

46). Rediscovered in the Renaissance, a large selection of Gregory's poetry appeared in volume three of the *Poetae Christiani Veteres* of Aldus Manutius (Venice 1504). The first attempt at a complete edition was that made by Protestant scholars at Basel in 1550; this was superseded by the *Opera Omnia* of J. Billius, with important commentaries (Paris 1609–11), which was in turn superseded by the Benedictine edition (Paris 1778–1840) that is reprinted in Migne. The breadth of Gregory's appeal is seen best in the diversity of his admirers; they included Erasmus, Melancthon, Gibbon, and J. H. Newman. His relics repose in St. Peter's Basilica, Rome, in the Capella Gregoriana, beneath the altar of Madonna dell Soccorso (Our Lady of Help).

Feast: May 9 in the West; Jan. 25 in the East; commemorated again with St. John Chrysostom and St. Basil the Great on Jan. 30, the "Feast of Greek Letters."

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[J. T. CUMMINGS/K. B. STEINHAUSER]

GREGORY OF NYSSA, ST.

One of the three Cappadocian Fathers; b. Caesarea, between 335 and 340; d. Constantinople, c. 394. His grandmother, Macrina the Elder, was converted to Christianity through the teaching of GREGORY THAUMATURGOS, and his famous Christian family had suffered during the DIOCLETIAN PERSECUTION. Youngest of the three Cappadocian Fathers (sometimes called the Cappadocian Theologians so as to include the eldest sibling MACRINA), he was known as the philosopher and mystic while his brother, Basil of Caesarea, was considered the administrator and GREGORY OF NAZIANZUS the theologian. His sister, MACRINA, who had a formative influence on the education of her brothers, was the teacher and ascetic. Two of his ten brothers were bishops, namely, Basil and Peter of Sebaste.

Destined at first for a career in the church, Gregory was ordained a lector, but apparently he abandoned this vocation to follow that of his father, a rhetorician. He married and, after the death of his wife, was persuaded by Gregory of Nazianzus to enter the monastery founded by Basil in Pontus near the Iris River. At Basil's insistence, he was consecrated bishop of Nyssa, a suffragan of Caesarea in Cappadocia, in 372. Lacking Basil's administrative talents, he was accused of negligence in financial matters and deposed by an Arian dominated synod in 376. However, after the death of the Arian emperor Valens in 378, the pro-Nicene Theodosius I ascended to power and Gregory was able to return to Nyssa. When Basil died in 379, Gregory labored to continue his



Miniature detail of St. Gregory of Nyssa, from "Menologian of Basil II" (Vat. Gr. 1613).

brother's work, essentially becoming his heir. He took part in the Council of Antioch in 379 and was named metropolitan of Caesarea in 380. He played a major role at the Council of Constantinople I in 381, at which he was acknowledged as a pillar of orthodoxy and continuator of the thought of Basil. At the same time he replied to the radical Arian theologian Eunomius. In his last years he was involved in a bitter controversy over Apollinarianism. He died shortly after attending a council in Constantinople in 394.

WORKS

Ascetical Writings. There are problems concerning authenticity in the list of works attributed to Gregory, but they do not involve his major writings, and the authentic list is long and impressive. His letters appear to be incomplete. Written after 370, but perhaps as late as 379, *De Virginitate* was his first published work. In addition, there is the life of his sister, *De vita Macrinae*, and three short treatises, *De perfectione*, *De instituto Christiano*, and *De castigatione*. His ascetical writings manifest Platonic, Stoic, and Pythagorean influences. The *De anima et resurrectione*, a Christian parallel to Plato's *Phaedo*, is a dialogue with his dying sister, Macrina, that presents

Gregory's Christian views of immortality and the future life.

Dogmatic Writings. A number of Gregory's writings were concerned with the refutation of heresies and the clarification of the corresponding orthodox positions. His Trinitarian writings were produced between 380 and 384. Most important among these is *Contra Eunomium*, a lengthy refutation of the writings of the Arian Bishop Eunomius, who asserted that the persons of the Trinity were radically dissimilar from one another. Against the Arians is a short tract, *Ad Simplicium de fide sancta*, addressed to a tribune, Simplicius. There are two pieces directed against the Macedonians, who denied the divinity of the Holy Spirit, *Sermo de Spiritu Sancto adversus Pneumatomachos Macedonianos* and *Ad Eustathium de sancta Trinitate*.

Another major work, *Oratio catechetica magna*, is a summary of catholic teaching, presented in contrast to the teaching of the Jews and the pagans. It stands in the line of systematic works between Origen's *De principiis* and the *De fide orthodoxa* of John Damascene. After 385 Gregory wrote a vigorous refutation of the Christological heresy of Apollinaris, *Antirrheticus adversus Apollinarem*, which quoted frequently from Apollinaris's work.

It is the most important extant writing against Apollinarianism. In *Adversus Apollinaristas* he rejected the Apollinarian charge that he holds there are two sons of God. A small tract, *Contra fatum*, defends the freedom of the will against a pagan philosopher. *Ad Graecos ex communibus notionibus* was written in 397. *Ad Adlabium quod non sint tres dii*, utilizing the distinction between person and nature, explains how one can speak of three persons without asserting the existence of three gods.

Exegetical Writings. A large portion of Gregory's writings is devoted to the exposition of scripture. Two early works (written ca. 379–389), having a scientific intent, that is, attempting to expose the teaching of scripture in harmony with right reason or true philosophy, are the *Explicatio apologetica in Hexaemeron* and the *De opificio hominis*. The first is a continuation of a task undertaken by Basil to explain Genesis in the light of the scientific and philosophical accounts of the formation of the world; the second continues with a concentration on the creation of human beings. The particular exegetical technique which Gregory inherits from Origen is *akolouthia*, that is, connection or sequence of thought, which he utilizes to give meaning and order to the apparently random events of biblical text.

Two short pieces are concerned with theological interpretation, the *De phytonissa* and a homily on 1 Cor 15.28. The other exegetical writings develop the doctrine of Christian perfection and, particularly, the way of mystical union taught by scripture. They include the *De vita Moysis*, *In psalmorum inscriptiones*, *In Ecclesiasten homiliae*, *In Canticum Canticorum*, on the Old Testament; *De oratione dominica*, *De beatitudinibus* and another homily on 1 Cor 6.18, on the New Testament. Of particular interest is *De vita Moysis*, which describes Moses's mystical ascent to God through the three theophanies recorded in the book of Exodus.

TEACHING

Above all, the intellectual basis of Gregory's theology was Greek. His thought represents the encounter between Greek classical philosophy and Christian biblical revelation. Hellenistic Judaism was the religion of Judea and Galilee during the life of Jesus. Widespread Hellenism had been the environment for the expansion of primitive Christianity, and the New Testament had been written in *koine* or common Greek. However, the Hellenism of the Cappadocians was profoundly different both in form and in content. Gregory's language was in no way common. His writing was more literary and more polished than the language of the New Testament. His thinking was more rational and more sophisticated and especially dependent upon pagan sources. The Cappadocians in general and Gregory in particular were on the

forefront of creating a new and genuine Christian culture, namely, a Christian version of classical Greek *paideia*. The philosophy of antiquity is so evident in the works of Gregory that some scholars, not without cause, have considered him more a Neoplatonist than a Christian. The point of view from which to understand Gregory's teaching is precisely this context of Christian *paideia*. In his thinking, scripture and philosophy are in a sense parallel. Both teach a higher doctrine and both have the same goal, the practice of virtue and final union with God. Gregory writes: "If one can give a definition of Christianity, we shall define it as follows: Christianity is an imitation of divine nature. . . . Christianity, therefore, brings man back to his original good fortune" (*De Professione*, FC 58, p. 85). The Neoplatonic type and archetype are evident in his definition. The practice of virtue is the imitation of divine nature while salvation is union with God. This salvific union is more precisely a reunion with God or the restoration of human beings to their original state in the garden before the fall.

Allegorical Method. Although Gregory was aware of the Antiochene criticism of the Alexandrian allegorical method of scriptural interpretation and was much more concerned with the literal sense than were the Origenists, he maintained nevertheless that the ultimate purpose of scripture is not its historical teaching, but the elevation of the soul to God. This requires the allegorical method, which makes possible the extension of scripture to include much philosophy that is not directly contained in the historical sense. Within this context Gregory admitted the ability to know God from reason, but vigorously objected, against Eunomius, to the univocal application to God of categories and names derived from creatures. The distinction between creator and creature is fundamental for Gregory, and as a result the creator remains in a realm of mystery. He made much of the incomprehensibility of God and may have been one of the principal sources of the negative theology of Pseudo-Dionysius.

Trinity. Gregory maintained that the Son and Holy Spirit are equally creator and God, although the Son is generated and the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and Son. In the fashion that became traditional in the Greek Fathers and Orthodox Christianity, he saw the Holy Spirit as proceeding in a line from the Father through the Son. His attempt to explain the unity of nature and diversity of persons is tinged with a Platonic realism that has difficulties as well as attractiveness. The divine persons are distinct by their relations to each other, correctly enough, but they share one nature in the way that several men share the same human nature. This could suggest tritheism, but Gregory conceived the unity of nature more as the unity of a group than as a nature individually repeated in each member. In his viewpoint "man"

means the whole human race, which has been inserted into matter in time and which will not be complete until the history of the human race has run its course. He had, as a result, a very strong sense of the unity of all human beings, which suggests a Stoic as well as a Platonic influence. In the Platonic tradition, however, he spoke of two creations of man, an ideal and an historical creation. With regard to the ideal creation, he held the peculiar position that human beings did not have by nature the sexual mode of reproduction. Humans were historically created male and female only because the creator foresaw the fall of the human race.

The Incarnation. This sense of the solidarity of the human race also contributes to the theology of the incarnation. Just as the human spirit made it possible for the physical universe to praise God with its own voice when it entered into matter, so when Christ became incarnate he entered into the whole human race and made it possible for mankind to praise God through his Son. The second person, however, assumes an individual human nature in such a way that there is only one person who is both God and man. Gregory taught the communication of idioms between the two natures in Christ, and accordingly insisted, against the Apollinarists, that Mary was the mother of God (*theotokos*) and not just the mother of man (*anthropotokos*).

Image of God. Part of the creationist pattern as applied to man is the doctrine of man as the image of God. This becomes a central notion in Gregory's anthropology and mystical theology. Man is the image of God as Creator and thus it is as lord of the universe and as a free agent that man's likeness to God is most often found. Because of this freedom man was able to fall into sin, and the image was soiled. It can be recovered through Christ and the practice of virtue. Christian perfection consists in becoming more and more like God. The quality of likeness also makes mystical knowledge possible, for as Greek philosophy taught, like is known by like. The attributes of God can be known through the image that is in man, although the essence of God transcends any knowledge of concepts or qualities.

Human Freedom. Despite the strongly intellectual character of his conception of Christian perfection, Gregory put a high value on human freedom, perhaps in opposition to Manichaeism, and he stressed greatly man's own responsibility and choice, even in the matter of faith and the attainment of the highest perfection. Yet there was a final optimism in Gregory. He did not accept the Origenist theory of the pre-existence of individual human souls, but he did support the doctrine of *apokatastasis* or the ultimate reconciliation of all creatures to God. The metaphysical argument for this rested on the Platonic doctrine

of the negative character of evil and on the Platonic doctrine of the dynamism of the good. Evil cannot be absolute and infinite. Neither can there be an unending endurance in evil, for all being is good, and the good must eventually work its way through finite evil. The dynamism of goodness continues even in the final possession of God, and beatitude is conceived as a state of perpetual progress.

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[R. F. HARVANEK/K. B. STEINHAUSER]

GREGORY OF OSTIA, ST.

Bishop and papal legate; d. Logroño, Navarre, Spain, May 9, 1044. Little is known for certain of Gregory before his election to the See of OSTIA except that he was a BENEDICTINE monk and abbot of the monastery of SS. Cosmas and Damian in Rome from 998 to 1004. He was undoubtedly a man of both learning and holiness and was favored by Pope BENEDICT IX. Under this pope he was elected bishop of Ostia in 1033–34 and was employed either as the librarian of the Roman Church or as chancellor. In 1039 Benedict appointed him papal legate to the Kingdom of Navarre in Spain. He is often invoked against attacks by locusts and other harmful insects, since he reportedly freed the Kingdom of Navarre from a plague of locusts by a simple sign of the cross. His cult was approved for Navarre in 1754.

Feast: May 9.

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[R. E. GEIGER]

GREGORY OF RIMINI

Augustinian philosopher and theologian; b. Rimini, Italy, toward the end of the 13th century; d. Vienna, November 1358. Gregory entered the Hermits of St. Augustine and studied in Italy; in Paris, where he received the degree of bachelor of theology (c. 1323); and in England. He taught at Paris, and at Bologna, Padua, and Perugia in Italy. He then returned to Paris, where he was given the title of *Magister cathedralicus* (*Chartularium universitatis Parisiensis* 2:557, n. 1097) in 1345.

Gregory returned to Italy. In 1351, he was appointed regent of the Augustinian house of studies at Rimini and prior of the monastery. After the death of the prior general, THOMAS OF STRASSBURG, in 1356, Gregory served as vicar general. A year later, he was unanimously elected

prior general. Gregory was considered by his contemporaries to be one of the most subtle philosophers and theologians. Posterity has awarded him the honorary titles of *Doctor authenticus* and *Doctor acutus*.

Gregory was influenced by WILLIAM OF OCKHAM, although he was less prone to skepticism. Gregory admitted the validity of the proofs for the existence of God and held that it is possible to demonstrate philosophically the spirituality of the soul. He opposed Ockham on the question of the plurality of forms. He assigned a great deal of importance to experience, claiming that the intellect knows the singular before the universal, and that intuitive knowledge precedes abstractive knowledge. For him, the universal has no foundation outside the mind; hence, it is only a fictitious concept, formed by the intellect—a sign, arbitrarily instituted (*ad placitum institutum*). The immediate object of knowledge and science is not the object that exists outside the soul but rather the total, overall meaning (*complexe significabile*) of the propositions of a syllogism. His followers not only identified Gregory with NOMINALISM but considered him one of its foremost proponents.

Gregory defended what he believed to be the doctrines of St. AUGUSTINE, including some spurious teachings. He suspected Pelagianism everywhere and fought against it. He overemphasized the corrupt state of human nature, the incapacity of free will, and the need for a special grace in order to perform a morally good act. For him, predestination was entirely gratuitous and independent of the prevision of the good use of free will. He held that children who die unbaptized will never see God and will suffer the punishment of eternal fire, thus earning for himself the nickname of “infant torturer” (*tortor infantium*).

Gregory's most important work is his *Lectura in primum et secundum librum sententiarum*. In addition, he is the author of the following: *Epistolarum divi Augustini tabula*; *Tractatus de imprestantiis Venetorum et de usura* (ed. Reggio Emilia 1522 and 1622); *Tractatus de conceptione B. Mariae Virginis*; *In omnes divi Pauli epistolas*; *In divi Iacobi epistolas*; *De quatuor virtutibus cardinalibus*; *Tractatus de intensione et remissione formarum corporalium*; and the *Registrum epistolarum sui generalatus*.

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