spirit, such as the ancient Church had in view when she spoke of the Spirit as our Lord's "very own," or in the West confessed that He "proceeds from the Son" and not from the Father only. And the answer must be that there is no explicit teaching upon this point in the Apostolic writings. *Even the statement*

¹¹⁵ For the duration of this book, the Cappadocian model will be, among other things, representative of taking the Greek word used for "proceed" (ἐκπορεύεται) as a specific code word signifying the eternal origin of the Holy Spirit, much like "only begotten" (μονογενής) for the eternal Son.

that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father does not explicitly teach the doctrine of an Eternal procession as it is conveyed in the modified terms of the Creed,¹¹⁶ while for the Eternal procession from the Son, no direct support from the New Testament has ever been claimed.¹¹⁷

Now, Swete goes on further to speak of valid inferences that can be drawn from the Biblical data on the manner of the Spirit's procession, but it is worth noting that the Scripture doesn't give any proof-texts or direct teaching on the Spirit's eternal origin from either the Father alone or the Father and the Son together. Ed Siecienski agrees in his own survey of the scholarship, particularly on the Johannine scripture text (Jn 15:26), and understands the statement of Christ that the Spirit "who proceeds from the Father" *is a reference to the temporal mission where the Fathers sends the Spirit into the world with the Son much like He did when He sent*

¹¹⁶ Swete here is referring to the Creed of Constantinople (381) which modified the Creed of Nicaea (325). In other words, the Bible has no teaching on the eternal origin of the Holy Spirit from the Father.

¹¹⁷ Henry B. Swete, *The Holy Spirit in the New Testament* (London: Macmillan and Co., 1910; reprinted by Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1976), 304. See also Siecienski, *Filioque*, 18.

the Son into the world.¹¹⁸ With regard to this very passage (John 15:26), Siecienski explains how even if “Gregory Nazianzus and others later attached a *specific theological significance to ἐκπορεύεσθαι*¹¹⁹ [...] there appears little reason to believe that John conveys that meaning in 15:26 [...]”¹²⁰ Following the exegesis of the majority of scholars, St. John the Gospel writer is not attempting to “describe the hypostatic origin of the Spirit (as later theology will contend) [...]”¹²¹ That is an enormously important observation.

¹¹⁸ Siecienski, *Filioque*, 22-23.

¹¹⁹ Eternal origin.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, 23; [emphasis added].

¹²¹ *Ibid.* In *The Gospel of John: Introduction, Exposition, Notes* (England: Pickering & Inglis Ltd., 1983), 316, F.F. Bruce states St. John’s record of the Spirit’s proceeding from the Father has “probably no metaphysical significance; it is another way of saying that the Spirit is sent by the Father.” See also C.K. Barret, *The Gospel according to St. John: An Introduction with Commentary and Notes on the Greek text*, 2nd ed. (Philadelphia, PA: The Westminster Press, 1978), 91. In *The Gospel According to John* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1991), 528-29, D.A. Carson states that St. John’s reference to the Spirit’s procession “refer not to some ontological ‘procession’ but to the mission of the Spirit.” In his *The Doctrine of God*, 159-60, Gerald Bray states that “*ekporeuetai* appears in the context of the temporal mission of the third person of the Trinity, whereas the Cappadocians used it to describe the inner relation of the Holy Spirit to the Father within the Godhead.” In his *Johannine*

The late Scripture scholar Brooke F. Westcott (1825-1901), who was famous for his co-editing of the New Testament in the Original Greek (1881), utilizes the Greek syntax of John 15:26 “to show decisively that the reference here is to the temporal mission of the Holy Spirit, and not to the eternal Procession [...] and it is most worthy of notice that the Greek fathers who apply this passage to the eternal Procession instinctively substitute ‘out of’ (ἐκ) for ‘from’ (παρὰ) in their application of it [...]”¹²²

Theology: The Gospel, the Epistles, and the Apocalypse, Paul A. Rainbow states (pages 251-52): “Jesus says that the Spirit of truth ‘proceeds from the Father’ (Jn 15:26). In context this means that the Father sends the Spirit into the world. But based on the axiom that the sending reflects what is true of the inner life of the Trinity, Christian theologians reason that there must be an eternal procession of the Spirit... Applied to the speculative realm of intra-trinitarian relations of origin, this suggests that the Son is the Father’s agent in the eternal spiration. The ingenerate Father initiates, and the Son completes, the act of spiration; the impetus comes from the Father and involves the Son.”

¹²² B.F. Westcott, *The Gospel According to St. John: The Authorized Version with Introduction and Notes* (Grand Rapids, MI: WM. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1881; reprinted in 1975), 225. It seems that the slight manipulation of the text between “from the side of” to “out of” is not a substantial one.

With this kind of interpretation, coinciding with contemporary scholarship, the later insistence by both East and West that this special Greek word ἐκπορεύεται carries with it, in either the mind of St. John or of the early Christian community, the unique signification of the Spirit's eternal principle of origin is a theological point deduced indirectly from the immediate context of John 15:26. On top of this, there is another text of the New Testament which uses the same Greek word (ἐκπορευόμενον) for procession as John 15:26 to describe the Spirit procession, but there it describes a procession of the Spirit from both the Father and the Son in the economy of salvation, and is not explicitly theological (*ad intra*). The reference is as follows: "And he showed me a pure river of water of life,¹²³ clear as

¹²³ St. Ambrose interprets "water of life" in the following manner: "This is certainly the River proceeding from the throne of God, that is, the Holy Spirit..." Citation from *On the Holy Spirit*, Book III.20.154, *New Advent*, <http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/34023.htm>. The first Greek commentator on the Apocalypse, Andrew of Caesarea (563-637), interprets the water to be the Holy Spirit, c.f. Eugenia Scarvelis Constantinou, *Guiding to a Blessed End: Andrew of Caesarea and His Apocalyptic Commentary in the Ancient Church* (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 2013), 118. See also Henry B. Swete, *The Apocalypse of St. John: The Greek Text with Introduction and Notes*, 3rd ed. (London: Macmillan & Co. Ltd., 1911), 298. Swete here also emphasizes that the procession of the Spirit from the Father

crystal, *proceeding*¹²⁴ *from the throne of God and of the Lamb.*" (Rev 22:1).

Biblical scholars understand the Johannine intention of "procession" in John 15:26 and Rev 22:1 to refer to the temporal sending of the Spirit into the world. One might say, then, that the only explicit teaching of the procession of the Holy Spirit in the Bible is a temporal procession into the world, and that the precise Greek word used by later Cappadocian theology is used by St. John the Apostle to describe a procession of the Spirit from the Father together with the Son. Lastly, the very context of St. John (14-16) suggests that the procession of the Spirit has the temporal mission in mind because it is Christ who preparing His disciples for his upcoming departure by promising that the Father and the Son will send a

and Son in Rev. 22:1 is, once again, like John 15:26, a reference to the temporal mission of the Spirit into the world. See notes from Peter J. Leithart, *Revelation 12-22* (London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2018), 401. The "water" has to be the Holy Spirit since, in another part of the Johannine corpus, Christ says: "He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow *rivers of living water.*' But this He spoke *concerning the Spirit*" (John 7:38-39a). For Scriptural corroboration, see Ezekiel 36:25-27, 47:9-12; Zechariah 12:10, 14:8; Isaiah 44:3; Revelation 7:17, 21:6.

¹²⁴ The syntax of the Greek word "proceeding" (ἐκπορευόμενον) is precisely the same Greek word in the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed of Constantinople (381)

Comforter to be with them and to guide them, and by doing so, they will make Their home with Christ's followers.

If it is true that John 15:26 is not a strict reference to the eternal procession (timeless origin) of the Spirit from the Father in the ontological (*ad intra*) Trinitarian life of God, but rather simply to the temporal mission towards creatures, this would take away the force of the oft-used argument that the developed Greek theology of "procession" (they use the Greek ἐκπορευόμενον in the Creed of Constantinople 381) is simply restating the message of Jesus. In other words, the Cappadocian theology¹²⁵ of the Spirit's procession involves a very codified and specific definition for the word "procession," namely, an inflexible reference to the eternal source of the Spirit's person from the Father. However, if, as the above would suggest, St. John's record of Christ's words only meant temporal sending by "proceeds from the Father," then the Cappadocian gloss on "procession" is at least one step away from St. John's immediate intention with the ἐκπορεύεται word. This does not nullify the Cappadocian theology, but it would show that it is a deduction rather than a simple restatement Christ's theological intention

¹²⁵ This is not strictly confined to Cappadocian triadology.

as recorded by the Apostle. It would mean that the Cappadocian theology of procession, even if perfectly true, is a *theological inference* from Scripture, rather than a *direct repetition* of Christ's explicit teaching.

Now, anyone who has studied the Patristic interpretations on John 15:26's use of "procession" will know that many of the Fathers of the Church really do use that word to describe an eternal "coming-forth" of the Spirit's person from the Father. It could very well be that the Fathers saw a temporal sending of the Spirit strictly in the text but understood the temporal sending to reflect the eternal origin of the Spirit. That certainly is the case with many in the West, and even St. Gregory of Nyssa¹²⁶ and St. Cyril of Alexandria. In that case, this would be a benefit to the defense of the *Filioque*, since the *ad extra* sending of the Spirit is an act from both the Father and the Son, as even the Orthodox admit, and if the *ad extra* mission of the Spirit is supposed to reflect the *ad intra* inner ontological life of the Trinity, then the Spirit would have to proceed from the Father *and the Son* by that logic.

¹²⁶ Guilio Maspero, *Trinity and Man: Gregory of Nyssa's Ad Ablabium* (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 175-80.

St. John Chrysostom, a treasured Saint for both Catholics and Orthodox, had the following commentary on John 15:26-27:

On this account He called It not “*Holy Spirit*,” but “*Spirit of Truth*.” But the, “*proceeds from the Father*,” shows that He [the Spirit] knows all things exactly, as Christ also says of Himself, that “I know whence come and whither I go”, speaking in that place also concerning truth. “Whom will send.” Behold, *it is no longer the Father alone, but the Son also who sends.*¹²⁷

St Chrysostom sees the “procession” here to be the temporal sending of the Spirit into the world since he parallels it with Christ’s coming into the world to testify

¹²⁷ John Chrysostom, *Homily 77*, Commentary on the Gospel of John, *New Advent*, <http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/240177.htm>; [emphasis added]. Very clearly here, St. John parallels the Spirit’s procession into the world with Christ’s own coming into the world (c.f. John 8:14), and on that basis infers that the Spirit “knows all things” (i.e., omniscient with God). That St. Chrysostom sees the temporal sending of the Spirit in this passage is doubly ensured by his paralleling the procession of the Spirit from the Father with the Son’s sending of the Spirit into the world.

to the Truth, and then adds that the Father doesn't do this alone but sends the Spirit with the Son.

When expositing the John 15:26 passage specifically, the Alexandrian genius Didymus the Blind (313-398), whose volume *De Spiritu Sanctu* (On the Holy Spirit) was praised by St. Jerome who translated it from Greek to Latin, stated that "we ought to understand that the Holy Spirit goes out from the Father *as the Savior himself goes out from God...*"¹²⁸ and "when the Son sends the Spirit of Truth, whom he called the Consoler [Jn 15.26], *at the same time the Father also sends him.* The Father does not send the Spirit without the Son sending him since he comes through the identical will of the Father and Son..."¹²⁹ Clearly, Didymus understood this as directly pertaining to the temporal mission of the Spirit in creation, and yet it is an exposition of John 15:26 no less.

¹²⁸ Didymus, *De Spiritu Sancto*, 113; citation from *Works on the Spirit: Athanasius and Didymus*, trans. Mark DelCogliano, Andrew Radde-Gallwitz, and Lewis Ayres (Yonkers: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2011), 179. Unfortunately, Didymus's reputation took a hit as he was associated with the Origenist idea of the pre-existence of souls and allegorical exegesis. However, Didymus's dogmatic theology on the Trinity was well received as it was well respected by St. Athanasius, St. Jerome, and St. Ambrose. See the defense of Didymus in the introduction of the cited work, 31-34.

¹²⁹ Didymus, *Ibid.*, 117; *Ibid.*, 180.

After citing John 15:26, St. Ambrose further defines what he means by the “procession” of the Spirit: “The Spirit is not, then, sent as it were from a place, nor does He proceed as from a place, *when He proceeds from the Son*, as the Son Himself, when He says, ‘*I came forth from the Father*, and have come into the world,’ destroys all fancies, which can be reckoned as from place to place.”¹³⁰ Obviously, by St. Ambrose’s comparison between the Spirit’s procession and the Son’s coming into the world, he understands “procession” to be the temporal sending of the Spirit into the world, and not, at least directly, the eternal origin of the Spirit. This kind of commentary on John 15:26 from the pre-eminent Saints militates against the inflexible interpretation of “proceeds” (ἐκπορεύεται) as a code word for the eternal hypostatic origination of the Spirit.

Therefore, the most explicit passage on the Spirit’s procession in the New Testament (John 15:26) has the weight of scholarship, convincing exegesis, and at least some significant Patristic commentary to lend support for the interpretation that what is directly being spoken about in that passage by the Lord is the *temporal mission of the Spirit into the world* from the Father and the Son, thereby

¹³⁰ Ambrose, *On the Holy Spirit*, Book 1.11.116-119, *New Advent*; [emphasis added].

making the Greek-Cappadocian theology of procession *inferred* or *implied*, at best, rather than *directly testified*.¹³¹ I repeat, that is not to say that the ancient commentators did not, like modern exegetes, see a direct inference to the eternal origin of the Spirit from the Spirit's temporal flowing out from the Father and Son. On the contrary, they did. However, since the Spirit's temporal flowing out also comes from the Son, the Spirit then also from the Father, matches perfectly with the Greek word for "procession" in St. John's record of the Apocalypse, but again it speaks there also of the Spirit's temporal procession from both the Father and the Spirit, and clearly not directly to the ad intra relationship of the Spirit to the Father.

This is extremely significant because if the Biblical witness itself only explicitly testifies to a temporal ἐκπορευόμενον (procession) of the Spirit from the Father, then that means that the later Cappadocian and medieval exclusivity of ἐκπορευόμενον as being the strict eternal

¹³¹ This slight criticism of Cappadocian fundamentalism, which is probably not a fair representation of the Cappadocian theologians themselves, but rather of men carrying on their legacy centuries later, is not to be understood as a gratuitous credit to the Augustinian model of the Trinity. Both models, it seems, are not directly found in Scripture but are reasoned out theologically by way of inference.

origin of the Spirit is a theological construct which admittedly is based off the Scriptural record, but nonetheless has further development of its own terms and concepts. There is another reason why this is significant. If the above is true, then it also means that the Biblical ἐκπορευόμενον of the Spirit temporally from the Father likely carries with it the inference of an eternal origin of the Spirit from the Father. A further consequence of this is that the Augustinian model, which includes the conception of an eternal origin from *both* the Father and the Son, has support from the simple fact that the Biblical ἐκπορευόμενον (procession), *qua temporally ad extra*, of the Spirit from the Father entailed an eternal origin from the Father. Another way of putting this is that the Biblical witness in the famous passage of St. John's Gospel on the Spirit's procession from the Father only supports the Cappadocian model of the Spirit's eternal origin insofar as it equally supports the Augustinian model for the same.

John 16:12-15

There is a 2nd passage in the Gospel of St. John which is quite relevant to the *Filioque*. It reads as follows:

I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. However,

when He, the *Spirit of truth*, has come, *He will guide you into all truth*; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come. He will glorify Me, *for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you. All things that the Father has are Mine. Therefore I said that He will take of Mine and declare it to you.* (John 16:12-15)

Now, on its face, it would seem that the activities that Jesus is describing pertain only to the temporal world, since he uses time-bound words such as “*when He, the Spirit of Truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth [...] Therefore [...] He will take of Mine and declare it to you.*” All this implies activity of the Holy Spirit in the temporal economy of salvation. Both Orthodox and Catholics accept this. However, as was mentioned already in the 3rd chapter, the temporal economy of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit reflect the eternal and intra-Trinitarian life of God. It will be shown how this reciprocal relationship is required to make sense of certain Patristic commentaries. In this passage a dependence of the Spirit on the Son is emphatically said by the divine Apostle. How can one divine Person, who is eternally God, be dependent

upon any other for receiving something? In John 8:26, Christ says that He also “hears” from God the Father: “I have many things to say and to judge concerning you, but He who sent Me is true; and I speak to the world *those things which I heard from Him.*” Two verses later he is more emphatic: “[...] I do *nothing of Myself*; but as My Father *taught Me*, I speak these things.”

Now, how does the eternal 2nd Person of the Holy Trinity, who is consubstantial with God the Father, come to be found “hearing” and “learning” information that he then later “speaks”? One might think to go directly to the idea of the created human nature of Christ receiving information from God and using this to understand how Christ heard and learned from God. However, that does not work with the Holy Spirit who is said by Christ to hear and learn from Himself, *and thus gain knowledge.* Therefore, this hearing and learning on the part of Christ from the Father, and the Spirit from Christ, must have another explanation. Moreover, what the Spirit receives cannot be an accident in God. The Spirit, nor the Son, as the eternal God, cannot obtain something already had by virtue of being God. And since “hearing” is a way of receiving information, or truth, the Spirit and the Son can’t be literally said to come to a point either, out of a sequence of time, hear or receive knowledge. That is

impossible. God the Holy Spirit, or God the Son, receiving something divine must be an eternal receiving, which ends up defining the Spirit's unique cause in the *ad intra* life of God, i.e., hypostatic origin. Commenting on this passage of Scripture, the Rev. Joseph Pohle aptly describes the intended meaning:

The bearing of this precious dogmatic text will appear from the following considerations. In the first place it is said of the Holy Ghost that he "hears" and "receives" His knowledge of "the things that are to come," (i.e., of the future), from Christ. Being in the future tense, "audiet" and "accipiet" cannot refer to the intrinsic, eternal essence of the Holy Ghost, but solely to His future temporal manifestation *ad extra*. *Now, one Divine Person can "hear" and "receive" from another only in so far as He does not, like the Father, possess His knowledge and consequently His essence, from Himself (a semetipso, ἀφ' ἑαυτοῦ), but receives it by way of essential communication [...]* Hence, just as Christ "hears" and "learns" from His Father only in so far as His

divine nature with all the attributes of omnipotence, omniscience, etc., are communicated to Him by His eternal Generation from the Father; so, too, the Holy Ghost “hears” and “receives” from the Son only in this sense that all His knowledge and His whole essence are derived through origination from Christ. Consequently the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Son as well as from the Father.”¹³²

If the Spirit or the Son are said to receive, it must reflect the eternal reception of each from another eternally. This is a perfectly logical inference seeing as the Son Himself said he hears and takes from the Father, since the Son is begotten of the Father before all ages. In his commentary on John 8:26-28, St. Augustine understands the hearing and learning by the Son from the Father to reflect the eternal reception of the Son of the essence of the Father through *being begotten* (hypostatic origination) of the Father eternally. He writes:

In an incorporeal way the Father spoke to the Son, because in an incorporeal way

¹³² Rev. Joseph Pohle, *The Divine Trinity*, 64-65; [emphasis added].

the Father *begot the Son*. Nor did He so teach Him as if He had begotten Him untaught; but to have taught Him is the same as to have *begotten Him full of knowledge*; and this, “The Father has taught me,” is the same as, “The Father has begotten me already knowing.” For if, as few understand, the nature of the Truth is simple, to be is to the Son the same as to know. From Him therefore He has knowledge, from whom He has being. Not that from Him He had first being, and afterwards knowledge; but as in begetting He gave Him to be, so in begetting He gave Him to know; for, as was said, to the simple nature of the Truth, being is not one thing and knowing another, but one and the same.¹³³

Similarly, St. Cyril of Alexandria answers the objection that Christ’s hearing and learning shows that He is not God by appealing to the fact that through the eternal

¹³³ Augustine, *Tractates on the Gospel of John*, 40.5, *New Advent*, <http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/1701040.htm>; [emphasis added].

generation of the Son, *whereby He receives the nature of the Father eternally*, the Son can be said to know all things from receiving it (i.e., gaining knowledge) from the Father:

Since the Only Begotten, then, is of the same substance as his begetter and preeminent in the dignities of the one divine nature, he will, no doubt, surely and necessarily do whatever the Father himself may do. This is what “doing nothing of his own” means. He will surely speak the words *of the one who beget him*, not as an underling or one who takes orders or a disciple but as one who possesses as a fruit of his own nature the fact that he uses the words of God the Father. *By this, the statement that he says nothing on his own is made clear and distanced from all invective.*¹³⁴

In the same context, St. Cyril further expounds on Christ’s words: “[...] of Myself I do nothing, but as the Father

¹³⁴ Cyril of Alexandria, *Commentary on John*, 8:28, Vol. 1, Eng. Trans.: David R. Maxwell, ed. Joel C. Elowsky (Downer’s Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2013), 346-47; [emphasis added].

taught Me, I speak [...]” Again, the speech sounds as if Christ, the eternal God, is hearing and learning from the Father. St. Cyril describes how this speech is legitimate because of Christ’s eternal birth from the Father where the latter gives His own nature and essence to the former:

It is then possible without being taught to learn of nature which *infuseth so to say the whole property of the sower into the offspring*. Thus therefore does the Only-Begotten Himself here too affirm that He learned of the Father... For what He knows that He is *because of the Father from Whom He is* (for He is Light of Light), this He said that He learnt of Him, having a sort of untaught learning of God-begetting works and words from the *own Nature of Him who begat Him*, mounting up as by necessary laws to sameness in all things of will and of word with God the Father.¹³⁵

¹³⁵ St. Cyril of Alexandria, *Commentary on John*, 8:28; Eng. Trans. Pusey, *The Library of the Fathers of the Holy Catholic Church*, Vol. 43, 613; [emphasis added].

Chapter 3: The Filioque in Sacred Scripture

Therefore, this Johannine theme of Christ's reception of information through *hearing* and *learning* is a statement of His full share in all that the Father has, including all knowledge, *because of His being eternally begotten from the Father*, i.e., hypostatic origination. It shows an eternal hypostatic dependency on the Father as the source His being and subsistence. In other words, what we have here is a dependency of one divine Person, the Son, upon the Father showing forth the eternal hypostatic dependency on the Father before all ages. This interpretation seems necessary since Christ, as God, cannot have the accidents of hearing and learning new information that He did not always have. Yet, the Apostle records Jesus saying He has learned and gained knowledge. It must be the reception of all knowledge from the Father in eternity past in His eternal begotten-ness from the Father, i.e., receiving divinity from the Father as source.

If we return to John 16, we see that Christ says that the Holy Spirit, who is equally God as the Son, also hears and learns what to say *from the Son*. Would it be rash to suggest that, just like the Son receives from the Father all that He has through eternal begetting, so also the Spirit receives from the Son in precisely the same way, only by procession? If so, then the Person of the Spirit is

dependent upon the Son as a principle of His subsistent being. Again, the Spirit never took on passible human nature and cannot have the accident of learning something in time. Therefore, it must also mean here that the Spirit receives the divine attribute of omniscience (all knowledge) in His *timeless* spiration (breathing) *from the Son*. Yet, in this passage, Christ says the Spirit will only proclaim what he hears, and then further describes this as the Spirit *taking from Christ* and declaring it to the disciples. “Therefore we conclude,” says Fr. Bernard Lonergan, “that he receives from what is divine, namely from what belongs to the Son as well as to the Father.”¹³⁶

¹³⁶ Bernard Lonergan, *The Triune God: Doctrines*, 539. This talk of the Spirit as the 3rd in the Trinitarian order who receives from the Son who is 2nd, who Himself received from the unbegotten Father who is 1st, was already instinctive in the pneumatology of many Christian thinkers prior to the 4th century. You can certainly see that especially in those who did not think the Spirit to be uncreated. One spectacular passage comes from Eusebius of Caesarea (265-340), famous for his *Ecclesiastical History*, from his *Praeparatio Evangelica* (Preparation for the Gospel), 7:15: “Next to the being of God the Universal King, which is without beginning and unbegotten, they teach that Beginning which is begotten from no other source than the Father, being both First-born and fellow worker of the Father's will, and perfectly likened unto Him.... And next after this second Being there is set, as in place of a moon, a third Being, the Holy Spirit, whom also they enroll in the first and royal dignity and honour of the primal

Therefore, “the Holy Spirit hears, receives, and depends because he receives his divinity itself from another. This reception is nothing other than the eternal procession of the Holy Spirit.”¹³⁷ Again, it seems clear from these words: “[...] He [Spirit] will take from what is mine and declare it to you” (John 16:15). Clearly, the Spirit is going to declare Truth after having received it from the Son, who Himself received all knowledge from the Father. However, since the Son received it eternally from the Father *by being eternally begotten* of Him, so also the Spirit *received it eternally* from the Son by eternally receiving His essence from the Father through

cause of the universe, He also having been appointed by the Maker of the universe for a ruling principle of the created things which came after, those I mean which are lower in rank, and need the help which He supplies. But this Spirit, holding a third rank, supplies those beneath out of the superior powers in Himself, *notwithstanding that He also receives from another, that is from the higher and stronger, who, as we said, is second to the most high and unbegotten nature of God the King of all: from whom indeed God the Word is Himself supplied, and drawing as it were from an ever-flowing fountain which pours forth Deity*, imparts copiously and ungrudgingly of the radiance of His own light to all, and especially to the Holy Spirit Himself, who is closer to Him than all and very near; and then to the intelligent and divine powers after Him.” Excerpt from *Eusebii Pamhili Evangelicae Preparationis*, trans. E.H. Gifford, S.T.P. (Horace Hart, 1903), 7.15; [emphasis added].

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, 537.

Him, i.e., receiving divinity in the timeless *ad intra* life of God. St. Athanasius cites this passage to demonstrate that just like the Son receives divinity from the Father, so also the Spirit receives divinity from the Son:

The Son says, "Those things which I have heard from the Father are what I speak to the world" (John 8:26), while the Spirit, in turn, receives from the Son; "He will take from what is mine," he says, "and declare it to you" (John 16:14). The Son came in the name of the Father, whereas the Son also speaks of "the Holy Spirit whom the Father will send in My name" (John 5:43). *Therefore, since the Spirit has the same relation of nature and order with respect to the Son that the Son has with respect to the Father, how can the one who calls the Spirit a creature escape the necessity of thinking the same about the Son? [...] For just as the Son, who is in the Father and in whom the Father is (cf. Jn 14:10), is not a creature but belongs (idios) to the being (ousia) of the Father [...], so also the Spirit, who is in the Son and in whom the Son is,*

cannot legitimately be ranked among creatures nor separated from the Word, so as to render the Trinity incomplete.¹³⁸

Whatever St. Athanasius intends by these words, it is impossible, says H.B. Swete, to interpret them “as implying less than an *essential derivation* [of the Spirit from the Son] [...] the *Filioque* is already substantially in his words.”¹³⁹ How remarkable it is that this parallelism is commented upon by the chief doctor of Nicene

¹³⁸ Athanasius, *Letters to Serapion*; Eng. Trans: Khaled Anatolios, *Athanasius* (London: Routledge, 2004), 178-79. To this general idea of the Spirit receiving from the Son, St. Athanasius comments further elsewhere: “Not then as the Son in the Father, so also we become in the Father; for the Son does not merely partake the Spirit, that therefore He too may be in the Father; nor does He receive the Spirit, but rather He supplies It Himself to all; and the Spirit does not unite the Word to the Father, but rather the Spirit receives from the Word... For He, as has been said, gives to the Spirit, and whatever the Spirit has, He has from the Word.” Citation from *3rd Discourse Against the Arians*, 24-25, *New Advent*, <http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/28163.htm>; [emphasis added].

The context strongly suggests an essential derivation of the Spirit from the Son likened to the essential derivation of the Son from the Father, rather than merely an economic or temporal significance.

¹³⁹ H.B. Swete, *On the History of the Doctrine of the Procession of the Holy Spirit* (Cambridge: Deighton, Bell, and Co., 1876), 92; [emphasis added]; [brackets mine].

orthodoxy? Similarly, on this passage, St. Ambrose says the following:

The Son received all things from the Father, for He Himself said: "All things have been delivered unto Me from My Father." All that is the Father's the Son also has, for He says again: "All things which the Father has are Mine." And those things which He Himself received by Unity of nature, the *Spirit by the same Unity of nature received also from Him*, as the Lord Jesus Himself declares, when speaking of His Spirit: "Therefore said I, He shall receive of Mine and shall declare it unto you." Therefore, what the Spirit says is the Son's, what the Son has given is the Father's. So neither the Son nor the Spirit speaks anything of Himself.¹⁴⁰

And again, St. Ambrose understands the common operation of the three divine Persons to manifest in a

¹⁴⁰ Ambrose, *The Holy Trinity*, 2.12.134, *New Advent*.

*certain order*¹⁴¹ which situates the Father as 1st, the Son as 2nd, and the Spirit as 3rd:

It has then been proved that like as God has revealed to us the things which are His, so too the Son, and so too the Spirit, has revealed the things of God. *For our knowledge proceeds from one Spirit, through one Son to one Father; and from one Father through one Son to one Holy Spirit* is delivered goodness and sanctification and the sovereign right of eternal power.¹⁴²

¹⁴¹ The full order signifies the Father as the One who receives from no one else but gives divinity to another, the Son as He who receives his divinity from the Father via being begotten of Him, and the lastly the Spirit who receives divinity from the Son.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*, 2.12.130; [emphasis added]. Elsewhere, St. Ambrose states: "The Holy Spirit also, when He proceeds from the Father and the Son, is not separated from the Father nor separated from the Son," *ibid.*, 1.11.120; In the context of St. Ambrose's *De Trinitate*, it seems clear that he reads the word "proceed" on the part of the Spirit from the Father and the Son as the temporal mission, but this should have implications for the eternal *ad intra* order of the Godhead. This is especially the case since he intertwines the temporal mission with the procession of the Spirit from the Father in John 15:26. Hanson sees here an unambiguous teaching of the Filioque, c.f. R.P.C. Hanson, *The*

St. Ambrose seems to have written his *De Trinitate* taking from the work of the contemporary head of the catechetical school of Alexandria, Didymus, who himself commented on John 16 in the following manner:

The Lord's words that follow confirm this opinion, when he says, "He (i.e., the Paraclete) shall glorify me, for he shall receive of mine" (Jn 16:14). Once more, this term, "to receive," *must be understood in a manner befitting the divine nature*.¹⁴³

When Didymus adds, "in a manner befitting" the nature of God to receive, it must mean an eternal reception that has no sequence of time. St. Cyril of Alexandria, commenting on John 16, makes the following comments, all of which might raise more questions than

Search for the Christian Doctrine of God: The Arian Controversy 318-381 (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1988), 789.

¹⁴³ Didymus the Blind, *De Spiritu Sancto*, §§34-37. Latin text in Louis Doutreleau, S.J., ed., *Didyme l'Aveugle: Traité du Saint-Esprit* (Paris 1992) [= Sources Chrétiennes n° 386], pp. 284-296; also in PG 39, 1063C – 1066A; Eng. Trans: Peter Gilbert, "Further on John 16:13-15: Didymus the Blind," January 16, 2009, *De unione ecclesiarum*, <https://bikkos.wordpress.com/2009/01/16/further-on-john-1613-15-didymus-the-blind/>; [emphasis added].

answers, but which nevertheless make it clear that the Spirit's eternal procession is involved with His "receiving" from the Son in some sense:

The Holy Spirit is not understood to be foreign to the essence of the Only Begotten but *proceeds naturally from that essence* and is not something else besides him, as far as the identity of essence is concerned, even though he should be understood somehow to exist in his own person.¹⁴⁴

¹⁴⁴ Cyril of Alexandria, *Commentary on John*, Vol. 2, ed. Joel C. Elowsky, 256. It is rather significant that St. Cyril also gives the interpretation that the Spirit "receives" from the Son in the latter's earthly ministry of miracle working, i.e., the Son's performance of miracles was accomplished through "His own" Spirit like an inward skillset. He writes: "... for it was through operating *through his own Spirit* that he was believed to be God by nature. This is why he also said, 'He will take from what is mine and announce it to you.'" Cit. from *The Council of Ephesus of 431: Documents and Proceedings*, trans. Richard Price (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2020), 168. What makes this even more significant is that this 3rd letter of St. Cyril to Nestorius was deemed to be part of the Cyrillian texts approved by at least the Council of Constantinople (553), c.f. Price, *The Council of Ephesus of 431*, 168; Price, *The Acts of the Council of Constantinople of 553*, trans. Richard Price (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2009), 66-71. This letter shows that Photius's interpretation of John

And:

The reason he says, “He will receive what is mine,” is that the Spirit is of the same substance with the Son and *proceeds* (πρόεισιν)¹⁴⁵ *through him in a God-befitting way*,¹⁴⁶ thus possessing all perfect activity and power over all things. We believe that the Spirit subsists of himself and that he truly is what he is and is said to be, *even as he exists in the essence of God and proceeds and issues from it*, possessing in himself all that belongs to it by nature... Then the statement that the Spirit receives something from the Only Begotten is completely unimpeachable and free from blame. *Since he proceeds through him by nature as his own Spirit [...]*¹⁴⁷

16 on “he will receive of what is mine” is contradicted by an important text which made its way into Conciliar usage.

¹⁴⁵ Greek added, c.f. PG 74.449.

¹⁴⁶ By saying “God-befitting” he means a timeless procession, and therefore eternal, since God is not bound by time.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 258. Notice how, for St. Cyril, he could use the verb ἐκπορεύεσθαι/ἐκπορεύεται (proceeds) as signifying the “coming

St. Cyril's comments above should be interpreted through his commentary on the famous passage of John 15:26:

Look—look—he calls the “Spirit of Truth” (that is, Himself) the “Paraclete,” and he says that he “proceeds” (ἐκπορεύεσθαι) from the Father. Just as the Spirit belongs to the Son by nature, being in him and proceeding (προϊόν) through him, *so also the Spirit belongs to the Father*. The attributes of their substance surely cannot be divided because the Spirit is common to both [...] After all, if the Son does not proceed (ἐκπορεύεται) from the Father, that is, from his essence, as you maintain, how could the Spirit not be understood to be superior to the Son?¹⁴⁸

forth” of the Spirit or the Son from the Father. More importantly, understand how St. Cyril says that the Son’s origin is a ἐκπορεύεται from the “essence” of the Father. This gives a hint as to how St. Cyril understands the Spirit’s “going forth” or “proceeding” from the essence of the Son.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 246; [emphasis added]. Greek added from PG 74.417. Now, much hinges on whether St. Cyril understood by ἐκπορεύεσθαι (proceeds) an eternal coming forth of the Spirit from the Father. It is

Whatever one might say about St. Cyril's other statements specifically about the procession of the Spirit from the Son, one simply cannot deny that he held to an eternal derivation of the Spirit from the Son in the *ad intra* life of God. How else could he reference John 15:26 and then draw a comparison to the Spirit's procession from the Son? Cyril is not alone, either. The great Western Father St. Hilary of Poitiers is remarkably clear that the Spirit's procession from the Father and His, per John 16, *receiving from the Son*, are one and the same thing,¹⁴⁹ in light of the consubstantial communion between Father and Son. He writes:

Now I ask whether *to receive from the Son* is the same thing as *to proceed from the Father*. But if one believes that there is a difference between receiving from the Son and proceeding from the Father,

not extremely easy to tell in every instance because St. Cyril sees the temporal economy as illustrative of the immanent theology of God's life.

¹⁴⁹ In R.P.C. Hanson, *The Search for the Christian Doctrine of God*, states: "Hilary makes no distinction between the Spirit in the economy of salvation and the Spirit in his relations within the Godhead." Hanson is of the opinion that there is no theologians before the Cappadocian theologians who distinguish between mission and the relations in the inner life of the Godhead, *ibid.*, 788.

surely to receive from the Son and to receive from the Father will be regarded *as one and the same thing*. For our Lord Himself says, because ‘He shall receive of Mine and shall declare it unto you.’ ‘All things whatsoever the Father has are Mine: therefore said I, He shall receive of Mine and shall declare it unto you.’ That which He will receive — whether it will be *power, or excellence, or teaching* — the Son has said must be received from Him, and again He indicates that this same thing must be received from the Father. For when He says that all things whatsoever the Father has are His, and that for this cause He declared that it must be received from His own, He teaches also that what is received from the Father is yet received from Himself, because all things that the Father has are His.¹⁵⁰

The Trinitarian conception of St. Hilary comes out so vividly that it is worth quoting the entire section at length:

¹⁵⁰ Hilary, *De Trinitate*, Book 8, *New Advent*; [emphasis added]

Thus we do not deny a unanimity between the Father and the Son — for heretics are accustomed to utter this falsehood, that since we do not accept concord by itself as the bond of unity we declare Them to be at variance. But let them listen how it is that we do not deny such a unanimity. The Father and the Son are one in nature, honour, power, and the same nature cannot will things that are contrary. Moreover, let them listen to the testimony of the Son as touching the unity of nature between Himself and the Father, for He says, ‘When that advocate has come, Whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth Who proceeds from the Father, He shall testify of Me.’ The Advocate shall come and the Son shall send Him from the Father, and He is the Spirit of truth Who proceeds from the Father. Let the whole following of heretics arouse the keenest powers of their wit; let them now seek for what lies they can tell to the unlearned, and declare what that is which the Son sends from the Father. He Who sends manifests His power in that

which He sends. But as to that which He sends from the Father, how shall we regard it, as received or sent forth or begotten? For His words that He will send from the Father must imply one or other of these modes of sending. And He will send from the Father that Spirit of truth which proceeds from the Father; He therefore cannot be the Recipient, since He is revealed as the Sender. It only remains to make sure of our conviction on the point, whether we are to believe an egress of a co-existent Being, or a procession of a Being begotten. For the present I forbear to expose their licence of speculation, some of them holding that the Paraclete Spirit comes from the Father or from the Son. For our Lord has not left this in uncertainty, for after these same words He spoke thus — “I have yet many things to say unto you, but you cannot bear them now. When He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He shall guide you into all truth: for He shall not speak from Himself: but whatever things He shall hear, these shall He speak; and He shall

declare unto you the things that are to come. He shall glorify Me: for He shall receive of Mine and shall declare it unto you. All things whatsoever the Father has are Mine: therefore said I, He shall receive of Mine and shall declare it unto you.' Accordingly He receives from the Son, Who is both sent by Him, and proceeds from the Father. Now I ask whether to receive from the Son is the same thing as to proceed from the Father. 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. For our Lord Himself says, Because He shall receive of Mine and shall declare it unto you. All things whatsoever the Father has are Mine: therefore said I, He shall receive of Mine and shall declare it unto you. That which He will receive — whether it will be power, or excellence, or teaching — the Son has said must be received from Him, and again He indicates that this same thing must be received from the Father.

For when He says that all things whatsoever the Father has are His, and that for this cause He declared that it must be received from His own, He teaches also that what is received from the Father is yet received from Himself, because all things that the Father has are His. Such a unity admits no difference, nor does it make any difference from whom that is received, which given by the Father is described as given by the Son. Is a mere unity of will brought forward here also? All things which the Father has are the Son's, and all things which the Son has are the Father's. For He Himself says, 'And all Mine are Yours, and Yours are Mine.' It is not yet the place to show why He spoke thus, 'For He shall receive of Mine': for this points to some subsequent time, when it is revealed that He shall receive. Now at any rate He says that He will receive of Himself, because all things that the Father had were His. Dissever if you can the unity of the nature, and introduce some necessary unlikeness through which the Son may not exist in unity of nature. For the Spirit of

truth proceeds from the Father and is sent from the Father by the Son. All things that the Father has are the Son's; and for this cause whatever He Who is to be sent shall receive, He shall receive from the Son, because all things that the Father has are the Son's. The nature in all respects maintains its law, and because Both are One that same Godhead is signified as existing in Both through generation and nativity; since the Son affirms that that which the Spirit of truth shall receive from the Father is to be given by Himself. So the frowardness of heretics must not be allowed an unchecked licence of impious beliefs, in refusing to acknowledge that this saying of the Lord, — that because all things which the Father has are His, therefore the Spirit of truth shall receive of Him — is to be referred to unity of nature.¹⁵¹

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*; [emphasis added].

Some readers might point out that St. Hilary doesn't really answer the question of whether to receive from the Son is different than to proceed from the Father, but when He defines what receiving from the Son means—that it is the manner in which the Spirit receives *power, excellence, and teaching* (knowledge)—it is clear that this is the manner in which the Spirit receives from the Son is a *communication of the divine nature itself*, which must be a hypostatic origination. For power, excellence, and knowledge are all things shared equally by Father, Son, and Spirit, and is therefore pertaining to God's nature.

We have significant evidence, therefore, that the Johannine text of John 16 teaches that the Spirit, like the Son towards the Father, owes His subsistent being and hypostatic existence to the Son as well as the Father. More interesting is how Photius responded to appeals in his day to this precise passage in John 16. For Photius, if the Spirit has an *eternal* derivation from the Son, he admitted that this *would necessarily entail the Filioque*. Therefore, it was paramount for him to find a way to reject this interpretation of John 16. "What other persons," writes he, "from whom the Spirit is said to receive, could be meant other than the Father? *Because it cannot be* (as has

been recently contended, against God) *that He receives from the Son [...]*¹⁵²

Notice how Photius sees the *Filioquist* implication from the supposition that the Spirit receives from the Son. And yet, as shown above, significant Fathers explicitly interpret this passage as the Spirit receiving from the Son.¹⁵³ We just read how St. Athanasius, St. Ambrose, St.

¹⁵² Photius, *Mystagogy*, 21.

¹⁵³ At times, the Fathers will interpret the passage as saying the Spirit receives from the Son, but with specific reference to the temporal sphere of existence. However, even in those instances, it seems as though the eternal order is signified by the temporal ordering. St. Cyril of Jerusalem writes: "He preached concerning Christ in the Prophets; He wrought in the Apostles; He to this day seals the souls in Baptism. And the Father indeed gives to the Son; and the Son shares with the Holy Ghost. For it is Jesus Himself, not I, who says, All things are delivered unto Me of My Father; and of the Holy Ghost He says, 'When He, the Spirit of Truth, shall come, and the rest.... He shall glorify Me; for He shall receive of Mine, and shall show it unto you'. The Father through the Son, with the Holy Ghost, is the giver of all grace; the gifts of the Father are none other than those of the Son, and those of the Holy Ghost; for there is one Salvation, one Power, one Faith; One God, the Father; One Lord, His only-begotten Son; One Holy Ghost, the Comforter. And it is enough for us to know these things; but inquire not curiously into His nature or substance : for had it been written, we would have spoken of it; what is not written, let us not venture on; it is sufficient for our salvation to know, that there is Father, and Son, and Holy Ghost." Cit. from St. Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catechetical Lecture*, 16, *New Advent*. If one objects that to receive

Augustine, St. Cyril of Alexandria, and St. Hilary of Poitiers specifically argued for what Photius believed would necessarily entail the *Filioque*. In addition, Photius's interpretation contradicts the Greek grammar of the text and is unfitting given the context. The specific passage in mind here is as follows:

He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine (ἐκ τοῦ ἐμοῦ) and declare it to you. All things that the Father has are Mine (ἐμά ἐστιν). Therefore I said that He will take of Mine (ἐκ τοῦ ἐμοῦ) and declare it to you. (John 16:14-15)

Photius understood “of what is mine” as not referring to things that belongs to Christ but things that belong only to the Father, which happens to also be His in light of their unity.¹⁵⁴ He argued that if Christ wanted to say the Spirit would take from Himself that he would have used “from me” instead. But that can't be the case since, as the Greek text in parenthesis shows, Christ refers to ‘what is Mine’ three times, and the 2nd instance, which uses the plural,

from the Son in the temporal order is different than receiving from the Son in the eternal order, why would the former contradict the latter?

¹⁵⁴ Photius, *ibid*.

speaks of what belongs to Christ from the Father, and not simply what belongs to the Father. Secondly, the context opens with Jesus saying the Spirit will *glorify Him* by taking of what is His and declaring it. If Jesus were merely seeking to signify by “take of what is mine” that the Spirit will take only from the Father, then seemingly it would be a glorification to the Father alone. However, the text supports that taking from the Son is what is in mind, even if taking from the Son is substantially the same as taking from the Father. Both Father and Son are a single principle, in other words. Therefore, Photius’s reading is incomplete by both the Greek grammar and the context.

To sum up this section, what we have from the witness of the Johannine texts is that, just like the Son’s receiving from the Father is a mirroring of His eternal reception of His essence from the Father through being begotten, so also the Spirit’s receiving from the Son is a mirroring of His eternal reception of His essence from or through the Son by way of procession. Such an interpretation was unacceptable to Photius.

Chapter 4: The *Filioque* in the Church Fathers

At the Council of Florence, Bessarion, the Archbishop of Nicaea, despite being one of the “most learned” Greek delegates,¹⁵⁵ and despite being initially opposed to the *Filioque*,¹⁵⁶ came to the following conclusion after observing the goings on of the Council, and the Latin argumentation pro- *Filioque* in particular:

They brought forth passages not only of the Western teachers but quite as many of the Eastern... to which we had no reply whatsoever to make except that they were corrupt and corrupted by the Latins. They brought forward our own Epiphanius as in many places clearly declaring that the Spirit is from the Father and the Son: corrupt we said they were... They adduced the words of the Saints of the West: the whole of our answer was “corrupt” and nothing more. We consider and consult among

¹⁵⁵ Siecienski, *The Filioque*, 152.

¹⁵⁶ Joseph Gill, “The Sincerity of Bessarion the Unionist,” in *Journal of Theological Studies*, Vol. 26, part 2, Oct. 1975, 378.

ourselves for several days as to what answer we shall make, but find no other defence at all [...]¹⁵⁷

Fellow Greek delegate Georgios Scholarius agreed in full:

[...] you all see that the Latins have contended brilliantly for their faith, so that no one with a sense of justice has any reason to reproach them... They brought forward from the common fathers of the

¹⁵⁷ PG 161.358CD: Eng. Trans: Joseph Gill, *The Council of Florence* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1959), 224. The late Reformed theologian, Herman Bavinck, summarized the Greek Fathers very well, and it is this revelation that impacted Bessarion before the Latin defenses at the Council of Florence: "Accordingly, in the works of Gregory of Nyssa, Epiphanius, Dydimus, Cyril, and others, expressions occur which seem to teach the procession of the Holy Spirit from the Son. They use the prepositions "from" and "out of," teach that the Holy Spirit takes everything from Christ, and that Christ is the fountain-head of the Holy Spirit, John 7:38; they state that he is out of the essence of the Father and of the Son and that possessing 'the very essence of the Son' he is the image, the mouth, the breath of the Son; they recognize him as the third person, in order following the Son, and they hold that he receives all things from the Father through the Son." See Herman Bavinck, *The Doctrine of God*, trans. William Henricksen (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1991; reprint from Wm B Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1951), 315.

Church... as witnesses of their doctrine, each of whom must be judged the equal of all the man in the world, and those not just incidentally and causally but as if they were for us judges of the present disputes [...] Besides, they put forward others from the common fathers those of the East I mean, adorned with an equal wisdom and honor, who also said just the same as those others... and they offered in proof of their doctrine no merely specious reasoning, no coercion, but everything straightforwardly and as flowing from the divine scriptures and the fathers.¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁸ Gennadios Scholarius, *Speech to fellow Greeks at Florence* "On the Need of Aiding Constantinople," ed. L. Petit et al., *Oeuvres complètes de Gennade Scholarios*, vol 1 (Paris 1928) 287-9, trans. Joseph Gill, *The Council of Florence*, 225-6; as cited in John E. Erickson, *The Challenge of Our Past*, 159. Gennadios later recanted of his agreement with the Council under the influence of Mark Eugenikos. Gennadios, like Bessarion and the Latins at Florence, insisted with St. John of Damascus that the Saints and Fathers of the Church "must mutually agree," c.f. John Erickson, *The Challenge of our Past*, 167, fn. 6. The problem with Photius, of course, is he was unaware of just how many Fathers supported the Filioque. I suspect this is the same for Mark Eugenikos.

In contrast, the zealous Mark Eugenikos, Archbishop of Ephesus, refused to recognize the Latin Fathers as authentic,¹⁵⁹ for which reason he refused to sign into unity with the Latins.¹⁶⁰ On top of that, he, like Photius,¹⁶¹ “separated saintly inspiration from infallibility among all saints” and thus simply held that it was possible for the Fathers to have erred.¹⁶² However, Fathers of the Church

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 225. Gill notes that Bessarion actually examined the ancient manuscripts in the monasteries in Constantinople and found that the more ancient codices had what the Latins were saying, and the more recent ones somehow had key elements missing, c.f. *ibid.*, 223-34, fn. 1.

¹⁶⁰ Sicienski, *The Filioque*, 153.

¹⁶¹ *Mystagogy*, 70. For a recent attempt by an Orthodox sage on how to understanding a deeply erring Saint, see Fr. Seraphim Rose, *The Place of Blessed Augustine in the Orthodox Church* (Platina, CA: St. Herman of Alaska Brotherhood, 2007).

¹⁶² Christian Kappes, “Mark of Ephesus, the Council of Florence, and the Roman Primacy,” in *Primacy in the Church: The Office of Primate and the Authority of Councils*, Vol. 1, ed. John Chryssavgis (Yonkers, NY: St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 2016), 123. Admittedly, Mark had a point with Gregory of Nyssa’s universalism. Also, St. John of Damascus himself recognized the slight possibility of at least “one” mistake in the Fathers when commenting on the reported iconoclasm of St. Epiphanius of Salamis, c.f. *Three Treatises on the Divine Images*, Treatise 1.25, trans. Andrew Louth (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir Seminary Press, 2003), 38. However, even in that commentary, St. John chooses to explain it away first through calling the report of an error in the Fathers as spurious and/or interpreting it in the best light.

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carry the most weight between Catholics and Orthodox, for we both hold that the Holy Spirit administered perpetual assistance in the one true communion that is in continuation with the Apostles, the foundation of the Church.

Below are statements from the Councils, Saints, Doctors, and early Christian theologians of the undivided Latin & Greek Church of the 1st millennium, many of which clearly testify on behalf of the *Filioque* while others give only hints.¹⁶³ The key features to look for is whether

Therefore, in showing how strained he is to admit a mistake among the Fathers, even being satisfied to stretch the plausibility of a bit, he shows how much he is at pains to admit even one Father erred.

¹⁶³ Since this book is on the Greek and Latin debate over the *Filioque*, and therefore a debate between the Roman Church versus the Churches of Byzantium, I've excluded what scholars today refer to as the first instance of *Filioque* in a creed found at the Council of Seleucia-Ctesiphon (410) wherein it is said: "And we confess the living Holy Spirit, the living Paraclete. Who is from the Father and the Son, in One Trinity, in one Essence, in one Will, in harmony with the faith of the 318 bishops, which was in the city of Nicaea." Citation from Charles P. Price, "Some Notes on the *Filioque*," in *Engaging the Spirit: Essays on the Life and Theology of the Holy Spirit*, (Eds.) Frank Hemlin & Frank Tedeschi (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 2017), 159. According to D.H. Williams, Professor of Patristics and Historical Theology at Baylor University, this is "probably the first appearance of the *filioque*..." See his "The Evolution of Pro-Nicene Theology in the Church of the East," in *From the Oxus River to the Chinese Shores:*

the statements being made are with reference to the *ad intra* eternal life of God, the *ad extra* temporal economy in dealing with creation, or if it can be shown that the *ad extra* signifies the *ad intra*. On top of that, a further distinction will be to see whether these statements can be understood strictly as an “energetic” versus “hypostatic” procession of the Spirit from the Son, a detail which will be unpacked further down below.

A further preliminary note should be made, however. Often enough, readers of this subject will assume that all the Church Fathers worked with the eternal *ad intra* relations of the Trinity as fixed in an entirely separate category of physics than the God’s *ad extra* temporal economy with creatures. What you will see below is that for some Church Fathers, having these two domains hermetically sealed off from one another, as if one does

Studies on East Syriac Christianity in China and Central Asia, (Eds.) Li Tang & Dietmar W. Winkler (Orientalia-Patristica-Oecumenica Vol. 5 (2013), 390. In his 1st Volume on the *Acts of Chalcedon*, Patristics scholar Fr. Richard Price likewise noted that the profession of faith at Seleucia-Ctesiphon is “the earliest occurrence in creedal history of the *filioque*.” See Richard Price & Michael Gaddis, *The Acts of the Council of Chalcedon 451*, Vol. 1 (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2005), 193. See also Norman Tanner, *New Short History of the Catholic Church* (London: Burns & Oates, 2011), 68-69; Mauro Gagliardi, *Truth is a Synthesis*, 493

not inform the other, renders interpreting their arguments impossible. This is because these two domains are to be interpreted together as if one were a reflection of the other, like a mirror. In that case, one must refrain from relegating the *ad extra* temporal economy as wholly unrelated to the theology of the *ad intra* relationships of the Trinitarian persons. In fact, we see that for many Fathers, the temporal economy of Father, Son, and Spirit reflected the *ad intra* theology of God, matching the major thesis of the previous chapter.

Lastly, the reader should also try to become somewhat familiar with the idea of an “energetic procession” of the Spirit from the Son, to which the next chapter explains in some detail, in order to see if the authors cited below are simply trying to communicate something about the Holy Spirit in the reality of God’s energy as opposed to His hypostatic origination. Below is a sort of short florilegium with attending commentary throughout.

Tertullian (155-220)

But as for me, who derive the Son from *no other source but from the substance of the Father*, and (represent Him) as doing nothing without the Father's will, and as having *received all power from the Father*, how can I be possibly destroying the Monarchy from the faith, when I preserve it in the Son just as it was committed to Him by the Father? The same remark (I wish also to be formally) made by me with respect to the third degree in the Godhead, *because I believe the Spirit to proceed from no other source than from the Father through the Son*.¹⁶⁴

¹⁶⁴ Tertullian, *Against Praxeus*, 4, *New Advent*, <http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/0317.htm>.

Here Tertullian opens up with a statement about the hypostatic origin of the Son when he says the source of the Son is the "substance of the Father." Therefore, to add within that context that the Spirit has for his hypostatic source the Father "through the Son," he intends to mean that both the Father and the Son are His hypostatic source.

There is some concern with Tertullian because of his departure from the orthodox Christian faith later in life, as well as some writings where he makes it appear as if he sees the Son and Spirit as created, yet of the very same substance of God.¹⁶⁵ In either case, the order of the Trinity in his mind is one that begins in the Father, moves out into the Son, and the Father and Son produce the Spirit. Elsewhere:

For the root and the tree are distinctly two things, but correlatively joined; the fountain and the river are also two forms, but indivisible; so likewise the sun and the ray are two forms, but coherent ones. Everything which proceeds from something else must needs be second to that from which it proceeds, without being on that account separated. Where, however, there is a second, there must be two; and where there is a third, there must be three. *Now the Spirit indeed is third from God and the Son; just as the fruit of the tree is third from the root, or as the stream out of the river is third from the fountain, or as the apex of the*

¹⁶⁵ *Ad Hermogenes*, 3.4.

ray is third from the sun. Nothing, however, is alien from that original source whence it derives its own properties. In like manner the Trinity, flowing down from the Father through intertwined and connected steps, does not at all disturb the Monarchy, while it at the same time guards the state of the Economy.”¹⁶⁶

Then there is the Paraclete or Comforter, also, which He promises to pray for to the Father, and to send from heaven after He had ascended to the Father. He is called another Comforter, indeed; but in what way He is another we have already shown, *‘He shall receive of mine,’* says Christ, *just as Christ Himself received of the Father’s.* Thus the connection of the Father in the Son, and of the Son in the Paraclete, produces three coherent Persons, who are yet distinct One from Another. These *Three are one essence, not one Person,* as it is said, I and my

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 8.

Father are One, in respect of unity of substance not singularity of number.¹⁶⁷

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 25. Once again, this is a clear statement to Tertullian's belief that the Son is a source to the hypostatic being of the Spirit, for he draws from the Father being a source to the Son's hypostatic being in the context, and makes them parallel.

St. Dionysius of Alexandria (248-264)

I spoke of the Father, and before referring to the Son I designated Him too in the Father. I referred to the Son — and even if I did not also expressly mention the Father, certainly He was to be understood beforehand in the Son. I added the Holy Spirit, but at the same time I further added *both whence and through whom He proceeded*. But they are ignorant that neither is the Father, qua Father, separated from the Son — for the name carries that relationship with it — nor is the Son expatriated from the Father. For the title Father denotes the common bond. *But in their hands is the Spirit, who cannot be parted either from Him that sent or from Him that conveyed Him*: How then can I, who use these names, imagine that they are sundered and utterly separated from one another? And after a little he goes on, *“Thus then we extend the Monad indivisibly into the Triad, and conversely*

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*gather together the Triad without diminution into the Monad.*¹⁶⁸

¹⁶⁸ Cited in Athanasius, *De Sententia Dionysii, New Advent*, <http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/2810.htm>. When St. Athanasius cites St. Dionysius's statement "... we extend the Monad indivisibly into the Triad," he makes clear he is referring to the hypostatic origin of the Son and the Spirit since to go from Monad to Triad is to go from 1 to 3, where the latter are pertinent to the hypostases (Persons). And yet, St. Dionysius describes the Spirit, who is the 3rd in the order which reaches a Triad, as coming from the 1st and 2nd, i.e., the Father and Son. Some scholars have seen a tendency, however, at least in his earlier writings, to subordinate the Son to the Father by the use of analogies, c.f. R.P.C. Hanson, *The Search for the Christian Doctrine of God*, 75-76.

Didymus the Blind (313-398)¹⁶⁹

Our Lord teaches that the being of the Spirit is derived not from the Spirit Himself, *but from the Father and the Son*; He goes forth from the Son, proceeding from the Truth; He has no subsistence but that which is *given Him by the Son*.¹⁷⁰

Therefore, just as we understood the natures of incorporeals in our discussion above, so too we now ought to

¹⁶⁹ According to Mark DelCogliano, Andrew Radde-Gallwitz, and Lewis Ayres, all competent scholars on the 4th century pneumatological writings, the original Greek text translated by St. Jerome “is unquestionably by Didymus.” See *Works of the Spirit: Athanasius the Great and Didymus the Blind*, 37.

¹⁷⁰ *De Spiritu Sancto*, 34-37; Eng. Trans: H.B. Swete, *The Holy Spirit in the Ancient Church: A Study of the Christian Teaching in the Age of the Fathers* (London: Macmillan & Co. Ltd., 1912), 224-25. See also Joseph Pohle, *The Divine Trinity: A Dogmatic Treatise*, 185. The manuscript for Didymus’s *De Spiritu* survives only in the Latin which came from St. Jerome’s translation of the original Greek, which was nevertheless used by St. Ambrose and St. Hilary of Poitiers for their own *De Trinitate*’s.

acknowledge that the Holy Spirit *receives from the Son that which belongs to his own nature*. This does not signify that there is a giver and a receiver, but one substance, *since the Son is said to receive the same things from the Father which belong to his very being*. For the Son is nothing other than those things which are given to him by the Father, and the substance of the Holy Spirit is nothing other than that which is *given to him by the Son*.¹⁷¹

Notice how St. Didymus is speaking of a parallelism between the Spirit deriving all that He is from the Son and the Son deriving all that He is from the Father. Undoubtedly, to derive “all that He is” in both cases of the Spirit and Son is to receive the divine essence. Therefore, what is in view here is the communication of the divine essence from the Father to the Son and the same communication from the Son to the Spirit. How could this be envisioned as anything other than a hypostatic origination? Certainly, a communication of the divine

¹⁷¹ Excerpted from Didymus, *De Trinitate*, 165; citation from *Works on the Spirit: Athanasius and Didymus*, trans. Mark DelCogliano, Andrew Radde Gallwitz, and Lewis Ayres (Yonkers: New York, 2011), 194.

The Filioque

essence between Trinitarian persons is not a procession of the Son and Spirit according to God's natural activity.

St. Hilary of Poitiers (310-367)

Your Holy Spirit, as the Apostle says, searches and knows Your deep things, and as Intercessor for me speaks to You words I could not utter; and shall I express or rather dishonour, by the title 'creature,' the power of His nature, *which subsists eternally, derived from You through Your Only-begotten?*¹⁷²

Concerning the Holy Spirit I ought not to be silent, and yet I have no need to speak; still, for the sake of those who are in ignorance, I cannot refrain. There is no need to speak, because *we are bound to*

¹⁷² Hilary of Poitiers, *De Trinitate*, 12.55, *New Advent*. Here, St. Hilary is speaking to God the Father about the intercessory prayer of the Holy Spirit on behalf of the Saints, and then further comments that the eternal "nature" and subsistence of the Spirit is derived from the Father through the Son. If the Spirit, who "subsists eternally," derives that subsistence from both the Father and Son, then both Father and Son are the hypostatic source.

The Filioque

essence between Trinitarian persons is not a procession of the Son and Spirit according to God's natural activity.

The Filioque

*confess Him, proceeding, as He does,
from Father and Son.*¹⁷³

This last sentence is translated far better by Fr. Brian Daley as: “[...] we must confess him as having the Father and the Son as his source.”¹⁷⁴ The Latin is “qui Patre et Filio auctoribus confitendus est.”¹⁷⁵ The word “auctoribus” gives the sense of the beginning rise of the Spirit.

¹⁷³ *Ibid.*, 2.29, *New Advent*; [emphasis added].

¹⁷⁴ Brian Daley, “Revisiting the ‘Filioque’: Roots and Branches of an Old Debate, part 1 in *Pro Ecclesia*, Vol. 10, n. 1, 2001, p. 38.

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, fn. 17.

St. Athanasius the Great (296-373)

In his three letters to Serapion, the Bishop of Thmuis, St. Athanasius wrote to defend the co-eternality and consubstantiality of the Holy Spirit with the Son and the Father. It had been reported to him that there were some theologians who had recently converted from Arianism to believing that the only-begotten Son was God from God, but still held that the Holy Spirit was a creature, and thus not consubstantial with the Godhead. In order to refute this error, St. Athanasius draws a paradigm in the Son-to-Father relationship by which to compare the Spirit-to-Son relationship, and argues that both correspond insofar as the Son is equal in substance to the Father by certain divine properties in the same way that the Spirit is equal in substance to the Son by certain divine properties.

Although the emphasis and focus of St. Athanasius himself is not to dive deep into the hypostatic origin of the Spirit, there is one aspect of his arguments against the *Tropikoi* that does touch upon it. The Son receives all things (the divine essence) from the Father and, in turn, the Spirit receives all things through the Son. Now, the Son receives all things from the Father not simply by way of consubstantiality, but through being begotten of God,

and so the Spirit receives all things from and through the Son in his own manner of proceeding from God. Again, the primary focus is to teach the sameness of substance in the Holy Spirit as in the Father and Son, thereby eliminating the idea of the Spirit being a creature, but in so doing, he provides key insight in how the Spirit eternally receives from the Son in a similar way to the Son eternally receiving from the Father:

Indeed, just as *the Son is the only-begotten offspring*, so too is the Spirit, *who is given and sent from the Son*,¹⁷⁶ also one and not many, nor one of many, but the only Spirit. Since there is one living Word, there must be one perfect and complete living activity and gift whereby he sanctifies and enlightens.¹⁷⁷

¹⁷⁶ This parallel between Son as the Father's "offspring" and the Spirit as "sent and given" by the Son could possibly indicate that for St. Athanasius, even the temporal mission (i.e., being sent and given) of the Spirit from the Son is indicative of hypostatic origination. Otherwise, how could the comparison be drawn as St. Athanasius intends here?

¹⁷⁷ Interestingly enough, this could comport with the Spirit's flowing forth by way of God's activity (energy), but that seems unlikely since St. Athanasius is speaking to a hypostatic peculiarity of the Spirit,

This is said to *proceed* (ἐκπορεύεσθαι)¹⁷⁸ from the Father, *because* (ἐπειδὴ) the Spirit shines forth, and is sent, and is given from the Word,¹⁷⁹ who is confessed to be from the Father. Indeed, the Son is sent from the Father. For He says: “God so loved the world that he sent his only-begotten Son [Jn 3.16].” *But the Son sends the Spirit.* For he says: “If I go away, I will send you the Paraclete [Jn

whereas the means by which God sanctifies a creature is common to all three divine persons.

¹⁷⁸ Notice that St. Athanasius cites the famous word “proceeds” from John 15:26, but here gives it a meaning that is more directly about the economic sending of the Spirit. However, St. Athanasius here clearly wishes to prove the eternity of the Spirit. Thus, the economic procession of God into the world illustrates the eternal theological reality. As observed by Fr. Brian E. Daley, St. Athanasius shows no sign of making a rigid distinction between the eternal versus temporal procession of the Holy Spirit, c.f. “Revisiting the ‘Filioque’: Roots and Branches of an Old Debate, Part 1, *Pro Ecclesia*, Vol. X, n. 1, 2001, 41.

¹⁷⁹ St. Athanasius appears to read ἐκπορεύεσθαι (proceeds) from John 15:26 as referring to the temporal coming of the Spirit into the world towards creatures. See comment by Patristics scholar C.R.B. Shapland on the varied definition given to ἐκπορεύεσθαι to the time of Athanasius, Marcellus of Ancyra, and Eusebius of Caesarea in his *The Letters of Saint Athanasius Concerning the Holy Spirit* (London: Epworth Press, 1951), 64 fn13.

16.7].” And *the Son glorifies the Father*, saying: “Father, I have glorified you” [Jn 17.4]. *But the Spirit glorifies the Son*. For he says: “He will glorify me” [Jn 16.14]. And the Son says: “I declare to the world *what I heard from the Father* [Jn 8.26].” *But the Spirit receives from the Son*. For “he shall receive from what is mine and announce it to you [Jn 16.14].” And the Son *came in the name of the Father*, but the Son says: “the Holy Spirit whom *the Father will send in my name* [Jn 14.26].” And so, *if the Spirit’s rank and nature vis-à-vis the Son corresponds to the Son’s vis-à-vis the Father*, how can anyone who claims that the Spirit is a creature not be compelled to think the same about the Son? *For if the Spirit is a creature of the Son, it would be consistent to claim that the Word is a creature of the Father.*¹⁸⁰

¹⁸⁰ *Ad Serapion*, i., 25; Eng. Trans. M. DelCogliano, A. Radde-Gallwitz, & L. Ayres, *Words on the Spirit: Athanasius and Didymus*, 86; [emphasis added]. For another translation, see H.B. Swete, *The Holy Spirit in the Ancient Church: A Study of the Christian Teaching in the*

St. Athanasius here makes a “just as” and “so also” comparison between the Son’s being *born* of the Father, *sent* by the Father, *glorifying* the Father, *receiving* from the Father, and *coming in the name* of the Father, and the Spirit’s being *given* by the Son, *sent* by the Son, *glorifying* the Son, *receiving* from the Son, and *coming in the name* of the Son. In the case of the Son-to-Father, the described relationship of being “born” or “sent by the Father”, to “receive from the Father,” or to “come in the name of the Father” *all might sound as if the Son could be created* since it sounds like he is subordinate to the Father. However, St. Athanasius believes that the Son’s receiving all things from the Father to be an indication He is of the same essence or substance as the Father *through being eternally begotten*. As he writes elsewhere: “For it was perfectly clear to them that no created substance would ever say: ‘All that the Father has is mine [Jn 16.15]’... But since these phrases can be said of the Son, and since all things mentioned earlier that belong to the Father are the

Age of the Fathers, 216-17; [emphasis added]. For commentary, see also Herman Bavinck, *The Doctrine of God*, 314; Sicienski, *The Filioque*, 37-38.

Son's, the substance of the Son must not be created, but must be the same as the Father in substance."¹⁸¹

Now, some readers might quickly point out that the context is dealing with the economy of salvation. However, the first part of the above citation mentions the Son's being the "offspring" of the Father, and that isn't purely of the temporal order. St. Athanasius is not working with a strict dichotomy in that regard in this context, and to insist upon that dichotomy would be to impose something upon St. Athanasius. Also, St. Athanasius draws the immanent and eternal aspects of the Godhead from the temporal missions. For example, in the 2nd letter to Serapion, he writes:

Hence, if the Son is not a creature *because of the way in which he belongs to the Father and because he is the proper offspring of the Father's substance*, but is the same as the Father in substance, *then likewise the Holy Spirit is not a creature—indeed, whoever says such a thing is impious—because of the way in which the Spirit belongs to the*

¹⁸¹ *Ad Serapion*, 2.5; Eng. Trans. M. DelCogliano, A. Radde-Gallwitz, & L. Ayres, *Words on the Spirit: Athanasius and Didymus*, 111.

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*Son, and because he is given from the Son to all people and all that he has is the Son's.*¹⁸²

And:

For we will find that the way in which we know the Son belongs to the Father corresponds to the way in which the Spirit belongs to the Son. Just as the Son says: "All that the Father has is mine [Jn 16.15]," *so too we will find that all these things through the Son are in the Spirit.*¹⁸³

What are "these things"? Everything proper to what it means to be God, i.e., the divine essence. This is precisely the interpretation of John 16 that Photius understood would necessarily entail a *Filioquist* reading of the Scriptures. What is being spoken about here is the Spirit's essence and subsistent being which receives what it is from the Father through the Son. Likewise, the Son receives all that He has from the Father by being the offspring of the Father.

¹⁸² *Ibid.*, 119.

¹⁸³ *Ibid.*, 118.

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The Son isn't a creature, as the former Arian heretics held, but St. Athanasius draws out the argument that if the phraseology of "being sent" or "receiving from the Father" were meant to convey that the Son had a beginning in time, then and only then could you attempt to say that the Spirit is created since the same phrases are used of his relationship to the Son as being sent and receiving from Him. However, being sent by the Father and receiving all things from the Father are reflective of the Son's eternal origination from the Father as the only-begotten offspring. In the same way, then, the Spirit's being sent by the Son and receiving all things through Him is reflective of the Spirit's eternal origination. Even if God's common nature, divinity, and activity between the three Persons is being more focused on in the context of what St. Athanasius is saying, he certainly hits on the hypostatic properties of what makes the Son a Son and the Spirit a gift from both the Father and the Son.

According to C.R.B. Shapland, who translated and commented on the letter of Athanasius *ad Serapion*, "if we regard what is implicit, rather than what is explicit, in these letters, we are justified in claiming that the procession of the Spirit through the Son is a necessary

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corollary of his whole argument.”¹⁸⁴ In his 3rd discourse against the Arians, St. Athanasius harps on this once again:

Not then as the Son in the Father, so also we become in the Father; for the Son does not merely partake the Spirit, that therefore He too may be in the Father; nor does He receive the Spirit, but rather He supplies It Himself to all; and the Spirit does not unite the Word to the Father, *but rather the Spirit receives from the Word...* For He, as has been said, gives to the Spirit, and *whatever* the Spirit has, *He has from the Word.*¹⁸⁵

¹⁸⁴ C.R.B. Shapland, *The Letters of Saint Athanasius Concerning the Holy Spirit*, 42. See page 119fn4 for extended comments on the implicit double procession in Athanasius’s doctrine of the Spirit.

¹⁸⁵ *3rd Discourse Against the Arians*, 24-25, *New Advent*, <http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/28163.htm>. Patristics scholar Fr. Thomas Weinandy, O.F.M., states: “While Athanasius does not explicitly state the Augustinian filioque, his argument bears a striking resemblance to the one Augustine himself will employ and will be followed by Aquinas, that is, that all that the Spirit possesses from the Father comes through the Son’s bestowal n so the Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son.” Citation from Weinandy, *Athanasius: A Theological Introduction* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University Press

St. Ambrose of Milan (340-397)

The Spirit is sent to all, and passes not from place to place, for He is not limited either by time or space. He goes forth from the Son, as the Son from the Father, in Whom He ever abides; and also comes to us when we receive. He comes also after the same manner as from the Father Himself, from Whom He can by no means be separated. The Spirit, also, is indeed said to be sent, but the Seraph to one, the Spirit to all. The Seraph is sent to minister, the Spirit works a mystery. The Seraph performs what is commanded, the Spirit divides as He wills. The Seraph passes from place to place, for he does not fill all things, but is himself filled by the Spirit. The Seraph comes down with a certain mode of passage according to his nature, but we cannot think this of

of America, 2018), 107. St. Athanasius's conception that the Spirit "receives from the Son" would be picked up by St. Epiphanius to teach the substance of the Filioque, c.f. Hanson, *The Search for the Christian Doctrine of God*, 788.

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the Spirit, of Whom the Son of God says: *'When the Paraclete shall come, even the Spirit of Truth, Whom I send unto you, Who proceeds from the Father.'* For if the Spirit proceeds from a place and passes to a place, both the Father Himself will be found in a place, and the Son likewise. If He goes forth from a place, Whom the Father or the Son sends, certainly the Spirit passing from a place, and making progress, seems to leave, according to those impious interpretations, both the Father and the Son like some material body. I am saying this with reference to those who say that the Spirit comes down by movement. But neither the Father, Who is above all not only of corporeal nature, but also of the invisible creation, is circumscribed in any place; nor is the Son, Who, as the Worker of all creation, is above every creature, enclosed by the places or times of His own works; nor is the Spirit of Truth as being the Spirit of God, circumscribed by any corporeal limits, Who since He is incorporeal is far above the whole rational creation

through the ineffable fullness of His Godhead, having over all things the power of breathing where He wills, and of inspiring as He wills. *The Spirit is not, then, sent as it were from a place, nor does He proceed as from a place, when He proceeds from the Son, as the Son Himself, when He says, I came forth from the Father, and have come into the world, destroys all fancies, which can be reckoned as from place to place.* In like manner, also, when we read that God is within or without, we certainly do not either enclose God within anybody or separate Him from anybody, but weighing these things in a deep and ineffable estimation, we comprehend the hiddenness of the divine nature.¹⁸⁶

Here, St. Ambrose understood John 15:26 to be referring to the Spirit's procession from the Father, and the Son, into the world towards creatures. Of course, he properly qualifies this as not a quantifiable movement as would be only fitting for a creature. What is important here is that John 15:26 is understood by St. Ambrose to

¹⁸⁶ Ambrose, *De Trinitate*, 1.11.115-117, *New Advent*.

be, strictly speaking, the economic sending of the Spirit. That means St. Ambrose was not working with an awareness that the Johannine Greek for “procession” (ἐκπορεύεται) was a specific code word directly meaning the eternal origin of the Holy Spirit. It is difficult to say what the wider implications of this are given that St. Ambrose, a Saint venerated by both East and West, gave an interpretation of the biblical text (John 16:26) which would be (a) an economic proceeding and (b) a joint proceeding from both the Father and the Son. At the very least, it should signify that the Spirit’s procession in St. John’s Gospel, according to St. Ambrose, is primarily or directly speaking to the economic mission, but with an implication of the *ad intra* eternal origin of the Spirit. And that proves itself in other statements in the *De Trinitate* of St. Ambrose.

The Son received all things from the Father, for He Himself said: “All things have been delivered unto Me from My Father.” All that is the Father’s the Son also has, for He says again: “All things which the Father has are Mine.” *And those things which He Himself received by Unity of nature, the Spirit by the same Unity of nature received also from*

Him, as the Lord Jesus Himself declares, when speaking of His Spirit: “Therefore said I, He shall receive of Mine and shall declare it unto you.” Therefore what the Spirit says is the Son's, what the Son has given is the Father's. So neither the Son nor the Spirit speaks anything of Himself. For the Trinity speaks nothing external to Itself.”¹⁸⁷

Elsewhere:

But if you are willing to learn that the Son of God knows all things, and has foreknowledge of all, see that those very things which you think to be unknown to the Son, the Holy Spirit received from the Son. *He received them, however, through Unity of Substance, as the Son received from the Father.* “He,” says He, “shall glorify Me, for He shall receive of Mine and shall declare it unto you.” “All things whatsoever the Father has are Mine, therefore said I, He shall receive of Mine, and shall declare it unto you.”

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 2.12.134, *New Advent*.

What, then, is more clear than this Unity? What things the Father has pertain to the Son; what things the Son has the Holy Spirit also has received.¹⁸⁸

In these texts, St. Ambrose is focused upon the sameness of substance or unity of nature between the three divine Persons, as well as the unity of operation and activity towards creatures. However, he also finds in their equality an *immanent order of receptionism* beginning with the Father towards the Son, and then the Son towards the Holy Spirit. So that, even if all three are equal in nature, substance, essence, and operation, the ordering of the Persons (Father, Son, and Spirit) show forth the origin of where the Son and Spirit receive the essence of God, while also never having lacked it (i.e., an eternal communication of essence from the Father to the Son, and the Son to the Spirit). As one prestigious Eastern Orthodox priest and Patristic scholar, Fr. John A. McGuckin, said in summary of St. Hilary of Poitiers and St. Ambrose: “In all these cases the immediate context is of the soteriological mission of the Spirit, *but there is clearly a sense of speculation present about the immanent relations of the Trinity too*, and this trend was strengthened further by Augustine’s monumental work,

¹⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 2.11.118, *New Advent*.

his highly influential book *On the Trinity*.¹⁸⁹ It should be further noted that the kind of immanent relations that St. Ambrose, St. Hilary, Didymus the Blind, St. Athanasius, and St. Epiphanius were clearly on the hypostatic origin of the Spirit because they often figured the reception of the Spirit from the Son in parallelism with the reception of the Son from the Father in terms of His substance. This would militate against the “energetic” explanation which will be further investigated below.

¹⁸⁹ John Anthony McGuckin, *The Westminster Handbook to Patristic Theology* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2004), 145.

St. Basil the Great (330-379)

Since, then, the Holy Ghost, from Whom all the supply of good things for creation has its source, is attached to the Son, and with Him is inseparably apprehended, *and has Its being attached to the Father, as cause, from Whom also It proceeds; It has this note of Its peculiar hypostatic nature, that It is known after the Son and together with the Son, and that It has Its subsistence of the Father. The Son, Who declares the Spirit proceeding (ἐκπορευόμενον)¹⁹⁰ from the Father through Himself (δι' ἑαυτοῦ) and with Himself (καὶ μεθ' ἑαυτοῦ), shining forth alone and by only-begetting from the unbegotten light, so far as the peculiar notes are concerned,¹⁹¹ has nothing in*

¹⁹⁰ Greek from PG 32.329; This is the precise Greek word for “proceeds” as used in the Greek of the Nicene-Constantinopolitan creed, the same Greek word for “proceeds” as used by St. John in Rev. 22:1, and taken from the same root for as used in John 15:26 (ἐκπορεύεται).

¹⁹¹ Hypostatic properties

common either with the Father or with the Holy Ghost. *He alone is known by the stated signs.* But God, Who is over all, alone has, as one special mark of His own hypostasis, His being Father, and His deriving His hypostasis from no cause; and through this mark He is peculiarly known...¹⁹²

It is crucial to see that here St. Basil is distinguishing the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit according to their “peculiar notes”, which is another way of saying their hypostatic differentiations. The Spirit is said to have his peculiar note of proceeding from the Father “through” the Son. This is especially interesting in light of the fact that the *Tomos* of Blachernae (1285) condemned anyone who taught that the hypostasis of the Spirit proceeds from the Father “through the Son”. The *Tomos* only allows for an eternal shining or manifestation of the Spirit through the Son. However, St. Basil can’t be understood in this context to be speaking about a shining that is less than hypostatic origination since the whole context of the letter is on the “peculiar notes” or hypostatic distinctions versus the

¹⁹² St. Basil the Great, *Letters*, 38.4, *New Advent*.

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nature (ousia) of God, and therefore the respective origins.¹⁹³

¹⁹³ Papadakis, *Crisis in Byzantium*, 160-61.

St. Gregory of Nyssa (335-395)

For there, with the Father, unoriginated, ungenerate, always Father, the idea of the Son as coming from Him, yet side by side with Him is inseparably joined; and *through the Son and yet with Him* (δι' αὐτοῦ δὲ καὶ μετ' αὐτοῦ)¹⁹⁴ before any vague and unsubstantial conception comes in between, *the Holy Spirit is found at once in closest union*; not subsequent in existence to the Son, as if the Son could be thought of as ever having been without the Spirit; *but Himself also owning the same cause of His being*, i.e. the God over all, as the Only-begotten Light, and having shone forth in that very Light, being

¹⁹⁴ Fr. Giulio Maspero comments on this text: "One notes how the origin of the Spirit is conceived of from the Father *but in a manner that is also conjuncted with the Son*, by the coupling of the prepositions *through* and *with* (δι' αὐτοῦ δὲ καὶ μετ' αὐτοῦ)..."; [emphasis added]. Citation from Maspero, "Trinitarian Theology in Gregory of Nyssa's *Contra Eunomium I: The Interplay between Ontology and Scripture*" in *Gregory of Nyssa: Contra Eunomium I*, ed. Miguel Brugarolas, 483.

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divisible neither by duration nor by an alien nature from the Father or from the Only-begotten.¹⁹⁵

In this passage, St. Gregory is doubtlessly speaking upon the origin of the Spirit, and the means of His eternal production “through” and “with” the Son of God, who Himself is only-begotten of the Father. Nevertheless, the term “cause” is reserved for the Father alone. Elsewhere, the Nyssan goes on:

But then, after passing that summit of theology, I mean the God over all, we turn as it were back again in the racecourse of the mind, and speed through conjoint and kindred ideas *from* the Father, *through* the Son, *to* the Holy Ghost. For once having taken our stand on the comprehension of the *Ungenerate Light* (Father), we perceive that moment from that vantage ground *the Light that streams from Him* (Son), like the ray co-existent with the sun, whose cause indeed is in the sun, but whose existence is synchronous with the sun, not being a

¹⁹⁵ Gregory of Nyssa, *Contra Eunomium*, 1.26, *New Advent*.

later addition, but appearing at the first sight of the sun itself: or rather (for there is no necessity to be slaves to this similitude, and so give a handle to the critics to use against our teaching by reason of the inadequacy of our image), it will not be a ray of the sun that we shall perceive, *but another sun blazing forth*,¹⁹⁶ *as an offspring, out of the Ungenerate sun*, and simultaneously with our conception of the First, and in every way like him, in beauty, in power, in lustre, in size, in brilliance, in all things at once that we observe in the sun. Then again, we see *yet another such Light (Spirit) after the same fashion sundered by no interval of time from that offspring Light (Son), and while shining forth by means of It (Son) yet tracing the source of its being to the Primal Light (Father); itself, nevertheless, a Light shining in like manner as the one*

¹⁹⁶ This description of the begotten Light “blazing forth” shows that the analogy of the Father as the primal Light and then two further lights that shine out cannot be speaking of the energetic procession that was put forward by the 13th century Byzantine theologian Gregory II of Cyprus.

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first conceived of, and itself a source of light and doing all that light does. There is, indeed, no difference between one light and another light, qua light, when the one shows no lack or diminution of illuminating grace, but by its complete perfection forms part of the highest light of all, and is beheld along with the Father and the Son, *though counted after them*, and by its own power gives access to the light that is perceived in the Father and Son to all who are able to partake of it. So far upon this.¹⁹⁷

¹⁹⁷ *Contra Eunomium*, 1.36, *New Advent*. In this text, one might argue that all that St. Gregory is saying is that the Father, Son, and Spirit are compared to a sun and two lights emitting from the same sun, where the 2nd light exists through the 1st light, and thus is simply a statement to the Spirit's hypostatic existence through the Son but still solely caused by the "Primal Light", i.e., the Father. One might draw the distinction between the source of existence and the means of existence, where the Father is the sole cause of the former and the Son is the means of the latter. But the issue with this is that, so far as existing is concerned, the manner of existence is shared by all three persons, and St. Gregory here is noting on what makes each of the three distinct. God does not have three different existences. He is One. Therefore, St. Gregory here is more likely speaking of how in God all things are one and equal save for where there is a *relationship of*

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In the above citation, we see very clearly the Cappadocian using the sun and the light shone forth from the sun as an analogy with which to describe the multiplicity of the one substantial God. Notice how the Spirit is called a 3rd light emitting through the 2nd light, which is the Son, but is traced back to the 1st light, which is the original sun. This encapsulates the basic logic of the Trinitarian distinction in Nyssan thought. Notice, however, that in this context, both the Son and the Spirit are said to be shining from the sun (Father), and this as their hypostatic characteristic. Therefore, there is no indication that St. Gregory is speaking about an alternative reality such as God's action or energy, which is common to all three divine persons.

causation from one to another. This accords with what is said in *Ad Ablabius* by the same author: "that while we confess the invariable character of the nature, we do not deny the difference in respect of cause, and that which is caused, by which alone we apprehend that one Person is distinguished from another — by our belief, that is, that one is the Cause, and another is of the Cause; and again in that which is of the Cause we recognize another distinction. For one is directly from the first Cause, and another by that which is directly from the first Cause." Therefore, when St. Gregory speaks of the 3rd Light shining forth from by means of the 2nd Light, nevertheless tracing its first source of its being to the 1st Light, the idea here is not just "manner of existence" but of unique hypostatic relational opposition, namely, of cause to caused. In sum, the Holy Spirit is hypostatically originated from the 2nd Light, but traces His existence through this means ultimately back to the 1st Light.

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However, it cannot be said that he describes the Son as a cause since he leaves that designation to the Father alone. Even so, the “shining” of the Spirit here is still speaking of His hypostatic property of existence, and it is said to be “through the Son”. In the context, the *light* or *shine* feature is tied to hypostatic origination as well, and so St. Gregory appears to be far more on the side of teaching that the Spirit’s procession is from both the Father and the Son, even if the Son is emphatically spoke of as non-causal and merely *the means by which*.¹⁹⁸ Elsewhere, we see more commentary on the Spirit as 3rd:

For the plea will not avail them in their self-defense, that He is delivered by our Lord to His disciples *third in order*, and that therefore He is estranged from our ideal of Deity. Where in each case activity in working good shows no diminution or variation whatever, *how unreasonable it is to suppose the numerical order to be a sign of any diminution or essential variation!* It is as if a man were to see a separate flame burning on three torches (*and we will suppose that the third flame*

¹⁹⁸ As shown further below in this book, the Orthodox Council of Blachernae 1285 condemned such a notion.

is caused by that of the first being transmitted to the middle, and then kindling the end torch), and were to maintain that the heat in the first exceeded that of the others; that that next it showed a variation from it in the direction of the less; and that the third could not be called fire at all, though it burnt and shone just like fire, and did everything that fire does. But if there is really no hindrance to the third torch being fire, though it has been kindled from a previous flame, what is the philosophy of these men, who profanely think that they can slight the dignity of the Holy Spirit because He is named by the Divine lips after the Father and the Son?¹⁹⁹

¹⁹⁹ Gregory of Nyssa, *On the Holy Spirit Against the Macedonians*; Eng. Trans: *New Advent*, <http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/2903.htm>. Gregory here is arguing that just because there is an order to the three divine persons, that does not thereby entail a difference in essence or nature, and he uses the imagery of an equal flame that put aflame 3 torches, all of which have a distinct order. Notice here that the Holy Spirit is pictured as a torch whose flame is caused by means of 2 prior torches. To be more precise, there is a single torch that is

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He [the Son] is properly addressed with the title of Eternal; again, on the other hand, because the thought of Him as Son in fact and title gives us the thought of the Father as inalienably joined to it. He thereby stands clear of an ungenerate existence being imputed to Him, while He is always with a Father Who always is, as those inspired words of our Master express it, *“bound by way of generation to His Father’s Ungeneracy.”* Our account of the Holy Ghost will be the same also; the difference is only in the place assigned in order. *For as the Son is bound to the Father, and, while deriving existence from Him, is not substantially after Him, so again the Holy Spirit is in touch with the Only-Begotten, Who is conceived of as before the Spirit’s*

1st in order, i.e., originally is kindled with its flame all on its own. Then the 1st torch lights the 2nd torch, such that the 2nd torch has its flame from the first. Now, the 3rd torch has its flame, ultimately, from the 1st torch, but by means of the 2nd torch. What then is the cause of the 3rd torch being aflame with the same fire as the first 2? One could say the 1st torch is the ultimate cause, but it can’t be imagined that the 2nd torch is wholly uninvolved.

subsistence only in the theoretical light of a cause. Extensions in time find no admittance in Eternal Life; so that, when we have removed the thought of cause, the Holy Trinity in no single way exhibits discord with itself...²⁰⁰

This passage is especially interesting as it would appear to be an instance where the Cappadocian is teaching that the Spirit is ordered in 3rd place in the Trinitarian τάξις (taxis/order) because He isn't just from the Father but is from the Father *through the Son* (ergo, 3rd). The argument seems clear from the text. The passage is trying to show that the Son and the Holy Spirit are both eternal, and therefore equal in nature to God the Father, but the notes on what makes the three truly distinct by

²⁰⁰ Gregory of Nyssa, *Contra Eunomium*, 1.42, *New Advent*. A better translation: "Our account of the Holy Spirit is the same, with a difference only of order. *As the Son is joined to the Father*, and having his being from him does not come afterwards in existence, *so in turn the Holy Spirit holds close also to the Only begotten, who only in terms of causation is thought of as prior to the existence* (hypostasis) of the Spirit; temporal measurements have no place in preeternal life. *So with the exception of the idea of cause, the Holy Trinity has no variance within itself at all.*" Translation by Stuart G. Hall in *Gregory of Nyssa: Contra Eunomium I*, ed. Miguel Brugarloas (Leiden: Brill, 2018), 195; [emphasis added].

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way of cause. Why is the Father 1st in the order? Because He is the “cause” and is Himself “uncaused”. Why is the Son 2nd? It is because He is generated into being, eternally, from the Father. Why is the Spirit 3rd? There has to be a Third-ness to the Spirit in His hypostatic property. But you can only have a 3rd if the Spirit is in some way passing through the 2nd ultimately back to the 1st, otherwise you wouldn’t have a 3rd, but just another 2nd, i.e., the Son and Spirit immediately from the 1st. For St. Gregory, the Son comes before the Spirit because the Son stands in some way to the Spirit’s cause, albeit traced back ultimately to the 1st in the Order, the Father. Albeit St. Gregory never refers to the Son as cause.

Now, can this passage be merely referring to another divine order besides hypostatic origination, such as the natural operation of the Godhead? While there are certainly implications, this would seem beside the context. The argument about the Son’s generation from the Father is a hypostatic origination, and it is precisely in that line of thinking that the Spirit emerges in the text of St. Gregory. The immediate comparison is that even though the Son of God derives His existence from the Father, the Son is not substantially after Him. The meaning of that is that you have an eternally derived existence. The Son eternally, without interval of time,

derives His existence from the Father, while at the same time is not substantially after Him because they share the very same substance as equally God. The Son's 2nd-ness is simply the result of an eternal hypostatic origination. From this comparison is brought in the Spirit who is ordered after the Son, though not substantially, but according to what? According to an eternally derived existence, *at least through the Son*. A remarkable parallel comes from St. Basil:

But we say that the Father is ranked prior to the Son *in terms of the relation that causes have with what comes from them*, not in terms of a difference of nature or a pre-eminence based on time.²⁰¹

The very last sentence in the above passage provides certainty, as St. Gregory felt the need to say that when the matter of cause is removed between the Three Persons, they have no "discord with Itself", i.e., no real distinctions. Given other statements of St. Gregory elsewhere, this seems to be the best interpretation of this passage. For if by "theoretical light of a cause" St Gregory were simply

²⁰¹ Basil, *Against Eunomius* 1.20, *The Fathers of the Church*, vol. 122, 121.

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referring once again to the Father alone, that would not explain why the Son is “before” the “Spirit’s subsistence”, and yet that is precisely why the “theoretical light of a cause” comes up. It also cannot be a reference to the Son’s being caused by the Father alone either since that also doesn’t explain the Thirdness of the Spirit, where the Son is ordered “before”. The hypostatic origination of the Spirit from the Son, though traced back to the Father as the 1st, is reasonably inferred.

Once again, this can’t be simply speaking of God’s natural activity, because the activity of God is shared with all Persons in the Godhead equally and here St. Gregory is distinguishing the Three Persons according to their manner of origin and coming into being, even if eternally, in that this explains their *τάξις*. While each divine Person holds the common activity in an enhypostatized manner, the statements here by St. Gregory of Nyssa are speaking too strongly of what is peculiar and unique to the Spirit as He is relationally opposed by the note of causation. The hypostatic origin of the Spirit, therefore, is to be the preferred reading of these texts. As Fr. Brian E. Daley (D.Phil, Notre Dame) comments:

Gregory of Nyssa himself, who generally insists that the only *αἰτία* or ‘cause’ of the divine being is the Father, in whom the

substantial unity of God is entirely grounded, still suggests, in a few passages, *that the Son also plays a part in the 'causation' of the Spirit, in a way that does not derogate from the primary role of the Father in that causation.*²⁰²

The foregoing evidence proves Fr. Daley correct. Elsewhere, St. Gregory described the Spirit as proceeding from the Father and “receiving from the Son.” The context would suggest that it is an eternal reception of the Son on the part of the Spirit:

By saying that He is absolutely immortal, without turning, or variableness, always beautiful, always independent of ascription from others, working as He wills all things in all, Holy, leading, direct, just, of true utterance, searching the deep things of God, *proceeding from the Father, receiving from the Son, and all such-like things, what, after all, do you*

²⁰² Brian E. Daley, “Revisiting the ‘Filioque’: Roots and Branches of an Old Debate, part 1, *Pro Ecclesia*, Vol. X, n. 1, 2001, p. 43; [emphasis added].

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lend to Him by these and such-like terms?²⁰³

One last particular passage is worth noting as it raises the question over the distinction between the source of the Spirit's existence versus the manner of manifestation of His being.

The Holy Spirit by the uncreatedness of His nature has contact with the Son and Father, *but is distinguished from them by His own tokens*. His most peculiar characteristic is that He is neither of those things which we contemplate in the Father and the Son respectively. He is simply, neither as ungenerate, nor as only-begotten: this it is that constitutes His chief peculiarity. Joined to the Father by His uncreatedness, He is disjoined from Him again by not being "Father." United to the Son by the bond of uncreatedness, and of deriving His existence from the Supreme, *He is parted again from Him by the characteristic of*

²⁰³ Gregory of Nyssa, *On the Holy Trinity Against the Macedonians*, *New Advent*, <https://www.newadvent.org/fathers/2903.htm>.

*not being the Only-begotten of the Father, and of having been manifested by means of the Son Himself. Again, as the creation was effected by the Only-begotten, in order to secure that the Spirit should not be considered to have something in common with this creation because of His having been manifested by means of the Son, He is distinguished from it by His unchangeableness, and independence of all external goodness.*²⁰⁴

Notice that St. Gregory says that the Son and the Spirit are alike in that they derive their existence from the "Supreme" or the unbegotten Father. The Son is born of the Father and the Spirit proceeds from the Father. However, notice what he says next. He is joined to the Son equally in being uncreated but is disjoined from the Son in that the Spirit is not begotten of the Father such that he would be another Son, making a Father and two brothers. Moreover, he is disjoined from the Son because the Spirit is *manifested* by means of the Son. Since the Spirit is manifested "through" or "by means of" the Son, there is a

²⁰⁴ *Contra Eunomium*, 1.22, *New Advent*.

kind of source versus destination relationship that makes a distinction between the Son and Spirit.

The Orthodox might keep their finger on the word “manifested” (πεφηνέναι). Could this be an example of the procession of the Spirit through the Son in the mode of God’s natural energy or operation? His next statement gives proof that St. Gregory does not have anything but the Spirit’s personal and unique hypostatic existence in mind. St. Gregory feels the need to insert a distinction about the Spirit that would, if not understood, lead to the idea that the Spirit is created by the Son. Being “manifested by means of the Son” can naturally be thought of as being a creature of the Son, but St. Gregory comes in and avoids that by making it clear that the Spirit is disjoined from creation by His being uncreated. If this *manifestation through the Son* were representative of a different reality than the Spirit’s hypostatic existence, then foreseeing the possible mistake or misreading of the Spirit as a creature would have never been brought up in order to safeguard his eternity.

There is also another passage by St. Gregory where there is language of an eternal “manifestation” of one divine Person but which must be strictly hypostatic. This comes in the 8th book *Contra Eunomium* wherein the following is said:

For neither does the word “*breath*” present to us dispersion into the air from the underlying matter, nor “*savour*” the transference that takes place from the quality of the ointment to the air, nor “*brightness*” the efflux by means of rays from the body of the sun; but this only, as we have said, is manifested (*δηλούται*) by this particular mode of generation, that He is conceived to be of Him and also with Him, no intermediate interval existing between the Father and that Son Who is of Him.²⁰⁵

Here, St. Gregory speaks of the Son being eternally shone from the Father in the mode of generation, i.e., hypostatic origination. Therefore, it raises the question as to why it wouldn't be the same, despite the Greek word differing (The word for “manifestation” in *Contra Eunomium* 1.22 is *πεφηνεναι*), when St. Gregory speaks of the Spirit eternally manifested through the Son? Therefore, the strict “energetic” reading of “manifestation” in the

²⁰⁵ Gregory of Nyssa, *Contra Eunomium*, 8.4, *New Advent*; [emphasis added], Greek from PL 45.784.

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Gregorian corpus seems lacking exegetical and contextual support.

St. Epiphanius of Salamis, Cyprus (310-403)

And there are not two sons: for the one Son is Only-begotten, and the Holy Spirit is the Spirit that is holy, the 'Spirit of God,' always existing with the Father and Son, not alien from God, but being from God, "*proceeding from the Father*" and "*receiving from the Son.*"²⁰⁶

²⁰⁶ *The Fathers of the Church, A New Translation*, vol. 128; St. Epiphanius of Cyprus, *Ancoratus*, 6, trans. Young Richard Kim (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press), 68. Also see *Ancoratus*, 6; Eng. Trans: Swete, *The Holy Spirit in the Ancient Church*, 226. When St. Epiphanius says "receiving from the Son" he clearly refers to the text of John 16:12-15. By "receiving from the Son," St. Epiphanius has in mind a reference to John 16:12-15, and its context. Since what comes before it, i.e., proceeding from the Father, is the timeless origin of the Spirit, the "receiving from the Son," also must mean a timeless reality. According to Fr. Brian E. Daley, St. Epiphanius "likes to combine John 16:14-15 (which says the Spirit 'receives from' the Son) with John 15:26 (he 'proceeds from' the Father) when speaking about the Spirit's origin: so he speaks of the Spirit several times as 'being from' the Father and the Son, without further explication, and explicitly takes these two Johannine texts, in two passages, to mean the Spirit 'is from both.'" Excerpt from "Revisiting the 'Filioque': Roots and Branches of an Old Debate," *Pro Ecclesia*, Vol. X, No. 1, 43.

For the Only-begotten Himself says: “The Spirit of the Father,” and “the one proceeding from the Father,” and “*he will receive from what is mine,*” in order that he may not be believed alien from the Father and the Son, *but of the same ousia, the same divinity [...]*²⁰⁷

[...] the Spirit of the Father and the Spirit of the Son, intermediate between the Father and the Son, and *from the Father and the Son* (ἐκ τοῦ πατρὸς καὶ τοῦ υἱοῦ).²⁰⁸

[...] neither does any know the Spirit but the Father and the Son, the Persons from (παρ οὗ) whom *He proceeds* and from whom (παρ οὗ) *He receives*.²⁰⁹

If, therefore, “he proceeds from the Father,” and “will receive from what is

²⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 73; [emphasis added].

²⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 8; Eng. Trans: Swete, *The Holy Spirit in the Ancient Church*, 227. The immediate context is timeless intra-trinitarian life.

²⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 11; Eng. Trans: Swete, *ibid.*

mine” (the Son), the Lord says, just as, “no one knows the Father except the Son, nor the Son except the Father,” thus I dare to say that [no one knows the] Spirit except the Son *from whom he receives* and the Father *from whom he proceeds*.²¹⁰

With the parallelism or close association between the Spirit’s procession from the Father and His receiving from the Son, it is extremely unlikely that St. Epiphanius understood the Spirit’s receiving from the Son to be anything other than the *ad intra* and immanent life of God. One might speculate on whether this reception on the part of the Spirit from the Son is the energetic or active procession of the Spirit according to the nature of God’s energy (and energies). However, to repeat, the Byzantine doctrine of God’s energies is something which, regardless of what might be said uniquely about the energy *quae* enhypostatized in the Holy Spirit, *is common to all three divine Persons*, and St. Epiphanius here is interested in marking the Spirit by His unique origin from the Father and the Son, one by proceeding and the other by receiving. As Gregory Palamas said, “The proper appellations of the

²¹⁰ St. Epiphanius of Cyprus, *Ancoratus*, trans. Young R. Kim, 165.

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*divine hypostases are common to the energies...*²¹¹ Even in the *ad extra* experience of the Saints by the multiplied divine energies, while being “essentially personalized” or *enhypostatized*, is “a common manifestation of the Three Persons of the Trinity.”²¹²

²¹¹ *Against Akindynos* III, 10; edd. Kontogiannes and Phanourgakes, p. 184; citation and translation from Meyendorff, *Byzantine Theology*, 187.

²¹² George Maloney, *Uncreated Energy: A Journey into the Authentic Sources of Christian Faith* (Warwick, NY: Amity House Inc., 1987), 70.

St. Augustine of Hippo (354-430)²¹³

St. Augustine is almost unanimously understood to have taught the *Filioque*, and the scholarship on this point is indisputable. The relevance of this is seen in how great a theologian the Latin and Greek Churches held St. Augustine to be. In the 3rd session of the 5th Ecumenical Council (Constantinople II, 553), the bishops pronounced on the universality of the 4 previous Ecumenical councils, and emphasized that the council present then upholds “everything that accords with these definitions by the aforementioned holy four councils on the orthodox faith,” and then right afterwards says:

In addition we also follow *in everything* the holy fathers and doctors of the holy church of God, Athanasius, Hilary, Basil, Gregory the Theologian and Gregory of Nyssa, Ambrose, *Augustine*, Theophilus, John of Constantinople, Cyril, Leo, and Proclus, and we accept *everything they*

²¹³ St. Augustine's *De Trinitate* was translated into Greek by Maximus Planudes (1260-1305), a monk and theologians in Constantinople. According to Siecienski, Planudes himself criticized St. Augustine for his *Filioque* doctrine, c.f. *Filioque*, 143.

*expounded on the orthodox faith and in condemnation of heretics; we also accept the other holy and orthodox fathers who preached the orthodox faith in the holy church of God irreproachably till the end of their lives.”*²¹⁴

The significance of this is obvious. Other than the fact that Sts. Athanasius, Hilary, Ambrose, Cyril, and Leo the Great were clearly teaching an eternal procession from the Son (as this commentary shows), St. Augustine is ranked at the top list of the Church’s universal doctors on the orthodox faith. What theological writings could they have in mind from St. Augustine? His *De Trinitate* was one of his most important works that took his life to write. It could not be that they were simply referring to his anti-Donatist writings, for that would be to limit the extent far too small, although it is nearly certain they didn’t have his *De Trinitate* in Greek.

Nevertheless, it is certain that the Greek tradition never took up the explicit structure of his Trinitarian theology, let alone his teaching on predestinating grace in

²¹⁴ Richard Price, *The Acts of the Council of Constantinople of 553* Vol. 1, (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2012), 224; [emphasis added].

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soteriology. And it is also true that St. Gregory of Nyssa is suspect of teaching universalism, and so we shouldn't be ignorant of the fact that both Catholics and Orthodox have recognized that the Fathers can err. It is still ironic, to say the least, that in the midst of this particular Ecumenical Council (553) where theologians who were long dead were being dug up out of the grave, metaphorically speaking, and condemned as heretics for errors committed in their writings produced during the course of their lives. And yet, Sts. Augustine and Gregory of Nyssa are sort of just passed over. The Spirit guided the pen of the Fathers for a reason.

Below are passages from St. Augustine on the procession of the Holy Spirit, and I've taken the most indisputable on this point:

But in their mutual relation to one another in the Trinity itself, if the begetter is a beginning in relation to that which he begets, the Father is a beginning in relation to the Son, because He begets Him; but whether the Father is also a beginning in relation to the Holy Spirit, since it is said, 'He proceeds from the Father,' is no small question. Because, if it is so, He will not only be a

beginning to that thing which He begets or makes, but also to that which He gives....If, therefore, that also which is given has him for a beginning by whom it is given, since it has received from no other source that which proceeds from him; *it must be admitted that the Father and the Son are a Beginning (principium, Eng. Principle) of the Holy Spirit, not two Beginnings (principia);* but as the Father and Son are one God, and one Creator, and one Lord relatively to the creature, so are they one Beginning relatively to the Holy Spirit. But the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit is one Beginning in respect to the creature, as also one Creator and one God.²¹⁵

Wherefore let him who can understand the generation of the Son from the Father *without time,*²¹⁶ understand also the *procession of the Holy Spirit from both without time.* And let him who can understand, in that which the Son says,

²¹⁵ Augustine, *De Trinitate*, Book 5.13-14, *New Advent*.

²¹⁶ Eternal *ad intra* relations.

'As the Father has life in Himself, so has He given to the Son to have life in Himself,' not that the Father gave life to the Son already existing without life, but that *He so begot Him apart from time*, that the life which the Father gave to the Son by begetting Him is co-eternal with the life of the Father who gave it: let him, I say, understand, that *as the Father has in Himself that the Holy Spirit should proceed from Him, so has He given to the Son that the same Holy Spirit should proceed from Him, and be both apart from time*: and that the Holy Spirit is so said to proceed from the Father as that it be understood that His proceeding also from the Son, *is a property derived by the Son from the Father*. For if the Son has of the Father whatever He has, then certainly He has of the Father, *that the Holy Spirit proceeds also from Him*.²¹⁷

Above all, this passage above is the most important text since it excludes from possibility the idea that St. Augustine held to a more Eastern Orthodox conception of

²¹⁷ *Ibid.*, Book 15.26, *New Advent*.

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the Spirit's procession. Here's why. We have his clear testimony of the eternal/timeless procession of the Spirit at the beginning of the passage, and so this can't be referring strictly to the temporal procession of the Spirit from the Father and Son towards creatures. Secondly, the *very same* timeless procession of the Spirit that comes from the Father is said to be given to the Son so that the Son, together with the Father, spirates the Spirit. Therefore, this cannot be referring to anything less than what the Council of Florence taught in the 15th century. Elsewhere, St. Augustine says:

But because it is most difficult to distinguish generation from procession in that *co-eternal*, and *equal*, and *incorporeal*, and *ineffably unchangeable and indivisible Trinity*, let it suffice meanwhile to put before those who are not able to be drawn on further, what we said upon this subject in a sermon to be delivered in the ears of Christian people, and after saying wrote it down. For when, among other things, I had taught them by testimonies of the Holy Scriptures that the Holy Spirit proceeds from both... But from Him, of whom the Son has it that He

is God (for He is God of God), He certainly has it that from Him also the Holy Spirit proceeds: and in this way the Holy Spirit has it of the Father Himself, that He should also proceed from the Son, even as He proceeds from the Father... *But the Holy Spirit proceeds not from the Father into the Son, and then proceeds from the Son to the work of the creature's sanctification; but He proceeds at the same time from both:* although this the Father has given unto the Son, that He should proceed from Him also, even as He proceeds from Himself.²¹⁸

And yet it is not to no purpose that in this Trinity the Son and none other is called the Word of God, and the Holy Spirit and none other the Gift of God, and God the Father alone is He from whom the Word is born, *and from whom the Holy Spirit principally proceeds.* And therefore I have added the word principally, because

²¹⁸ Augustine, *De Trinitate*, 15.48, *New Advent*; citing his *Tractates on the Gospel of John*, 99.8-9, *New Advent*.

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we find that the Holy Spirit *proceeds from the Son also*. But the Father gave Him this too, not as to one already existing, and not yet having it; but whatever He gave to the only-begotten Word, He gave by begetting Him. Therefore He so begot Him as that the common Gift should proceed from Him also, and the Holy Spirit should be the Spirit of both.²¹⁹

[...] when the Son spoke of the Spirit he said, ‘He proceeds from the Father,’ because the Father is the author [auctor]

²¹⁹ Augustine, *De Trinitate*, 15.29, *New Advent*. This text also shows that the Greek attempts at trying to read St. Augustine as if he didn't support the controversial Latin doctrine (codified at Lyons 1274 and Florence 1439) ultimately fail. According to Siecienski, Gennadios Scholarius, in his *Tract on the Procession of the Holy Spirit*, tried to argue that *procedere* (proceeds) in the Latin text of St. Augustine's *De Trinitate* refers to the equivalent of the Greek *ἐκπορευόμενον* (proceeds) which refers to the ultimately eternal and hypostatic procession of the Spirit from the Father alone. However, this citation from St. Augustine clearly shows that Gennadius's attempt at making him conformed to the later Byzantine view is incorrect since St. Augustine says that the procession of the Spirit from the Son is given from the Father's own property to do so, c.f. Siecienski, *The Filioque*, 143.

of his procession. The Father begot the Son and, by begetting Him, *gave it to him that the Holy Spirit proceeds from him.*²²⁰

²²⁰ "Si auctorem propterea dicis Patrem, quia de ipso est Filius, non est autem ipse de Filio; et quia de illo et Filio sic procedit Spiritus sanctus, ut ipse hoc dederit Filio gignendo eum talem, ut etiam de ipso procedat Spiritus sanctus." Latin text from *Contra Maximinum*, Book 2, paragraph 5 (PL 42.761); Eng. Trans: Lewis Ayres, *Augustine and the Trinity*, 265; [emphasis added].

St. Cyril of Alexandria (376-444)²²¹

For in that the Son is God and of God (ἐκ θεοῦ) by nature (for He is truly *begotten of God* the Father) the Spirit is His very own and *in Him* and *from Him* (ἐξ αὐτοῦ) *just as is conceived as to God the Father.*²²²

²²¹ St. Cyril was the most cited Father by the Latin delegation at the Council of Florence, c.f. Siecienski, *The Filioque*, 161. See especially the Appendix of this book on the significance of the terminology used by St. Cyril in his doctrine of the Trinity.

²²² Commentary on Joel, Book 2.28-29; Eng. Trans. Pusey *Commentary on The Gospel According to St. John*, Vol. 1 (London: James Parker & Co., Oxford, 1874), p. x; *Library of Fathers of the Holy Catholic Church, Anterior to the Division of East and West*, Vol. 43. (Eds.) E.B. Pusey & John Keble; Greek added by me, and emphasis mine. In the context, it seems that the Son's being "of God" or "from God" is explained in terms of his being "begotten" of the Father, which means the preposition "of" and "from" are explaining hypostatic origin. Therefore, in the same line of reasoning, to say that the Spirit is "of" and "from" the Son would be an indication that St. Cyril here means that the Spirit comes from the Son as well as the Father. See a similar argument and translation of the same passage in Swete, *The Holy Spirit in the Ancient Church: A Study of the Christian Teaching in the Age of the Fathers*, 269.

The Spirit proceeds from the substance of the Son.²²³

After the thrice-blessed Fathers have brought to an end the statement about Christ, they mention the Holy Spirit. For they stated that they believe in him, just

²²³ Cyril of Alexandria, *Thesaurus de sancta et consubstantiali trinitate*, 34, PG 75.588A, 593CD; cited in George C. Berthold, "Cyril of Alexandria and the Filioque," *Studia Patristica*, Vol. 19 (1989), 146. Notice the procession here is from the "essence" of the Son, which is equal to the Father. This perhaps is not as helpful since it does not explain more as to whether this is to be understood hypostatically, or some other reference to the common nature of the Godhead. St. Cyril probably means hypostatic origin, for elsewhere he uses the same language in reference to the hypostatic origin of the Son from the Father: "... the Word which came forth from the substance of the Father, the only begotten Son, true God of true God, light of light..." Cit. from Letter 55, *St. Cyril of Alexandria: Letters 51-110*, trans. John I. McEnerney (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1987), 23. If St. Cyril can in one place say the hypostatic origin of the Son comes by way of the Son coming forth from the Father's substance, then there is grounds to say that when he says the Spirit comes forth from the Son's substance, he likewise means hypostatic origin. What is certainly to be excluded is the idea that by saying "proceeds from the substance" this simply means that we could even say the Father proceeds from the substance of the Son or Spirit (or is "of" said substance), which is absurd. Certainly, an order is being sustained by St. Cyril, and an order which reflects hypostatic origination.

as they do in the Father and in the Son. For his is consubstantial with them and *he is poured forth* [προχεται], *that is, he proceeds* [ἐκπορεύεται]²²⁴ *as from the fountain of God the Father and he is bestowed on creation through the Son.* Wherefore, Christ breathed upon the holy apostles saying, “Receive the Holy Spirit.” Therefore God the Spirit is from God and not different from the substance which is highest of all, *but is from that substance and in it and is its own.*²²⁵

Since then the Holy Spirit, by coming to be in us, shows us to be conformed to God, while, again, *he comes forth* [πρόξεισι] *from the Father and the Son*, it is manifest that he is of the divine substance, *substantially coming forth* [προϊόν] *in it and from it*; just as would

²²⁴ It is quite important to see how St. Cyril can interpret these two words (ἐκπορεύεται and προχεται) can be used to describe the eternal procession of the Spirit. In fact, in this citation, St. Cyril sees ἐκπορεύεται as explaining προχεται, c.f. Siecienski, *The Filioque*, 161.

²²⁵ St. Cyril, Letter 55, *St. Cyril of Alexandria: Letters 51-110*, trans. J.I. McNernery, 34.

be the case also with a breath exiting a human mouth, even if the example is pedestrian and not worthy of our subject matter; for God surpasses all things.²²⁶

²²⁶ Cyril, *Thesaurus* 34 (PG 75, 585A); Eng. Trans. Dr. Peter Gilbert. Greek text: "Ὅτε τοίνυν τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον ἐν ἡμῖν γινόμενον συμμόρφους ἡμᾶς ἀποδεικνύει Θεοῦ, πρόεισι δὲ καὶ ἐκ πατρὸς καὶ υἱοῦ, πρόδηλον ὅτι τῆς θείας ἐστὶν οὐσίας, οὐσιωδῶς ἐν αὐτῇ καὶ ἐξ αὐτῆς προϊόν. ὡσπερ οὖν ἀμέλει καὶ τὸ ἐξ ἀνθρωπειοῦ στόματος ἐκτρέχον ἐμφύσημα, εἰ καὶ μικρὸν καὶ οὐκ ἄξιον τοῦ λόγου τὸ ὑπόδειγμα. πάντα γὰρ ὑπερέχει Θεός. St. Cyril cannot be understood to use ἐκπορεύω exclusively for the eternal procession of the Spirit, for he says that the Son came forth (ἐκπορεύω) from the Father, and often enough uses πρόειμι to refer to the eternal procession of the Spirit *from the Father*, and thus these words are note strict codes for St. Cyril indicating an economic vs. immanent procession. For example, in his commentary on John 15:26-27, St. Cyril says the following: "For if the Son does not *proceed* (ἐκπορεύεται) from the Father, that is, from His essence, as you think, surely the Spirit when compared with the Son would be regarded as superior to Him"; [emphasis added] and Greek added by me, c.f. Pusey, *A Library of Fathers of the Holy Catholic Church*, Vol. 44, 431. This insight was gained from Matthew R. Crawford, *Cyril of Alexandria's Trinitarian Theology of Scripture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 52-53. Crawford offers criticism of Siecienski's rigid distinction between St. Cyril's usage of ἐκπορεύεσθαι and προϊέναι for the reasons given above, c.f. Siecienski, *The Filioque*, 49. Perhaps the clearest evidence that St. Cyril didn't have a conceptual distinction between ἐκπορεύω and προϊέναι is the text of his 4th book against Nestorius: "'When the

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“All things whatsoever the Father hath are mine: and therefore I said unto you, that He taken of mine and shall declare it unto you”—The Son once more shows to us herein the complete and perfect character of the Person of the Father Himself also, and allows us to see why He said that He, *being the fruit of the Father’s substance, engrosses in Himself*

Comforter shall come whom I will send you from the Father, the Spirit of Truth which proceedeth (ἐκπορεύεται) from the Father, He shall testify of Me.’ Note therefore how the Spirit which proceedeth (ἐκπορευόμενον) from God the Father... For as the Holy Ghost proceedeth (πρόεισιν) from the Father, being His Spirit by nature, in the same manner It proceedeth through the Son also, being his of Nature and Consubstantial with Him...” Cit. from Pusey, *A Library of Fathers of the Holy Catholic Church*, Vol. 43 (Eds.) E.B. Pusey & John Keble, pages xvii-xviii. So both ἐκπορευόμενον and προῖέναι are used interchangeably to refer to the Spirit’s “coming forth” from the Father. For an extensive introduction to St. Cyril of Alexandria and the *Filioque*, the introduction of this commentary is well worth reading, *ibid.*, vii-xxi. In addition, if the reader consults the arguments from St. Cyril’s commentary from the passages from John 15 & 16 provided in the above chapter on *The Filioque in Sacred Scripture*, it becomes very apparent that St. Cyril isn’t working with a rigid conceptual distinction between the ad intra procession of the Spirit and the ad extra procession of the Spirit.

all that belongs to It,²²⁷ and says that It is all His own, and with reason [...] so that what the Father hath is the Son's, and what He That begat hath, belongs also to Him that is begotten of Him²²⁸ [...] He illustrates hereby the perfect union which He hath with His Father and the meaning of their Consubstantiality existing in unchangeable attributes [...] We say then that the Spirit receives of the Father and the Son the things that are Theirs²²⁹ in the following way; not as

²²⁷ St. Cyril's intention here is to illustrate the Son's perfect reception of the divine essence of God from the Father by being "the fruit of the Father's substance." This is an obvious reference to the hypostatic origin of the Son through being begotten of the Father. This is important to keep to maintain the proper focus before reading onward.

²²⁸ It is extremely important to catch that St. Cyril understands "all things" being given to the Son by the Father comes by way of hypostatic origin, i.e., the Son's being begotten. The reader should keep their finger on this and maintain the basic context so that further down when it is said that the Spirit receives from the Father and the Son, it should be understood likewise as the Spirit receiving "all things" from the Father and Son by way of hypostatic origination.

²²⁹ This is a reference to the equally derived divine nature of the Holy Spirit from the Father and the Son in the timeless *ad intra* life of God, thereby making this one of the clearest statements in St. Cyril that he

though at one moment He were devoid of the knowledge and power inherent in Them, and at the next hardly acquires such knowledge and power *when He is conceived of as receiving from Them*.²³⁰ For the Spirit is wise and powerful, nay, rather, absolute Wisdom and Power, not by participation in anything else, but by His own Nature. But, rather, *just as we should say that the fragrance of sweet-smelling herbs which assails our nostrils is distinct from the herbs so far as their conception in thought is concerned, but proceeds from the herbs in which it originates only by being a recipient of their faculty of giving scent in order to its display, and is not in fact distinct from them, because its existence is due to, and*

believed the Spirit depended on the Son, together with the Father, for His subsistence and divine being (i.e., hypostatic origin).

²³⁰ St. Cyril here speaks of the Spirit's *timeless* reception the divine nature from the Father and Son. It is parallel to the way in which he can speak elsewhere of the Son being begotten from the Father: "... he was begotten of the essence of God the Father independently of time..." Letter 55, *St. Cyril of Alexandria: Letters 51-110*, 20; *The Fathers of the Church: A New Translation*, vol. 77.

is wrapped up in them; even such an idea, or rather one transcending this, must you imagine about the relation of God to the Holy Spirit.²³¹

The Spirit is assuredly in no way changeable; or, if some people think him to be so infirm as to change, the disgrace will then be traced back to the divine nature itself, if in fact the Spirit is *from God the Father* and, for that matter, *from the Son*, being *poured forth* [προχέομενον]²³² *substantially from both*, that is to say, *from the Father through the Son* [ἐκ πατρὸς δι' υἱοῦ].²³³

²³¹ Pusey, *A Library of Fathers of the Holy Catholic Church*, vol. 44, 457-59.

²³² This Greek word was used elsewhere in a previous citation (c.f. citation from footnote 163) to be further described by the Greek word ἐκπορεύεται.

²³³ Cyril, *De adoratione* 1 (PG 68, 148A); Eng. Trans: Dr. Peter Gilbert. Greek text: Τρεπτόν δὲ οὐτοῦτο πνεῦμά ἐστιν. ἢ εἴτερ τὸ τρέπεσθαι νοσεῖ, ἐπ' αὐτήν ὁ μῶμος τὴν θείαν ἀναδραμεῖται φύσιν, εἴτερ ἐστὶ τοῦ Θεοῦ καὶ πατρός, καὶ μὴν καὶ τοῦ υἱοῦ τὸ οὐσιωδῶς ἐξ ἀμφοῖν, ἦγουν ἐκ πατρὸς δι' υἱοῦ προχέομενον πνεῦμα; [emphasis

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For even if the Spirit exists in his own hypostasis and is conceived of individually, in that he is Spirit and not Son, nevertheless he is not alien to the Son; for he was called the “Spirit of Truth,” while Christ is the truth, *and he is poured out* (προχέεται)²³⁴ *by Christ just as of course from God* (ἐκ του θεοῦ) *the Father.*²³⁵

added]. Alternative translation in Pusey, *The Library of the Fathers of the Catholic Church*, Vol. 43, ix.

²³⁴ Once again, the Greek word προχέεται is being used which before in the above citation proves to be synonymous with ἐκπορεύεται. Nevertheless, it can be questioned whether St. Cyril is speaking about an eternal or temporal pouring out in either instance. My position is that he can see both realities with the same language.

²³⁵ Cyril, *3rd Letter to Nestorius*; Eng. Trans: Price, *The Council of Ephesus of 431*, 168. It was against this statement that Theodoret of Cyrus accused St. Cyril of teaching the *Filioque*. Theodoret wrote in his refutation of St. Cyril the following: “That [the Spirit] has existence from the Son or through the son, this we shall reject as blasphemous and impious” as quoted in Price, *The Acts of the Council of Constantinople of 553*, I.268, fn. 180. This follows what Theodore of Mopsuestia himself said: “... and we do not consider him [the Spirit] to be the Son nor to have received existence through the Son,” in *ibid*, 267-68. In a separate work, Theodoret accuses St. Cyril further: “He also blasphemes against the Holy Spirit, saying that he does not

The Spirit was and is the Son's as He was and is the Father's; for though He proceeds [ἐκπορεύεται] from the Father, *yet He is not alien from the Son*; for the Son has *all things in common with the Father*, as the Lord has Himself taught us.²³⁶

proceed from the Father, in accordance with the Lord's saying, but has his existence from the Son," *ibid.*, II.361. Fr. Richard Price notes how while St. Athanasius and St. Cyril maintained the Scriptural wording of "procession" (Jn 15:26) for the Spirit's coming from the Father alone, but nevertheless they "ascribed a role to the Son, in order to bring out against the Arians the full equality of Father and Son" c.f. *ibid.*, 361, fn. 376. This seems to be quite a significant admission.

²³⁶ Cyril of Alexandria, PG 76.433; Eng. Trans: Swete, *The Holy Spirit in the Ancient Church*, 268. This is St. Cyril's reply to Theodoret, c.f. fn. 131 above. Some take this as St. Cyril's denial of the *Filioque*, but that doesn't seem clear at all. In fact, as it is stated, it seems as if it is plausibly reconcilable with the way the Council of Florence explained the Spirit's procession from both the Father and Son, since said procession was from the communion of Father and Son where they unite in spirating the Spirit as one principle. Elsewhere, Swete surveys the pneumatology of St. Cyril and concludes that he held "the idea of an essential derivation from the Son, as being One in Essence with the Father from Whom the Holy Ghost proceeds", c.f. *On the History of the Doctrine of the Procession of the Holy Spirit*, 150.

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For observe, when calling the Comforter “the Spirit of Truth,” that is, His own, He says that He *comes from* (ἐκπορεύεσθαι)²³⁷ the Father. For as the Spirit naturally belongs to the Son, being in Him and *proceeding* (προϊόν)²³⁸ through

²³⁷ Greek added from PG 74.417

²³⁸ This would be a perfect example of where St. Cyril uses ἐκπορεύεσθαι and προϊόν, albeit different terms, refer to the hypostatic origin of the Holy Spirit. For consider the argument being made here. The premise here is that since the Holy Spirit naturally belongs to the Father and the Son, the Spirit “proceeds” from the Father and “proceeds” through the Son. The next sentence where he says “But the qualities of Their substance cannot be distinct” shows that what was previously spoken about was where the Spirit was distinct from the Father and the Son, and it was said that the Spirit is distinct from Father and Son by His coming forth from the Father through the Son. Besides, it is quite apparent that St. Cyril uses the Greek προϊόν to refer the Holy Spirit’s eternal and hypostatic (personal) origin from the Father. For example, this shows up in St. Cyril’s commentary on John 14:11: “We consider that the Son, being of the Father, that is, of His essence, proceeded forth from Him in a manner ineffable, and yet abides in Him. Likewise also concerning the Holy Spirit: He proceeds in very truth from God as He is by nature, and yet is in no wise severed from His essence; but rather proceeds (προϊόν) forth from Him, still abiding ever in Him...” Citation from Pusey, *A Library of Fathers of the Holy Catholic Church*, vol. 44, 265. Therefore, προϊόν can surely signify the Spirit’s eternal origin of being, and not just, as supposed by Sicienski, a rather special notion of an eternal “progression” that is

Him, so also He belongs to the Father.
But the qualities of Their substance
cannot be distinct, where the Spirit is
common to both.²³⁹

The rather ambiguous statements by St. Cyril on the Trinity and the origin and outpouring of the Spirit requires some extra commentary. Cyrillian exegetes have long known that St. Cyril himself has a rather loose way when speaks about the *ad intra* life of God and the *ad extra* missions into the world. As Fr. Brian Daley says, St. Cyril does not “drive a wedge between God’s being in itself and God’s action in history, through Christ and the Spirit, to create, to save, and to sanctify.”²⁴⁰ Therefore, the “outpouring” or “going forth” of the Spirit by the Father and the Son reveals something of the eternal origin of the Spirit. Nevertheless, it is clear that St. Cyril is not

apart from eternal origin (manner of being rather than source of being), c.f. Siecienski, *The Filioque*, 49-50.

²³⁹ St. Cyril of Alexandria, *Commentary on John*, 15:26-27, vol. 2, trans. Pusey, *A Library of Fathers of the Holy Catholic Church*, vol. 44, 429.

²⁴⁰ Brian E. Daley, S.J., “The Fullness of the Saving God: Cyril of Alexandria on the Holy Spirit,” in *The Theology of St. Cyril of Alexandria: A Critical Appreciation*, (Eds.) Thomas Weinandy & Daniel A. Keating (London: T&T Clark, 2003), 148.

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attempting to give a clear and explicit detail on the precise origin of the hypostases of the Holy Spirit.

The language seems strange, as well, since we read in his writings that the Son and Spirit come forth from the “substance” of God or the “substance” of the Father, which also raises questions as to what he could be referring to. Surely, as already testified above, St. Cyril understood the Son to have been “begotten” by the Father, and so the Person of the Father is the origin of the Son, but St. Cyril finds himself content to speak of it as an eternal birth from the Father’s substance. That perhaps sheds light on those statements where the Spirit is said to proceed from the substance of the Son.

The unity of substance in Father and Son also seems to play a role in St. Cyril’s explanation for the deity and coming forth of the Spirit. This is a slightly different angle than that of the Cappadocians, for example. As Patristics scholar Dr. Richard Price (D.Phil, Heythrop College) notes, the “Antiochene and Cappadocian Fathers restricted themselves to the biblical affirmation of the Spirit’s procession from the Father (Jn 15:26), while Athanasius and Cyril ascribed a role to the Son, in order *to bring out against the Arians the full equality of Father*

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and Son.”²⁴¹ Thus, the procession of the Spirit comes from the unity of the Father and the Son, and this grounds much of the fabric of St. Cyril’s teaching on the “going forth” of the Spirit from the Father and the Son, from the Father through the Son, or through the Son.

Even though, as a response to the criticisms launched by Theodoret of Cyrus who accused St. Cyril of saying that the Spirit has his existence *from* or *through the Son*, St. Cyril said that the Spirit proceeds from the Father, in that very same response he also said the Father and the Son have *all things in common*, and this unity of Father and Son is elsewhere utilized by St. Cyril to speak of the common procession (προϊέναι) of the Spirit from the Father and the Son. A simple denial would have been far more explicit and a categorical rejection. Henry B. Swete claims that had the *Filioque* of the Latin West been explained to St. Cyril to mean “ex patre per filium” (from the Father through the Son), he would have accepted that the Spirit proceeds from the Father and Son (ex utroque, or “from both”).²⁴²

²⁴¹ See his commentary in *The Acts of the Council of Constantinople of 553*, trans. Richard Price, 361, fn. 376; [emphasis added].

²⁴² H.B. Swete, *The Holy Spirit in the Ancient Church*, 269.

Echoing this is the Greek Patristics scholar Marie-Odile Boulnois, who is a specialist in Cyrillian triadology. She says the following with regard to St. Cyril and the question of the *Filioque*:

Since the Spirit is both the Spirit of the Father, from whom he proceeds, as well as the Spirit of the Son, from whom he draws all that he has, his procession comes from the Father without excluding the Son's mediation. The Son receives from the Father a participation in the coming of the Holy Spirit, and the Spirit only comes from the Son because the Son receives from the Father the possibility of giving all to the Spirit. Cyril thus insists on the movement of giving which goes from the Father through the Son up to the Spirit and is transmitted by the Spirit to men.²⁴³

²⁴³ Marie-Odile Boulnois, "The Mystery of the Trinity according to Cyril of Alexandria: The Deployment of the Triad and Its Recapitulation into the Unity of Divinity," in *The Theology of St. Cyril of Alexandria: A Critical Appreciation*, (Eds.) Thomas Weinandy & Daniel A. Keating, 107. Boulnois, however, is careful enough to say that the later questions of the filioque as it regards to the debate

St. Leo the Great (400-461)

For in the Divine Trinity nothing is unlike or unequal, and all that can be thought concerning Its *substance* admits of no diversity either in power or glory or eternity. And while in the *property of each Person* the Father is one, the Son is another, and the Holy Ghost is another, yet the Godhead is not distinct and different; for while the Son is the *Only begotten of the Father*, the Holy Spirit is the *Spirit of the Father and the Son*, not in the way that every creature is the creature of the Father and the Son,²⁴⁴ but

between the Greek East and Latin West are quite anachronistic to the theological concerns of Cyril himself. What can be deduced from him, in other words, about the hypostatic origin of the Spirit, is through an integration of many statements across a wide landscape of theological writing on other subjects.

²⁴⁴ St. Leo here realizes that being X “of” Y is a relationship of origin, i.e., X originates from Y. This is proven by the fact that he realizes that the “of” relation might give the hint that the Spirit is, like all creatures, “of” the Father and Son by way of being a creature from the Father and Son. However, he anticipates the possibility of such a mistake, and clarifies that he has a distinct understanding of the preposition

as living and having power with Both,
and eternally subsisting *of That Which is
the Father and the Son.*²⁴⁵

In this passage, St. Leo is contrasting the single shared unity of substance of the Trinity with the *hypostatic particularities* of each of the three divine Persons. What is the particularity of the Spirit? The Spirit is Spirit of the Father and the Son, though he clarifies that such is not to be understood in the way that all creation is “of the Father and the Son,” which clearly implies that St. Leo had the idea that the Spirit has His origin from the

“of”. This “of” relation is an eternal “of”, i.e., the Spirit is eternally *of or from* the Father and Son, whereas creatures are temporally *off/from* the Father and Son.

²⁴⁵ Sermon 75.3, *New Advent*. This text may be argued to be less explicit, but it appears in the context that St. Leo is trying to say precisely what the distinct hypostatic properties of each of the Three Divine Persons are. Since he gives the Son’s origin in the Father, it is very probable that the text right after speaking of the Holy Spirit’s being “of” both Father and Son is a description of the Spirit’s hypostatic origin from both the Father and the Son. Some have thought that St. Leo mentions the distinct hypostatic property of the Son and then immediately shifts to speaking of the Spirit as a common nature to the Father and Son, but that would disrupt the logical train of thought. If St. Leo were thinking in that manner, why would he instantiate the unique property of one and then break from that pattern to speak of the common property of one to the other two?

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Father and Son in his mind so as to feel the need to make the clarification. Otherwise, there would have been no reason felt to make clear what is geared to be a mistaken reading, *prima facie*.

Though the Spirit has His eternal origin from the Father and the Son, He is also equal in substance with them, eternally subsisting of the same nature and essence as they. Another way of putting it is like this: though the Spirit and all creation are “from” the Father and the Son, the Spirit is unlike creation since He is eternally subsisting in the divine essence equally with the Father and the Son. That makes the most sense of St. Leo’s clarification. Elsewhere, he states:

And so under the first head is shown what unholy views they hold about the Divine Trinity: they affirm that the person of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost is one and the same, as if the same God were named now Father, now Son, and now Holy Ghost: and as if He who *begot* were not one, He who was *begotten*, another, and He who *proceeded from both*, yet another; but an undivided unity must be understood,

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spoken of under three names, indeed, but not consisting of three persons.²⁴⁶

²⁴⁶ Leo the Great, *Letters*, 15.2, *New Advent*. These words profess the *Filioque* doctrine “in no uncertain terms” says Sicienski, *The Filioque*, 64. This was St. Leo seeking to refute the Priscillianist belief that there were no real differences between Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, c.f. Brian E. Daley, S.J., “Revisiting the ‘Filioque’: Roots and Branches of an Old Debate,” *Pro Ecclesia*, Vol. X, 2001, no. 1, 41. Despite the hesitancy of Fr. Daley, it seems clear that here St. Leo distinguishes the Father as the one who begot, the Son as begotten, and the Spirit as proceeding from both the Father and the Son (*Filioque*). See comments by Swete, *The Holy Spirit in the Ancient Church*, 340-41. Alternative translation: Joseph Cullen Ayer, *A Source Book for Ancient Church History: From the Apostolic Age to the Close of the Conciliar Period* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1933), 378. As Sicienski notes, there are competing voices over this letter’s authenticity, c.f. Sicienski, *The Filioque*, 238, fn. 77. K. Küntle considered this particular letter spurious, as it bore strong resemblance to the literary form of the text from the Synod of Braga (563), but this view “has not been taken up in recent scholarship,” c.f. Bronwen Neil, *Leo the Great* (New York: Routledge, 2009), 151, fn. 26, *The Early Church Fathers* (Eds.) Carol Harrison. Letter 15 was omitted in *The Fathers of the Church’s Volume St. Leo the Great: Letters*, trans. Brother Edmund Hunt, C.S.C. (New York: Fathers of the Church, Inc., 1957), 67.

St. Eucherius of Lyons (380-449)

The Father is unbegotten, the Son begotten, the Holy Spirit neither begotten or unbegotten. If we should say 'unbegotten,' we might seem to be speaking of two fathers and if begotten, of two Sons, but rather who *proceeds from the Father and the Son* [qui ex Patre et Filio procedat], as a sort of *concord* of the Father and Son [velut quaedam Patris Filioque concordia].²⁴⁷

This Latin Metropolitan of Lyons, venerated by both Catholics and Orthodox (Nov. 6) was famous throughout Gaul for his theological works. One work in particular, a set of "instructions" to his son Salonius composed in 441 A.D., clearly includes the *Filioque*. Here, we see that his context is the hypostatic distinctions between the three divine persons, and he individuates the Spirit as a

²⁴⁷ Eucherius of Lyons, *Instructiones ad Salonium*, I (PL 50.774); Eng. Trans: Sicienski, *The Filioque*, 64.

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“concordia” (concord) of the Father and the Son because he “proceeds” from both.

St. Faustus of Riez (405-495)

We say that the Spirit is sent by the Father and the Son, and that he proceeds from the same substance, and that they act in common; this is why the Son says of Him: the Paraclete... proceeding from the Father. He did not say: "Created by the Father," but "*proceeding from the Father*," which means that he is referring to the power and nature of the Father, *in union with Him*. The saying "to proceed from the Father," precisely, emphasizes that the Spirit, together with the Father, *has no beginning*. But why does one say that the Son is born of the Father, and what does the "procession" of the Holy Spirit mean? If you want to know the difference between the one who is born and the one who proceeds, it is naturally because the former is the Only-Begotten Son (of the Father), *whereas the latter*

*has his origin from the Father and the Son.*²⁴⁸

As is typical of Augustinian thought, the temporal and economic mission of the Son and the Spirit reflect an ad intra reality which had no beginning, as St. Faustus says. Clearly, the birth of the Son from the Father is eternal, and it is this which is running parallel with the procession of the Spirit from Father and Son. Again, this also has no indication of energetic manifestation according to the order of God's essential act and is thus regarding the hypostatic origination of the Spirit. St. Faustus is venerated by both Catholics and Orthodox (Sept. 28).

²⁴⁸ Faustus of Riez, *The Holy Spirit*, Ch. 13; citation found from Fauste de Riez, *De l'Esprit Saint*, introduction, translation and annotation by Joseph Berthon, preface by Gaston Savornin (Association for the study and safeguarding of the religious heritage of Haute Provence, Digne 1999). English translation from the French by Alexandre-Newman Gallot.

St. Paschasius the Roman Deacon (+ 512)

In the year 593, Pope St. Gregory the Great wrote his 4-volume work entitled *Dialogues*, which is an extensive account of the lives of holy men and the wonderful miracles of the Saints in Italy. In the 4th book, St. Gregory makes reference to the Roman deacon, St. Paschasius (venerated by both Catholics and Orthodox, May 31st), “whose *sound and eloquent books of the Holy Ghost be extant amongst us...* was a man of a wonderful holy life, a marvelous giver of alms, a lover of the poor, and one that contemned himself.”²⁴⁹ In one of the books St. Gregory, *De Spiritu Sancto* [On the Holy Spirit], St. Paschasius states the following:

The Spirit is said to be sent by the Father and the Son, and to *proceed from Their substance....* If you ask what distinction is to be drawn between generation and procession, there is clearly this difference, that the Son is begotten of

²⁴⁹ St. Gregory the Great, *Dialogues*, 4.40 (Paris, 1608). Translated by P.W., with introduction and notes by Edmund G. Garner, M.A.

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*One, but the Spirit proceeds from Both.*²⁵⁰

Because the Roman deacon is contrasting the eternal generation of the Son with the “procession” of the Spirit, the latter must be the eternal hypostatic origination of the Spirit, and not the economic mission, nor an energetic manifestation.

²⁵⁰ Paschasius, *De Spiritu Sancto*, 12 (PL 62.23); Eng. Trans. H.B. Swete, *The Holy Spirit in the Ancient Church*, 347; [emphasis added].

St. Avitus of Vienne (450-519)

[...] we say the Holy Spirit *proceeds from the Son* and the Father [a *Filio et Patre procedere*][...] [and] it is the property of the Holy Spirit to *proceed from the Father and the Son* [ut sicut est proprium Spiritui sancto a Patre *Filioque* procedure].²⁵¹

²⁵¹ Avitus of Vienne, *Fragmento Libri de divinitate Spiritus Sancti* (PL 59.385); Eng. Trans: Siecienski, *The Filioque*, 65. German historian Uta Heil, functioning Lecturer at the Friedrich-Alexander-University Erlangen-Nuremberg and Heisenbergscholar of the German Research Foundation, notes the following details about St. Avitus along with another Saint named Faustus of Riez, who is venerated by both Catholics and Orthodox: "In contrast to this subordination of the Holy Spirit as a creature and gift for the humans Avitus, similar to Faustus of Riez a generation earlier, emphasizes the double emergence of the Holy Spirit from the Father and the Son (*Filioque*): *nos vero spiritum sanctum dicimus a filio et patre procedure...* In his discussion with Gundobad Avitus underscores the eternal, everlasting emergence of the Holy Spirit from the Father and the Son... so that the Holy Spirit does not emerge after a certain period of time which would make him into a creature that is created and passes away." Cit. from "The Homoians in Gaul," in *Arianism: Roman Heresy and Barbarian Creed*, (Eds.) Guido M. Berndt & Roland Steinacher (Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2014), 294.

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The Lord himself with his own lips certainly mentioned (John 15.26) “the Spirit of Truth, which proceedeth from the Father”. By saying “proceedeth” rather than “proceeded” he did not teach of a time when he proceeded, but by removing the past and the future demonstrated the power of his procession, *which occurs in an eternity of never-ending present time*, so that, just as it is the nature of the Holy Ghost to proceed from the Father *and the Son (Filioque)*, even if the Catholic Church does not persuade unbelievers [of the truth of] this, it (sc. The Church) not go beyond [this truth] in its own teaching.²⁵²

St. Avitus, venerated by both Catholics and Orthodox (Feb. 5) makes clear here that the procession of John

²⁵² *Contra Arianos*, 13; citation from *Avitus of Vienne: Letters and Selected Prose*, trans. Danuta Shanzer & Ian Wood (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2002), 172; [emphasis added]. See also Rev. Alfred G. Mortimer, *The Creeds: An Historical and Doctrinal Exposition of the Apostles', Nicene, and Athanasian Creeds* (New York: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1902), 92; Marilyn Dunn, *Belief and Religion in Barbarian Europe. 350-700* (London: Bloomsbury, 2013), 75.

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15:26, in his interpretation, is an eternal hypostatic origination of the Spirit, but that it is still an origination from both the Father and the Son.

St. Fulgentius of Ruspe (467-533)

Therefore, in that Holy Trinity... the Father is one, who alone by nature has generated the one Son from himself; and the Son is one, who alone has been born from the nature of the one Father, and the Holy Spirit is one, *who alone proceeds from the essence of the Father and the Son.*²⁵³

This is an unmistakable reference to the eternal hypostatic origin of the Holy Spirit by St. Fulgentius, honored as a Saint in both East and West (Jan 1st).

Therefore, the divinity of the Son could not receive the Holy Spirit since the Holy Spirit itself *proceeds from the Son just as it proceeds from the Father* and is given

²⁵³ Fulgentius, "Life of Fulgentius," in *The Fathers of the Church, Fulgentius: Selected Works*, trans. Robert B. Eno, S.S. (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1997), 64; [emphasis added].

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by the Son just as it is given by the
Father...²⁵⁴

According to the late Fr. Edmund J. Fortman (D.Theol),
“Fulgentius [...] who has been called ‘the greatest
theologian of his time’” emphasized the Filioque so much
“that it is obvious that he accepts it as a traditional
doctrine.”²⁵⁵

²⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 538; [emphasis added].

²⁵⁵ Edmund J. Fortman, *The Triune God: A Historical Study of the Doctrine of the Trinity* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 1999), 156.

St. Caesarius of Arles (468-542)

Whoever wants to be saved, brethren, above all must know and adhere to the Catholic faith. If anyone does not keep it whole and intact, doubtless he will perish forever.... The Father was made or created or begotten by no one. The Son was begotten by the Father alone, not made or created. The Holy Spirit was not made or created or begotten, *but proceeds from the Father and the Son.*²⁵⁶

²⁵⁶ *Quincunque* (also known as the *Athanasian Creed*), cited by St. Caesarius of Arles in *Sermons*, 3, *The Fathers of the Church*, St. Caesarius: *Sermons*, Vol 1 (1-80), trans. Sister Mary Magdeleine Mueller, O.S.F. (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1956), 27. Fr. Mark Dorenkemper, author of *The Trinitarian Doctrine and Sources of St. Caesarius of Arles* (Fribourg, Switzerland: University Press, 1953) states on p. 98: "An internal procession from the Father and the Son, eternal and without order and degrees—such is the procession of the Holy Spirit as St. Caesarius describes it." Citation found in Shawn C. Smith, "The Insertion of the Filioque into the Nicene Creed and a Letter of Isidore of Seville," *Journal of Early Christian Studies*, Vol. 22, no. 2, Summer (2014), pp. 276, fn. 75, published by The John Hopkins University Press: DOI 10.1353./earl.2014.006.

The Father is God, the Son is God, the Holy Spirit is God... However, every one of the faithful should believe that the Son is equal to the Father in divinity but inferior to Him in the humanity of His body which He assumed from ours; the Holy Spirit, in turn, *proceeds from them both*.²⁵⁷

St. Caesarius of Arles, a Saint who is venerated by both Catholics and Orthodox (Aug. 27), obviously supports the eternal procession of the Spirit from the Father and the Son, and it is clear he understood this in the context of the Spirit's hypostatic origin, as is clear from the parallel given of the Father's having no beginning, the Son having his beginning through generation, and then obviously the Spirit having his beginning from both Father and Son through proceeding.

The first citation is from a sermon where St. Caesarius cites the *Quicumque Vult*, also known as the Athanasian Creed.²⁵⁸ This Creed is probably created in the 5th century

²⁵⁷ Sermon 10, *ibid.*, 59.

²⁵⁸ J.N.D. Kelly, *The Athanasian Creed* (New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1964), 13 & 109; Frederick W. Norris, "Athanasian Creed,"

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Latin West, and while it is called the *Athanasian Creed*, it is almost certainly not from the pen of St. Athanasius. Nevertheless, it was universally attributed to him in the West and it was widely held to be a binding statement of the universal and apostolic faith.²⁵⁹ Just the word *Quicumque Vult* literally means “whoever wishes” [to be saved], and this decree comes with a threat of eternal damnation on all who deny its contents, including the *Filioque*. Even so, it is this St. Caesarius that the Orthodox acclaim with veneration in the following *Troparion & Kontakion* on his feast:

In truth you were revealed to your flock
as a rule of faith, an image of humility
and a teacher of abstinence; your
humility exalted you; your poverty
enriched you. Hierarch Father Caesarius,
entreat Christ our God that our souls may
be saved.²⁶⁰

in *Encyclopedia of Early Christianity*, 2nd ed., ed. Everett Ferguson (New York: Routledge, 1999), 137.

²⁵⁹ Richard Baugh, *Photius and the Carolingians: The Trinitarian Controversy* (Belmont, MA: Nordland Publishing Co., 1975), 26.

²⁶⁰ Saint Caesarius, Bishop of Arles - *Troparion & Kontakion* (Aug. 27), *Orthodox Church in America*,

St. Gregory of Tours (538-594)

I believe therefore in God the Father almighty and in Jesus Christ His only Son... I believe in the Holy Ghost, who *proceeded from the Father and the Son*, and He was not before them in time, but was equal, the God co-eternal always with the Father and the Son...²⁶¹

St. Gregory of Tours, who is venerated by both Catholics and Orthodox (No. 17), prefaced his famous *The History of the Franks* in Book 1 with an emphatic statement of what he understood to be the Apostolic faith in the form of an extended creed mimicking the structure of the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed.

<https://www.oca.org/saints/troparia/2000/08/27/102412-saint-caesarius-bishop-of-arles>.

²⁶¹ Gregory of Tours, Book 1, *The History of the Franks* (London: Penguin Books, 1974), 68.

St. Gregory the Great (540-604)

The Orthodox Church highly venerates St. Gregory the Great, and they often refer to him as the “*Dialogist*” (one who dialogues) which is simply a further reference to his famous *Dialogues*. When it was translated into Greek by Pope St. Zacharius (679-752), these volumes flourished in the East and the Greek Church cherished it. In the Orthodox *Menaion*, St. Gregory’s feast day includes the following:

Most sacred Pastor, thou art the successor of the see and also of the zeal of the first one (St. Peter), cleansing the people and bringing them to God. Successor of the throne of the prince of the choir of disciples, whence thou dost by thy teaching as with a torch enlighten the faithful, oh Gregory! When the first of Churches embraced thee, she watered all the earth that is beneath the sun with divine teaching. Hail, torch of religion, who dost light up all the world with the glory of thy words! Lighthouse, who dost

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call back to the shore those who are
tossed among the waves of error!
Instrument sounded by the breath of the
Holy Ghost!²⁶²

And yet, concerning the *Filioque*, “Pope Gregory the Great certainly taught the doctrine, but did not incorporate it into any profession of faith.”²⁶³ According to the late Frederick H. Dudden, “Gregory took his doctrine from Augustine, and was clearly in sympathy with the Spanish Catholics who inserted into the Creed the dogma of the Double Procession.”²⁶⁴ His own comments support this.

Now certainly the Holy Spirit, the
Advocate, *is ever proceeding from the
Father and the Son.*²⁶⁵

²⁶² Citation from Adrian Fortescue, *The Eastern Orthodox Church*, 2nd edition (London: Catholic Truth Society, 1908), 57.

²⁶³ Owen M. Phelan, *The Formation of Christian Europe: The Carolingians, Baptism, and the Imperium Christianum* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 148.

²⁶⁴ F. Homes Dudden, *Gregory the Great: His Place in History and Thought*, Vol. 2 (New York: Russel & Russel, 1967), 349.

²⁶⁵ St. Gregory the Great, *Dialogues, The Fathers of the Church vol. 39*, trans. Odo J. Zimmerman, O.S.B. (Washington, D.C., 1959), 109.

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However, being 'sent' can further be understood in accordance with the nature of the Godhead. The Son is said to be 'sent' by the Father in the same sense that we say he is 'begotten' by the Father. Now when he says, 'When the Holy Spirit comes, whom I will send to you from the Father,' the Son shows that he himself 'sends' the Holy Spirit, who is equal to the Father and the Son, and yet was not made man. If then 'to be sent' is only to be understood as 'to be made man,' then, surely, the Holy Spirit could in no way be referred to as sent, since he was never made man. *In the Holy Spirit's case, being 'sent' refers to the divine procession by which he issues forth from both the Father and the Son.* In the same way, therefore, that the Spirit is said to be 'sent' because he proceeds, so the Son,

without incongruity, can be said to be 'sent' because he is begotten.²⁶⁶

For He [Christ] asserts that He shews plainly of the Father, because by the appearance of His majesty, which was the manifested, *He shews both how He springs from the Father not unequal to Himself, and how the Spirit of Both proceeds coeternal with Both.* For we shall then openly behold, how That Which Is *by an origin*, is not subsequent to Him *from Whom It springs*; how He Who is produced by procession, is not preceded *by Those [Father and Son] from Whom He proceeded.*²⁶⁷

²⁶⁶ *Reading the Gospels with Gregory the Great*, Homilies on the Gospels 21-26, *Homily 26*, trans. Santha Bhattacharji (Petersham: St. Bede's Publications, 2001), 94. Notice the important correlation that St. Gregory here draws between the economic sending as indicative of the form of the eternal origination.

²⁶⁷ Gregory the Great, *Morals on the Book of Job*, 30.17; Eng. Trans. Rev. J. Bliss, *Library of Fathers of the Holy Catholic Church*, Vol. 31 (Oxford: John Henry Parker, 1850), 375.

St. Isidore of Seville (560-636)²⁶⁸

The Holy Spirit is proclaimed to be God because it *proceeds from the Father and the Son*, and has God's substance... Between the Son who is born and the Holy Spirit who proceeds is this distinction, that the Son is born from one, the *Holy Spirit proceeds from both*.²⁶⁹

²⁶⁸ According to Siecienski, St. Isidore presided over the 4th Council of Toledo (633) which declared its "it's belief in the Holy Spirit who is 'neither created nor begotten but proceeds from the Father and the Son' *The Filioque*, 69. See also Judith Herrin, *Byzantium: The Surprising Life of a Medieval Empire* (Princeton University Press, 2007), 46. In one particular letter to a General Claudius, which is largely considered spurious by historical scholarship, St. Isidore emphatically supports the *Filioque*, c.f. *The Letters of St. Isidore of Seville*, trans. Gordon B. Ford, Jr. (Amsterdam, Netherlands: Adolf M. Hakkert, 1970), 31-37. For a defense of its authenticity, see Shawn C. Smith, "The Insertion of the Filioque into the Nicene Creed and a Letter of Isidore of Seville," *Journal of Early Christian Studies*, Vol. 22, no. 2, Summer (2014), pp. 261-286.

²⁶⁹ Isidore of Seville, *The Etymologies of Isidore of Seville*, Book 7.3; trans. Stephen A. Barney, W. Lewis, J. Beach, & O. Berghof (Cambridge University Press, 2006), 157-58.

Only the Son is born of the Father; therefore he is called Begotten (Genitus). Only the Holy Spirit *proceeds from Father and the Son*; therefore it alone is referred to as “the Spirit of the others.”²⁷⁰

St. Isidore of Seville, a man venerated by both Catholics and Orthodox (April 4), clearly taught the *Filioque* in the above citations. In his *History of the Goths*, St. Isidore speaks of the Christian piety of the the Visigothic King Reccared I (559-601) who converted to Christianity after renouncing Arianism in 587.²⁷¹ Describing Reccared as having “reverence for religion”, “devout in his faith”, and benefitting the Gothic people by restoring “reverence for the true faith,”²⁷² St. Isidore gives the following account of the King’s testimony to the orthodox theology of the Trinity at the Council of Toledo (589):

²⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 159.

²⁷¹ Everett Ferguson, *Church History: From Christ to Pre-Reformation*, Vol. 1 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2005), 291.

²⁷² *History of the Goths*, 52; Eng. Trans. Guido Donini & Gordon B. Ford, Jr., *Isidore of Seville’s History of the Goths, Vandals, and Suevoi*, 2nd revised ed. (Leiden: Brill, 1970), 25.

He then called together a synod of bishops from the various provinces of Spain and Gaul for the *condemnation of the Arian heresy*; this very religious ruler was present at this assembly and supported its proceedings by his presence and signature; together with all his subjects he renounced the falsehood which the nation of the Goths had up to now learned from the teaching of Arius, and proclaimed the unity of the three persons in God, saying that the Son was born from the Father consubstantially, that the Holy Spirit *proceeds inseparably from the Father and the Son and is one Spirit of both*, whence they are one.²⁷³

Undoubtedly, in this profession “it was asserted that the Spirit proceeded from the Father and the Son, and in the third of the anathemas of the synod anyone who denied this proposition was condemned.”²⁷⁴ According to

²⁷³ *History of the Goths*, 53; Eng. Trans. *ibid.*; [emphasis added].

²⁷⁴ Geoffrey D. Dunn, “Catholic Reception of the Council of Nicaea,” in *The Cambridge Companion to the Council of Nicaea*, ed. Young Richard Kim (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021), 355. For

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the late Henry Chadwick, a prestigious British scholar of the Patristics, the Council of Toledo (589) “included the Augustinian *Filioque* as part of proper catechetical doctrine. In the western churches of the sixth-century the truth of this doctrine was taken for granted as a necessary safeguard against Arianism.”²⁷⁵

The 1st session of Toledo (589) records the King giving his testimony of conversion, wherein he adds: “In equal degree must the Holy Spirit be confessed by us, and we must preach that He proceeds from the Father and the Son and is of one substance with the Father and the Son.”²⁷⁶ In addition, the third anathema of the Council states “Whoever does not believe in the Holy Spirit, or does not believe that He proceeds from the Father and the Son, and denies that He is coeternal and coequal with the Father and the Son, let him be anathema.”²⁷⁷ According

more scholarship on this, see B.J. Kidd, *Documents Illustrative of the History of the Church*, Vol. III (New York: SPCK, 1941), 32.

²⁷⁵ Henry Chadwick, *The Church in Ancient Society: From Galilee to Gregory the Great* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 657. For further corroboration Aristeides Papadakis, *The Christian East & the Rise of the Papacy: The Church AD 1071-1453* (Crestwood: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1994), 228.

²⁷⁶ J.N.D. Kelly, *Early Christian Creeds* (New York: David McKay Company Inc., 1972), 361.

²⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 361-62.

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to *The Orthodox Study Bible*, though “the King may have meant well, but he was contradicting Jesus’ teaching, confessed by the entire Church, concerning the Holy Spirit. Unfortunately, that local Spanish council agreed to his error.”²⁷⁸

On the other hand, the saintly Isidore of Seville bears witness to the Christian orthodoxy of King Reccared, and yet as we see the latter was unmistakably confessing that the Spirit proceeds eternally from the Father and the Son as the single cause of His existence. What is further interesting here is that Reccared converted from Arianism under the influence of the brother of St. Isidore and predecessor in the archepiscopal see of Seville, St. Leander (534-600), a man also venerated as a saint by Catholics and Orthodox (April 4), and warmly befriended to St. Gregory the Great.²⁷⁹ St. Leander, in fact, presided over the Synod of Toledo (589), and thereby held to the *Filioque*.²⁸⁰ Fr. John Meyendorff expresses astonishment

²⁷⁸ *The Orthodox Study Bible* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1978), XXV.

²⁷⁹ Everett Ferguson, *Church History*, Vol. 1, 291.

²⁸⁰ Paul C. Burns, “Mozarabic Rite,” in *Medieval Iberia: An Encyclopedia*, ed. E. Michael Gerli (London: Routledge, 2003), 589; Howard Watkin-Jones, *The Holy Spirit in the Mediaeval Church: A Study of the Christian Teaching Concerning the Holy Spirit and His Place in the Trinity from the Post-Patristic Age to the Counter-*

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at how St. Leander accepted the Filioque at this Synod.²⁸¹ Therefore, there are grounds to believe that 6th century Latin Saints were in support of the *Filioque* as a true expression of the Trinitarian faith against Arianism.²⁸²

Reformation (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2021; originally published by Epworth Press in 1922), 24.

²⁸¹ John Meyendorff, *Imperial Unity and Christian Divisions* (Crestwood: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press), 144.

²⁸² Recent scholarship has begun to doubt the insertion of the Filioque at the Councils of Toledo before 653, but nevertheless believe that its creedal insertion came from the influence of St. Isidore of Seville, thus effectively leaving the main thrust of this section without subtracted import for the subject at hand, c.f. Michael J. Kelly, *Isidore of Seville and the Liber Iudiciorum: The Struggle for the Past in the Visigothic Kingdom* (Leiden: Brill, 2021), 134. Elsewhere, Professor of History and specialist in Medieval Spain, Alberto Ferreiro, states: "Of great significance was the addition of the filioque clause to the Nicæan/Constantinopolitan Creed; it was introduced in Hispania somewhere between 589 and 633. There are still those who defend that it was at the Third Council of Toledo (589)." Citation from Alberto Ferreiro, "The Visigothic and Suevoic kingdoms: The Road to Unity in Post-Roman Hispania," in *The Routledge Hispanic Studies Companion to Medieval Iberia*, ed. E. Michael Gerli & Ryan D. Giles (London: Routledge, 2021), 73. But even if one were to press the likelihood that the Filioque was not interpolated into the creed at Toledo (589), the Filioque was still explicitly taught in the 1st opening session and in the 3rd of the Council's anathemas, c.f. J.N.D. Kelly, *Early Christian Creeds*, 362. The same conclusion drawn by Alasdair Heron in "The Filioque Clause," *One God in Trinity*, eds. Peter Toon & James D. Spiceland

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That St. Isidore himself was in agreement with his brother, the King Reccared, and the Council of Toledo (589) is clear from his account given above in his *History of the Goths*, but one can also consider the forthcoming history of St. Isidore's life. He presided over the Council of Toledo (633) at which the then King of Hispania, Sisenand, professed that "the Holy Spirit derived from both Father and Son, a belief supported by Isidore."²⁸³ As cited from above, St. Isidore's *Etymologies* clearly teaches the Filioque and received wide acceptance throughout the West as a "pure formula of faith."²⁸⁴

(Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2021; originally published in 1980 by Cornerstone Books), 64; lastly, Karl Christian Felmy, "The Development of the Trinity Doctrine in Byzantium (Ninth to Fifteenth Centuries)" in *The Oxford Handbook of the Trinity*, eds. Gilles Emery, OP, and Matthew Levering (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 213.

²⁸³ Judith Herrin, *The Formation of Christendom* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1987), 239.

²⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

St. Maximus the Confessor (580-662)

With regard to the first matter [*Filioque*], they (the Romans) have produced the unanimous evidence of the Latin Fathers,²⁸⁵ and also of Cyril of Alexandria, from the study he made of the gospel of St. John. On the basis of these texts,²⁸⁶ *they have shown that they have*

²⁸⁵ This portion of the statement right here deserves pause. What Latin Fathers? If not a reference to Sts. Ambrose, Augustine, Fulgentius of Ruspe, Hilary of Poitiers, Jerome, Faustus of Riez, Avitus, Leo the Great, and Gregory the Great, then which Latin Fathers could possibly be adduced to say that the Spirit hypostatically proceeds from the Father absolutely alone, with no eternal involvement of the Holy Spirit?

²⁸⁶ It is important to note that St. Maximus, who was undoubtedly familiar with the text of St. Cyril, understood the Latin defense of their *Filioque* to have utilized St. Cyril's many statements in his commentary on the Gospel according to St. John with regard to the Spirit's procession or "going forth" from the Father and the Son. If the reader comprehends the citations provided earlier in this chapter by St. Cyril on the text of St. John's Gospel, one might be able to glean that St. Cyril understood that the consubstantial unity of Father and Son serves as a sort of ground upon which the Spirit's person receives His being. If that is what St. Maximus has in mind, that certainly would

*not made the Son the cause (aitian) of the Spirit*²⁸⁷—they know in fact that the Father is the *only cause* of the Son and the Spirit, the one by begetting and the other by ekporeusis (procession)—*but that they have manifested the procession through him* (to dia autou proienai) *and have thus shown the unity and identity of the essence [...]*²⁸⁸

exclude *Photian Monopatrisim* and would posit the Son with some involvement in the Spirit eternal coming to be.

²⁸⁷ It is sometimes thought that the Latins rejected this text from St. Maximus (*Letter to Marinus*) since he denies that the Son is cause. This is what is reported in *Memoirs of Silvestro Syropoulos*, a Greek delegate at Florence. However, as Siecienski rightly notes from the official *Acta*, the Latins did not simply reject the *Letter to Marinus*. Rather, they explained that they deny the Son is the “primacy cause of the Spirit” and argued that St. Maximus was consistent with the Filioque, c.f. Siecienski, *The Filioque*, 165-66.

²⁸⁸ Maximus, *Letter to Marinus*, PG 91.136; Mansi 10.695ff.; Eng. Trans: Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, Vol. 3, 52-53. From what St. Maximus says here, it seems as though the Latin theologians he had discussions with were able to clarify that they did not hold to a Diarchy in the Godhead, whereby the Father and the Son are both the arche or “cause” (aitia) of the shared deity of the Trinity. As was clear from even the early Latin Fathers, even St. Augustine, the Father alone is “principle without principle,” which is just another way of saying that the Father alone is the Monarch, i.e., sole beginning, since

For the Holy Spirit, just as he belongs to the nature of God the Father according to his essence so he also belongs to the nature of the Son according to his essence, *since he (ἐκπορευόμενον) proceeds inexpressibly from the Father through his begotten Son* and bestows on

the Father's spirative production of the Spirit is still "given" to the Son, making Him a "beginning from another beginning," or "principle from principle," which means the Father retains the unique Monarchy when we look at the absolute cause. What is interesting here is that St. Maximus describes the Latin dependence upon St. Cyril's commentary on the Gospel according to St. John, and it is in this commentary, as I've shown above, that makes it clear that, for St. Cyril, the consubstantial unity of the Father and the Son makes both of them an eternal source from which the Spirit derives the divine nature, and thus His hypostatic origin. More importantly, St. Maximus says that the Latins retain the teaching that the Father alone is cause (ἐκπορεύσις), and that the Spirit is solely produced eternally from the Father, but has some sort of "progression through" (πρόεισιν) the Son. However, St. Cyril uses πρόεισιν to describe the hypostatic origin of the Son through being begotten, and so the term doesn't seem to carry a special code meaning for a non-hypostatic origination, but is possibly comport with such a thing.

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the lampstand—the Church—his energies as through a lantern.”²⁸⁹

[...] just as the mind [i.e., the Father] is the cause of the Word,²⁹⁰ so is He also

²⁸⁹ Maximus, *Quaestiones ad Thalassium* 63, *Maximi Confessori Quaestiones ad Thalassium*, Carl Laga & Carlos Steelas (Turnhout, Belgium: Brespols, 1980), as cited in Siecienski, *The Filioque*, 77. Greek can be obtained from PG 90.672 C-D). The well-known Patristics scholar G.L. Prestige summarizes Maximus in his *God in Patristic Thought* (London: SPCK, 1952), 253-54, “So, too, Maximus the Confessor, to carry the matter no further, defends the double procession by reference both to Cyril and the Latin Fathers (opusc. 70 C, D), arguing that the doctrine does not imply that the Son is the cause of the Holy Spirit, *but that the Spirit proceeds through the Son*; and again, he maintains (qu. Ad Thal. 63, 238D) that as the Holy Spirit is by nature in substance the Spirit of the God and Father, so He is by nature in substance the Spirit of the Son since He ineffably *proceeds out of the Father substantially through the begotten Son*.” J. Meyendorff understands St. Maximus to be merely referring to the temporal economic procession of the Spirit in the world as representing the Spirit’s consubstantiality with the Son, c.f. *Byzantine Theology*, 93. This has some merit since St. Maximus goes directly from the eternal origin to the temporal economy of salvation on mankind, and thus, even if the Son is mediating, it could be towards the latter reality.

²⁹⁰ Context would determine whether this is a reference to the hypostatic origin of the Word, but that seems unquestionable. If so, then the Word being involved in the cause of the Spirit by the Father

[the cause] of the Spirit *through the Word*. And just as one cannot say that the Word is of the voice,²⁹¹ so too one cannot say that the Son is of the Spirit.²⁹²

seems to be an eternal and hypostatic involvement, whatever that might be.

²⁹¹ The voice coming out of the mouth does not cause the Word, but rather the Word, as a logical concept, precedes and goes into the making of the Voice. Perhaps in a mediatorial sense. In the same way, St. Maximus seems to think that the Son goes into the production of the Spirit, even if the Father is first principle.

²⁹² Maximus, *Quaestiones et Dubia*, 34 in José Declerk (ed.) , *Quaestiones et Dubia* (Turnhout: Brespols, 1982), p. 151, as cited from Najib George Awad, *Orthodoxy in Arabic Terms: A Study of Theodore Abu Qurrah's Theology in its Islamic Context* (Boston: De Gruyter, 2015), 258. See similar translation by Siecienski: "Just as the nous is cause of a word, so also [the Father is the cause] of the Spirit through the mediation of the Logos. And just as we are not able to say that the word is of the voice, neither can we say that the Son is of the Spirit." Original source: *St. Maximus the Confessor: Questions and Doubts*, ed. Despina D. Prassas (DeKalb: University of Northern Illinois Press, 2010), 147; citation taken from Siecienski, "St. Maximus the Confessor, the Filioque, and the Papacy," in *A Saint for East and West: Maximus the Confessor's Contribution to Eastern and Western Christian Theology*, (ed.) Daniel Haynes (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2019), 50-51. Even though Anastasius the Librarian (9th century) claimed St. Maximus meant that the Spirit temporally proceeds from the Father through the Son, this particular text speaks to the eternal (*ad intra*) relation between Son and Spirit, c.f. Siecienski, *The Filioque*, 77-78.

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St. Maximus's famous *Letter to Marinus* has been used throughout the centuries in order to both prove or disprove the doctrine of the *Filioque*. It is my view that the argument made in his letter can be used to defend either the *Photian monopatrism*, the Latin *Filioque*, or even the *Blachernae* or *Palamite* notion of a procession of the Spirit through the Son in God's natural activity. A variety of factors must be looked at. In the first place, St. Maximus's appeals to the consensus of the Latin Fathers, the majority of whom are unmistakably *Filioquist* in the Florentine sense,²⁹³ could lead one to think that he is clearly in support of the Latin understanding of the procession. Even more in this direction is his appeal to the writings of St. Cyril, and the latter's *Commentary on the Gospel According to St. John* in particular. St. Cyril makes is very transparent, as proven in the commentary above, that the Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son eternally in the order of His hypostatic origin.

But here there are reasons to be skeptical of this. St. Maximus seems to exclude from the Son being the "cause"

²⁹³ See Alexander Alexakis, *Codex Parisinus Graecus 1115 and Its Archetype* (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks, 1996), 76-85. Alexander argues for the emphatically pro-*Filioque* status of the florilegium that St. Maximus was probably viewing while he sojourned in the West.

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of the Spirit, and that would be, *prima facie*, contradictory to the Latin-Augustinian *Filioque*. For Maximus, the Spirit proceeds (ἐκπορεύεσθαι) from the Father as the sole cause and then “comes through” (προϊέναι) the Son, of which the explanatory details are simply nowhere in the letter to Marinus. Curiously, Maximus thinks that this distinction between ἐκπορεύεσθαι and προϊέναι somehow exemplifies the Cyrillian commentary on the Gospel according to St. John where the cause of the Spirit is the Father alone, leaving the Spirit to come through (in some way) the Son. However, as my notes on St. Cyril above demonstrate, προϊέναι and ἐκπορεύεσθαι are not rigidly different, let alone sufficiently distinct to account for the difference between cause and some other non-originating hypostatic mediation (e.g. the energetic manifestation or temporal procession towards creatures).

If Maximus has the pneumatology of St. Cyril correct, ἐκπορεύεσθαι and προϊέναι aren't to be reduced to the temporal mission of the Spirit through the Son but must be an eternal reality as well. This much at least should be unmistakable. This would then militate against the interpretation which sees St. Maximus supporting the strict *Monopatristism* of Photius's *Mystagogy*, where an eternal procession of the Spirit is from the Father alone,

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leaving the Son to merely be that which “through” the Spirit comes towards creation.

But is it possible that St. Cyril uses those two terms (ἐκπορεύεσθαι and προϊέναι) in order to convey the difference between hypostatic origin and some other ad intra eternal coming forth, e.g., a procession according to the order of God’s action or energy? As shown in the 2nd Appendix, this is unlikely, and so this would militate against St. Maximus being an explicit support of the neo-Palamite gloss on the eternal manifestation qua God’s energy.

St. Maximus uses those words almost interchangeably, and with reference to hypostatic origin. And yet, he makes it clear to Marinus that the Son is not cause of the Spirit, which certainly doesn’t simplify things for us. However, it very well could be the case that when he is speaking of “cause” here, he means the primordial cause of the 1st, e.g., the Father, without excluding the mediatorial means of the 2nd, e.g., the Son.

This is how Greek theologian Bessarion, who ended up converting to Catholicism because of the Latin presentation of the Church Fathers at Florence, read the *Letter to Marinus*. On St. Maximus’s exclusion from the Son of being “cause” of the Spirit, Bessarion wrote:

That the Son is not a cause of the Spirit we can also say, for we understand the meaning of cause in the strictest sense, as used in the Greek idiom, whereby cause always is understood as the *primordial first cause*.²⁹⁴

Admittedly, this interpretation comes with a stretch. However, because St. Maximus appealed to the consensus of the Latin Fathers on the *Filioque*, which is undoubtedly proto-Florentine in content, together with the fact that he appealed to the *Filioquist* theology of St. Cyril's commentary on the Gospel according to St. John, Bessarion's interpretation is certainly not unreasonable. As the argumentation provided in this book attempts to show, the idea that the Latin Fathers were teaching a pure *Photian Monopatrism* or some kind of *Latino-Palamite* notion of an energetic procession is simply outside the bounds of reason.

The only other helpful gloss on the Letter to Marinus would be to suggest that Maximus has in mind a procession of the Spirit from Father alone as "cause", but

²⁹⁴ Bessarion of Nicaea, *Refutatio Capitem Syllogisticorum* (PG 161.240); Eng. Trans. Sicienski, "Saint Maximus the Confessor, the Filioque, and the Papacy," in *A Saint For East and West*, ed. Daniel Haynes, 39; [emphasis added].

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that, like St. Gregory of Nyssa, the hypostatically-originating-procession itself comes *through the Son*. If this were the case, it would still fall under the anathema of Blachernae (1285) which condemned any notion of the Spirit proceeding from the Son, even if the latter was that by which the Spirit proceeds through.

On another note, it is common in recent times to hear that the Latins at Florence simply rejected the authenticity of the letter because it refuted the Latin position on the *Filioque*. However, in the *Acts of Florence*, the Latins, besides questioning the letter's authenticity, reacted to the content of the letter in the following manner:

For even we ourselves would say that the Son is not the primary cause of the Spirit: we assert one cause of the Son and the Spirit, the Father, the one according to generation and the other according to procession; but in order to signify he communion and equality of essence we also assert the procession through the Son and clearly confess the inseparability of the substance. For the Son is substantially the Son of the Father and the Holy Spirit substantially is of the

Father and the Son. Since he is substantially of the Father and the Son, and the substance of the hypostasis is inseparable, therefore the Holy Spirit is also from the hypostasis of the Son. Maximus states at the pronouncements of the holy Roman fathers do not say otherwise, not only Augustine, Jerome, and Ambrose, but the rest whose books manifestly assert the Holy Spirit is from the Father and the Son.²⁹⁵

The Latin response to the letter to Marinus sounds remarkably equivalent to Bessarion, and they were not opposed to the reasoning of the content. They were largely skeptical of its authenticity. Besides, the authenticity of the Letter to Marinus has been, according to Siecienski, doubted for centuries.²⁹⁶ In any case, it is quite striking how the letter to Marinus can be used by multiple sides to “prove” their views, and consequently it is not very useful

²⁹⁵ Joseph Gill, *Quae supersunt actorum Graecorum Concilii Florentini*, vol. 1 (Pontificium Institutum Orientalium Studiorum: Roma, 1953), 412; Eng. Trans. Siecienski, “Saint Maximus the Confessor, the Filioque, and the Papacy,” in *A Saint for East and West*, ed. Daniel Haynes, 39; [emphasis added].

²⁹⁶ Siecienski, *The Filioque*, 79.

in bringing unity between Catholics and Orthodox today. It is certain that St. Maximus would have never used the Greek word for cause (*aitia*) as if it belonged to the Son of God. St. John of Damascus and St. Maximus are both adamant on this point. However, the question is whether St. Maximus could have been only concerned to use that word for the primordial source of all deity that the Latin, too, held for the Father exclusively. He excludes the Son from this, and he says the procession of the Spirit “through the Son” manifests the Son’s consubstantiality with the Father. This is the part which is utterly strange.

What could manifest this consubstantiality if not something shared by all three divine Persons? Given St. Maximus’s immersion in Greek theology, it is unlikely that it pertains to anything else by what of the shared substance of all three Persons. This can be used as a hint that St. Maximus might be speaking about the shared activity of God, or the energetic procession. Fr. John Meyendorff is not without a basis to conclude the following from reading St. Maximus: “In other words, from the activity of the Spirit in the world after the Incarnation, one can infer the consubstantiality of the three Persons of the Trinity, but one cannot infer any causality in the eternal personal relationships of the Spirit

with the Son.”²⁹⁷ However, St. Maximus would then be clashing with his reference to St. Cyril, and definitely the Latin Fathers. Or, he could have innocently misinterpreted the Latins, as well as St. Cyril.

Lastly, it should be noted that St. Maximus excludes the Son from being a cause of the Spirit by stating that the Father alone is the cause of the Son and Spirit, and then mentions the peculiar manner of being caused for both, the Son by way of generation and the Spirit by way of proceeding (ἐκπορεύεσθαι). But it should also be recognized from the citations given above that St. Maximus includes the Son in that proceeding of the Spirit as being essentially “through the Son.” And thus, the Son is not totally alien to the Spirit’s procession. What kind of union with that procession, by which the Spirit is eternally produced, does the Son have? If we say that He [the Son] merges with the Father in that the Spirit proceeds from both, then that would seem to merge the Son into being the cause of the Spirit, something St. Maximus had already excluded. Nevertheless, elsewhere he brings the Son into view precisely in the eternal procession of the Spirit as some sort of means to the active spiration or procession of the Spirit, something condemned by Blachernae 1285. Perhaps he was not aware of the

²⁹⁷ John Meyendorff, *Byzantine Theology*, 93.

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seeming incoherence, and if so, it seems Bessarion's rationalizing of St. Maximus with the Father as primordial cause could bring a sharper coherence to Maximian thought. All in all, the letter to Marinus leaves more questions than answers.

**St. Theodore of Tarsus, Archbishop of
Canterbury (602-690)**

[...] Following these in all devotion and orthodoxy, we likewise believe and confess their divinely inspired doctrines and confess the Father and Son and the Holy Spirit to be rightly and truly a Trinity consubstantial in Unity and Unity in Trinity, that is, one God, in three substances or consubstantial persons equal in glory and honour [...] We glorify our Lord Jesus Christ as they glorified Him, adding and subtracting nothing: we anathematize with heart and lips those whom they anathematized and we accept those whom they accepted, glorifying God the Father, who is *without beginning*, and His only begotten Son, *begotten of the Father* before all worlds, and the Holy Spirit, *ineffably*

*proceeding*²⁹⁸ from the Father and the Son [...] ²⁹⁹

According to Fr. Richard Price, Pope St. Agatho (680), in seeking support for the doctrine of Dyothelitism against Byzantine Monothelitism, sent the Acts of the Lateran Council (649) with Abbot John to Canterbury to England and requested the English to declare its profession of faith. St. Theodore, the Archbishop of Canterbury, who was a Greek Catholic, then held the Council of Hatfield (680), wherein the quoted portion was part of a larger profession.³⁰⁰ What is interesting about this is that when Pope St. Agatho received this statement of St. Theodore, he gladly received it and embraced its contents.³⁰¹ Oxford classicist and specialist in Medieval texts David Howlett states that St. Theodore “required”

²⁹⁸ Since this profession concerning the Holy Spirit is couched within the basic eternal Trinitarian relations, it would be unlikely that an energetic procession, which is categorically separate from hypostatic origination, is being discussed by St. Theodore.

²⁹⁹ As quoted from the historical account in St. Bede, *The Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, (Eds. & trans.) Judith McClure & Roger Collins (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 199-200.

³⁰⁰ See *The Acts of the Lateran Synod of 649*, trans. Richard Price (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2016), 103.

³⁰¹ Sicienski, *The Filioque*, 89.

adherence to the *Filioque*.³⁰² That St. Theodore subscribed to the *Filioque* is confirmed by Henry Chadwick and others.³⁰³

³⁰² *The Celtic Latin Tradition of Biblical Style* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 1995), 342.

³⁰³ Henry Chadwick, "The English Church and the Monothelite Controversy," in *Cambridge Studies in Anglo-Saxon England*, vol. 11, *Archbishop Theodore: Commemorative Studies on His Life and Influence*, ed. Michael Lapidge (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 93-95. See also J. Robert Wright, *A Companion to Bede: A Reader's Commentary on the The Ecclesiastical History of the English People* (Cambridge: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2008), 100; *Biblical Commentaries from the Canterbury School of Theodore and Hadrian*, eds. Bernhard Bischoff & Michael Lapidge (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 143-46; Richard Haugh, *Photius and The Carolingians* (Belmont, MA: Nordland Publishing Co., 1975), 30.

St. John of Damascus (675-749)

Further, it should be understood that we do not speak of the Father as derived from any one, but we speak of Him as the Father of the Son. *And we do not speak of the Son as Cause or Father*, but we speak of Him both as from the Father, and as the Son of the Father. And we speak likewise of the Holy Spirit as *from the Father*, and call Him the Spirit of the Father. *And we do not speak of the Spirit as from the Son:*³⁰⁴ but yet we call Him the Spirit of the Son [...] *And we confess that He is manifested and imparted to us through the Son* [...] It is just the same as in the case of the sun from which come both the ray and the radiance (for the sun itself is the source of both the ray and the radiance), and it is through the ray that the radiance is imparted to us, and it is

³⁰⁴ This is strong language suggesting something very close to how Photius would make his argument.

the radiance itself by which we are lightened and in which we participate.³⁰⁵

This passage suggests that St. John cannot be adduced as a clear witness to the Filioque doctrine of the West. The meaning in this passage seems to accord along the lines of the economic procession of the Spirit from the Son into the world of creation. Yet, elsewhere, he writes:

And to put it shortly, the Father has no reason, wisdom, power, will, save the Son Who is the only power of the Father, the immediate cause of the creation of the universe: as perfect subsistence begotten of perfect subsistence in a manner known to Himself, Who is and is named the Son. And the Holy Spirit is the power of the Father revealing the hidden mysteries of His Divinity, proceeding from the Father *through the Son in a manner known to Himself, but different from that of generation*. But the Holy Spirit is not the Son of the Father but the Spirit of the Father as proceeding from the Father.

³⁰⁵ John of Damascus, *An Exposition of the Orthodox Faith*, Book 1.9, *New Advent*.

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For there is no impulse without Spirit. And we speak also of the Spirit of the Son, not as through proceeding (ἐκπορευόμενον) from Him, but as *proceeding through Him from the Father. For the Father alone is cause.*³⁰⁶

This could be read as an eternal and immanent procession of the Spirit, according to His origin, through the Son. However, it is difficult to determine. What is clear is that the Damascene is adamant that the *Father alone is cause* through “proceeding”, and yet this “proceeding” is never to be understood without being “through the Son.” That “through” in this instance is an eternal mediation of the Spirit’s procession is made absolutely clear in the above citation when the Damascene has to add “but different than generation,” which entails that the mediatorial procession of the Spirit through the Son is a hypostatic origination.

The above could accord with the Bessarion’s explanation at Florence, where the exclusive cause of deity is in the Father alone understood as the primordial or absolute first cause, without excluding the mediating inclusion of the Son as the Only Begotten. I find nothing

³⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 1.12.

in St. John's material that necessarily gravitates in that direction, however, and other statements in the corpus of the Damascene could raise legitimate questions as to what he means. At the same time, nothing the Damascene says about the procession of the Holy Spirit "through the Son" hints that it is an "energetic" procession of the common nature of the three divine persons. In the next citation below, St. John speaks of the procession of the Spirit from the Father alone, and then adds that the Spirit "rests in the Son," possibly indicating that he holds to the processing origination of the Spirit from the Father alone while having the Son as a terminating point to which the procession ends. Not enough detail is provided by the Damascene to be too conclusive:

God is also Holy Spirit, being sanctifying power, subsistential, proceeding from the Father without separation, and resting in the Son, identical in essence with Father and Son.³⁰⁷

Elsewhere, we get more indications of the mediatorial function of the Son in the Spirit's hypostatic procession:

³⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 1.14.

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I say that God is always Father, having his Word always coming from himself and, *through the Word*, having his Spirit proceed (ἐκπορευόμενον) from him.³⁰⁸

Father is the Father, and unbegotten; Son is the Son, begotten and not unbegotten, for He is from the Father; Holy Ghost, not begotten but proceeding, *for He is from the Father* [...] Think of the Father as a spring of life *begetting the Son like a river* and the *Holy Spirit like a sea*, for the spring and the river and the sea are all one nature. Think of the Father as a root, and of the Son as a branch, and of the Spirit as a fruit, for the substance in these three is one. The Father is a sun

³⁰⁸ John of Damascus, *Dialogue Against the Manicheans*, 5, PG 94.1512B; Eng. Trans. *Ancient Christian Doctrine*, ed. Thomas C. Oden, Vol. 4, *We Believe in the Holy Spirit*, ed. Joel C. Elowsky (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2009), 233. This sounds more along the lines of the eternal procession, but there is enough conflicting evidence to leave it as questionable.

with the Son as rays and the Holy Ghost
as heat.³⁰⁹

³⁰⁹ John of Damascus, *On Heresies*, 103; Eng. Trans. Frederic H. Chase, Jr., *St. John of Damascus: Writings* (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1958), 162; *The Fathers of the Church*, Vol. 37. In this text, one might observe that the main point of St. John is to focus on the unity of nature amidst the diversity of Persons. However, it would be rash to deny that he does not include hypostatic origination, or perhaps its order, in the midst of describing the diversity of Persons. For instance, he compares the Son being begotten "like a river." Clearly, the river imagery is supposed to match the hypostatic origination of the Son. Is it too much to say, therefore, that the imagery of the Holy Spirit as the sea, which comes from the spring through the river, is meant to be compared to eternal hypostatic origination?

St. Paulinus II of Aquileia (726-802)

The Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church confesses that we should believe one person of the Father, because the Father is He who begat the Son coeternal with Himself without time and without all beginning, and another person of the Son, because the Son is He who was begotten without beginning by the Father, not putatively but truly, *and another person of the Holy Ghost, for the Holy Ghost is, and proceeds from the Father and from the Son.*³¹⁰

At the Synod of Frankfurt-on-Main (794), of which St. Paulinus was president, the above *Libellus* was drawn up to condemn Elipandus of Toledo and the *adoptionist* heresy.³¹¹ St. Paulinus was a proponent for the defense of

³¹⁰ *Libellus against Elipandus*, Mansi 13.878; Eng. Trans. J. Rawson Lumby, *The History of the Creeds* (Cambridge: Deighton, Bell, & Co, 1873), 93; [emphasis added].

³¹¹ J.N.D. Kelly, *Early Christian Creeds*, 3rd ed. (London: Routledge, 2014; first published by Addison Wesley Longman Ltd., 1950), 364; Siecienski, *The Filioque*, 93.

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both the *Filioque* doctrine and its being added to the creed.³¹² He thought the addition was necessary because of “heretics who murmur that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father alone.”³¹³

³¹² J. Tixeront, *History of Dogmas*, Vol. 3 (St. Louis, MO: B. Herder, 1916), 504.

³¹³ Aidan Nichols, *Light from the East: Authors and Themes in Orthodox Theology* (London: Sheed & Ward, 1995), 76.

St. Tarasios of Constantinople (730-806)

I believe in one God the Father almighty, and in one Lord Jesus Christ the Son of God and our God, born of the Father timelessly and eternally, and in the Holy Spirit the Lord and giver of life, *who proceeds* (ἐκπορευόμενον)³¹⁴ *from the Father through the Son* and is acknowledged to be himself God [...]³¹⁵

ἐκπορευόμενον (proceeds) is used typically in Greek thought as the eternal production of the hypostases of the Holy Spirit, and yet here the Son is said to play a role in

³¹⁴ It is important to note here that St. Tarasios is citing the creed, whose use of “proceeds” is defined as an eternal and hypostatic origination. The Greek word used for proceed is the same Greek term used in the Nicene-Constantinopolitan creed (ἐκπορευόμενον), c.f. Mansi 12.1222, as cited in *Ancient Christian Doctrine*, ed. Thomas C. Oden, Vol. 4, *We Believe in the Holy Spirit*, ed. Joel C. Elowsky, 234. It would seem all the odder to read into this a separate category of energetic procession. Like St. Basil, saying the Spirit’s Person eternally proceeds from the Father “through the Son” is condemned by Blachernae (1285). It allows only for an energetic procession, which is a natural or essential manifestation common to all three divine Persons.

³¹⁵ *The Acts of the Second Council of Nicaea (787)*, Session 3, trans. Richard Price (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2020), 211.

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this. One should also notice how the context here is with reference to the hypostatic origin of the three divine persons in the midst of the Creed! Therefore, to try and read the “energetic procession”, a procession which is common to all three divine persons (i.e., the Trinity’s action), would surely be a stretch and foreign to the context of hypostatic particularity.

Pope St. Leo III (795-816)

We believe the Holy Spirit *proceeds equally from the Father and the Son* and is consubstantial and co-eternal with the Father and the Son [...] The Holy Spirit, *proceeding from the Father and Son*, is fully God.³¹⁶

³¹⁶ Pope Leo III, *Letter to the Eastern Churches*, Epistula 15; Eng. Trans: Richard Haugh, *Photius and the Carolingians: The Trinitarian Controversy* (Belmont, MS: Northland Pub. Co., 1975), 68; cit. found in Sicienski, *The Filioque*, 97. For the full Latin text of this letter to the East, c.f. Swete, *On the History of the Doctrine of the Procession of the Holy Spirit*, 230-231. A fuller translation is provided by Dr. Peter Gilbert, and it shows that the Pope understood the *Filioque* to be *de fide*: ““The bishop Leo, servant of the servants of God, to all the Eastern Churches. We are sending you this symbol of Orthodox faith so that both you and all the *rest of the world may hold to the right and inviolate faith in accordance with the Holy Roman Catholic and Apostolic Church*. We believe in the Holy Trinity, that is, Father Son, and Holy Spirit, one God, all-mighty, of a single substance, of a single essence, of a single power, Creator of all creatures, from whom are all things, through whom are all things, in whom are all things: the Father, from himself, not from any other; the Son, begotten of the Father, true God of true God, true light of true light, not two lights, however, but one light; *the Holy Spirit, proceeding equally from the Father and from the Son, consubstantial, coeternal with the Father*

This is the Pope that many remember for his having two silver shields with the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed without the Filioque written on both, in Greek on one side and Latin on the other and placed it publicly in St. Peter's Basilica.³¹⁷ This is undeniably true. It is also true that he declined requests from the Franks to add the Filioque to the official Creed. However, as Jaroslav Pelikan noted:

He did indeed accept the Filioque as a doctrine, and in the creed which he composed he confessed his faith in "the Holy Spirit, who proceeds equally from the Father and the Son [...] In the Father there is eternity, in the Son equality, in the Holy Spirit the connection between eternity and equality." But he was not

and the Son. The Father, complete God in himself, the Son, complete God begotten of the Father, the Holy Spirit, complete God proceeding from the Father and the Son...."; cit. from De Unione Ecclesiarum: Musings on Church and State, June, 24, 2008,

<https://bekkos.wordpress.com/2008/06/24/on-anastasius-the-librarian/>. This is significant because Photius, in his *Mystagogy*, attempts to defend the Church Fathers who may have taught the *Filioque* by saying that they did not teach it as a doctrine but perhaps by way of mistake in a quasi-private mode of thought.

³¹⁷ See Aidan Nichols, O.P., *Rome and the Eastern Churches*, 239

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willing to impose an addition to the creed, although he did permit it to be taught. “We ourselves”: the pope said, “do not chant this, but we do speak it [legimus] and by speaking teach it; yet we do not presume by our speaking and teaching to insert anything into the creed.”³¹⁸

³¹⁸ Jaroslav Pelikan, *The Christian Tradition: A History of the Development of Doctrine*, Vol. 2, *The Spirit of Eastern Christendom 600-1700* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1974), 187.

St. Alcuin of York (724-804)

There are, however, certain attributes proper to each person of the Holy Trinity, which each reveals within an inseparable equality. The Father alone is the Father, and likewise the Son alone is the Son, and the Holy Spirit alone is the Holy Spirit. The Father has this property that he alone among all others *does not derive from anyone else*. In this way to him alone pertains Fatherhood, and not just divine being. The Son of God has the property of *being only-begotten*, by which He alone is begotten of the Father consubstantially. The Holy Spirit has the distinctive character of *proceeding equally from the Father and the Son*. He is the Spirit of both, and is of the same

substance and eternity as the Father and the Son.³¹⁹

St. Alcuin is well known for being representative of the Latin *Filioquist* position, being extremely influential in the theology of Charlemagne's court. It is quite obvious that the context of the above citation is the unique and timeless hypostatic properties of the three divine persons, and the Spirit is uniquely marked as that which eternally proceeds from both the Father and the Son. What is most pertinent to our purpose here is to see how equivalent St. Alcuin's description of the *Filioque* is with his Latin patrimony, i.e., the teaching of the Latin Saints and Doctors. I don't think any Orthodox would try to squeeze a proto-energetic manifestation in the Alcuin *Filioque*, and yet it is the latter which could have been written by St. Ambrose, St. Augustine, St. Leo the Great, or St. Gregory the Great. This militates against the idea that the Latin-*Filioque* prior to the 7th and 8th centuries was just a Latin version of the Greek Orthodox *Filioque* according to God's natural action akin to the Council of Blachernae 1285.

³¹⁹ Alcuin, *De Fide Sanctae et individualae Trinitatis* (PL 101.17); Eng. Trans: Douglas Dales, *Alcuin II: Theology and Thought* (Cambridge: James Clarke & Co., 2013), 101; [emphasis added]. See also Siecienski, *The Filioque*, 95.

Chapter 5: The *Filioque* & the Late Byzantine Response

Having now examined the Scriptural and Patristic highlights on the Holy Spirit's procession, it is now time to look at the position of the Medieval-Byzantine East which found itself from the 9th century forward condemning the *Filioque*. This will provide the opportunity to see if the Greeks were correct in their understanding of the Spirit's procession, and whether their rejection of the *Filioque* was justified. In the fully developed response of the East, Photius's arguments against the *Filioque* remain firm, but Orthodox scholars recognize a certain development of Greek doctrine on the subject of the Son's eternal relationship with the Holy Spirit. Their position was that the Spirit can be said to eternally depend on the Son, but not for the cause of His existence, but rather simply for the *manner* of His existing, whether that be in the order of God's eternal energy or even in some unique non-causal hypostatic property.

Chapter 5: The Filioque & the Late Byzantine Response

It is my observation that neither the “energetic” manifestation of the Spirit from the Son which some believe is codified by the Greeks at Blachernae 1285 , nor an alternative hypostatic procession from the Father (as cause) through the Spirit (non-causally), suffices to match the biblical and Patristic evidence reviewed in the previous chapter on the Son’s involvement in the Spirit’s procession. The evidence surely demonstrates a necessary involvement (i.e., cause) of the Son in the very production of the Spirit's person. More details on this will be given below.

As already explained in previous chapters, many readers are familiar with the *Mystagogy of the Holy Spirit* written by Patriarch Photius in the 9th century and how this document intended to be a thorough refutation of the *Filioque* doctrine. He sustained a strict *Mono-patrist* position whereby the Father alone is the cause of all deity, and the Spirit and the Son simply come forth eternally from Him, one by generation the other by procession. Picture the Father as the Sun, and the Son and Spirit are two bright rays that flow down on the left and right below.

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If anything is clear by now it is that this simplistic *Monopatrism* position, despite its philosophical coherence, simply will not do justice to the Patristic data of at least the Latin tradition, and arguably the Greek tradition as well. It fails even to account for the Greek Fathers who taught the Spirit “proceeds” (ἐκπορεύεται) from the Father “through the Son” (διὰ τοῦ Υἱοῦ), where said “through” is modifying the word “proceeds”, thereby indicating that the Son has a mediatorial role in the originating procession (and therefore production) of the Spirit. This would also give no hint at the “energetic” manifestation. The Medieval-Byzantine East came to strongly reject any *Filioquist* interpretations of the Trinity, and nevertheless opted for this *Monopatrism*.

The West, on the other hand, believed it was faithful in synthesizing the Latin and authentic Greek Patristic tradition. Assembling in a Council in Lyons in 1274, the Latins defended the *Augustinian Filioque* and it was theologically defined. Basing its decrees on the Latin and Greek Fathers, the Lyonian Fathers that the Holy Spirit proceeds eternally from both the Father and the Son as one single principle and *as one single spiration*.

Shortly after this, there were groups in Constantinople who were ready to accept the *Lyonese Filioque* as reflecting Patristic pneumatology. However, there was

a greater force in support of the anti-unionist effort. But how were these anti-unionist theologians to respond to the overwhelming evidence of the Fathers that speak of the Spirit eternally coming forth from the Father and Son, or more importantly, *through the Son* (διὰ τοῦ Υἱοῦ)? Although it is rather uncommon to highlight this element of Eastern Orthodox triadology, it is not true, as opposed to popular opinion, that the Orthodox are open to the idea of the Spirit eternally coming from the Father *through the Son* in His hypostatic origin. Even “through the Son,” according to the Byzantine Orthodox in the late Middle Ages, is wholly unacceptable and equally as incorrect as saying the Spirit has His hypostatic origin from the Father and the Son. The Council of Blachernae (1285) condemned the idea that the Spirit’s hypostatic existence comes from the Father through the Son.³²⁰ They only allowed for the Spirit to have this origin from the Father alone. How then did the Greeks deal with the clear testimony of the Fathers on the Spirit’s existence through the Son?

In order to refute the *pro-Lyonese-Filioque* unionist party in the East, the anti-unionist Greeks held a synod in a suburb territory of Constantinople (Blachernae) in 1285 which issued a *Tomos* authored by the well-known

³²⁰ Papadakis, *Crisis in Byzantium*, 157.

Gregory II of Cyprus (1241-1290), who will be referred to as the Cypriot for short, which had condemned the Latin *Filioque*, both that the Spirit proceeds from the Son *or through the Son*, but then surprisingly offered an explanation of how to understand the Patristic witness of the Spirit's eternal coming *διὰ τοῦ Υἱοῦ* (through the Son). In his *Tomos*, the Cypriot states:

In certain texts [of the Fathers], the phrase (through or from the Son) denotes the Spirit's *shining forth* and *manifestation*. Indeed, the very Paraclete *shines forth* and is *manifest eternally* through the Son, in the same way that light shines forth and is manifest through the intermediary of the sun's rays; it further denotes the bestowing, giving, and sending of the Spirit to us. It does not, however, mean that it subsists through the Son and from the Son, and that it receives its being through Him and from Him.³²¹

So we see here that the Cypriot, after condemning that the Spirit proceeds from both Father and Son or from Father through the Son, provides an alternative

³²¹ *Ibid.*, 160.

explanation for the Spirit's eternal dependency upon the Son, and he relegates this dependency to the Spirit's eternal illumination, shining, or manifestation. What precisely is this *eternal shining*? It is not an easy question to answer, and interpretations of the Cypriot are debated among Orthodox theologians.³²² At the very least, what we have here is a recognition by the Orthodox that the Church Fathers speak of an eternal flowing forth *διὰ τοῦ Υἱοῦ*, but that this is absolutely besides the productive cause of the Spirit's eternal person. Detailing this Greek formulation will be extremely important in aiding the reader to assess whether the Church Fathers really meant this eternal manifestation as opposed to the Spirit's hypostatic origin from/through the Son. Before getting into the theological explanation, a bit of the background is necessary.

As already alluded, this doctrinal development of a timeless shining of the Spirit through the Son was right in the midst of an attempt by the Byzantine Emperor Michael VIII Palaeologus (1261-1282) to forge union with

³²² See Anne-Sophie, "The Eternal Manifestation of the Spirit through the Son: a Hypostatic or Energetic Reality?" *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* Volume 113, Issue 3, Sept. 11, 2020, pp. 1041-1068; available online *De Gruyter*, September 11, 2020, <https://doi.org/10.1515/bz-2020-0044>.

the Roman Church through subscribing to the *Lyonian Filioque*, a policy which the then Patriarch of Constantinople, John IX Bekkos (1275-1282), a man whose career carried immense importance to this subject, was theologically on board with. Through a close reading of the Church Fathers,³²³ he became convinced that the Greek Fathers taught the same thing that the Latins taught, just with different terminology. In other words, Bekkos came to understand that the Holy Spirit truly did have his eternal hypostatic origin from the Father *through the Son*, which was equal to being from the Father *and the Son*.³²⁴

In the grand scheme, the 13th century debates over the *Filioque* in Byzantium can be summarized by a great doctrinal contrast between Bekkos and the Cypriot. These 2 figures illustrate the bulk of the theological controversy between East and West since Bekkos was in support of the union with the Latins. Alongside of this, there were Greek anti-unionists who agreed with the Cypriot against union with the Latins but disagreed with both the Cypriot and

³²³ Joseph Gill, *Byzantium and the Papacy 1198-1400*, 158-59.

³²⁴ Joseph Gill, "John Beccus, Patriarch of Constantinople," in Joseph Gill, *Church Union: Rome and Byzantium (1204-1453)* (London: Variorum Reprints, 1979), 265; Aristeides Papadakis, *The Christian East & the Rise of the Papacy*, 232.

Bekkos on how to theologize about the Holy Spirit. The crux of the debate was how to understand the Spirit's being "from the Son" or "through the Son," now understood by all to be clearly laced in Patristic writings.³²⁵

Leading the pro-unionist cause, Bekkos insisted that *διὰ τοῦ Υἱοῦ* could be basically reconciled with the Latin *qui ex Patre Filioque procedit* (proceeds from Father and the Son).³²⁶ The anti-unionists who disagreed with both Bekkos and Gregory, reasonably called *Photian fundamentalists*, insisted that the only flowing forth of the Spirit from the Son is in the temporal economy. The Cypriot, in contrast, who himself eventually succeeded in becoming the Patriarch of Constantinople, was not satisfied to simply say that the Spirit only issues forth from the Son in the economy of temporal creation without further commenting on the Spirit's timeless relationship with the Son. He found "Photius' arguments wanting; by going creatively beyond them, he enriched, deepened, but also stretched the Photian formulations."³²⁷ On the other

³²⁵ For a detailed history, see Papadakis, *Crisis in Byzantium*. Fr. Aidan Nichols, O.P., states: "Photius hardened pneumatology into a mould that made it impossible for the orthodox to reach agreement with the West or even with those Latin fathers they accept as their own", *Rome and the Eastern Churches*, 251.

³²⁶ Joseph Gill, *ibid.*, 155-60.

³²⁷ Aidan Nichols, *ibid.*, 3.

hand, Bekkos took the position that the Patristic *διὰ τοῦ Υἱοῦ* was substantially equivalent to the Latin *Filioque*, and thus he found no reason for Greeks and Latins to remain divided.

In addition to these options, you had ultra-conservative *Photian fundamentalists* who went completely the other way and denied all involvement of the Son in the Spirit's eternal existence, even the so-called eternal shine or manifestation. These opposed the *Tomos* of Blachernae since they simply wanted to repeat the strict *Photian Monopatrism* explanation.³²⁸

The Cypriot comes in and seeks to find a way to deny the Spirit's hypostatic origin from the Son (affirming Photius) while also going past Photius in articulating a manner in which the Spirit comes forth eternally through the Son that occurs in a different mode, namely, this concept of a manifestation of the Spirit by means of the Son. He recognized "that the Patristic evidence cannot be reduced solely to Photius's exclusive formulation "from the Father alone."³²⁹ Photius had no problem saying that the Spirit is sent by the Son in the temporal economy of

³²⁸ Robert M. Haddad, "The Stations of the Filioque," in *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly* 46:2 (2002), 252.

³²⁹ *Ibid.*, 37.

salvation towards creatures, but in the timeless (*ad intra*) being of God, he simply had no place for the Son to be involved in the Spirit's coming to be. At least, there isn't a great deal of explanatory evidence that he did.

Bekkos certainly goes beyond this since he attempted to argue that the Son has a mediatorial role in the very procession of the Spirit itself, thus situating the Son in the cause of the Spirit's hypostasis.³³⁰ In at least a grammatical sense, Photius's *Mystagogy* reduced the Patristic understanding of the Spirit's eternal origin to a very narrow model.

It is now time to focus in on the Cypriotic formulation of the Spirit's manifestation through the Son. Fr. John Meyendorff offers his understanding of the details on the theological development of Greek pneumatology from Photius to Blachernae 1285 where this notion of a timeless shining of the Spirit through the Son is actually a reality existing *on the order of God's essential activity or energy*:

The usual counter-argument of the Orthodox side was that in Biblical or patristic theology procession "from" or "through"

³³⁰ *Ibid.*, 69.

the Son designates the charismata of the Spirit, and not His hypostatic existence. For indeed *pneuma* can designate the giver and the gift; and, in the latter case, a procession of the “Spirit” from or through the Son—i.e., through the Incarnate historical Christ—happens in time, and thus does not coincide with the eternal procession of the Spirit from the hypostasis of the Father, the only ‘source of divinity.’ *This counter-argument was recognized as in-sufficient, however, by the major Orthodox Byzantine theologians of the thirteenth and the fourteenth centuries. Gregory of Cyprus (1283-1289) [...] chairman of the council (1285) which officially rejected the Union of Lyons, had this assembly approve a text which, while condemning the Filioque, recognized an “eternal manifestation” of the Spirit through the Son. What served as a background to the council’s position is the notion that the charismata of the Spirit are not temporal, created realities, but eternal, uncreated grace of “energy” of God. To*

this uncreated divine life, man has access in the body of the Incarnate Logos. Therefore, the grace of the Spirit does indeed come to us “through” or “from” the Son; *but what is being given to us is neither the very hypostasis of the Spirit nor a created, temporal grace, but the external “manifestation” of God, distinct from both His person and His essence.* This argument was also taken over and developed by Gregory Palamas [...] who, like Gregory of Cyprus, formally recognizes that as energy, *“the Spirit is the Spirit of Christ, and comes from Him, being breathed and sent and manifested by Him, but in His very being and His existence, He is Spirit of Christ, but is not from Christ, but from the Father.”*³³¹

And so, the eternal manifestation of the Spirit taught by the 13th century Cypriot, according to Meyendorff, is something existing on the order of God’s *natural operation*, and not something to do with the Spirit’s hypostatic origin, nor anything strictly unique to the

³³¹ John Meyendorff, *Byzantine Theology*, 93-94.

hypostases of the Spirit. This idea of the eternal manifestation or illumination of the Spirit from the Son being explained concretely as a reality in the mode of God's energies was theologically speculated in the writings of Nikephoros Blemmydes (1197-1272) who taught that the eternal relationship between the Son and the Spirit was explained "in terms of consubstantiality and not in terms of a causal relationship."³³² Trying to use the verb "shining"³³³ from the writings of St. Athanasius, Nikephoros spoke of the Spirit as the "energy" of the Son.³³⁴ However, the energy of the Son is common to all three divine persons, and thus the eternal manifestation is a reality that comes from the nature of God, i.e., the uncreated energy.

According to this reading of the Cypriot and Palamas, both figures are responsible for developing this trajectory of the Spirit's "shining" qua energies. For the Cypriot, according to Meyendorff, though there is a language of the

³³² Theodoros Alexopoulos, "The Eternal Manifestation of the Spirit 'Through the Son' (διὰ τοῦ Υἱοῦ) According to Nikephoros Blemmydes and Gregory of Cyprus," in *Ecumenical Perspectives on the Filioque for the Twenty-first century*, ed. Myk Habets (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2014), 75.

³³³ Which, as was seen in the commentary on St. Athanasius in Ch.3, a metaphor to describe the unique hypostatic property of the Spirit.

³³⁴ *Ibid.*, 74.

Spirit shining eternally from the Son, this is a reality stemming from the unity of essence, and thus equal in all three divine persons.³³⁵ So while it sounds peculiar to the Spirit that He shines out through the Son eternally, this is still a matter, in Meyendorff's interpretation, concerning the "energetic life of the Trinity,"³³⁶ and thus the common nature.

The Cypriot, therefore, couldn't simply say the Spirit proceeds from the Father alone, leaving it at a pure reassertion of Photius's *Monopatriist fundamentalism*, nor could he admit that the *διὰ τοῦ Υἱοῦ* of the Church Fathers was simply saying precisely what the Latins were claiming, namely, an indivisible and eternal principle in both Father and Son as the hypostatic origin of the Spirit. He then figured that he could give two different meanings to "ἐκ", "διὰ", and "ἐκπορευόμενον" in the statement "... the Holy Spirit, who proceeds from [ἐκ] the Father through [διὰ] the Son." According to Aristeides Papadakis, who takes the same "energetic" interpretation of the Cypriot/Palamas as Meyendorff, the Cypriot claims that when the Church Fathers wrote διὰ (through) the Son, they simply intend to say that the Spirit comes

³³⁵ *Ibid.*, 77-78.

³³⁶ *Ibid.*, 79.

through the Son by way of an “energetic manifestation,”³³⁷ rather than an eternal hypostatic procession. Knowing these two things are contrasted is important.

Gregory of Cyprus’s theology sustains that the “notion of causation— *aitia*—was to be understood in an absolute sense, and had to be ascribed to the Father alone, as the Cappadocians had affirmed; any interventions by the Son in the procession was ruled out [...] Causation was not susceptible to either participation or division (sharing) with the Son... Hence, the expression ‘through the Son’ was neither synonymous nor coextensive with the Latin *ex Filio (Filioque)*.”³³⁸ Thus, the Cypriot actually does not depart from Photius’s *Monopatrism*. Rather, he attempts to add this notion of God’s natural action to explain the Spirit’s shining through the Son. This would render his teaching to be ontologically distinct from the hypostatic procession of the Spirit since God’s energy is a common trait to all three divine Persons, albeit in the triadic order of Father through the Son and *in the Spirit*. As Vladimir Lossky describes well, the energetic activity in God permits “the difference between tri-hypostatic existence in itself and tri-hypostatic existence in the common

³³⁷ Papadakis, *Crisis in Byzantium*, 71.

³³⁸ *Ibid.*, 72.

manifestation outside the essence.”³³⁹ Meyendorff and Papadakis, therefore, are of one mind with Lossky on the Cypriot and Palamas.

It cannot be stressed enough how important it is to understand that if Meyendorff, Papadakis, and Lossky are correct in their interpretation of the Cypriot, and therefore the council of Blachernae (1285), then the anti-unionist of the Greek East formulated their doctrine of the eternal flowing forth of the Spirit from the Father *through the Son* for an entirely different category than what the Greek Cappadocian Fathers understood when they constructed the Creed which says the Spirit “proceeds from the Father” since the latter is according to the hypostases of the Spirit and His origin. The eternal procession has to do with hypostatic characteristics, which *must not* be equal in all three divine persons. The “energetic shining” is something common to all three divine persons, as Lossky described.

Therefore, in the above reading of the Medieval-Byzantine “*Filioque*”, if we can call it that, the eternal “flowing forth” of the Spirit from the Son has nothing to

³³⁹ Vladimir Lossky, “The Procession of the Holy Spirit in Orthodox Trinitarian Doctrine,” in *In the Image and Likeness of God* (Crestwood: St. Vladimir’s Orthodox Seminary Press, 1976), 93.

do with the Spirit's hypostatic origin. We are in a different category of thought when speak of *energetic* or *active* procession of the Spirit through the Son. Not knowing this explains why many Catholics today can be confused as to why the Orthodox, to this day, have never accepted the *per filium* (through the Son) resolution. This is because they understand that "through" to be in an entirely different category than hypostatic origination, whereas the Catholics do.

I've cited from Meyendorff, Papadakis, and Lossky, but there are more Orthodox theologians that support this reading of the "eternal manifestation" of the Cypriot and Blachernae (1285). The Greek Orthodox theologian Theodoros Alexopoulos helps explaining how Gregory of Cyprus divides the deified functions of Spirit into three categories:

Gregory clearly distinguishes three specific functions within the Deity referring to the Holy Spirit: procession, eternal manifestation, and temporal mission. Within these three functions yet another distinction must be made. The procession must be explained in terms of a relationship of origin *while the other two*

*functions in terms of the unity of essence
(consubstantiality).*³⁴⁰

Gregory Palamas similarly made this clear when he said the following: “There are three realities in God, namely, *substance, energy,* and a Trinity of divine *hypostases.*”³⁴¹ The first two are equal in that they pertain to the unity of the divine essence, whereas the hypostases have distinguishing properties. In consequence, the “energetic manifestation” in Gregory of Cyprus, and picked up by Palamas, is not within the order of hypostatic peculiarity, but in the common natural action of the Trinity. Again, Vladimir Lossky makes this distinction clear and applies it to the “energetic” procession:

In His hypostatic existence, the Holy Spirit *proceeds from the Father alone;* and this ineffable procession enables us to confess the absolute diversity of the

³⁴⁰ Theodoros Alexopoulos, “The Eternal Manifestation of the Spirit ‘Through the Son’ (διὰ τοῦ Υἱοῦ) According to Nikephoros Blemmydes and Gregory of Cyprus,” in *Ecumenical Perspectives on the Filioque for the Twenty-first century*, ed. Myk Habets, 77; [emphasis added].

³⁴¹ Palamas, *Capita*, 75; Eng. Trans. A.N. Williams, “Light from Byzantium: The Significance of Palamas’ Doctrine of Theosis,” in *Pro Ecclesia*, 1994; Vol. 3, n.4, p. 495.

Three Persons, i.e. our faith in the Trinity. In the order of *natural manifestation*, the Holy Spirit *proceeds* from the Father *through the Son* (dia Hiou), after the Word; and this procession reveals to us the *common glory* of the Three, the eternal splendor of the divine nature.³⁴²

If there were any remaining doubt over the ontological difference between the hypostatic procession of the Spirit and the Medieval-Byzantine conception of the “energetic manifestation” of the Spirit (which Lossky calls, not insignificantly, “natural” manifestation), then this one line in the Cypriot’s *Tomos* should remove whatever doubt remains:

If, in fact, it is also said by some of the saints that the Spirit proceeds “through the Son,” (fol. 96) what is meant here is the eternal manifestation of the Spirit by the Son, *not the pure* [personal] *emanation into being of the Spirit, which has its existence from the Father*. Other-

³⁴² *Ibid.*; [emphasis added]. This echoes Photius’ *Mystagogy* in the first part.

wise, this would deprive the Father from being the only cause and the only source of divinity [...] ³⁴³

We have then two different kinds of “processions” in view here. Let’s call it *procession A* versus *procession B*, where *A* refers to eternal hypostatic procession and *B* refers to the energetic manifestation (of the unity of the divine essence). This can be further explicated in the following manner on behalf of this neo-Palamite interpretation:

- (A) The Holy Spirit proceeds (*eternally/hypostatic*) from the Father.

- (B) The Holy Spirit proceeds (*energetically*) from the Father and proceeds (*energetically*) from the Son.

Thus we have articulated two very distinct processions of the Holy Spirit, “one hypostatic from the Father, the other communicative from the Father and the Son,” and, according to Greek Orthodox theologian Fr. John P. Manoussakis, such a categorical difference squeezed into the “through the Son” terminology “is

³⁴³ Tomos 1285, 5; Eng. Trans: Papadakis, *Crisis in Byzantium*, 161.

based... on ‘the ancient Eastern, Cappadocians, and Palamite distinction between divine essence and divine energies.’”³⁴⁴

In keeping with Palamas’s 75th chapter, the Trinity of divine hypostases is a distinguished reality from the common activity or energy. Often, Catholics can be mistaken in thinking that the late Byzantine doctrine of the Spirit’s procession from the Father “through the Son” is simply an additive to the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed, but as we can see what we have here is a wholly and categorically distinct kind of procession to begin with.

When the later Greeks articulated their understanding of the Spirit’s flowing forth eternally “from the Son”, they simply mean *procession B*. To understand the contrast between energy and hypostases, we can say that while a hypostatic origination speaks of the eternal cause of the Spirit’s existence, subsistence, and essential being,

³⁴⁴ John Panteleimon Manoussakis, *For the Unity of All: Contributions to the Theological Dialogue between East and West*, 20. For further elaboration on the similarity and distinction between the procession of the Spirit’s coming to exist (eternally) from the Father and the Spirit’s shining forth through the Son, see Dumitru Staniloae, *Theology and the Church*, trans. Robert Barringer (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 1980), 17-19.

whereas the energetic shining has to do with the manner in which the Spirit so exists in the timeless life of God, namely, He shines through the Son in one single common operation or energy that all three divine Persons partake of. Gregory Palamas explains:

[...] the Holy Spirit *proceeds from the Two*, because it comes essentially from the Father through the Son, you should understand this teaching in this sense: *it is the powers and essential energies of God which pour out, not the divine hypostasis of the Spirit.*³⁴⁵

One can see how when Palamas says the Spirit “proceeds from the Two,” it can easily be mistaken for a *Filioquist* reading. Once we understand he is speaking about the natural or essential activity that is equally triadic as it is monadic, i.e., equal in all three divine persons, then we can see how it is entirely of a different category than the hypostatic origination concept of the Latin *Filioque*. Elsewhere, Palamas reiterates the same idea:

³⁴⁵ Gregory Palamas, *Apodictic Treatise*, I, Coisl. 100, fol. 58 (ed. Constantinople, 1627, p. 100); Eng. Trans: John Meyendorff, *A Study of Gregory Palamas* (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 1964), 230; [emphasis added].

The hypostasis of the All-Holy Spirit *does not come from the Son*: it is not given or received by anybody; it is only the divine *grace and energy* which are received.³⁴⁶

Once again, the Spirit does not, in this view, eternally come from the Son for His hypostatic origin, but merely goes forth through the Son according to this different ontic mode of energetic manifestation, which we now know is equally expressed in each of the persons of the Trinity.³⁴⁷ Therefore, as Palamas argued, this energetic manifestation is from the divine nature (though not

³⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, fol. 41 (p. 64); Eng. Trans: Meyendorff, *Ibid.*; [emphasis added].

³⁴⁷ For more explicit proof that Palamas understood the energetic procession of the Spirit through the Son to be wholly distinct from the Spirit's hypostatic procession of the Spirit from the Father alone, see the wonderful study Mikonja Knežević, "'Εκ' and 'διὰ' in Apodictic Treatises on the Procession of the Holy Spirit of Gregory Palamas," in *Triune God: Incomprehensible but Knowable—The Philosophical and Theological Significance of St. Gregory Palamas for Contemporary Philosophy and Theology*, ed. Constantinos Athanasopoulos (Newcastle upon Tyne, United Kingdom: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2015), 264-91; Markos Orphanos, "The Procession of the Holy Spirit According to Certain Greek Fathers," in *Spirit of God, Spirit of Christ: Ecumenical Reflections on the Filioque Controversy*, ed. Lukas Vischer (London: SPCK, 1981), 21-45; Siecienski, *The Filioque*, 145-47.

identical to it), and therefore it is common to all three divine Persons,³⁴⁸ and can neither be identified with the hypostatic origin of the Spirit which is unique to the hypostasis of the Father alone.³⁴⁹ To repeat, this manifestation of the Spirit is neither the Spirit's hypostatic origin nor His essence (*per se*), but the uncreated and common activity or operation of the Triune God. This *Palamite Filioque*, or *Orthodox Filioque*,³⁵⁰ is therefore not a belief of the Spirit's origin but rather the idea of the Spirit being "from the Father through the Son, *in terms of*

³⁴⁸ Gregory Palamas distinguishes between creatures who each have a distinct energy, whereas God, even though He is three divine Persons, still has only one energy, c.f. Gregory Palamas, *The One Hundred and Fifty Chapters*, C.112, (ed.) and trans. by Robert E. Sinkewicz (Netherlands: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1988), 211. It is for this reason that the solution offered by Eric L. Mascall to bridge Palamism and the Latin Filioque will not work, since Mascall is under the impression that the eternal manifestation is ordered off the eternal procession of the Spirit from the Father. The Cypriot and Palamas differentiate the eternal hypostatic procession of the Spirit from the Father and the eternal energetic procession of the Spirit from the Father through the Son as two categorically different processions that do not intersect, nor can they be added together to produce an addition that forms a new whole, c.f. Mascall, *The Triune God*, 67-68.

³⁴⁹ Meyendorff, *Ibid.*, 231.

³⁵⁰ Borrowing the term as used by Dr. Marcus Plested.

nature.”³⁵¹ But if it is “of nature”, then, as been emphasized hitherto, it is singular and equal in all three divine Persons. As Dr. Marcus Plested (D.Phil, Oxford), Professor of Byzantine theology at Maquette University, well described:

Since, for Palamas, *energeia* pertains to nature and not to hypostasis, there is necessarily a single *energeia* of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.³⁵²

If the *energeia* of God is one and singular in the Trinity, then the procession or manifestation of the Spirit in the *energeia* of the Son must be also true of the Father and even the Spirit Himself. Furthermore, since God’s action in creation is a common action of the Trinity, then the economic mission of the Spirit can also be said to be equal in all three, even if it is commonly spoken of as if the Spirit is sent by the Father and the Son. When God’s energy becomes directed at creation and creatures, such as in the economy of salvation, then God’s single energy

³⁵¹ Marcus Plested, *Orthodox Readings of Aquinas*, 38; [emphasis added].

³⁵² *Ibid.* Now, it should be noted that for Palamas, energy is not entirely disassociated with the hypostases of each divine member of the Trinity, since each has the energy enhypostatized, i.e., in and from the person, despite it being equal in all three.

accommodates to the manifold and complex nature of time, space, and finitude.

According to this peculiar mode of God's action, Palamas had no problem saying that "the Spirit is the Spirit of Christ, and comes from Him, being breathed and sent and manifested by Him, but in His very being and His existence, He is the Spirit of Christ, but is not from Christ, but from the Father."³⁵³ All this would be language enabled from the simple fact of the consubstantiality of the Trinitarian Persons. But it can't be stressed enough how important it is to understand that, in the immanence of God, His single energy or activity is one and singular among the three divine Persons, and thus quite distinct from the theology of the Latin *Filioque* which is concerned with *where the three divine Persons are really distinct*.

Furthermore, just like Photius and the Cypriot, Palamas was vehemently opposed to the idea of the Spirit proceeding from the Father and the Son, *or even through the Son*, if we are referring to the Spirit's hypostatic origin. He understood the Latin *Filioque* to create a diarchy between Father and Son, and thus making two beginnings

³⁵³ Gregory Palamas, *Apodictic Treatise*, I, 9; ed. B. Bobrinskoy, in P. Chrestou, *Palama Syngrammata* (Thessaloniki, 1962), I, 37; Eng. Trans. & citation from Meyendorff, *Byzantine Theology*, 94; [emphasis added].

or producers of the Spirit of God. In addition, by confusing the unique property of the Father with the Son in a dual-spiration or double procession of the Spirit's eternal being, the Latins made the Father and Son "homohypostatic" (i.e. of the same Person).³⁵⁴

The intention of the late Medieval Byzantine response to the Latin *Filioque* was to make sense of an eternal relationship between the Spirit and the Son in some way "without making the Son a cause (either immediate or proximate) of the Spirit's being."³⁵⁵ Understandably, John Bekkos described the Cypriot's idea of an eternal

³⁵⁴ Meyendorff, *Study of Gregory Palamas*, 230; George C. Papademetriou, *Introduction to St. Gregory Palamas* (Brookline, MA: Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 2004), 87-88.

³⁵⁵ Siecienski, *The Filioque*, 142. Although, there is a divergence among Orthodox theologians on whether the "energetic procession" in Gregory of Cyprus and Gregory Palamas is referring to an eternal hypostatic manifestation of the Spirit or merely to the economic procession in time towards the salvation of the world. Noting that most Orthodox theologians hold that the Cypriot and Palamas held to two categorically distinct "processions", one hypostatic and another energetic, Anne-Sophie Vivier-Mureşan provides other Orthodox voices who differ, while also surveying the evidence herself in the writings of the two Gregory's, "The Eternal Manifestation of the Spirit through the Son: a Hypostatic or Energetic Reality?" *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* Volume 113, Issue 3, Sept. 11, 2020, pp. 1041-1068; available online *De Gruyter*, September 11, 2020, <https://doi.org/10.1515/bz-2020-0044>.

manifestation as a “novelty,” and further questioned the seemingly unprecedented distinction between hypostatic origination and energetic manifestation since they could be more reasonably collapsed into the same thing.³⁵⁶ Even Papadakis, who certainly favors the side of the Cypriot against Bekkos, admits that until the 13th century, the concept of eternal manifestation of the Spirit through the energies of God, i.e., *procession B*, “broke new ground.”³⁵⁷ Gregory Palamas expands further upon this development, but also links it with his understanding of the Fathers.

Antiochian Orthodox historian Dr. Robert M. Hadadd (D.Phil, Harvard) calls the Cypriot’s distinctive theology a “novel interpretation of the allusion of certain Fathers to the procession of the Spirit *through* the Son,” and records that prior to the 13th century, “Greek theology had tended to interpret the expression [through the Son] not as a reference to the eternal procession of the Spirit but to the sending of the Spirit into the world within time...”³⁵⁸ In other words, the pre-dominant response of the Greek East

³⁵⁶ *Ibid.* Though, if he understood that the energetic procession as in the order of God’s natural action, then he couldn’t have seen them as collapsing.

³⁵⁷ Papadakis, *Crisis in Byzantium*, 89.

³⁵⁸ Robert M. Haddad, “The Stations of the Filioque,” 252; [emphasis added].

against the *Filioque* was that the Son sends the Spirit in the temporal economy, and that is as far as they went, until this late coming rebuttal against the West in the 13th century.

We might question this as several works have been published that try to show this concept can be seen even as far back as St. Gregory of Nyssa, probably in St. Maximus, and possibly picked up in interim Greek theologians such as John of Damascus. However, the question of whether the doctrine of Trinitarian energy is true or not (it certainly is, in some sense) is not as relevant to this book as much as whether said energy-doctrine explains *the Patristic axiom that the Spirit is eternally from and through the Son*, as well as whether it can be identified in the Fathers as a mode of God's existence distinct from the hypostatic peculiarity of the Spirit, namely, to the common activity of God. The burden of proof for that is certainly on the Orthodox, as a first reading of the Fathers reviewed above gives little to no hint in that direction.

Did St. Augustine, St. Ambrose, St. Hilary, St. Cyril, and St. Epiphanius intend to say the Spirit proceeds from the Son exclusively according to this energetic manifestation? That is unlikely. Just this observation should cause one to be curious as to how it could arise to the level

of dogmatic status in the Eastern Orthodox Church from the 13th century to the present.³⁵⁹

Before penetrating further into the Byzantine response to the Filioque, I'll now give a brief excursus to review and summarize what has been said hitherto, and then move on to consider those Orthodox who have criticized this "energetic" manifestation of the Spirit through the Son as explaining the Patristic *per filium*. We've seen that in the 13th century all sides began to see that the Scriptural and Patristic testimonies bear witness to the Son's involvement with the Spirit, and particularly with some aspect of His eternal existence. If it is the case that the Spirit depends on anything besides Father for His

³⁵⁹ The eternal manifestation doctrine rests upon the more comprehensive doctrine of the real distinction within the being of God between His nature and operations, enabling a real difference between the existence of God and the manner(s) of His existence. There is not enough space to venture into this subject in this small book, but it is important to note that since the eternal manifestation of the Spirit is performed through the "energies" of the Son, as signified by Gregory's *Tomos* (1285), said manifestation is cooperative by all three Divine Persons, and not just the Son. Therefore, to say the Spirit "proceeds from the Father [energetically] through the Son [energetically]" should not show up in contexts within the Patristic writings where the author is specifically dealing with the eternal hypostatic origin of the Spirit. This is what will call into question the theological application of the Cypriot *Tomos*.

The Filioque

existence, then whatever is “added” even by way of mediation, it was thought, will be involved in the cause of the Spirit’s subsistence.³⁶⁰ Therefore, to include the Son in the procession of the Spirit, *even by way of mediation* (i.e., through the Son), is to involve the Son in the cause (principle) of the Spirit, for the Spirit would depend on the Son and the Father in some way for the production of His person. The anti-unionist Greeks could not go there. This was intolerable for the Cypriot, the Greeks at Blachernae (1285), Gregory Palamas, and the majority of Eastern Orthodox today.³⁶¹

³⁶⁰ The Latins did not think the spirative act which the Father and Son share equally in was numerically a product from an addition of Father and Son, but rather the spiration is absolute and numerically one and undivided, even if the Father has this in Himself and the Son has it from the Father.

³⁶¹ This argument that “from the Son” and “through the Son”, that is “ek” and “dia”, amount to the same thing, i.e. causation, is carried even to the modern period. One prominent Eastern Orthodox theologian, the Rev. George Mastrantonis, stated on (p. 59) in *A New-Style Catechism on the Eastern Orthodox Faith for Adults* (St. Louis: The OLOGOS mission, 1969), the following: “An effort later was made to resolve this dispute concerning the procession of the Holy Spirit. Instead of the phrase ‘and from the Son’, filioque, a proposal was made to read ‘and through the Son’, in the hope that the word ‘through’ would be received favorably by both sides, West and East. The new endeavor failed for two reasons: because it was forbidden for anything to be added to the Creed, and, in substance, the word

For this reason, it was important for opponents of the Latin *Filioque* to completely exclude the Son from the cause of the Spirit. However, as noted, the Greek Church had to harmonize with the Patristic witness that the Spirit eternally proceeds from the Father and flows through the Son, at least in some way. The only alternative to attributing to the Son the cause of the Spirit's existence was this idea that while Spirit proceeds from the Father alone as cause, there is this categorically different mode of God's energetic manifestation of the Spirit which can be said to be "through the Son", though common to the whole Trinity. This, *prima facie*, not only appears to fall short of what the Fathers are teaching on the Son's role in the Spirit's hypostatic origin, but also runs the risk of being a later idea imported back into the Fathers to explain the Patristic citations provided in defense of the *Filioque*.³⁶²

'through' is no different from the word 'from'. The proposition DIA, through, in Greek, does not differ in substance from the word EK, from, in Greek, because both words lead to the cause." When this Catechism was published, it received an endorsement (p. 6) from the then Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople, Athenagoras I: "We received the printed text of the catechism which we thoroughly examined with great care and interest."

³⁶² This is not to question the fact that we have records from the Church Fathers that teach the Trinitarian energy. What seems absent is a Patristic use of that energy-doctrine to detail a different kind of procession of the Spirit from the Son as opposed to the hypostatic

The reader will be the judge of that based on the citations provided in the 3rd chapter.

Recently, however, some theologians have contested what is held by “most scholars”³⁶³ by suggesting that Gregory of Cyprus’s doctrine of the eternal shining of the Spirit is not on the order of God’s energy but is rather something truly unique to the hypostases of the Holy Spirit, and rather not shared by all the three divine persons. One such as Anne-Sophie Vivier-Mureşan, a theological faculty member of the *Institut Catholique de Paris*, draws attention to the fact that the Cypriot can make statements about the eternal manifestation of the Spirit through the Son as something pertaining to hypostatic uniqueness of the Spirit, and not to the shared triadic nature. She cites the following passage from an *Apology* of the Cypriot:

The Spirit is *another light* similar to [the Son’s] in the same way: he is not

procession which comes up in the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed. Consequently, it does not appear that the energies of the Trinity sufficiently explains all the many statements from the Church Fathers on the procession of the Spirit from the Son.

³⁶³ Joost Van Rossum, “Gregory of Cyprus and Palamism,” in *Studia Patristica*, Vol. XXXVII, ed. M.F. Wiles & E.J. Yarnold (Leuven: Peeters, 2001), 25.

separated by a time interval from the unbegotten light, but it is *through it* [Son's light] that he *shines forth* and that is *from the archetypal light* that he has the *cause of his hypostasis*.³⁶⁴

This above indicates that the Cypriot has in mind something exclusive to the Spirit when he describes His “shine” through the Son, thereby being ontologically distinct from the common energy of the Trinity. Vivier-Mureşan cites another passage:

[...] on the one hand the light [the Spirit] *emerges* from the ray [the Son], as we said, but on the other hand it does not receive from it or through it *the principle of its being* but it receives it purely and without intermediary from [ἐκ] the sun [the Father], from which [comes] the ray

³⁶⁴ Gregory of Cyprus, *Apology*, PG 142.264C; Eng. Trans. Anne-Sophie Vivier-Mureşan, “The eternal manifestation of the Spirit through the Son: a hypostatic or energetic reality?”, *Byzantinische Zeitschrift*, 113 (2020), p. 1047.

[the Son] itself, *through which* the light
[the Spirit] *is manifest and emanates.*³⁶⁵

Quite remarkable. Here above the Cypriot sounds perfectly congruent to the explanation of St. Gregory of Nyssa, as seen in the Patristic comments provided in chapter 3 of this book. St. Gregory insisted the Father alone is the causal principle of deity, for both Son and Spirit, and yet also taught that the very production of the Spirit is not without a mediatorial involvement of the Son. Perhaps the Cypriot doesn't intend to go as far as the Cappadocian, but the parallel is striking.

Vivier-Mureşan even cites from the late Fr. Dimitru Staniloae, a well-known Romanian Orthodox theologian, who himself believed the eternal manifestation doctrine entailed something about the unique property of the Spirit Himself and not about the common natural energy of the Trinity. According to Staniloae, the Cypriot's eternal manifestation doctrine "is not the expression of the identity of essence between Son and Spirit but the expression of a personal relation. If it were true that this relation resulted exclusively from their essential identity, it would no longer distinguish the Spirit from the Son and

³⁶⁵ Gregory of Cyprus, *Confession of Faith*, PG 142.251A-251B; Eng. Trans. Anne-Sophie Vivier-Mureşan, *Ibid.*; [emphasis added].

the Father, because there could then be a shining forth of the Spirit from the Father, or of the Son from the Spirit and the Father, or of the Father from the Spirit and the Son.”³⁶⁶

One should take note that when Staniloae refers to the “identity of essence,” he means to say that the eternal manifestation cannot simply be on the order of God’s energy, since the latter is equal in all three divine persons. Ergo, Staniloae rejects the idea that the Cypriot taught simply that the *eternal manifestation* is simply the *energetic procession* of God, i.e., co-operatively from the Father, through the Son, and in the Holy Spirit. On the contrary, Staniloae cites further from the Cypriot:

Now Gregory of Nyssa adds to the individual personal attributes of the Spirit which distinguish him from the Father and Son the fact that he is manifested and shines forth through the Son.³⁶⁷

Vivier-Mureşan is therefore not alone in her study. She also echoes from a 1999 study produced by Professor

³⁶⁶ Fr. Dumitru Staniloae, *Theology and the Church*, trans. Robert Barringer (Crestwood: St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 1980), 20.

³⁶⁷ Gregory of Cyprus, *Apologia*, PG 142.266D; Eng. Trans. Fr. Dumitru Staniloae, *ibid.*

Emeritus of Byzantine theology at St. Sergius Institute of Orthodox Theology, Dr. Joost Van Rossum. Rossum argues that the later Palamite insistence on the “energetic” flowing forth of the Spirit through the Son is not to be confused with the “eternal manifestation” which Gregory of Cyprus capitalized on in his *Tomos* issued at Blacharane (1285).³⁶⁸ In so doing, he recognizes that he is going up against the consensus of Orthodox scholarship on this: “[...] almost all scholars who have written on Gregory of Cyprus have seen a link between his notion of the ‘eternal shining forth’ of the Holy Spirit and Palamas’ doctrine of the divine energies. They say: it is the divine energies that shine forth eternally from the Father through the Son.”³⁶⁹ On the contrary, Rossum believes that while the Cypriot probably would have had no disagreement with the later Palamite conception of divine activity/activities, the texts of the Cypriot “themselves do not suggest that he had the divine energies in mind when writing about the ‘eternal manifestation’ of the Spirit through the Son.”³⁷⁰

³⁶⁸ See his “Gregory of Cyprus and Palamism,” in *Studia Patristica*, Vol. XXXVII, ed. M.F. Wiles & E.J. Young (Leuven: Peeters, 2001), 626-630.

³⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 628.

³⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 629.

Now, to finally summarize this very important chapter. At the Council of Lyons (1274) the Latin West dogmatized St. Augustine's doctrine of the eternal hypostatic origin of the Holy Spirit from both the Father and the Son as from one productive principle of spiration. In the East, there were some, such as John Bekkus, who came to view the Greek Patristic tradition which had spoken of the Spirit eternally coming from the Father "through the Son" as compatible, even equal, with the *Filioque* doctrine of Lyons. However, this pro-unionist minority was outnumbered by the anti-unionist Orthodox led by Gregory of Cyprus and the dogmatic decree of the council of Blachernae (1285), which had placed the anathema on anyone who said the Spirit takes from the Father and the Son, or through the Son, His existence.

The *Tomos* of the Cypriot, issued at Blachernae, attempted to explain the eternal relationship between the Son and the Spirit, and most of Orthodox scholarship reads the Cypriot doctrine of the Spirit's "eternal manifestation" through the Son as simple the mode of the Son's energy, which is equal to the common energy of the Trinity, manifesting the identity of essence. Moreover, it is held by these scholars that Gregory Palamas develops upon the Cypriot in the same vein, leaving the manifestation of the Spirit through the Son to be energetic. On

the other hand, some theologians have rightly called this explanation into question by reviewing the theological argument of the Cypriot in his *Tomos* and in other texts. While there are strong arguments for this position, I've come to see the strength of the arguments of Vivier-Mureşan, Rossum, and Staniloae. However, there are still points to contend with, and to this we now turn.

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Given the available data provided in the previous chapter, it is far more likely that Gregory II of Cyprus intended to assert two basic things which tends to raise more questions than they do answers. First, he understood that the person of the Holy Spirit is caused by the Father alone, by way of the procession. By this, the Spirit is eternally produced solely by the Father as the only principle of His being. Secondly, however, he then added that the Spirit emerges into manifestation through the Son, and that this was a hypostatic particularity. He used the analogy of light that comes from the ray of the sun. The light shines from the ray, but since the ray comes from the sun, the light must ultimately be traced back to the sun too for its principle of causation. This conception of the Spirit from the Father through the Son echoes, in some measure, if not synonymously, the triadology of St. John of Damascus and St. Gregory of Nyssa. Moreover, it is debatable, as indicated from the above, whether Gregory Palamas followed the Cypriot on the metaphysics of the Spirit's eternal manifestation from the Son.

How does the eternal manifestation doctrine comport with the Patristic evidence? If the Cypriot is accurately interpreted by the majority of scholarship which says he was simply speaking of an eternal manifestation of the Spirit through the Son, but said manifesting was by the mode of God's common energy of the Trinity, then the Cypriot finds little to no support from the Church Fathers for his teaching on the production of the Spirit. The Fathers are very much speaking to a hypostatic property in the Spirit when they teach that He proceeds from both the Father and the Son, or from the Father through the Son. On the other hand, if the Cypriot actually teaches that the Spirit is properly existing through the Son eternally, then this has a better chance at matching the Cappadocian doctrine of the Spirit through the Son. However, it is not without its problems.

In the first place, the Greek pneumatology of St. Gregory of Nyssa, to whom the Cypriot most closely aligns in theory, entails that the actual production of the Spirit, i.e., the procession, is from the Father through the Son. In other words, the procession itself, i.e., the act of coming into existence (eternally), is through the Son, albeit traced back to the Father as the root cause. The Cypriot wants to utilize the same analogy, but strongly condemned the

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view that the Spirit proceeds into existence through the Son and opted rather to leave this to the Father alone.

Secondly, the Cypriot avoids concluding that the Spirit proceeds into existence through the Son by making a real distinction Blachernaebetween coming into existence, i.e., being produced, and the manner of existing. For the Cypriot, he can see the Son involved in the latter, but not the former, and thus he posits two distinct realities that are not to be confused. Fr. Dumitru Staniloae, who attempts to explain Gregory of Cyprus, clarifies this as well:

The movement of the Spirit *towards existence* (the procession) which is from the Father and the movement *towards manifestation or illumination* which is from the Son are *neither to be confused nor separated*.³⁷¹

And again:

According to Gregory [of Cyprus] this illumination [or manifestation] of the Spirit through the Son does not mean his

³⁷¹ Dumitru Staniloae, "Trinitarian Relations and the Life of the Church," in *Theology and the Church*, 17; [emphasis added].

coming into existence as it does in procession which, accordingly, he attributes to the Father alone.³⁷²

Consequently, one wonders how the Spirit, so far as His existence is concerned, can be split between the *origin* of existence and the *style* or *manner* of existence, such that the *origin* and *style* of existing make up two distinct ontological existences. Surely, this can't be the claim. To return to the analogy of the light which comes from the duo of the sun and its rays, the light emits from the ray, which itself is caused by the sun. St. Gregory of Nyssa taught, as we saw from the 3rd chapter, that the hypostatic origin of the Spirit comes from the Father as the root cause, but not without the Son acting as like a ray which emits the light of the Holy Spirit. But since the Cypriot severs the emitting light from the ray to be in any sense involved in the Spirit's "coming into existence", he is forced to argue that the Spirit comes into existence from the Father alone, and that the light emitting from the ray is not the Spirit's coming into existence, even by way of the Son, but rather is something different altogether, namely, the manifestation of the Spirit.

³⁷² *Ibid.*, 19. Words in brackets added.

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Such a construction still requires the existence of the ray before (logically speaking) the light emits from the ray, even if the ray itself is traceable back to the sun for its own cause. Also, the light emits from the ray, and despite the ray itself being caused solely by the sun. One wonders how this doesn't already agree with the basic aim of the *Filioque*. The Cypriot, therefore, has much to explain for how the Spirit can proceed from the Father alone, and then exist through the Son. The following summary from Dr. David Bradshaw has a helpful clarification:

Gregory [of Cyprus] concedes that the Spirit may be said to exist through the Son insofar as He eternally shines forth from the Son, but *denies that the Spirit therefore has His existence through the Son*. The distinction between “existing” and “having existence” is no more obvious in Greek than it is in English, and Gregory’s critics professed to find it unintelligible. To substantiate it Gregory invoked the Damascene’s analogy with light: *radiance exists through the ray in that it shines forth from the ray, but it has its existence directly from the sun*. Gregory also makes use of the analogy to

emphasize, as had Gregory of Nyssa and John Damascene before him, the close connection between the Spirit's *procession into existence* and *His shining forth from the Son*. The manifestation of the Spirit through the Son is eternal; it accompanies His procession from the Father just as the manifestation of light through the ray accompanies the procession of the light from the sun.³⁷³

One might say that this analogy from both St. Gregory of Nyssa and St. John of Damascus makes the doctrine of the Cypriot not too different than the *Filioque* since the later can still trace the Spirit's cause to a root further back than the Son to the Father Himself as the font of all deity. In this reading of the Cypriot, perhaps the mistake of his and his Greek colleagues was to see in his own doctrine something radically contrary to the *Filioque* of the Council of Lyons when it was not necessary to do so.

The real question that must be asked in order to settle the score between the Catholics and Orthodox on the *per*

³⁷³ David Bradshaw, *Aristotle East and West*, 218-219; [emphasis added].

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filium or *διὰ τοῦ Υἱοῦ* resolution is whether the Spirit's procession, considered in itself, is a finished product before (logically speaking) the Son's "through" involvement. If the answer to this question is "Yes," then the Orthodox have been correct all these centuries in denying all sense of causation to the Son in the production of the Spirit, whatever else they might be unsure about when it comes to the Spirit's being *διὰ τοῦ Υἱοῦ*. On the other hand, if the answer to this question is "No," and the Son is intrinsically involved in the procession of the Spirit itself, even if in a mediatorial sense, then the Catholics have been correct all these centuries to at least include the Son in the cause of the Spirit's existence. For if the Father's spiration necessarily involves the Son in order to produce the Spirit, then Father and Son are what the Spirit proceed from in some real sense.

The oft used Triadic analogy to demonstrate the procession of the Holy Spirit in the Greek tradition following St. Gregory of Nyssa is the sun → light → ray analogy. Other analogies run along the lines of just 3 lights, with an original light (1st), then 2 more lights that shine from the original, where the 3rd shines through the 2nd. We've covered the Triadic torch analogy that the Cappadocian gave. In each of these analogies, there are two goals in mind. The first is to ensure that the 2nd and

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3rd of the Trio trace their origin back to the 1st, who alone is designated as the “cause” or the base from which all generation is caused. The second is to make it clear that the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd are distinguished by the difference that is made between a cause and an effect. The 1st generates the 2nd immediately, and the 3rd emerges from the 2nd while the 2nd is not designated as the “cause”, a trait reserved exclusively for the 1st.

The Eastern tradition that takes these analogies as humanly descriptive of the divine reality of the Trinity are left having to figure out how to explain the 2nd isn't some sort of a cause to the emergence of the 3rd. In order to do this, we've covered how a distinction is made between the “cause of existence” versus “the means of existence” or “fact of existence”. One might try to use the analogy that the ray that emits from light can't be thought to be caused by the light since the light itself is caused by the sun. Therefore, the light that emits from the sun is simply a means by which the ray manifests. Nevertheless, if the 2nd is necessary for the emergence of the 3rd, I can't see how one can remove the 2nd in the means of production of the 3rd. And here we come to the very crux of the debate between Catholics and Orthodox. There is no way to bridge the ontological structure of the Triadic analogy of the Cappadocian and the Augustinian *Filioque*, since the

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former posits that the 1st (sun) is doing something different than the 2nd (light) in the production of the 3rd (ray), whereas the latter (Augustine) posits that the 1st (sun) and 2nd (light) are on single principle (indistinguishably identical) in the production of the Spirit. It can't be denied that the ontological structure is irreconcilably different. But does that necessarily entail a difference between the two warrants the accusation of Trinitarian heresy from both sides to the other?

Let us consider the fact that St. Augustine and St. Gregory are seeking to achieve precisely the same thing. Both want to say God is one. Both want to say that God, while one, is Triune. Both want to say that there is a Triadic order from 1st, 2nd, to 3rd. Both want to say that the distinguishing order is made up solely on the difference between cause and caused. However, when we come to decipher how to distinguish the 2nd and 3rd, St. Augustine gives the structure of the 1st as unoriginated, the 2nd as originated from 2nd, and then the 3rd as originated from the 1st and 2nd together as one principle. The Cappadocian gives the structure of the 1st alone as unoriginated cause, and then says the 2nd is immediately originated from the 1st, and the 3rd is mediated originated from the 2nd traced back to the causation of the 1st. St. Augustine still maintains the exclusivity of the 1st as the absolute starting

point of all generated deity, but believes the 1st and 2nd merge as the productive principle of the 3rd, while the Cappadocians maintains the exclusivity of the 1st as the absolute starting point of all generated deity, but believes the 2nd and 3rd are simply both categorized as “caused” from the cause (1st), with the caveat that the 3rd does, in some sense, come through the means of the 2nd.

The learned Orthodox theologian Metropolitan Kallistos Ware takes note of the equivalent aim between the core of Latin and Greek triadology:

In this way for Augustine, as for the Cappadocians, the Father remains the ‘fountainhead of the deity’, the sole source and ultimate origin within the Trinity. Augustine’s teaching that the Spirit proceeds from the Father and from the Son—but with the qualification that He proceeds from the Son, not “principally” but “through the gift of the Father”—is thus not so very different from Gregory of Nyssa’s view that the Spirit proceeds from the Father through the Son. The Council of Florence, in endorsing Augustine’s doctrine of Double Procession, explicitly re-emphasized

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the point that the spiration of the Spirit is conferred on the Son by God the Father. The contrast, then, between Orthodoxy and Rome as regards the “monarchy” of the Father is not nearly so stark as appears at first sight.³⁷⁴

The Greek tradition that rejects the the *ultra-Monopatristic* thesis comes very close to the Augustinian Filioque, but it reserves itself from saying the Son can in any way have causative significance in relation to the Holy Spirit. However, in so doing they have to settle for this curious distinction between the cause of existence and the manifestation of existence, which is not terribly easy to explain. That is at the root of Western curiosity on this matter. The Son has to become somehow non-contributory to the production of the Spirit, and yet the procession, which is the very means of that production, is

³⁷⁴ Timothy Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, 217. It is questionable whether Ware truly understands the Florentine dogma of the Filioque since on page 216 of the same book Ware seems to refer to the procession of the Spirit from the Father as something essentially different than the procession of the Son, as if there are two different kinds of procession. However, in the same paragraph he recognizes that the Father gives to the Son the power to spirate the Spirit.

through the Son. It sounds as if the role of the Son is merely a passive tunnel. The farthest I've seen one go in explaining the role of the Son is Fr. Dimitru Staniloae as described by Fr. Theodore Stylianopoulos:

As if to relieve Western fears that Eastern triadology neglects the mutuality and reciprocity of the Son and the Spirit—including the sharing and participation of the Son in the eternal spiration of the Spirit from the Father—Staniloae speaks of “the *active repose* of the Holy Spirit in the Son” and an intimate “eternal relation of the Son to the Spirit [which] is the basis of the sending of the Spirit to us by the Son.” According to Staniloae, Eastern trinitarian theology as articulated by Gregory the Cypriot goes so far as to posit an active eternal projection or shining forth or manifestation of the Spirit through the Son, a manifestation which applies to the Spirit’s eternal existence as well as to the temporal mission [...] It can be said that the Son even *causes the eternal manifestation of the existence* of the

Spirit, but it cannot be said that the Son causes the Spirit's coming into existence of hypostasis itself [...] In other words, the Son in every way receives and manifests the Spirit but does not cause its existence as such because only the Father is the source or origin or cause of both the Son and the Spirit through ineffably different but united acts.³⁷⁵

Here is another instance of this distinction being drawn between the *cause of existence* and the *cause of the manifestation of existence*, but there is at least an “active” role given to the Son in the procession of the Spirit. However, Staniloae understands this active involvement to be defined as the Son's reception of the Spirit, where the latter reposes. That is not even analogous to the manner in which St. Gregory of Nyssa describes the Spirit as emerging *from* the Son. On top of this, the difference between cause of existence and the cause of the manifestation of existence requires some further explanation. Perhaps this is akin to the production of a ray which is simultaneous with the sun and the light from the sun, but is nevertheless 3rd in order from the two. The

³⁷⁵ Theodore Stylianopoulos, *The Filioque: Dogma, Theologoumenon or Error?*, 37-38.

light does not cause the ray, per se, but is necessary for the ray. In this analogy, you have the cause of the ray being obviously in the sun, but the manifestation of the ray is through the light from the sun, and that gets right back to the view of Gregory the Cypriot.

The issue with the above is that there is no real sequence of time where the Spirit is caused and then is subsequently manifested. The Spirit is caused and is manifested eternally and simultaneously, and thus it is more fitting to conceive the Spirit's eternal production as happening simultaneously with His manifesting so much so that the difference between existence and the manifestation of existence becomes more and more difficult to make. Does the difference even exist?

No one would posit a real division between existence and its manifestation, especially in the eternal God. How, then, can we press this distinction? Here, some have offered the analogy of how the Son's existence is a real fact that furnishes the Father as a true Father, and that the Father-Son relationship itself requires the Spirit in some way, but the necessity of the Son in this instance is not constitutive in the Spirit's production but rather is simply a necessity of supposition.

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St. Augustine's merging of the Father and the Son as one productive principle of the Spirit also raises its own issues. How can the Father expand His own property of having the generative power to produce another person in the Godhead with the Son without abrogating the uniqueness of this property to Himself? Latin theologians have always insisted that the Father as *primordial cause* remains singularly fixed in Himself since the Son only spirates the Spirit with the Father by receiving this from the Father. Therefore, the Father as the exclusive generator of all deity remains intact, and is not shared with the Son. However, the precise act wherein the Spirit is produced, the Son joins equally with the Father as the productive principle. In Catholic theology, this nuanced distinction sufficiently differentiates the Father and the Son.

The further question to be asked, thereafter, would be to wonder how the Father's contribution of spiration and the Son's mediatorial involvement does not add up to two principles. Is there really a procession of the Spirit from the Father as one thing and then another procession of the Spirit from the Son as another thing? According to Gregory Palamas, because the "hypostatic characteristics of the persons are different, the procession of the Holy Spirit from the Father is different from the procession of

the Holy Spirit from the Son.”³⁷⁶ If this is the case, then a two-principle *Filioque* is the consequence, and that would necessarily be heretical. Catholics have always denied a two-principle *Filioque* and have rather insisted that while the Father and Son are individuated and unique in their own respective hypostases, the spirative action which produces the Spirit is equal in both, making only one principle of the Spirit. However, for Palamas, if “the two processions were the same, there would be two divinities rather than one.”³⁷⁷ Answers these objections will occupy the space of the next chapter.

³⁷⁶ Norman Russell, *Gregory Palamas and the Making of Palamism in the Modern Age* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019), 110.

³⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

Chapter 7: Answering the Late Byzantine Objections

Now, to face the late Byzantine objections, more particularly those of the Cypriot and Palamas, head on.³⁷⁸ To summarize, they claim that the *Filioque* (1) creates a Diarchy between Father and Son (two principles), (2) confuses their persons into a *homohypostasis*, and (3) incorrectly attributes the property of being the cause of all deity to the Son as well as the Father, thereby destroying

³⁷⁸ This will mostly recap what was already stated in the 2nd chapter, only adjusted to meet the objections of the Palamite objections. Since the Trinitarian theology of St. Thomas Aquinas has become commonly used model of Catholic Trinitarian doctrine, the defenses of the *Filioque* will be following most closely to his thought in response to Greek objections. Aquinas also follows the basic *Filioquist-Triadological* thought from St. Augustine's *De Trinitate* as it continued onward in the West until its synthesis in Aquinas. See especially the works of St. Anselm on the Spirit's procession as well as the debate between Anselm of Havelberg with Nicetas of Nicomedia, *Anselm of Canterbury: The Major Works* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998) & Anselm of Havelberg, *Anticimenon: On the Unity of the Faith and the Controversies with the Greeks*, trans. Ambrose Criste, OPraem, & Carol Neel (Collegetown, MN: Liturgical Press, 2010), *Premonstratensian Texts and Studies* 1.

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the Father's unique personal property. Moreover, the Orthodox would have it that the Patristic data which speaks of the Spirit eternally proceeding (or coming forth from) the Father "through the Son" is merely descriptive of the natural energy of God eternally flowing forth or a merely as a cause to the manifestation of existence rather than the cause of existence. How did the Latins respond?

The Catholic Church today maintains what was decreed at the Council of Florence concerning the Father's monarchy, following St. Augustine. Florence maintains that the Father alone is the "source and principle of all deity," and that "whatever the Father is or has, he has not from another but from himself and is principle without principle." St. Augustine likewise, after stating that the Spirit and Son are from the Father, states the "Father is from no one."³⁷⁹

Fr. Gilles Emery provides some helpful observations from Aquinas that expand this point. Aquinas, when commenting on Pseudo-Dionysius's use of the phrase "fountain of all deity" (*fons deitatis*) to describe *what property strictly belongs to the Father alone*, states this expression has the purpose to "designate the Father as 'principle without principle' or as 'author', in the way

³⁷⁹ *De Trinitate*, Book 4.28, *New Advent*.

Augustine speaks of it.³⁸⁰ If the Father alone is the full source and font of all divinity, then the Son of God, by His very origin as begotten, cannot obtain from the Father this property of being the full unoriginated sole source of all deity, *even if*, by virtue of being begotten, *He receives from the Father the power to spirate the Spirit as one principle with the Father*. Simply by the Son's receiving it shows He is *principle from principle* and is therefore certainly disqualified from being the absolute font of all deity. In his commentary on the Sentences, St. Thomas Aquinas states the following:

When we consider the properties of the persons, we find the notion of, as it were, 'first principle' in the Father. And it is in virtue of the unity of a principle without principle that, the same nature is communicated to all, within each nature. *This is why it is through the Father that all is one.*³⁸¹

³⁸⁰ Gilles Emery, *The Trinitarian Theology of St. Thomas Aquinas*, 172.

³⁸¹ Thomas Aquinas, *I Sent.* D. 31, q. 3, a. 2; as cited in Gilles Emery, *ibid.*, 173; [emphasis added]. Too often the Latin *Filioque* is understood by Greek Orthodox as a testament to the single divine essence being the source of unity between the three divine Persons, however this isn't the full story. One English Catholic priest, the late

Therefore, the objection cannot be sustained that the Latins proclaim a Diarchy in the Godhead. This also means that the Latin teaching does not merge the unique property of the Father with the unique property of the Son in the spirative production of the Spirit. The *Filioque*, in other words, posits that there is a further traceability backwards from the active spiration of the Spirit to the Father as the sole beginning point of God-productivity, i.e., the power to produce divine persons consubstantial with God, from which the Son derives that spirative power. Thus, there is a distinction here between the Father as the Monarchical font of God-productivity, and the Son as generatively deriving from the Father all things, and specifically with reference to the power to

Fr. J.P. Arendzen (1873-1954), stated this truth quite clearly: "It must be well remembered that in the Blessed Trinity it is not the divine nature formally as such that produces the three divine Persons, as if all Three arose and took their origin from the divine nature considered in itself. This would be a complete misunderstanding and against authoritative teaching. The Son proceeds from the Father as person, and the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and Son as persons, whereas the Father does not proceed at all. The Father has no origin of any kind. His personality is such that He possesses the divinity as His own and gives it to the Others. He is Himself the source and wellspring of the Godhead, as the Greek Fathers truly express it." Citation from J.P. Arendzen, *Understanding the Trinity* (Manchester, NH: Sophia Institute Press, 2004; originally published in 1937 by Sheed and Ward, London, under the title *The Holy Trinity*), 134.

produce the Spirit. It is, therefore, no surprise that Metropolitan Kallistos Ware affirms “the Latin west as well as the Greek east upholds the doctrine of the ‘monarchy’ of the Father.”³⁸²

The Greeks, nevertheless, insisted that such a model still entails two sources to the Spirit. St. Thomas Aquinas states in response to this Greek objection:

They maintain, also, that the Holy Spirit, since He is simple, *cannot be from two*; and that the Holy Spirit, if He proceeds perfectly from the Father, does not proceed from the Son; and other arguments of this sort. These are easy to solve, even if one is but little skilled in theological matters. *For the Father and the Son are a single principle of the Holy Spirit by reason of the unity of divine power, and by one production they produce the Holy Spirit*; thus, also, the three Persons are one principle of

³⁸² Timothy Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, 216.

creatures and by one action they produce
creatures.³⁸³

While the Latins claimed that the *Filioque* does not morph the Monarchy into a Diarchy, the Greeks have equally contradicted this by saying that *simply claiming* there is no Diarchy does not salvage a Diarchy from being what is nevertheless resultant from the doctrine itself by the force of logic. It is important to realize, however, that the procession of the Holy Spirit from the Father and the Son as from one principle, and not two, is a result of the unity of Father and Son as they share equally in all things *except what pertains to Fatherhood and Sonship*.³⁸⁴ This Trinitizing construction where relational opposition alone serves to account for hypostatic distinctions in the God head is the only rescue for the Catholic doctrine of the *Filioque* from the Greek objections actually sticking. The reasoning is sound, and the below summation of this concept is drawn from the incomparable help of Fr. Gilles

³⁸³ Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Contra Gentiles*, Book 4.25.5, trans. Charles J. O'neil (New York: Hanover House, 1955), updated by Joseph Kennedy, O.P.,

<https://isidore.co/aquinas/english/ContraGentiles4.htm>.

³⁸⁴ Paternity (fatherhood) and Filiation (sonship) do not produce a converse relationship between the Father spirating and the Son spirating, and thus no real distinction is made in their spirative action.

Emery, whose book on the subject is to be richly commended.³⁸⁵

The Father has divinity in Himself without being caused by another (i.e., He is principle without principle; cause without cause), and by His begetting the Son, the Son receives all things from the Father except for that which is a converse relation in the Son to the Father, i.e. Paternity or the begetter. Likewise, in begetting the Son, the Father does not receive anything from the Son, and cannot merge in unity with Filiation. Therefore, what we have here between Father and Son is unity in all things, except for Paternity and Filiation. Everything else merges into unity, while it is maintained that the Son is unified through being begotten, and the Father has that unity in Himself as the primordial font of all deity. Because of this, the Father and the Son do not stand in a converse relationship (an opposition) when it comes to the origin of the Spirit, which is referred to as a *spirative principle*.³⁸⁶ Thus, Father and Son share together equally in the spirative act which causes the subsistent being of the Spirit. Therefore, three observations can be made.

³⁸⁵ Fr. Gilles Emery, *The Trinitarian Doctrine of St. Thomas Aquinas*.

³⁸⁶ Spiration = breathing out

The Filioque

First, the Father and Son do not spirate the Holy Spirit as two spirators, as if the Father spirates in His own spirative act, and then the Son adds Himself to the Father's spirative act with His own action, adding up to a double-spiration. This would make two spirators, and thus two principles, and thus a Diarchy. Rather, the Father and the Son share in one indivisible spirative act, which itself is a single producing principle (cause) of the Spirit.³⁸⁷ Secondly, while the Father and Son share in one spirative act, serving as one principle of the Spirit, the Father and Son are still two distinct Persons from which the Holy Spirit originates, albeit deriving from where those two distinct Persons are united as one, namely, in the power to spirate. Seen as Persons, they are distinct. Seen in their power to spirate, they share in one indivisible act of spiration. Thirdly, the Son is not a principle without principle, and thus does not obtain the

³⁸⁷ Speaking of the spiration of the Spirit as an "act" is done so analogously. The cause of the Spirit are the Persons of the Father and the Son in their unity, and not some abstract "action" between the two. Nevertheless, it is helpful to use this language to speak of their shared breathing forth of the Spirit while also being able to distinguish how the Father and the Son possess the property to eternally breath forth the Spirit into existence. The Father has it in Himself, the Son has it from the Father, and so the hypostatic distinctions between Father as sole cause and Son as derived cause are manifest in and through the *Filioque* doctrine.

spirative power in Himself, but from receiving it from another, namely, the Father. And so, being cause from a cause, the Son derives His share in the spirative principle of the Spirit. On the other hand, the Father is a principle without principle, and thus has it within Himself to spirate the Spirit. As cause without cause, the Father derives His spirating the Spirit from no one.

In all three points, the Monarchy of the Father's Person remains intact while also, by virtue of begetting the Son to whom He gives all things, merging into one with His Son in the one indivisible action of spiration of the Holy Spirit. If one looks at the distinctive Persons of the Father and the Son, one sees where they are distinct, and how one is the cause and the other is caused, but if one sees the two distinct Persons as they are united in one spirative act, then one sees only one principle of the Holy Spirit, rather than two.³⁸⁸ St. Thomas Aquinas makes this clear in the following words:

³⁸⁸ Eastern Orthodox theologians might well understand the claim that the spirative action which is the single principle of the Holy Spirit is one and undivided, thereby not making two beginnings (causes/arches) in the Godhead, but they might still see that the Father's spirating the Spirit is His own personal unique property qua Father, and to share this with the Son would be to confuse unique personal properties. Firstly, it is not qua Father that He breathes forth

the Spirit, but rather as principle without principle that he breathes the Spirit forth. Qua Father, He is the Father of a Son, not a Spirit. However, qua Father he is also the principle without principle in the Godhead, and the font of all deity, from whom the Son and Spirit are eternally derived. Secondly, since in God all things are one and shared where there is no relational opposition, the Father and the Son do not only possess unique personal properties by which they are distinguished but also personal properties which they can share because there lacks any converse relationship between them (i.e., relational opposition). As Congar adequately explains Aquinas: "Thomas follows the logic of the principle according to which the divine Persons are distinguished, in their properties, those which are identical with the Persons because they are constitutive of those Persons—fatherhood and sonship—and those which, not being constitutive (because they do not include a relationship of opposition), can be common to several Persons. This is so in the case of active spiration, in which the Father and the Son are not, as such, opposed." *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, Vol. 3, 120. Gilles Emery also sufficiently captures this reality: "It is in their unity that the Father and Son spirate the Holy Spirit. This unity is not only the essential oneness of the Father and the Son but, more precisely, it concerns their personal union ('notional,' in the sense of a trait common to the Father and the Son) as 'spirative principle.' The principle of the Holy Spirit, for Catholic doctrine, is the Father and the Son in their communion." *The Trinity*, 145. Or as St. Avitus says, the Father and Son breath out the Spirit in their "consortium." Lastly, it must never be forgotten that the Father qua Father has the spirative power in Himself and thus gives it to the Son, via begetting Him, maintaining the unique and sole monarchy to the Father alone. This rationale, seeming overly rationalistic, seems to be the only way to make sense of how there must be maintained the divine monarchy in the

In every action two things are to be considered, the 'suppositum' acting, and the power whereby it acts; as, for instance, fire heats through heat. So if we consider in the Father and the Son the power whereby they spirate the Holy Ghost, there is no mean, *for this is one and the same power*.³⁸⁹ But if we consider the persons themselves spirating, then, as the Holy Ghost proceeds both from the Father and from the Son, the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father immediately, as from Him, and mediately, as from the Son; *and thus He*

Godhead, but also that the Spirit eternally originates from both the Father and the Son.

³⁸⁹ Ergo, it is impossible to be two principles. Aquinas adds to this elsewhere: "If the Son received from the Father a numerically distinct power for the spiration of the Holy Ghost, it would follow that He would be a secondary and instrumental cause; and thus the Holy Ghost would proceed more from the Father than from the Son; whereas, on the contrary, the same spirative power belongs to the Father and to the Son; and therefore the Holy Ghost proceeds equally from both, although sometimes He is said to proceed principally or properly from the Father, because the Son has this power from the Father." Prima Pars, q. 36, a. 3, reply to obj.2, *New Advent*, <https://www.newadvent.org/summa/1036.htm#article3>.

is said to proceed from the Father through the Son."³⁹⁰

Rehearsing earlier points, St. Thomas Aquinas also argues that if there is no procession of the Holy Spirit from the Son, as one principle with the Father, then there would be no way to distinguish the Son and the Spirit, since on the other end of spiration from the Father (passive spiration in the Spirit) and filiation from the Father (passive generation in the Son) there is no converse relationship. Since in God all things are one and identical where there are no relational oppositions, there must be a relationship of origin to make a converse relation between the Spirit and the Son. Either the Spirit causes the Son with the Father, or the Son causes the Spirit with the Father.

But since the Spirit causing the Son has no testimony in divine revelation or the Patristics, and since there is no such thing as "Son of the Spirit", but only "Spirit of the Son," it is clear that the Spirit must be caused by the Son. This particular argument finds objection by some modern thinkers because it seems to rely on this notion of relational opposition as the only manner to distinguish

³⁹⁰ Thomas Aquinas, *Prima Pars*, q. 36, a. 3, reply to obj. 1, *New Advent*; [emphasis added].

the three divine Persons in the Godhead. It may be helpful here to quote, once again, St. Gregory of Nyssa to illustrate the Patristic roots of how the divine simplicity of God renders this concept of relational opposition, specifically caused by a relationship of origin between the Persons, necessary to Trinitize the simple Monad:

[...] since the divine, simple, and unchangeable nature *rejects all diversity regarding essence*, so that it is one, it *admits nothing within itself that would indicate multiplicity...* But if anyone should falsely accuse our position of merging the hypostases [Persons], since we admit no differentiation in the nature, we refute this accusation in the following way. *Although we hold the divine nature to be free of all differences or variation, we do not at all deny the difference that is found between the principle and the originated by which alone one hypostasis is understood to be distinguished from another.* We believe that one is a principle [the Father] and the other [the Son] originates from the principle; and again we see a further

difference between the originated, for one originated [the Son] comes immediately from the principle [the Father], while the other [Spirit] comes from the principle [the Father] through the mediation of the first originated [the Son].³⁹¹

St. Gregory of Nyssa admits that nature or essence of God is absolutely simple and admits no degrees of variation or divisibility, and then insists that, because of such an all-embracing oneness in God, there can only be a distinction within God that differentiates the three divine Persons *by way of one Person causing the other*. He is emphatic that it is this “*alone*” which makes distinction in God, very much like St. Basil in *Contra Eunomium* (Book 2.28) made clear, and which gets picked up with stronger emphasis in St. Augustine and, finally, in scholastic Trinitarianism.

Of course, medieval theologians took the terminology a step further than the Cappadocians. They understood Father as the principle, the Son as immediately originated from the Father, and the Spirit as

³⁹¹ Gregory of Nyssa, *Not Three Gods*; Eng. Trans: Lonergan, *The Triune God*, 475-477; [parentheses added].

mediately originated from the Father through the Son. St. Thomas Aquinas would look at this and simply say there is only a little more work to do in light of divine simplicity and the necessity of maintaining the single Monarchy of the Godhead. This perhaps explains why the Latin scholastic emphasis on relational opposition has more functional applicability to theology than it does contemporary Orthodox theology.

Turning to the question of God's energy, where the latter alone, according to many neo-Palamites, pertains to the procession of the Spirit "through the Son". The problem with this explanation is that it really does depend on whether the Scripture and the Fathers can be read as if the original authors really intended to communicate this wholly separate category of energetic manifestation, as opposed to hypostatic origin.

For the Orthodox who wish to sustain this position, not only is a theological defense of the essence of God as *really* distinct from His action required, a consideration for which this book has no space to allow, but it also needs to be shown that the Church Fathers actually had this in mind when they speak of the Spirit's procession "through the Son." A massive blow to this position would be St. Gregory of Nyssa who, as the Nyssen specialist Guilgo Maspero argued, makes it clear that the *διά τοῦ Υἱοῦ* refers

to the Trinitarian immanence,” and that it is impossible to limit this “*only to the energetic realm.*”³⁹² Furthermore, as illustrated from the citations from St. Gregory, the contexts wherein he speaks of the origination of the Spirit from the Father by means of the Son are all speaking of hypostatic origination, and there is almost no hint of it being the natural activity of the Godhead. From the evidence adduced in this short book, the plain sense of the Patristic authors, faithful to their context, it is far more reasonable to see them as supporting the idea that the Spirit has His hypostatic origin from the Father *through the Son*, and therefore, as Bekkos observed, from both Father *and the Son*, so long as this origination is traced back to the *Primal Cause* of the Father who alone is uncaused and the arche of deity. This would mean that the understanding of the Patristic sources as explained by Bekkos, which supports Lyons (1274), is to be preferred over the Cypriot, Palamas, and certainly over Photius.

Moreover, since Bekkos was aiming at union with the Latin West, the *Filioque* as articulated at Lyons (1274) and Florence (1439) can be seen as more successfully synthesizing the Eastern and the Western conceptions, i.e., the Latin *Filioque* (or *per fillium*) and the Greek *διὰ τοῦ Υἱοῦ*. On the other hand, a strict *Photian fund-*

³⁹² G. Maspero, *The Trinity and Man*, 157; [emphasis added].

amentalism (Monopatrism) very clearly excludes, at the very least, the Latin West from the bosom of the orthodox communion of Christ's Church.³⁹³ So also, the Cypriotic and Palamite eternal manifestation (*διὰ τοῦ Υἱοῦ*), if wholly separated from the category of hypostatic origination, and instead engrafts itself wholly into the category of God's mode of energy, which, again, is common to all three divine Persons, then it would appear that the *Photian monopatrism* is still maintained insofar as the Spirit's hypostatic origin is concerned.

This is by no means to oversimplify the evidence as if it were completely in favor of the *Filioque*. One can find a good deal in the Fathers that, *prima facie*, seems at odds with it. However, the above is meant to show how the

³⁹³ This is the conflict that Bessarion had to face, c.f. Joseph Gill, *The Council of Florence*, 240-41; For Bessarion, he came to the conviction that "the *Filioque* is universal among the Latin Doctors," and thus "it is clear that these agree among themselves and agree too with the eastern Saints." According to Fr. Joseph Gill, Bessarion saw three possibilities: (1) condemn the *Filioque*, (2) accept it, or (3) claim that the Latin books are all spurious. Summarizing Bessarion's response, Gill records his thoughts given in his *Oratio dogmatica*: to do (1) would be to throw the Fathers into condemnation and to claim (3) was implausible since the Latins had so many sources and the Greeks couldn't verify or falsify all of them. For a summary of Bessario's *Oratio*, see especially Sicienski, *The Filioque*, 160-61; Joseph Gill, *The Council of Florence*, 240-45.

energetic manifestation doctrine might require a bit more importing of foreign ideas that the Latin and Greek Fathers were not necessarily thinking at the time when speaking of the Spirit's procession, particularly when they speak of the Spirit eternally *διὰ τοῦ Υἱοῦ*.

The *Filioquist* still carries the burden of showing that the same Fathers held to its fundamental idea, nonetheless. The divine essence being communicated to the Son from the Father, and then to the Spirit from the Father and (or through) the Son, and this in the timeless and eternal relationship of the Trinity, seems to be the bare minimum evidence showing forth a preference towards a *Filioquist* reading over a *Monopatrism* one.³⁹⁴ On the other hand, the bare minimum evidence for the energies doctrine is that the Fathers should be found articulating, more often than not, this categorically separate origination from the Father by procession and

³⁹⁴ This ordering also precludes taking the concept of consubstantiality and predicating that each of the Three Persons can be said to be "of" one Another. There is no room for the idea of the Father coming from the Son or the Spirit, nor could the Father be thought of as being "of" the Spirit. The ordering of Father, Son, and Spirit, coupled together with the fact that there is a hypostatic origination of the 2nd from the 1st, and the 3rd from the 1st and the 2nd, shows a fixed arrangement for which even consubstantiality cannot alter.

Chapter 7: Answering the Late Byzantine Objections

another procession or manifesting through the Son through the mode of energy. In any case, if anything is learned in this exercise, it is that answering these questions must be preceded by humility and patience, knowing that both sides are really pulling hard on what seems so plain to each respective interlocutor.

Conclusion

The broad and complex development of doctrine on the Holy Spirit's eternal origin in both the Latin West and Greek East shows that settling the debate between Catholics and Orthodox is no easy endeavor. The *Filioque* is just three English words "and the Son" but its explanation is not given by itself standing alone. Rather, it stems from the much larger question of how to Trinitize the one God or how to unify the Triad of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. All orthodox writers were seeking to maintain the full status of deity in each of the three divine Persons, while also maintaining the invariable unity of God and the reality of their respective distinctions.³⁹⁵ While it may be displeasing to have to recognize that Eastern and Western triadologies both developed in unique and seemingly irreconcilable ways, it can be satisfying to see that when the respective models are simplified to show their

³⁹⁵ However much his hesitations on the obvious dogmatic character of the *Filioque* doctrine are subject to criticism, it can't be stressed enough how accurate Hanson was in his description of the varied approaches to Trinitize the one God in the early centuries, see his "The *Filioque* Clause" in *Studies in Christian Antiquity*, 279-97. This should, *a priori*, cause all scholars to be humble in their temptations to absolutize own solution to the puzzle.

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essential aims, and when misunderstandings are cleared away, there seems to be hope of coming closer to finding common ground between Catholics and Orthodox.

Nevertheless, the heart of the division over the *Filioque* rests upon whether the Son any *causative* involvement in the eternal production of the Spirit's Person. The Catholic Church says yes, and the Orthodox Church still says no. The majority of the Orthodox have either held that the Spirit proceeds from the Son in the temporal economy alone, or they configure a theology of a shining forth eternally from the Son according to the mode of God's activity or energy, or else some other completely non-causative source which is only the cause of the Spirit's existent manifestation. The latter have been in the minority, but have held that the Spirit, in His hypostatic uniqueness, proceeds from the Father *through the Son*, but that the Son's "through" involvement is not constitutive of the procession, *but rather something non-causative beside it*.

It is also apparent that the terminology used in the theologizing of the Trinity and the Holy Spirit began to vary between East and West. Certainly, in the more developed Cappadocian explanations of the Trinity, the word "procession" (ἐκπορεύεται) was thought to signify, all the way back to the authorial intention of St. John the

Apostle, a specific eternal hypostatic origination of the Spirit from the Father. However, the research provided in this book shows that St. John likely had no intention to convey that precise meaning by his use of the word “proceeds” (ἐκπορεύεται). If that checks out, then St. John is speaking about a temporal procession of the Spirit from the Father and the Son even in John 15:26. The consequence of this is extremely relevant to the *Filioque*, because if the Church Fathers draw evidence of an eternal procession of the Spirit from the Johannine literature, it could only be valid if they saw the temporal procession to be indicative of the eternal procession, in which case the Spirit undoubtedly proceeds from the Father *and the Son* in light of the foregoing reason. It cannot be denied, however, that many Greek Fathers understood ἐκπορεύεται to be a special term exclusively as meaning the eternal hypostatic origin of the Spirit over and against the temporal sending which comes through the Son.

On the other hand, Latin commentators such as St. Ambrose and St. Hilary of Poitiers, both treasures to Catholics and Orthodox, can exhibit far more freedom in making use of the Latin “proceeds” (procedit/procedure) to refer to the temporal mission of the Spirit as representative of the eternal origin, or vice versa! One can also pick up equivalent terms that are used inter-

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changeably for the temporal procession or the eternal origin of the Spirit from the writings of St. Cyril of Alexandria, a major contributor to the Church's theological Christology, and also from no less than St. Gregory of Nyssa himself.

The economic Trinity reflecting the immanent Trinity certainly gives way to a more *Filioquist* model along the lines of St. Augustine up to the Council of Florence, since both the Father and Son are said to “send” the Spirit in time. If what is done in time is shown to be reflective of what is the case outside time, the *Filioque* seems logically resultant. The late Anglican theologian E.J. Bicknell best summarized all that has been said above on the Patristic authors who see this immanent and economic parallelism:

But we cannot but believe that the “Temporal Mission” of the Holy Ghost... corresponds to something within the “Essential Trinity”, *that it rests upon and springs out of a relation within the eternal being of God...* Thus we speak of the Second Person of the Holy Trinity as Son, and the Third as Spirit. Further, if in time the Holy Spirit proceeded from the

Father and the Son, we can only express His relationship to the Father and Son in eternity by the use of the same language. For we can have no other. Accordingly, Catholic theologians have always taught that the Father is alone the underived source of Godhead (ἀναρχος) and the Son derives His being by eternal generation from the Father. Further, from the first it was held that the procession of the Spirit, like the generation of the Son, refers not only to His mission but to His essential life, that He derives His being from the being of God. Some theologians taught the Spirit like the Son received His Godhead immediately from the Father alone. But the majority saw that just as His temporal mission was from the Father through the Son, just as the Holy Spirit who descended at Pentecost was the Spirit not only of the Father but of the Son, so within the eternal life of God He received His being not directly from the Father, but mediately through the Son. *The Divine Essence was conceived as*

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eternally passing from the Father through the Son into the Spirit... The words of Jn 16 where the Spirit is said to receive the things of Christ, just as Christ received all that is the Father's, would seem to refer primarily to the economic Trinity, though no doubt they hint at an eternal relationship.³⁹⁶

This summary may not persuade everyone as its basic connection is not entirely obvious. In any case, what remains largely consistent across the horizon of East and West is that a primary place is reckoned to the Father in His being the sole font of all divinity, and therefore, in a special sense, the sole cause (*aitia*) of the Spirit and the Son, all the while the Son is said to be involved in the Spirit's eternal procession. Certainly, the Greek tradition, exemplified in the *Exposition of the Orthodox Faith* by St. John of Damascus or St. Maximus the Confessor in his letter to Marinus would be strict in removing the property of causation to the Son, and would rather give to Him some sort of mediating role, yet without a robust enough definition to unmistakably harmonize with either the

³⁹⁶ E.J. Bicknell, *A Theological Introduction to the Thirty-Nine Articles of the Church of England*, 3rd ed. by H.J. Carpenter (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 1955), 123; [emphasis added].

developed *hypostatic Filioquism* of the West, nor, it seems to me, the *energetic Filioquism* of the recent majority Orthodox interpretation. One might say these two Greek Fathers foreshadowed the development at the late Greek Council at Blachernae (1285) and going forward,³⁹⁷ but what remains to be discerned is whether they understood the Spirit's procession "through the Son" to exclude the Son's involvement from the procession itself. The Latin Fathers are unmistakable on this question, e.g., St. Augustine, and the descriptions of the Spirit's procession in St. Gregory of Nyssa seem to indicate the same, though not as clear.

However, the situation became even more difficult with the theological arguments of Photius against the West.³⁹⁸ For, as even recognized by Greek Orthodox theologian Fr. John P. Manoussakis, by narrowing down so hard against the *Filioque*, "Photius sought to create a

³⁹⁷ Of course, St. John of Damascus does speak of the going forth of the Spirit through the Son according to God's action, but this is not speaking directly to the question of those texts where St. John seems to speak of the hypostatic origination of the Spirit *through the Son*.

³⁹⁸ Photius was specifically directing his arguments against the Latin Franks, who were emphasizing the need for the *Filioque* addition to the creed. However, it can be said Photius is writing against the West since both Rome and the other Western churches were all in support of the *Filioque* doctrine.

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new dogmatic position for Eastern pneumatology, namely, that the Holy Spirit proceeds *only* from the Father, or from the Father *alone*, the not-so-silent implication being that the Second Person of the Holy Trinity is not involved in any way (either from him or through him) in the procession of the Holy Spirit.”³⁹⁹ This basic fact is substantially agreed with by Aristeides Papadakis who stated that Photius’s *Monopatristism* “failed to address the question of the relationship of the Spirit and the Son outside time, as expressed in the formula ‘through the Son.’”⁴⁰⁰ Gregory the Cypriot himself, according to Papadakis, considered Photius’s formula as an “extreme” position that he found “wanting.”⁴⁰¹

While the substance of Photius’s arguments were not wholly repudiated, they required development, expansion, or “completion” in order to reach a cogent explanation of the Patristic teaching on the Spirit’s flowing (in some sense) eternally through the Son. Most of Orthodox scholarship sees the Cypriot as ratifying the *energetic* manifestation doctrine, but it is likely that he held to something far more particular to the hypostases of the Holy Spirit. Ironically, as shown in chapter 3-4,

³⁹⁹ John P. Manoussakis, *For the Unity of All*, 17, fn. 8.

⁴⁰⁰ Papadakis, *Crisis in Byzantium*, 89.

⁴⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 90.

neither the Cypriot nor Palamas really deny *Photian Monopatrism*, but simply doubled down on it.

Whether the *Tomos* of Blachernae (1285) and its theological elucidations in the writings of Gregory Palamas cohere with the early Fathers will be a matter for the reader to judge, but the Patristic florilegium and commentary provided in this book largely seems to indicate that what is eternally communicated from the Son to the Spirit is His essence and subsistent being, even if saying so is, in part, coincident with a theological context wherein the economic sending of the Spirit from the Son is in view (as illustrative of the *ad intra* relations).

This much is clear, the historic Greek objection to the *Filioque*, the one that says the Monarchy of the Father is thereby abrogated, does not stand. According to the late R.P.C. Hanson, "It must be obvious to any fair-minded investigator that theologians of the Western tradition have never intended, no matter how they may have juggled with words, to envisage two sources or *archai* in God."⁴⁰² Even at the 11th Council of Toledo (675), which gave massive space to a *Filioquizing* of the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed, made it clear that the Father, "from whom the Son was born and the Holy Spirit

⁴⁰² Hanson, *Studies in Christian Antiquity*, 295.

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proceeded, *has origin from no one*. He is therefore, *the source and origin of the whole divinity...*⁴⁰³ At most, the Orthodox can say that while the intention is pure, the logical result of the theological principles in the *Filioque* necessarily lead to such a consequence. But that remains to be shown after the qualifications of relative opposition are explained, especially by the Latin scholastics.

What we read repeatedly from either St. Augustine or St. Thomas Aquinas is that the sole font of all deity is said to be in the Father alone, who Himself causes and unifies the Son and Spirit. Aquinas can refer to the Father alone as the “first principle” or the “auctor” (auctoritas) of the Godhead. Thus, the property of being the sole beginning or source of deity cannot be communicated to the Son, even though the Son joins the Father in the spirative production of the Spirit.⁴⁰⁴ As Yves Congar so helpfully

⁴⁰³ The 11th Council of Toledo (675), *The Church Teaches: Documents of the Church in English Translation* (Rockford, IL: TAN Books & Publishers, Inc., 1973; previously published by B. Herder Book Co., 1955), 127; [emphasis added].

⁴⁰⁴ This here is perhaps the most controversial part of the debate. Can the Father retain His personal, and therefore incommunicable, property of being the sole font, cause, and producer of deity if he communicates to the Son the active production of the Holy Spirit? The only way to give the affirmative while being orthodox, and maintaining sound theological coherence, is to refer back to the

explains, the Son's fertility to produce the Spirit is given to Him, and so He is forever a principle *from a principle*, unlike the Father.⁴⁰⁵ As Congar notes further, Nilus Cabasilas was incorrect to say "that the Latins unite or merge together the Father and the son in the state of the source (*fontalitas*)."⁴⁰⁶

The perceptive John Bekkos realized that the Spirit's procession from the Son successfully avoids positing two causes in the Godhead since "whatever is the Son's leads

theological construal of relational opposition. While the Son and Father merge together into one equal and indistinguishable unity so far as the production of the Spirit is concerned, since therein lies no converse relation (an opposite side of a relation), the Father and the Son do not obtain this in the same manner, because the Father has it as "principle without principle," that is, in Himself without causation, and the Son has it as "principle from principle," that is, from Another (the Father) by causation (begetting). This element of the Father as having the active production of the Spirit without causation (in Himself) is *absolutely incommunicable to the Son*, and it is certain that it is incommunicable because of the relational opposition between Son and Father qua Son and Father (the former comes from the latter, and the latter comes from the Son, and the Son obtains all from the Father eternally whereas the Father has all things in Himself without being sourced in another).

⁴⁰⁵ Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, 136.

⁴⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

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back to the Father, the first cause,”⁴⁰⁷ accurately matching the Catholic resolution. That is, there is a fundamental traceability of the fontal cause of deity back to the Father alone as source since even the active spiration of the Spirit, being one principle of Father and Son together, is something given to the Son from the Father. For this reason, Bekkos was put under anathema by the 13th century Greek hierarchy.

It is also wrong to characterize, as is often done,⁴⁰⁸ the Augustinian and Western Trinitarian theology as grounding the unity of the Godhead solely “in some philosophically conceived abstract essence of God.”⁴⁰⁹ Even Fr. Vladimir Lossky, speaking theoretically, recognized that there is such a thing as balancing an approach to an orthodox Trinitarian model by either beginning with the unity of the divine essence or the Trinity of divine Persons, “so long as the first did not attribute to the essence a supremacy over the three persons, nor the second to the three persons a supremacy

⁴⁰⁷ Migne, *Patrologiae cursus completes, ser. Graeco-latina*, 141.17C; Eng. Trans. Joseph Gill, *Byzantium and the Papacy 1198-1400*, 156.

⁴⁰⁸ Papadakis, *Crisis in Byzantium*, 62-65, 88.

⁴⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 88.

over the common nature.”⁴¹⁰ Nor can it be said that divine simplicity was devoid in the Cappadocian model of the Trinity.

As pointed out in the chapters 1 and 2, and despite his *emanationist modeling* of the Triad, even St. Gregory of Nyssa recognized the only way to make real distinctions in the Godhead was through the a distinction of relational origin between each of the Persons, i.e. one Person originating from another.⁴¹¹ When one looks at the full

⁴¹⁰ Lossky, *The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church*, 56. Of course, Lossky thinks the Latin *Filioque* as it developed violates this balance.

⁴¹¹ J.N.D. Kelly nicely summarizes St. Gregory of Nyssa's understanding: "It was Gregory of Nyssa, however, who provided what was to prove the definitive statement. The Spirit, he teaches, is out of God and is of Christ; He proceeds out of the Father and receives from the Son; He cannot be separated from the Word. From this it is a short step to the idea of the twofold procession of the Spirit. According to him, the three Persons are to be distinguished by Their origin, the Father being cause (τὸ αἰτιον) and the other two caused (cf. τὸ αἰτιατόν). The two Persons Who are caused may be further distinguished for one of Them is directly (προσεχῶς) produced by the Father, while the other proceeds from the Father through an intermediary. Viewed in this light, the Son alone can claim the title Only-begotten, and the Spirit's relation to the Father is in no way prejudiced by the fact that He derives His being from Him through the Son. Elsewhere Gregory speaks of the Son as related to the Spirit as cause to effect, and uses the analogy of a torch imparting its light first

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orbed Trinitarian model of St. Augustine side-by-side with St. Gregory of Nyssa's, one certainly sees dissimilarities, but ones that are overshadowed by their remarkable similarities. This is recognized by pre-eminent theologians in the Eastern Orthodox Church.

The more important observation is whether the essence of St. Gregory's teaching on the origin of the Spirit is more compatible with the *Filioque* or with Gregory II of Cyprus. As briefly stated in the 6th chapter, St. Gregory of Nyssa held that the Spirit's procession through the Son was intrinsic to the very constitution of the procession itself (i.e., the origin of His person), and not something relegated beside it, as the Cypriot did. Nevertheless, St. Gregory of Nyssa, curiously, never did see the Son as a "cause" of the Spirit. The Catholic explanation has been to distinguish, once again, the Father as the auctor of the spirative power to produce the Spirit, whereas the Son receives it from the Father. This added element creates a bridge between St. Augustine and the Cappadocian.

to another torch and then through it to a third in order to illustrate the relation of the three Persons," c.f. *Early Christian Doctrines*, 262.

Admittedly, the Augustinian *Filioque*, perhaps, squeezed upon the divine simplicity much tighter,⁴¹² and furthermore urged a distinct manner of describing the eternal origin of the Spirit from the Son and Father as from one single principle (i.e., one beginning), calling the former a “cause” to the Spirit’s existence. However, given a careful examination of the Church Fathers on the Spirit’s eternal origin, such a formulation seems wholly justified.

Now, if the Orthodox Church can see to it that these answers successfully render null and void the historic charges of heresy, as well as admit the Augustinian model of the Trinity as achieving an equally valid solution to the *Three-in-One/One-in-Three* problem alongside the Cappadocian construction, this will certainly bridge the two conceptions closer together, and hopefully contribute to the unity of the Churches. Only in this way could the following words of the late and venerated hierarch of ROCOR,⁴¹³ John of Shanghai and San Francisco, be truly sensible: “The West was Orthodox for a thousand years,

⁴¹² In particular in the explanation of relations of opposition in God as the sole mark of real distinction. Although, as seen in St. Gregory of Nyssa’s explanations, this was not alien from his thought either.

⁴¹³ The Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russian.

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and her venerable liturgy is far older than any of her heresies.”⁴¹⁴

Well, when did her so-called “heresies” begin? With St. Augustine? That would go far too deep into the patrimony that the Orthodox hold as venerable and identical to her own communion. It can’t be as early as Pope St. Leo III, since the Orthodox often venerate Leo, who was nevertheless a clear and emphatic *Filioquist* in terms of doctrine, even though he is responsible to having the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed engraved on tables to be publicly displayed at the Vatican. John of Shanghai must mean the Popes at the beginning of the 2nd millennium who added the *Filioque* to the creed, and who asserted their divine primacy. But the reader should know by now, given the evidence provided in this book, the *Filioque* doctrine, officially classified as heresy by the Eastern Orthodox, far predates the 2nd millennium in the Latin Church prior to the schism.

The ideal resolution would be to find a way to bridge the Fathers of East and West while both recognizing their irreconcilable theological structures of the Trinity while seeking to protect the core theological orthodoxy of both

⁴¹⁴ Citation from John Hutchinson-Hall, *Orthodox Saints of the British Isles*, Vol. 2 (St. Eadfrith Press, 2014), viii.

sides. How could the West comport with the East, and vice versa? If the Byzantine *διὰ τοῦ Υἱοῦ* can be said to describe the Son's involvement in the eternal cause of the Spirit's Person,⁴¹⁵ then essentially the Council of Florence would be the best proposal for a way to end the debate, and successfully unify the ancient trajectories of thought from both East and West. And yet, it seems clear enough that the contemporary Orthodox leans more in seeing the *διὰ τοῦ Υἱοῦ* as pertaining strictly to the natural activity of God or uncreated energetic mode. There is some potential for those who take the view of Gregory II of Cyprus, since then there is just a gap between how to speak of the Spirit being "through the Son" within the constitution of His procession itself, and not something beside it.

Otherwise, for as long as the Byzantine *διὰ τοῦ Υἱοῦ* remains fixed for the Orthodox in a category wholly separate from the Spirit's hypostatic origination, and as long as the Florentine *Filioque* is seen as abrogating the divine Monarchy, creating a *homohypostasis* (as Palamas

⁴¹⁵ This will return to the question of essence vs. operations in God, and whether the Latin *Filioque* could harmonize with a purely energetic procession of the Spirit from the Son. As far as I can see, the Orthodox will need to manage to reconsider the arguments of Bekkos who made it plain that "ek" (from) and "dia" (through) can become one principle, at least making the Son eternally involved with the hypostatic procession of the Spirit.

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called it), thereby accusing the Latin West of saying the essence produces the Spirit (or to include Himself in His own procession!), no progress will be made in the theological dialogue. On the other hand, if the *διὰ τοῦ Υἱοῦ*, as shown from context of the Greek Fathers, sufficiently matches the Latin *per filium* and *ex Patre Filioque procedit*, as testified by John Bekkos, then there is no theological barrier to uniting East and West on this particular subject. Is this resolution likely to occur? If all Orthodox were to find the recognition given by Metropolitan Kallistos Ware on the essential orthodoxy of the *Filioque*, and how close it aligns with St. Gregory of Nyssa, then this resolution would be fast to come. However, as the late and great ecclesiastical historian Jaroslav Pelikan aptly said, the complexity of the *Filioque* is just as great as its tending toward perpetual controversy:

If there is a special circle of the inferno described by Dante reserved for historians of theology, the principal homework assigned to that subdivision of hell for at least the first several eons of eternity may well be the thorough study of all the treatises—in Latin, Greek, Church Slavonic, and various modern

languages—devoted to the inquiry: Does the Holy Spirit proceed from the Father only, as Eastern Christendom contends, or from both the Father and the Son (ex Patre Filioque), as the Latin Church teaches?⁴¹⁶

⁴¹⁶ Jaroslav Pelikan, *The Melody of Theology: A Philosophical Dictionary* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1988), 90.

Appendix I: The Interpolation of *Filioque* into the Creed

It is impossible to write upon the subject of the *Filioque* controversy without some mention of its interpolation into the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed by the Roman Church in the 11th century. Here, I will simply give a summary of the history, as well as what is at stake with regard to the Latin West adding this clause, especially in light of the *horos* of the Council of Constantinople (879).

At the Council of Florence, the Greek delegates largely relied on the 7th canon of the Council of Ephesus (431) to show that the Latin West had committed a canonical crime by adding to the creed.⁴¹⁷ However, this was clearly a misuse of that canon by the Greeks for two basic reasons. First, the decree of that canon was not intended to absolutely prohibit any and all material alterations or additions. Secondly, when it prohibits the composition of any different “creed” (ἑτέραν), it is strictly

⁴¹⁷ Sicienski, *The Filioque*, 153-54.

referring to the creed of Nicaea (325),⁴¹⁸ which is different in structure and wording from the creed established at Constantinople (381). The creed of 325 most likely had the following structure:

We believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of all things visible and invisible; and in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the only-begotten of his Father, of the substance of the Father, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten (γεννηθέντα), not made, being of one substance (ὁμοούσιον, consubstantialem) with the Father. By whom all things were made, both which be in heaven and in earth. Who for us men and for our salvation came down [from heaven] and was incarnate and was made man. He suffered and the third day he rose again, and ascended into heaven. And he shall come again to judge both the quick and

⁴¹⁸ David M. Gwynn, "The Council of Chalcedon and the Definition of the Christian Tradition," in *Chalcedon in Context: Church Councils 400-700*, (Eds.) Richard Price & Mary Whitby (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2011), 7-26.

*the dead. And [we believe] in the Holy Ghost. And whosoever shall say that there was a time when the Son of God was not (ἦν ποτε ὅτε οὐκ ἦν), or that before he was begotten he was not, or that he was made of things that were not, or that he is of a different substance or essence [from the Father] or that he is a creature, or subject to change or conversion [τρέπτὸν in Greek; convertibilem in Latin] — all that so say, the Catholic and Apostolic Church anathematizes them.*⁴¹⁹

As anyone who is familiar with the Nicene-Constantinopolitan creed, the creed of 325 is structurally very different in the 2nd half. The Council of 381 issued a creed with additions and alterations. Therefore, if the Greeks at the Council of Florence were to be strict with regard to the 7th canon of Ephesus (431), any additions or alterations to this creed of 325 would be a canonically criminal act. However, everyone knows that the Greek bishops at the Council of 381 issued a structurally different creed, and it was this more elaborate creed that

⁴¹⁹ The Nicene Creed, 1st Council of Nicaea (325), *New Advent*, <http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/3801.htm>.

was ratified side by side with the Creed of 325 at the Council of Chalcedon.

It would be truly inconsistent to think that Chalcedon's acceptance of two creeds violates the Council of Ephesus, for then we would have to say that Chalcedon criminally renders the very creed chanted universally by the Greeks from the 5th century onward was "itself in breach of Ephesus's prohibition!"⁴²⁰ Therefore, the bishops at Ephesus can't be read as trying to absolutely exclude other creeds with different structures so long as it agreed with that of Nicaea.⁴²¹ The late Archbishop Peter L'Huillier, who had a Doctorate in Eastern Orthodox Canon Law and who was adjunct Professor of Canon Law at St. Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary, makes this quite clear in his major work on the canons of the Ecumenical Councils:

We can certainly deplore the addition introduced into the creed in the West, but it is materially impossible to base this condemnation on canon 7 of Ephesus, which did not directly envision some

⁴²⁰ Norman Tanner, *Ecumenical Councils of the Early Church* (New York: CrossRoad Publishing Company, 2013) 26.

⁴²¹ For historical background, see *The Council of Ephesus of 431: Documents and Proceedings*, trans. Richard Price, 431-43.

addition but rather the composition of another formula of faith (ἐτέραν πίστιν) and furthermore concerned the definition of Nicea.⁴²²

By the late 4th century, the Greek bishops simply just knew that a development in doctrine required additions to clarify more precisely the Apostolic Tradition. The creed of 381 is structured so differently that the Council of Chalcedon (451) cited both the creed of 325 and the creed of 381 and then issued same exact prohibition against producing a “new creed” that would rival these two creeds. The fact that Chalcedon allowed the creed of 381 to enter the canonical books as being an authentic creed and exposition of the faith requires us to give a less-than-absolute reading the Ephesus’s 7th canon, as well as the prohibition given at Chalcedon. The bishops at Chalcedon themselves simply assume that structural additions could be made to the creed of 325 so long as it is orthodox and worthy of acceptance. This is the logical basis upon which Mark Eugenikos at the Council of

⁴²² Peter L’Huillier, *The Church of the Ancient Councils: The Disciplinary Work of the First Four Ecumenical Councils* (Crestwood: St. Vladimir’s Orthodox Theological Seminary, 1996), 163.

Florence argued that the creeds of 325/381 are simply just one creed.⁴²³

Presumably then, creeds can have slight differences, but all testify to the same faith. In fact, not all citations of the creed going back to the 4th and 5th century, according to Fr. Aidan Nichols, are “verbally uniform” and “a variety of linguistic differences was acceptable as long as the sense was not changed.”⁴²⁴ A perfect example would be how the Latin version of the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed states that Christ is “God from God” (*Deum de Deo*), which does not appear in the Greek version. These facts should be applied as a qualification to what the bishops said at Chalcedon:

We have proclaimed to all the creed of the 318; and we have made our own those fathers who accepted this agreed statement of religion, the 150 who later met in great Constantinople and themselves set their seal to the same creed. Therefore, whilst we also stand by the decisions and all the formulas relating to

⁴²³ George B. Howard, *The Schism Between the Oriental and Western Churches* (New York: Longmans, Green, & Co., 1982), 4.

⁴²⁴ Aidan Nichols, *Rome and the Eastern Churches*, 254.

the creed from the sacred synod which took place formerly at Ephesus... we decree that pre-eminence belongs to the exposition of the right and spotless creed of the 318 saintly and blessed fathers who were assembled at Nicaea when Constantine of pious memory was emperor; and that those decrees also remain in force which were issued in Constantinople by the 150 holy fathers in order to destroy the heresies then rife and to confirm this same catholic and apostolic creed.⁴²⁵

The function of creeds is to secure and safeguard the faith. Prior to the Council of Nicaea, the Churches of East and West professed the more ancient creed of the Apostles, which was known in ancient Rome. In fact, Nicaea (325) might be considered the first time a major creedal change happened by it developing the Creed of the Apostles to specify what the Church believes about Jesus Christ as consubstantial with God the Father. Obviously, the expanded creed of 381 does nothing different. And so, it can be understood how, by the time the *Filioque* was

⁴²⁵ Norman Tanner, *ibid.*, 27.

added to the creed in the West, it was probably not understood to have been a criminal act.

As is common knowledge, Western bishops thought it was perfectly fine to add the *Filioque* to the Nicene-Constantinopolitan creed in order to combat Arian heresies in the West. The earliest instance we know of is the Council of Toledo (589), and from this time such instances rapidly emerge in France and Spain. The famous “Athanasian Creed,” which clearly testifies that the Spirit’s Person eternally proceeds from the Father and the Son, was thought to have been a reflection of the Apostolic faith by everyone in the West.

Most likely speaking on behalf of the Latin West, J.N.D. Kelly notes the following: “The view that the creed was the work of Athanasius... *was universal in the middle ages.*”⁴²⁶ That means that the Latin Fathers thought the *Filioque* to have been held by the pre-eminent champion of Nicene orthodoxy himself. Kelly says elsewhere that the Augustinian *Filioque*, which undoubtedly finds itself in the Athanasian Creed, “became universally accepted in the West in the fifth and sixth centuries.”⁴²⁷ It was

⁴²⁶ J.N.D. Kelly, *The Athanasian Creed* (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1964), 3; [emphasis added].

⁴²⁷ J.N.D. Kelly, *Early Christian Creeds*, 359.

through this creed that for “more than a thousand years this eloquent confession, alongside of the *Life of Antony*, was the dominant written work through which Western Christians believed they heard the voice of Athanasius.”⁴²⁸ In fact, as was already mentioned in the Patristic florilegium earlier in the book, this creed of St. Athanasius was first found in the written collections of St. Caesarius of Arles.⁴²⁹ There is also a testimony which comes from St. Abbo of Fleury (944-1004), a pre-schism Saint of the West, who reports that the Athanasian Creed was liturgically sung in both France and England in his day, showing the *Filioque* lasted for centuries in the West before it became a problem between Latin and Greeks.⁴³⁰

As Fr. Brian Daley points out, “the inclusion of *Filioque* in the Latin text of the Creed by the Synod of Toledo in 589,⁴³¹ and its subsequent use in Spain and

⁴²⁸ Thomas Weinanday & Daniel Keating, *Athanasius and His Legacy: Trinitarian-Incarnational Soteriology and Its Reception* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2017), 77.

⁴²⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴³⁰ Daniel Waterland, *A Critical History of the Athanasian Creed* (London: SPCK, 1850), 26; *The Pray Book Dictionary*, (Eds) Harford, G. & Stevenson, M. (London: Sir Isaac Pitman and Sons, Ltd., 1913), 587.

⁴³¹ Fr. Daley says 587 but other sources confirm 589. For one contemporary scholar who supports the view of *Filioque* being added

England, probably raised little awareness in the West of being, in any sense, a modification of the faith of the fourth-century Fathers of the undivided church.”⁴³² Such a description is applied to what the Orthodox would call the *Orthodox West before the schism of 1054*. The *Filioque*, according to Swete, is found in the recitation of the creed in 11 Spanish councils held throughout the 7th century.⁴³³ What’s more important is that “throughout this period, the Eastern and Western churches generally remained in full communion, despite this characteristically Western way of understanding the origin of the Holy Spirit...”⁴³⁴ In fact, by the time the Carolingian theologians were defending the *Filioque* in the creed, many thought that it was the Greeks who had removed it from the original form of the bishops of Constantinople 381! That is how prevalent and universal this was in the far West. However, not everyone was so naïve. St. Paulinus of Aquileia (726-804), knowing that the creeds of 325 and 381 originally did not have the *Filioque*, argued

to the creed at Toledo (589), see Norman Tanner, *New Short History of the Catholic Church* (London: Burns & Oates, 2011), 44.

⁴³² Brian E. Daley, *Revisiting the ‘Filioque’: Roots and Branches of an Old Debate*, part 1, 46.

⁴³³ Henry Swete, *On the History of the Doctrine of the Procession of the Holy Spirit*, 174

⁴³⁴ *Ibid.*

nonetheless that the creed can be changed, if necessary, as the Nicene creed was changed at Constantinople (381).⁴³⁵

What remains strikingly odd, however, is that, of all places in the West to be in support of the creed as it was originally framed in 381, it was the Apostolic See of Rome herself which never added the *Filioque* to the creed and was against doing so during the 8th to 9th centuries in the face of Western political intentions to do so until the 11th century. However, it should be remembered that the Popes of Rome defended the orthodoxy of the procession of the Spirit from the Father and the Son, as understood by St. Augustine, despite their not wanting the interpolation in the creed. By the 11th century, Rome would find herself adding the *Filioque* to the creed as sung in the Mass, and this was to cause an uproar in relations with the Greeks. The interpolation of *Filioque* into the Spanish, French, and English Churches in the 6th to 7th centuries, and then eventually in Rome, can be said to be, as coined by Fr. Edmund Hill, a “*creeping canonization*”,⁴³⁶ paralleling the “*creeping canonization*” of the 2nd place of the Church of Constantinople in the

⁴³⁵ Aidan Nichols, *Rome and the Eastern Churches*, 238; Judith Herrin, *The Formation of Christendom*, 440.

⁴³⁶ Edmund Hill, *The Mystery of the Trinity*, 119.

hierarchical order of Churches, for centuries denied by Rome. The Greek East railed against this addition to the creed from the 9th century all the way unto Florence in the 15th century and this opposition persists to this day. This is not only because they understood the 7th canon of Ephesus to forbid changes to the creed, but such prohibition was specifically made once again at the Council of Constantinople (879-80), right in the midst of the historical context of Western attempts, against the admonition of Rome, to add *Filioque* to the creed!

However, even in the *horos* of that Council, the text of the prohibition against changing the creed includes an implication that it is not an absolute and invincible prohibition, and seems to include the possibility of an addition to the grammatical construction of the creed when and if necessary: “for subtraction and addition, *when no heresy is stirred up by the ingenious fabrications of the evil one*, introduces disapprobation of those who are exempt from blame and inexcusable assault on the Fathers.”⁴³⁷ This is confirmed by notable Church

⁴³⁷ Trans. George Dragas, “The Either Ecumenical Councils: Constantinople IV (879/80) and the Condemnation of the Filioque Addition and Doctrine,” *Greek Orthodox Theological Review* 44 (1999), 364. Henry Chadwick reads the *horos* as having the qualifier that the creed could change if and when there is a need, c.f. *East and*

historians. German Byzantinist Hans-Georg Beck wrote: “Even so, the prohibition *did not apply* if there was a question of disposing of a heresy; and the prohibition spoke of the adding of ‘false words’.”⁴³⁸ Presumably, then, if there were a context where there was a need to condemn heresy, and if an addition to the creed were “true words” instead of “false words”, then the creed seems like it could be unlocked.

But did this Council condemn the *Filioque* doctrine, *per se*? The late Jesuit scholar in Latin and Byzantine Canon Law, Fr. Clarence Gallagher, S.J., wrote: “The wording was in general terms, though its meaning was clear; *and it said nothing about the theological implications of the filioque.*”⁴³⁹ Beck goes on to observe that the 879 council “completely excluded the dogmatic question and contented itself with prohibiting additions

West: The Making of a Rift in the Church, From Apostolic Times until the Council of Florence (Oxford University Press, 2003), 176.

⁴³⁸ Hans-Georg Beck, “The Byzantine Church in the Age of Photius,” in *The Church in the Age of Feudalism*, trans. Anselm Biggs (New York: Herder and Herder, 1969), 189, *Handbook of Church History*, Vol. III, (Eds.) Hubert Jedin & John Dolan; [emphasis added].

⁴³⁹ Fr. Clarence Gallagher, S.J., “Patriarch Photius and Pope Nicholas and the Council of 879,” in *The Jurist: Studies in Church Law and Ministry*, Vol. 67, No. 1, 2007, 81; [emphasis added].

to the Creed.”⁴⁴⁰ Fr. Francis Dvornik accords with this: “*Nowhere* was the doctrine of the *Filioque* questioned: the *only objection* was to the addition of the formula to the Symbol.”⁴⁴¹ According to Byzantinist scholar Fr. Johan Meijer, the bishops at the 879 Council did not have the intention of condemning the doctrine behind the *Filioque* clause, as they “said nothing about the theological content of the filioque.”⁴⁴² Furthermore, they “did not seek to exclude further developments, as they knew that the Creed of Nicaea 325 had itself been the result of a development and of additions.”⁴⁴³ If it had, they would have specified the doctrine, condemned it along with its adherents. That is how it was always done as with Arius, Nestorius, Eutyches, and others in the past.

This explains why the Papal legates had no issue with ratifying the decrees of 879. As J.N.D. Kelly notes, the “Romans could assent because *there was no discussion* of the doctrine of the double procession of the Holy

⁴⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴¹ Francis Dvornik, *The Photian Schism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1948; reprinted 1970), 196; [emphasis added].

⁴⁴² Johan Meijer, *A Successful Council of Union: A Theological Analysis of the Photian Synod of 879-880* (Thessaloniki: Patriarchal Institute for Patristic Studies, 1975), 136 & 185.

⁴⁴³ *Ibid.*, 185.

Appendix 1

Spirit...”⁴⁴⁴ Even Papadakis admits that, for the Greek East, it was only at Blachernae (1285) that “*the doctrine was finally discussed and dogmatically settled.*”⁴⁴⁵ Nevertheless, it would be naïve to think that a condemnation of the *Filioque* doctrine was not in the minds of the Greeks at 879. That might make the matter even more interesting, for if they had the *Filioque* doctrine in mind and yet refused to condemn it, perhaps their outward acceptance demonstrates an outward toleration of its inherent doctrine, regardless of how erroneous they thought it to be. At the end of the day, we can’t deduce an official condemnation based on what was *in the mind* of the bishops if such a reaction never made it to the official text of the Council.

Unfortunately, the Latin West is not so clear on whether this Council held in Constantinople is still to be numbered in the list of the great Ecumenical Councils. It seems like the historical evidence favors that, at one time, it was ratified by Rome, but then later no longer was called Ecumenical. Scholars have recognized that there was an inversion that consisted of Rome originally holding to the Council of Constantinople (879) as Ecumenical and then

⁴⁴⁴ J.N.D. Kelly, “John VIII,” *Oxford Dictionary of the Popes* (New York: Oxford University Press Inc., 1986), 111; [emphasis added].

⁴⁴⁵ Papadakis, *Crisis in Byzantium*, 3.

later inverting to only recognizing the Council of Constantinople (869) as Ecumenical, which itself had been annulled, in some sense, by Pope John VIII's ratification of the Photian synod (879).⁴⁴⁶

To make matters even more difficult is that a profession of faith by Pope Leo IX (1049-1054) sent to Peter of Antioch in the 11th century only includes a recognition of 7 Ecumenical Councils, as Jalland notes.⁴⁴⁷ Pope Marinus II (942-6) likewise only counts 7, as Fr. Dvornik records.⁴⁴⁸ Even Cardinal Humbert of Silva Candida (1054), the famous figure who is responsible for slapping the bull of excommunication down on the altar of Hagia Sophia, only mentions 7 Ecumenical Councils.⁴⁴⁹

Thus, even with less than 100 years after 879, the Popes were still counting 7 Ecumenical Councils. But they aren't alone. Even the Greek East did not consistently count the Council of 879 as Ecumenical, seeing as how the number 7 continued to held by their own representatives for centuries afterwards.⁴⁵⁰ How is it, then, that Popes of centuries afterward failed to number either

⁴⁴⁶ Trevor Jalland, *Church and Papacy* (London: SPCK, 1944), 386.

⁴⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 387.

⁴⁴⁸ Dvornik, *The Photian Schism*, 315; see also 309-330.

⁴⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁵⁰ See Part 2, Chapter 5 & 6 in Dvornik, *The Photian Schism*.

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Constantinople (869-70) or Constantinople (879-80) as Ecumenical, only later to recognize the Council of 869-70 as alone truly Ecumenical, if and when the reverse should have been the case given the recorded history? It is an extremely disconcerting observation, and we have yet to have any full explanation by the Catholic Church that satisfactorily explains this issue.

These observations are sometimes brought out by Orthodox Christians in order to show that the Catholic Church has committed a canonical crime on the grounds of the *horos* of Constantinople (879) against creedal interpolations. One Catholic Medieval historian simply states that it “is now time for the Roman Catholic Church to recognize its error more officially”⁴⁵¹ and just admit that the 879-80 Council is to be numbered in place of the 869 Council. There are some reasons why some caution should be taken before resorting to such a proposed consequence.

In the first place, the Councils of Lyons (1274) and Florence (1439) argued in the context of what was at least staged as an Ecumenical Council that the *Filioque* was both orthodox in doctrine and that it was lawfully added to the Creed, and in both instances, there was Greek

⁴⁵¹ Norman Tanner, *The Councils of the Church*, 43.

acceptance of these conciliar decrees. At the very least, it must have been conceded, from the inception, that the creed could potentially welcome a word-addition by all the participating Greeks who signed the decrees at Florence. Gennadios Scholarius, while at the Council of Florence, said that "no one can deprive an Oecumenical Synod of this prerogative, since we know that other synods have declared the truth faith by additions."⁴⁵² Of course, he later changed his mind by the influence of Mark of Ephesus.⁴⁵³

Therefore, while we might say that the Roman addition to the creed in 11th century is an open contradiction to the force of the decree of Constantinople (879-80), it seems also to be the case that this Council was not seen as having an enduring Ecumenical value, in either East or West.⁴⁵⁴ This observation might be immaterial anyhow since even a local Council can bring canons into binding effect under Papal approval. Secondly, the Council of Constantinople (869) was annulled at the Council of Constantinople (879) by an

⁴⁵² Joseph Gill, *The Council of Florence*, 167.

⁴⁵³ *Ibid.*, 166.

⁴⁵⁴ Leo Donald Davis, *The First Seven Ecumenical Councils 325-787: Their History and Theology* (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1983), 324.

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appeal to the Pope's power of the keys, as the successor of St. Peter.⁴⁵⁵ In other words, the Greeks recognized that the successor of St. Peter in the Apostolic See of Rome had the power to unbind what was formerly bound even at the court of an Ecumenical Council that was ratified by both Emperor and 5 Patriarchs.⁴⁵⁶ As such, the power inherent in the Pope may play a role in whether he can or cannot undo ecclesiastical binds that were before passed.

Ultimately, that is what it all boils down to: can the Pope unbind the *horos* of Constantinople (879), as well as the lock placed upon the Creed at the Councils of Ephesus (431) and Chalcedon (451)? Taking from the *Acts* of that very Council of 879, in particular the Papal claims left in them from the letter of Pope John VIII, the answer is a resolute "Yes."⁴⁵⁷ As such, the Roman addition of *Filioque* does not qualify to be a crime, by virtue of the principle of superior authority. This is also due to the fact that the *horos* of 879 is not a matter dealing with the content of divine revelation, but an ecclesiastical custom.

Lastly, we do know that the Church has the power to add words to creeds, even those protected by the 7th canon

⁴⁵⁵ Johan Meijer, *A Successful Council of Reunion*, 74-88.

⁴⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 83.

⁴⁵⁷ The Greeks accepted forceful claims by the Pope John VIII to have the power to annul the decisions of synods, c.f. *ibid.*

of Ephesus (431), i.e., Chalcedon, and so the lock placed on the creed by Chalcedon (451) and Constantinople (879) still admit, as noted by Hans-George Beck, the possibility of being unlocked by the lawful use of the Church's authority. If the Pope is recognized to have the use of the Church's keys to unlock the creedal lock, then the *Filioque* addition is justified. If it were otherwise, and there really is an irrevocable lock on the creed, then that would have severe repercussions towards the Catholic Church since she would be in canonical dereliction, which itself has a direct bearing on who is on the right side in the East West schism.

On the other hand, if the Catholic Church was wrong for adding *Filioque* to the creed, and if the Greek East was wrong for condemning the doctrine of the *Filioque*, now we have two wrongs which do not add up to one single right on either side. All in all, the primary intention of this book is to show the Scriptural and Patristic roots of the *Filioque*. If this intention was met successfully by the foregoing evidence, then the Orthodox Church, in blatantly official venues, has condemned a biblical and patristic doctrine as a heretical corruption. And so even if we were to concede that the *Filioque* addition to the creed were a canonical crime, that would leave both the Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church in some sort of wrong.

Appendix 1

That further leaves us with the comparing the wrong of a *possible* canonical crime versus the wrong of incorrectly condemning orthodox revelation from God. Which wrong is more tolerable, and which one can still yield the potential for a legitimate reversal without impugning the essential claim of either Church as the true one? The reader will have to decide.

**Appendix II: St. Cyril of Alexandria: Are
προχέμενον, προχεται, πρόεισι, προῖόν, and
ἐκπορεύεσθαι code words?**

Did St. Cyril of Alexandria use certain Greek words as strict codes to signify the eternal origin of the Spirit versus the eternal energetic or active procession of the Spirit, or even merely the temporal economic mission of the Spirit through the Son? The answer is not so simple. Dr. A. Ed. Sicienski, one of the foremost Byzantine historical theologians of our time, has provided a scholarly summary where leans in the affirmative.⁴⁵⁸ He recognizes that Cyril uses analogies such as sweetness from honey or heat from light or fire in order to speak of the Holy Spirit “going forth from” the Son of God. The question, however, is if this “going forth from” is to be understood in the “realm of theology”, i.e., the eternal immanent Trinity, or if it is simply with regard to the “realm of economy”, i.e., the relation of God to creatures.

Sicienski cites the work of George Berthold who argues that the Spirit comes from the Son eternally in the immanent relation between Son and Spirit. For Berthold,

⁴⁵⁸ Sicienski, *The Filioque*, 47-50.

Appendix 2

those passages which speak about the Spirit coming from the Son and the Father indicate an eternal procession from the Son. However, Siecienski calls for caution since St. Cyril uses certain Greek terms that might carry different significations when speaking about the Spirit coming from or through the Son. The range of words are usually as follows:

1. προχέομενον / προχεται
2. πρόεισι
3. προῖόν / προῖέναι
4. ἐκπορεύω / ἐκπορεύεσθαι

Some have held that the Greek word range within 1-3 has a strict conceptual difference from the words in 4. The latter, (ἐκπορεύω / ἐκπορεύεσθαι), in this view, are strictly reserved by St. Cyril for when he wants to describe where the personal existence of the Spirit derives His eternal origin. When he uses the other words (προχέομενον, προχεται, πρόεισι, προῖόν, προῖέναι), he intends either to describe the temporal procession of the Spirit from the Son into the world, or perhaps the eternal procession of the Spirit from the Son in a way strictly distinct from eternal origination, sort of like an eternal “progression” or “flowing forth.” However, St. Cyril is found using προῖόν and πρόεισι to describe the eternal origin of the Son from the Father in contexts where it

could not be anything but eternal origin or hypostatic production (i.e., generation or begetting). This would be a small hint that such words are not so rigidly reserved for such finer categories separate from hypostatic origination. For example:

The blessed Evangelist seems to me again to say with some great confidence This is the Son of God, that is, the One, the Only by Nature, the Heir of the Own Nature of the Father, to Whom we too, sons by adoption, are conformed and through Whom we are called by grace to the dignity of sonship. For as from God the Father every family in Heaven and earth is named, from His being properly, and first, the truly Father, so is all sonship too from the Son, by reason of His being properly and Alone truly Son, not bastard nor falsely-called, but of the Essence of God the Father, not by off-cutting or emanation or division or severance (for the Divine Nature is altogether Impassible): but as One of One, ever Co-Existing and Co-eternal and Innate in Him who begat Him, being in Him, and

coming forth from Him, Indivisible and without Dimensions; since the Divinity is neither after such as to make progressive footsteps. But like as from fire *proceedeth* (πρόεισιν) the heat that is in it, appearing to be separate from it in idea, and to be other than it, though it is of it and in it by nature, and *proceedeth* (προϊούσα) from it without suffering any harm in the way off-cutting, division, or emanation (for it is preserved whole in the fire): so shall we conceive of the divine offspring too, thinking thereon in a manner most worthy of God, and believing that the Son subsists of Himself, yet not excluding Him from the One Ineffable God-head, nor saying that He is Other in substance than the Father.⁴⁵⁹

In a similar context, St. Cyril writes:

⁴⁵⁹ St. Cyril of Alexandria, *Commentary on John*, 1:34, Vol. 1, PG 73.213; Eng. Trans. Pusey, *A Library of the Fathers of the Holy Catholic Church*, Vol. 43, 147.

But the Son hath in Himself the whole Property of the Father, not by participation, though the Father be said to have given it (for so He would have acquired, not as Natural Godhead) but the Father gives all that is His to His Son, just as a man too may be conceived to give to the child born of him all the properties of manhood, or as the fire too may be said to give to the heat *proceeding* (προϊούση) from it in the way of energy, the property of its own nature.⁴⁶⁰

Likewise, in another context:

As if the sweetness of the honey when laid on the tongue should say of itself, 'I am in the honey and the honey in me'; or as though again the heat that *proceeds*

⁴⁶⁰ St. Cyril of Alexandria, *Commentary on John*, 3:35, PG 73.281; Eng. Trans. Pusey, *A Library of the Fathers of the Holy Catholic Church*, Vol. 43, 195. One interesting point here is that St. Cyril uses "energy" as a mode of description, but it can't be applicable to anything but the Son's hypostatic origination. Therefore, this can't be read in the sense of the "energetic" procession that was put forth by the 13th century Cypriot or Gregory Palamas.

(*προϊούσα*) naturally from fire, emitting a voice were to say, I am in the fire and the fire in me. For each of the things mentioned is I supposed divisible in idea, but one in nature, and the one proceeding by a sort of indivisible and (*προόδω προχύπτρον*) *continuous forth come* from the other, so as to seem to be even severed from that wherein it is. Yet though the force of ideas regarding these things takes this form, still one appears in the other and both are the same as regards essence.⁴⁶¹

Also:

Look—look—he calls the “Spirit of Truth” (that is, Himself) the “Paraclete,” and he says that he “*proceeds* (*ἐκπορεύεσθαι*) from the Father.” Just as the Spirit belongs to the Son by nature, being in him and *proceeding* (*προϊόν*) through him, so also the Spirit belongs to the

⁴⁶¹ St. Cyril of Alexandria, *Commentary on John*, 1:1, PG 73.53; Eng. Trans. Pusey, *A Library of Fathers of the Holy Catholic Church*, Vol. 43, 32.

Father. The attributes of their substance surely cannot be divided because the Spirit is common to both... After all, if *the Son* does not *proceed* (*ἐκπορεύεται*) from the Father, that is, from his essence, as you maintain, how could the Spirit not be understood to be superior to the Son?⁴⁶²

Lastly, St. Cyril seems to think that *προχέομενον* or *προχεται* includes the concept of *ἐκπορεύεται*. However, *προχεται* is clearly used to describe the “flowing forth” of the Spirit from both the Father and the Son:

The Spirit is assuredly in no way changeable; or, if some people think him to be so infirm as to change, the disgrace will then be traced back to the divine nature itself, if in fact the Spirit is *from God the Father* and, for that matter, *from the Son*, being *poured forth* [*προχ-*

⁴⁶² Cyril of Alexandria, *Commentary on John*, 16:15, Vol. 2, ed. Joel C. Elowsky (Downer’s Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2013), 246. Greek added from PG 74.417. The reader should take note of how St. Cyril is using the same Greek word for “proceeds” for the Son from the Father. This shows that hypostatic origination is in the context, even if the *προϊόν* word is used.

εόμενον]⁴⁶³ *substantially from both*, that is to say, *from the Father through the Son* [ἐκ πατρὸς δι' υἱοῦ].⁴⁶⁴

[...] *He is poured forth* [προχεται], that is, *he proceeds* [ἐκπορεύεται]⁴⁶⁵ *as from the fountain of God the Father and he is bestowed on creation through the Son.*⁴⁶⁶

⁴⁶³ This Greek word was used elsewhere in a previous citation (c.f. citation from footnote 163) to be further described by the Greek word ἐκπορεύεται.

⁴⁶⁴ Cyril, *De adoratione* 1 (PG 68, 148A); Eng. Trans: Dr. Peter Gilbert. Greek text: Τρεπτόν δὲ οὐτουτοῦ τὸ πνεῦμά ἐστιν. ἢ εἴτερ τὸ τρέπεσθαι νοσεῖ, ἐπ' αὐτήν ὁ μῶμος τὴν θείαν ἀναδραμεῖται φύσιν, εἴτερ ἐστὶ τοῦ Θεοῦ καὶ πατρός, καὶ μὴν καὶ τοῦ υἱοῦ τὸ οὐσιωδῶς ἐξ ἀμφοῖν, ἡγουν ἐκ πατρὸς δι' υἱοῦ προχέομενον πνεῦμα. Alternative translation in Pusey, *The Library of the Fathers of the Catholic Church*, Vol. 43, ix.

⁴⁶⁵ It is quite important to see how St. Cyril can interpret these two words (ἐκπορεύεται and προχεται) can be used to describe the eternal procession of the Spirit. In fact, in this citation, St. Cyril sees ἐκπορεύεται as explaining προχεται, c.f. Sicienski, *The Filioque*, 161.

⁴⁶⁶ St. Cyril, Letter 55, *St. Cyril of Alexandria: Letters 51-110*, trans. J.I. McNernery, 34.

Notice the in the above citation, “poured forth” (προχεται) has the meaning of “proceeds” (ἐκπορεύεται), and yet προχεται is used to describe the Spirit’s going forth from the Son in St. Cyril’s 3rd letter to Nestorius. Therefore, when the Spirit proceeds (ἐκπορεύεται) from the Father (Jn 15:26), the Son is also sending the Spirit in the same act. St Cyril writes:

For even if the Spirit exists in his own hypostasis and is conceived of individually, in that he is Spirit and not Son, nevertheless he is not alien to the Son; for he was called the “Spirit of Truth,” while Christ is the truth, *and he is poured out (προχεῖται)⁴⁶⁷ by Christ just as of course from God (ἐκ του θεου) the Father.⁴⁶⁸*

It seems clear, therefore, that St. Cyril does not have code-limitations when he uses the various words in describing the Trinitarian relations. He uses *προϊόν* and *πρόεισιν* to describe the eternal production of the Son of

⁴⁶⁷ Once again, the Greek word προχεῖται is being used which before in the above citation proves to be synonymous with ἐκπορεύεται. Nevertheless, it can be questioned whether St. Cyril is speaking about an eternal or temporal pouring out in either instance. My position is that he can see both realities with the same language.

⁴⁶⁸ See citation from Chapter 4.

God from the Father, and even uses the some of the same metaphoric language that describes the flowing forth of the Spirit from the Son as sweetness from honey or heat from light.⁴⁶⁹ In the last citation, St. Cyril uses ἐκπορεύεται, which is supposed to be reserved to the eternal origin of the Holy Spirit, *to speak of the eternal origin of the Son!* Just on the varied usage of προῖόν and πρόεισιν, it should be transparent that these two words should not be strictly reserved to just the temporal economy of salvation, nor should it be seen as describing a specific kind of eternal procession that is distinct (e.g., the energetic procession) from the eternal origin of the person of the Holy Spirit.

Therefore, when it is said by St. Cyril that the Holy Spirit proceeds (προῖόν/πρόεισιν) from the Son, it should not automatically be ruled out as impossibly referring to the eternal origin of the Spirit's being and existence. In fact, given the usage of those words for the eternal and hypostatic origin of the Son from the Father, there is only evidence leaning in the direction that they are used to refer to the hypostatic origination of the Spirit as well, however much they are also meshed in contexts dealing with the temporal economy.

⁴⁶⁹ Siecienski, *The Filioque*, 48.

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