

Figuring Out the Filioque

"Phantaz Sunlyk"

Editor's Note: The issue of the filioque"-- how Son and Spirit relate -- has been of marginal interest to me, since it seems to me that neither position is particularly right or wrong, or that either one held makes a big difference in theology or Christology. Little can be gleaned from the Jewish pre-NT Wisdom theology, where the Spirit had yet to be bifurcated from the Word. That being the case I have requested that guest writer Phantaz Sunlyk,"who has studied deeply in this area, offer his own take on the issue. Phantaz is our resident Catholic with Protestant leanings. 🙏 I will insert my own comments now and then.

Prefatory Note

The below is the beginning of my essay on the Filioque, and not the whole, which I hope to complete in the not too distant future. What is contained below, however, will serve as a decent introduction to the issue and the basic points of controversy that surround it. In what I include in this go-around (sections I - V), I simply lay out the evidence, and for this reason citations will be abundant. The final sections (VI - VII), when complete, will consist of my attempt at offering what I think to be a step in the right direction for resolving the issue. **Sources**

- Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC)
- Congar, Yves, I Believe in the Holy Spirit, vol. 1 (Con-HS1)
- Congar, Yves, I Believe in the Holy Spirit, vol. 2 (Con-HS2)
- Congar, Yves, I Believe in the Holy Spirit, vol. 3 (Con-HS3)
- Davis, Stephen, et al (ed.), The Trinity: an Interdisciplinary Symposium (TIS)
- Fee, Gordon D., God's Empowering Presence (Fee-GEP)
- Hanson, R. P. C., The Search for the Christian Doctrine of God (Han-CDG)
- Kelly, J. N. D., Early Christian Doctrines (Kel-ECD)
- Kasper, Walter, The God of Jesus Christ (Kas-GJC)
- Lossky, Vladimir, The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church (Los-MTEC)
- Meerson, Michael, The Trinity of Love in Modern Russian Theology (Mer-TLRT)
- Moltmann, Jurgen, The Trinity and the Kingdom (Mol-TAK)
- Newman, John Henry Cardinal, The Development of Christian Doctrine (New-EDCD)
- O'Collins, Gerald, The Tripersonal God (O'Col-TG)
- Pelikan, Jaroslav, The Christian Tradition, vol. 2 (Pel-CT2)
- Pelikan, Jaroslav, The Christian Tradition, vol. 3 (Pel-CT3)
- Pelikan, Jaroslav, Christianity and Classical Culture (Pel-CCC)
- Pelikan, Jaroslav, Development of Christian Doctrine (Pel-DCD)
- Writings from the Philokalia on Prayer of the Heart (PHIL)
- Quasten, Johannes, Patrology, vol. 1 (Qua-P1)
- Quasten, Johannes, Patrology, vol. 2 (Qua-P2)
- Quasten, Johannes, Patrology, vol. 3 (Qua-P3)
- Quasten, Johannes, Patrology, vol. 4 (Qua-P4)
- Rahner, Karl, The Trinity (Rah-TT)

- Staniloae, Dumitru, Orthodox Dogmatic Theology, vol. 1 (Sta-ODT1)
- Studer, Basil, Trinity and Incarnation (Stu-TAI)
- Swinburne, Richard, The Christian God (Swi-CG)
- Swinburne, Richard, Revelation: From Metaphor to Analogy (Swi-RMA)
- Von Balthasar, Hans urs, Credo (vonB-CC)
- Ware, Kallistos, The Orthodox Church (War-OC)
- Ware, Kallistos, The Orthodox Way (War-OW)
- Zizioulas, John, Being as Communion (Ziz-BC)

I. INTRODUCTION

As a Christian whose mind is almost entirely consumed by the Trinity, there is no single thing that embarrasses and disturbs me so much as the fact that the Eastern Orthodox and Roman Catholic Churches are in a state of schism, partially over the way in which the doctrine of the Trinity itself is articulated in each communion. The point of disagreement is the *filioque*--the teaching that the Holy Spirit proceeds not from the Father only, but from the Father *and the Son*. I'm not certain as to the exact stance that the various Protestant communions adopt on this issue, but from my experience, it seems that for the most part, Protestants agree with Catholics. [*Ed. note -- my experience is that they don't even know that there are different stances on the issue, but what few know enough would follow with the Catholics here.*]

I'll never forget the sudden sense of perplexity that overcame me when I first read C. S. Lewis's 'Mere Christianity'. I was very young at the time, and had little idea that there was any substantial difference between one denomination and the other--this being several years before my conversion to Christianity, and subsequently, to Catholicism--yet one thing caught my eye from the beginning. Lewis's aim in the work was to show the 'common ground' shared by *all* Christians, and in this respect, I believe he was successful. Yet in the preface (pg. 8), he mentions that, in his desire to ensure that he was presenting what was common to all Christians, he submitted his work to 'four clergymen--Anglican Methodist, Presbyterian, Roman Catholic--and asking for their criticism.'

Even in my extreme youth, I at once asked myself, *but what about the Eastern Orthodox?* Another example--in the complete works of Francis Schaeffer (22 books), *there is only one reference to the Orthodox Church*, and this in passing! So, on the whole, I think that most of us in the West, if the thought hasn't yet occurred to us, need to ask the same question.

What about the Eastern Orthodox? They share the same Scripture (although, like the Catholic Church, they include the deuterо-canonicals, and even some books not included in the Catholic deuterо-canon), and the same basic faith; the doctrines of the Trinity, Incarnation, and the first seven ecumenical councils. Certainly they share as much common ground with Catholics and Protestants as Catholics and Protestants share with each other; what's more, they share more ground with Catholics than Catholics share with Protestants. Why the neglect?

Persons interested in the Eastern Orthodox communion are referred to 'The Orthodox Church' by Kallistos Ware--an excellent historical and theological introduction to the Church of the East. One of my aims in this essay is to, in analyzing the Filioque, give a *feel* for the Orthodox Church. I pray that any Orthodox readers will forgive shortcomings on my part. I have made an honest endeavor to understand the Orthodox way, but at the same time, my experience and learning are unfortunately extremely limited in this regard. At the outset, I confess wholeheartedly that I have a deep love for the East. I adore their mystical approach to theology, pneumatic Christology and Incarnational sacramentalism, and deference to the Fathers of the Church--all of which, among other things, come together and give expression in a beautiful way of Christian worship. To me, the Eastern Orthodox communion seems to be the translation of the believer, and the entire cosmos *through* the believer, *as prayerful response to the God who revealed himself as Love*. The Orthodox way is saturated in beauty.

Still, I am Catholic, and it is as a Catholic that I write. And while there certainly are persons who, for whatever reason, rejoice over the present dis-union between the East and the West (in my experience, such people are usually anti-Trinitarians who are only too thankful to be able to say *Ahhh ha! Ya see, even Trinitarians can't agree on what the Trinity is!*--as though modern Arians can agree either with themselves, or Christian history prior to the nineteenth century, or as though their theologies can even *begin* to begin to approach the complex clarity and vitality found in Trinitarian theology), I honestly believe that this disagreement is drastically exaggerated. The goal of this essay is to prove that 'the walls of separation do not reach as high as heaven!' (Con-HS3, 89)

II. THE FILIOQUE AS A SUBJECT OF DISPUTE

A. The Problem

I begin with some official declarations of the Roman Catholic Church.

*The Latin tradition of the Creed confesses that the Spirit proceeds from the Father **and the Son** (filioque)." The Council of Florence in 1438 explains: The Holy Spirit is eternally from Father and Son; He has his nature and subsistence at once (simul) from the Father and the Son. He proceeds eternally from both as from one principle and through one spiration. ... And, since the Father has through generation given to the only-begotten Son everything that belongs to the Father, except being Father, the Son has also eternally from the Father, from whom he is eternally born, that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Son.'*(CCC 246)

The affirmation of the filioque does not appear in the Creed confessed in 381 at Constantinople. But Pope St. Leo I, following ancient Latin and Alexandrian tradition, had already confessed it dogmatically in 447, even before Rome, in 451 at the Council of Chalcedon, came to recognize and receive the Symbol [Council of Constantinople] of 381. The use of this formula in the Creed was gradually admitted into the Latin liturgy (between the eighth and eleventh centuries). The introduction of the filioque into the Niceno-Constantinopolitan Creed by the Latin liturgy constitutes moreover, even today, a point of disagreement with the Orthodox Churches. (CCC 247)

*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, 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.* (CCC 248)

The Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father as the first principle and, by the eternal gift of this to the Son, from the communion of both the Father and the Son'(St. Augustine, *De Trin.* 15,26,47: PL 42:1095). (CCC 264)

Hence, according to the Catholic Church, the Spirit does not proceed from the Father only, but from the Father and the Son. The procession of the Spirit is described more technically by the word "spiration" (as distinct from the technical term for the procession of the Son, "generation"), and the Spirit's spiration comes from both the Father and the Son. This fact is recognized by the fathers of the Church, both Eastern and Western. The act of spiration by both the Father and the Son is thus the single manner whereby the Spirit originates within the immanent Trinity, and this spiration must be understood not merely within the category of metaphysics, but of communion.

Now for the Orthodox.

*In the Latin West, it is usually held that the Spirit proceeds from the Father and from the Son," and the word **filioque** (and from the Son) has been added to the Latin text of the Creed. Orthodoxy not only regards the filioque as an unauthorized addition-for it was inserted into the Creed without the consent of the Christian East-but it also considers that the doctrine of the "double procession," as commonly expounded, is theologically inexact and spiritually harmful. According to the Greek Fathers of the fourth century, whom the Orthodox Church follows to this day, the Father is the sole source and ground of unity in the Godhead. To make the Son a source as well as the Father, or in combination with him, is to risk confusing the distinctive characteristics of the persons. (War-OW 32)*

The Greek Fathers always maintained that the principle of unity in the Trinity is the person of the Father. As Principle of the other two persons, the Father is at the same time the Source of the relations whence the hypostases receive their distinctive characteristics. In causing the persons to proceed, he lays down their relations of origin-generation and procession-in regard to the unique principle of the Godhead. ... If, in conformity to the Latin formula, we introduce here a new relation of origin, making the Holy Spirit to proceed from the Father and from the Son; the monarchy of the Father, this personal relation creating the unity at the same time as the trinity, gives place to another conception-that of the once substance in which the relations intervene to establish the distinction of persons, and in which the hypostasis of the Holy Spirit is no more than a reciprocal bond between the Father and the Son ... [the Latin formulation] places the common nature above the persons; a doctrine which tends to weaken the hypostases by confounding the persons of Father and Son in the natural act of spiration, and in making the Holy Spirit a connection between the two. (Los-MTEC 60, 62)

Thus we seek to avoid the psychologizing explanations of Catholic theology which has recourse to these only from its desire to find human arguments in favor of the Filioque ... By emphasizing the love between the Father and the Son to the point of confusing them into a single principle of the Holy Spirit's procession, Catholic theology no longer sees them as being distinct persons. But the effect of this is to make impossible even the love between them, for, as in the act of the procession of the Holy Spirit, they no longer exist as two persons, Father and Son can no longer love one another properly speaking. ... In this misunderstanding of the Trinity the Holy Spirit is no longer, strictly speaking, the third, but the second. He appears rather as the one who drowns the two within an indistinct unity. And if, in order to be the common cause of the procession of the Holy Spirit, the two are indeed drowned within some indistinct whole, then the Spirit-as one who results from this indistinct whole-cannot be person either. ... Orthodox theology has avoided the danger of falling into this kind of impersonalism and has simply received the Son and the Holy Spirit as real persons actually given through generation and procession. (Sta-ODT1 247-248, 271-272, 274)

Thus the Spirit proceeds from the Father *only*. The Filioque is a doctrine foreign to the Greek fathers of the Church, and it was unjustifiably inserted into the Nicene Creed without the consent of the East. The affirmation of the Filioque necessarily results in a muddled doctrine of the Trinity-an implicit modalism-wherein the persons are robbed of personhood and seen, rather, as mere "manifestations" of a single (impersonal) "divine essence". All of this is the result of robbing the Father (a *person*) of his singular property of being the sole cause, source, and fount of the entire godhead, and replacing it with the union of two persons, who, thus united, form a "single principle", which on that account is impersonal. These, then, are the affirmations of both sides, given in their harshest forms.

B. Brief History of Polemic

In his now classic work entitled *The Orthodox Church*, Kallistos Ware relates the key moment in the schism of the East and West thusly-

"One summer afternoon in the year 1054, as a service was about to begin in the Church of the Holy Wisdom

at Constantinople, Cardinal Humbert and two other legates of the Pope entered the building and made their way up to the sanctuary. They had not come to pray. They placed a Bull of Excommunication upon the altar and marched out once more. As he passed through the western door, the Cardinal shook the dust from his feet with the words: 'Let God look and judge.' A deacon ran out after him in great distress and begged him to take back the Bull. Humbert refused; and it was dropped in the street." (War-OC 43)

And with this, the longest running schism in the history of the Christianity officially began. Yet this schism did not arise ex nihilo, and as I hope to show, it is actually more the result of distinctive intellectual and cultural climates than of theology. In particular, I will be arguing in what follows that Trinitarian theology, in its Eastern and Western forms, is no grounds whatever for the schism. Kallistos Ware (War-OC 44-46) mentions nine cultural factors which paved the way for the schism.

First, the division of the Roman Empire into two parts towards the end of the third century; second, the founding of Constantinople as a second capital of the Roman Empire; third, the fifth century barbarian invasions, which resulted in destroying the political unity between the East and West; fourth, the Avar and Slav invasions of the Balkan peninsula in the sixth and seventh century forged a barrier that interrupted the possibility of interaction between Byzantium "and the Latin world"; fifth, with the rise of Islam the Mediterranean "passed largely into Arab control"; sixth, the Iconoclast controversy in the eighth century, wherein the Popes of Rome firmly opposed certain Eastern patriarchs who wished to do away with icons; seventh, the growing alliance between Rome and France, which served to distance the relations between Rome and Byzantium; eighth, with the two cultures now being for the most part separate, "they no longer drew upon the same sources nor read the same books", and thus each developed independent of the influence of the other; and finally, the centralization of Western Christianity around the See of Rome. Thus we see that circumstances were not altogether auspicious for preservation of Church unity, and this for largely cultural and historical (rather than theological) reasons. At the very least it must be admitted that it is not altogether implausible that the distinctive environments of the two could foster distinctive expressions and understandings of the same faith even if the faith remained essentially the same.

Regarding the history of the Filioque, it can be summarized thusly. The patristic testimony, as we shall see, is nowhere near as clear as either side (in an exclusive and rigid form, which is by no means the only, or even the common, form adopted by members of either side) would like to imagine. The ante-Nicenes sometimes give clear evidence of belief in the fact that the Son is, in some sense, involved in the eternal procession of the Spirit; some of the Nicenes do as well, and it is in this era that the West (and some in the East) give more definite affirmation of this fact; and this affirmation was continued in the West in the post-Nicene era, largely under the influence of Augustine. Yves Congar, who is the author of perhaps the finest sustained analysis of this subject available in English, gives several citations of this. (Con-IBHS3 49-56) Since a more detailed evaluation of individual fathers will follow below, I'll here simply cite a few instances without comment.

Hilary (mid fourth century), Ambrose (late fourth), Augustine (late fourth to early fifth), Leo the Great (fifth century), Eucherius of Lyons, Faustus of Riez (both in the fifth century), and several others, all either affirm, or come close to affirming, the Filioque. The Councils of Toledo (late sixth century through the late seventh), in a context wherein Arianism was being combated (and *not* the Orthodox East), clearly affirmed the double procession. And, of course, the Athanasian Creed (ca. 440-500 a.d.) affirms the double procession as well. Yet during all of this time, though Rome accepted the Filioque as being true, it was never added to the Creed in any official way. Likewise, the East, being in full communion with the West during this time, raised no formal objection to the Filioque. We do, however, in Maximus Confessor have evidence that the point was disputed by certain in the East, and Maximus took it upon himself to mediate between East and West. He vindicated the Latins by making it clear that it is in accordance with the "unanimous evidence of the Latin Fathers, and also of Cyril of Alexandria", and that "they know in fact that the Father is the only cause of the Son and Spirit".

In the late eighth century, Charlemagne convoked a council and attempted to get the Filioque, in no uncertain

terms, recognized (exclusively) as being proper to the Nicene Creed. He appealed to Pope Hadrian for support, and Hadrian resisted his requests (though he affirmed that the Filioque was true); the strict adherence to Tradition on the part of the Roman See was made even clearer when, shortly afterwards, the Nicene Creed was hung-in Greek and Latin, side by side-in St. Peter's in Rome *without* the Filioque. In the ninth century (808 a.d.), a Greek monk of Mar Sabas noticed the Filioque in a Latin monastery, and appealed to Pope Hadrian regarding the "heresy". Towards the end of the ninth century, St. Photius was to arise in the East, and it is with him that we get the first clear and sustained denouncement of the Filioque. (Con-IBHS3 57-60; War-OC 52-56)

The argument of Photius, in its basic form, seems to have been grounded on two basic points. First of all, he asserted that the Filioque negated the monarchy of the Father as sole cause of the godhead (*aitia*). As we'll see below, Photius is on firm ground in opposing such a notion, while on the other hand, he thereby gives evidence of not perceiving the true Western position. Second, he argued that affirming the procession of the Spirit from the Father and the Son carried with it, as a matter of logical necessity, the belief (at least at the implicit level) that the Spirit therefore proceeds from something impersonal (since he would be proceeding not from the person of the Father, nor from the person of the Son, but from the two of them together; and since it is maintained that the two are distinct, the Spirit in turn would thus proceed from the divine substance of the two, which they have in common). Hence the theological point of departure for Photius' rejection of the Filioque were, it seems to me, based on an affirmation of the monarchy of the Father alongside a desire to ensure the *personal* nature of the three hypostases. As we saw above, these points continue to constitute the force in the East's theological argument against the West. It is therefore, I think, important to keep this in mind, and allow it to form a major part in forming the context wherein rapprochement should be sought.

Jaroslav Pelikan gives several examples of the typical arguments each side used against the other. (Pel-CT2 183-198) Here it is sufficient to note simply that the whole history of polemic, almost entirely, seems to have consisted of a series of misunderstandings. For example, language served as one such barrier: from the time of Jerome, the Latins translated the Greek term for "proceed", *ekporeusis*, with the Latin word *procession*--a term which was nowhere near as precise in connotation as the Greek. Yves Congar brings out this point succinctly when he states that the "Latin vocabulary cannot adequately convey the important shades of meaning contained in the Greek terminology. *Causa* is not exactly *aitia* ["cause"]; *principium* is wider in its use than *arche* [principle, arch, source]; *procedere* does not render *ekporeuesthai* ["proceed"] very well", and goes on to state that "This was not always sufficiently taken into account in the past. Each side was so certain of itself and had so little curiosity about the other's views that it only wanted to reduce those to its own ideas and formulae." (Con-IBHS3 202) The result of this, of course, is that the two sides would be operating within a context predisposed for misunderstandings. Alongside vocabulary, we can include more substantial points. The Greeks emphasized the fact of the Father's monarchy--and this is a legitimate move on their part; the Latins emphasized the fact of the persons consubstantiality--and *this* is a legitimate move on *their* part. The emphases of both were valid, yet a problem arises when one aspect of the truth is emphasized *at the expense of* another, and this in fact is what happened.

Attempts at re-union were tried, and foremost among these was the Council of Florence in the 15th century. On July 6, 1439, an agreement was forged, to which thirty-nine representatives of the East agreed. The agreement was fostered by equating "through the Son" (which the Greeks accept) with "and the Son" (which the Greeks have classically rejected). What must be kept in mind here is that, though the East soon recanted (and, in my opinion, rightfully so, given the context of their theological concerns and presuppositions), it *is* possible for the above conflation to be valid. The problem, however, was that it was *advanced and understood* in a sense which solely favored the Latin theological template, and failed to emphasize the concerns of the East. (Con-IBHS 186-188)

And thus, even down to our own day, the basic form of the debate remains as such.

C. Conclusion

The Orthodox are no doubt right to emphasize both the monarchy of the Father and (consequently) the personhood of the hypostases. While I disagree that the Catholics have failed to emphasize these points, and reject as being false the idea that the West has either forgotten or abandoned them, it must be conceded that the East is far more successful in its articulation of these two points. On the other hand, though I disagree that the manners of subsistence constitute the *sole* manner whereby the persons can be individuated, it does seem to me that this classic argument from the West has more force than the East is willing to grant.

That *what, precisely, each side wishes to affirm by taking the stance that they take* has often been overlooked by both parties must, I think, be admitted. The Catholics, it seems to me, wish more than anything else to affirm the unity and consubstantiality of the persons, and for them, the affirmation that the Spirit proceeds from the Father "and the Son" in no way implies the denial of the Father's monarchy. Likewise, that the East is willing to grant that the Son is not altogether a non-factor in the eternal existence of the Holy Spirit seems to me to be true. Hence there *may*, according to their own theological context, be *a sense* in which the Son is involved in the procession of the Spirit. At the very least, it can be certainly be affirmed that there is nothing that essentially constitutes a barrier to dialogue. Kallistos Ware (War-OC 210-218) gives examples of the various stances taken by Orthodoxy, and Yves Congar (Con-IBHS3 174-216) offers contributions toward agreement from the Catholic side. Sections IV through VII below are intended as a modest step in this direction. Yet before we travel too far abroad and actually engage the issue, a brief introduction to the theological methodology of the Eastern Orthodox and Catholic Churches will be given in order to lay out the epistemic framework wherewith this study will be pursued.

III. ORTHODOX AND CATHOLIC THEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

A. Scripture and Tradition

I realize that the majority of those who will be reading this are neither Catholic nor Orthodox, yet due to the specific nature of the theological problem at hand, along with the parties who are chiefly involved in the dispute, my manner of dealing with it will necessarily require more than the simple analysis of Scripture. In order for this approach to make any sense at all, a word needs to be said regarding Scripture and Tradition, and the manner of authority which these two have, in light of each other, in Catholicism and Orthodoxy. While it is my prayer that none will take offence, and it is my hope that the brief analysis below will bear fruit for Protestants even while remaining *in their own* Tradition, it must be confessed at the outset that the very state of the evidence itself is-it seems to me, and many others as well-so absolutely clear in this area, that it cannot be helped that I will sound as though I'm advancing an apologetic, though this is not directly my intention. I ask the reader to bear in mind that the only reason I bring this up is to place the Filioque within a context wherein it can be both understood and, if it is possible at all, settled.

According to the Catholic Church, the books of Scripture 'present God's own word in an unalterable form, and they make the voice of the holy Spirit sound again and again in the words of the prophets and apostles. It follows that all the preaching of the church, as indeed the entire Christian religion, should be nourished and ruled by sacred scripture.' (DV, 21) Likewise, the Orthodox, for their part, affirm that the 'Christian Church is a Scriptural Church: Orthodoxy believes this just as firmly, if not more firmly, than Protestantism. The Bible is the supreme expression of God's revelation to the human race, and Christians must always be a "People of the Book".' (War-OC, 199) The fact that Catholics and Orthodox actually affirm this needs to be emphasized if for no other reason than the fact that it is often assumed, atleast implicitly, that we either 'don't go by the Bible' or that we feel that we have some sort of right to go *over* it. Neither of these widespread assumptions is even close to the truth. Protestants, Catholic, and Orthodox all agree that Scripture is the authoritative word of God; that it cannot be gone against, and that all doctrine must come from Scripture. Insofar as all agree on this, we are on common ground.

A common distinction, which I accept, is made between *formal* sufficiency and *material* sufficiency. Catholics and Orthodox both maintain that Scripture is materially sufficient, yet deny that it is *formally*

sufficient. The difference between the two can be thought of thusly: if a man wishes to build a house, and he has all of the brick, lumber, concrete, etc., that he needs in order to build it, he has all of the material he needs. Yet something is still lacking. He needs to know how to put it all together. That which is required for 'putting it all together' can be called formal sufficiency. The analogy isn't perfect, but I think it gets the basic point across with sufficient clarity. And I don't believe it is true that Protestants, at this point, wish to part company with us. Tekton has in no uncertain terms [spoken out](#) against those of the KJV-only mentality, showing that going by 'the Bible alone' can often be counter-productive, and this due to the fact that the Bible cannot be understood if it is *taken out of context*, which exaggerated forms of Sola Scriptura invite, albeit with the best intentions.

The Bible cannot be understood if it is taken out of context. At this point, I think it is safe to say that Catholics, Orthodox, and Protestants all agree. The question that arises is *what constitutes the context* within which Scripture must be read if it is to be understood properly? This, I believe, is where the parting of the ways occurs (though the distance between us should not be exaggerated regarding this point, and an attempt should be made to see *how close* we can come to one another *without* compromise or the forsaking what we believe to be essential-I believe that in this regard concord is not so far away as is often imagined). A very common and very sane answer, insofar as it goes, is to claim that we must go back to the *original historical context* of Scripture, and then we will be able to determine what, for example, 'Saint Paul really said'. The Catholic Church, in claiming that 'in order to discover *the sacred authors' intention*, the reader must take into account the conditions of their time and culture, the literary genres in use at that time, and the modes of feeling, speaking, and narrating then current' (CCC-110), shows its agreement with this principle. And while 'hitherto Orthodox scholars have not been prominent in this field', the Orthodox Church does not 'forbid the critical and historical study of the Bible'. (War-OC, 201) Hence the historio-critical method of exegesis, which is without doubt the prime method of exegesis and doctrinal formulation employed, and employed very well, by Tekton, can be regarded as the common property of Protestants, Orthodox, and Catholics. The difference, however, is this-whereas (it seems) Protestants feel that *this is, in toto*, the *whole* of the context in which Scripture must be placed in order to properly understand it, Catholics and Orthodox believe that Scripture *must be viewed within a Traditional-Ecclesial context*, and that the historio-critical context *is not enough* by itself. [Ed. note: -- Correct. My own view would say that such traditions **may** indeed be part of the interpretive context; whether they are indeed must be determined by formal analysis.]

Thus the Catholic Church claims that 'the church does not draw its certainty about all revealed truths from the holy scriptures alone. Hence, both scripture and tradition must be accepted and honored with equal devotion and reverence.' (DV, 9) Likewise, the Orthodox believe that 'in the ocean of meanings which belong to the Spirit beyond the literal sense, no navigator can avoid going astray without the guidance of the same Spirit who hands down the understanding of them in the Church from generation to generation', and therefore, 'Scripture requires a tradition which is unchanged from the apostles. It represents another form of preserving and making use in its continuous effectiveness of that integral revelation fulfilled in Christ. ... Tradition keeps this dynamism of the Scripture contemporary without changing it, for tradition represents an application and a continuous deepening of the content of Scripture.' (Sta-ODT1, 45) So there isn't a dichotomy between Scripture and Tradition according to the Catholic and Orthodox churches. Indeed, according to us "'Sacred Tradition and Sacred Scripture, then, are bound closely together and communicate one with the other. For both of them, flowing out from the same divine well-spring, come together in some fashion to form one thing and move towards the same goal.'" Each of them makes present and fruitful in the Church the mystery of Christ, who promised to remain with his own "always, to the close of the age.'" (CCC, 80)

C. *The Mystical Word and Way*

Before moving on, it seems appropriate to include a brief word regarding prayer and Scripture in the East and West. First of all, it must be stated that the meaning of Scripture is not confined simply to the historio-literal level (by "historio-literal" I understand *only* the sense intended by the *human author* at the time when he

wrote it"). In saying this, I don't simply mean to affirm that we accept Tradition as an intrinsic to the hermeneutic of Christian epistemology; I mean to affirm that we recognize a *mystical* sense within Scripture. Classically, Scripture has been understood as containing four "senses": the literal, the moral, the allegorical, and the anagogical.

The "literal" sense isn't to be confused with what we mean when we accuse a KJV-onlyist of being a "literalist"; rather, "literal" in this context refers to the meaning intended by the human author at the time he wrote it. N. T. Wright and Ben Witherington are thus prime exemplars of exegetes who excel at finding and expounding the "literal" sense of Scripture. The "moral" sense, of course, refers to the practical application of Scripture. This is the sense of Scripture we are most likely to encounter at sermons on Sunday. The "allegorical" sense refers to the especially Christian sense which lies "underneath" the letter. Paul employs the allegorical method in Galatians 4:21-31 when he expounds the two covenants in light of Hagar and Sarah. Finally, the "anagogical" sense refers to eschatology. This doesn't simply mean "the end times", but rather, the illustration of eternal realities with reference to this-worldly happenings. An example of this would be the "theophany of the Trinity" at the baptism of Jesus, or the cross as the revelation of the love of God.

It seems to me that many Protestants think the literal sense (as defined above) to be sufficient for the formulation of doctrine, and with this I would strongly disagree. Though the literal sense cannot be overlooked or ignored (and it must be admitted that Christians have, in the past, been prone to commit this error), the literal sense does not exhaust the intent, nor the content, of Scripture. Hence it must be kept in mind that, for us, the mystical sense of Scripture (being the moral, allegorical, and anagogical) isn't something that simply "*may* have bearing", while lacking objective merit and, thus, belonging properly outside the domain of our theological hermeneutic. Rather, it is essential to it. A good introduction to this theme, for those interested in this topic (alongside those interested in knowing how Scripture was interpreted in the patristic and middle ages), is Henri De Lubac's *Scripture in the Tradition*. This method of interpretation will be the primary means I employ when, in section VII, I use Scripture to explore the Trinity. Only the literal method, however, will be employed in section IV below. [Ed. note -- Protestants have their own "allegorical" use of Scripture, only they tend to call it homiletics." In other words, they take a passage out of literal context and use it in a way that the literal sense could never intend. I find both methods questionable and open to abuse myself, but anyone who objects need to see if their own house is in order first. 🙏]

Secondly, the importance of prayer in Catholic and Orthodox theology cannot be emphasized enough. By "prayer" I don't simply mean "the act of asking God for things", but rather, I understand an entire way of life, which is grounded in communion with God. As St. Gregory of Sinai says, "He who seeks to understand commandments without fulfilling commandments, and to acquire such understanding through learning and reading, is like a man who takes a shadow for truth. For the understanding of truth *is given to those who have become participants in truth* (who have tasted it through living). Those who are not participants in truth and are not initiated therein, when they seek this understanding, draw it from a distorted wisdom." (PHIL 42) The important thing to grasp here is that *knowing* is equated with *participation*. And it is certainly to the point that St. Gregory states that the "final end of Orthodoxy is pure knowledge of [and therefore, "participation in"] the two dogmas of faith-the Trinity and the Duality". (ibid., 43) [Ed. note -- This actually is much closer to the purpose of [prayer](#) among the NT-era Jews.]

This point is crucial. It basically affirms that there is a one-one correspondence between "the life in Christ" and theology. Indeed, it is no accident that nearly the whole of great theological figures in the past were monks (people who lived, insofar as possible, exclusively toward God). It would miss the point to think that the only reason monks were theologians was because monks were, by and large, the only people educated enough to have the chance-the reason they were in such a position in the first place was due to their desire to renounce "the world" and give their entire self to God, and *this* is why they were great theologians. Any reading of the works of figures such as Origen, Gregory of Nyssa, Augustine, Maximus Confessor, Benedict, Symeon the New Theologian, Richard of St. Victor, Bonaventure, the Philokalia, or John of the Cross cannot

but bring home this point with almost staggering force. These men were possessed by the Spirit of God, and their writings shine forth with a radiance that, when read in the same Spirit in which they were written, dazzles the heart. Athanasius was an ascetic and a follower of Antony of Egypt, who was the founder of monasticism, and it was to the monks that Athanasius constantly went when he was forced into exile. All of the Cappadocians were, in one way or another, partakers of the monastic life, as was Augustine. The genius of Thomas Aquinas emerged within the cloister and was formed within the solitude of prayer, and the theology of Hans Urs von Balthasar is primarily a "theology from the knees".

The life of prayer is thus a constant communion with God. As mentioned above, it isn't simply "asking for things", it is also a "listening", a "seeking", a "contemplating". Scripture, within this context, is read *slowly* and *meditated upon*. The Word of God falls into the heart as a seed upon soil, and the Christian *focuses* upon it, and in *surrendering to the Word* we thereby *perceive* it to ever greater degrees-Scripture is not a still-shot that we are called to take account of, but rather the Word of God; a living garden we are invited to explore and *participate in*. Thus the reading of Scripture is itself a *Trinitarian event* in the full sense of the phrase. And so too for everything in life. The life of prayer is *centered*, a life that begins and ends with surrendering to, openness toward, and participation in, God. It is a life *consciously* lived *from* the Spirit, *in* the Son, and *toward* the Father. For those interested, the *Philokalia* is an excellent source on this theme.

E. Conclusion

The epistemic framework for the Eastern Orthodox and Catholic Churches, then, is quite broad, and the use of it may strike some Protestants-who might rather have expected nothing more than a rigorous analysis of Biblical passages in order to "settle the issue"-as awkward. The theologian begins within the context of the Church's proclamation, belief, and worship-this is a methodological point of departure, and something to be assumed rather than proven. Within this context, the theologian is a participant; the theologian should be centered in the sacramental constitution of the Church and the existential dynamism that comes from a life *constantly* open to, and permeated by, the Trinity. From *and toward* this center-point, the writings of Scripture and the fathers of the Church are engaged. Conclusions are formed in proportion to the questions and needs of the times, and in accordance with the above. It is within this epistemic framework that the present study will be conducted, and it is my hope that "seeing it in action" will, if not convince Protestants of its correctness, at least give a glimmer of its attractiveness.

IV. SCRIPTURE AND THE FILIOQUE

A. The Old Testament

The reader is first referred to J. P. Holding's [article](#) on the Holy Spirit, and due to its comprehensive scope, alongside the fact that the Trinity wasn't fully revealed until the time of the New Testament, only a few points will be brought out which may, as I see it, have implications further down the road.

To begin with, the Spirit is associated with, or identified as, the *power* of God.

Your right hand, O Lord, magnificent in power; your right hand, O Lord, has shattered the enemy ... at a breath of your anger the waters piled up, the flowing waters stood like a mound ... Ex. 15:6-8

Let your every creature serve you, for you spoke, and they were made; you sent forth your spirit, and they were created ... Jdt 16:14

This power serves a *revelatory* and *epistemic* function.

Upon Azariah, son of Oded, came the spirit of God. He went forth to meet Asa and said to him ... 2 Chron. 15:1

As he spoke to me, **spirit** entered into me and set me on my feet, and I heard the one who was speaking say to me... Ezek. 2:2

Alongside creative power and his revelatory function, the Spirit is shown to be a *transformative* agent in the people of God.

*Then he said to me, Prophecy over these bones, and say to them, 'Dry bones, hear the Word of the Lord!'" Thus says the Lord God to these bones, See! I will bring **spirit into** you, that you may **come to life**.'"... Thus says the Lord God, **From the four winds come, O spirit, and breath into these slain that they may come to life.**' Ezek. 37:4-5, 9*

*The **spirit** of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me ... to **bring glad tidings to the lowly, to heal the brokenhearted; to proclaim liberty to the captives and release to the prisoners** ... Isa. 61:1* And this brings us to what is, for our present purposes, the most important OT theme regarding the work of the Holy Spirit. The eschatological function of the Spirit is a *unitive* function which *joins together* God and man.

*I will pour out my **spirit upon** your offspring ... One shall say, **I am the Lord's**,"... And this one shall write on his hand, **The Lord's**"... Isa. 44:3, 5*

***No longer will I hide my face from them, for I have poured out my spirit upon the house of Israel,**"says the Lord God. Ezek. 39:29*

*Then afterward I will **pour out my spirit upon** all mankind. ... Then everyone **shall be rescued** who calls on the name of the Lord. Jl. 3:1, 5*

Hence the Spirit is first known as the *power* of God. He is the precondition for the *revelation* of God and God's will for man, and he also *transforms* man in accordance with the will of God. Yet it is, I propose, the *unitive* function of the Holy Spirit which gives us our most powerful insight into the constitutive nature of his person. This fact is not often mentioned, yet given the distinctly eschatological context of the passages in question, alongside the fact that this theme successfully coordinates the others into a coherent whole, I think that I am justified in coming to this conclusion.

In passing, it is worth mentioning that the Spirit and the Word/Wisdom, are commonly associated in function.

*By the **word of the Lord** the heavens were made; by the **breath of his mouth** all their host. Ps. 33:6*

The first chapter of the *Wisdom of Solomon* is our clearest example of this theme, and all the more remarkable because, in verses 3 through 7, God, Wisdom, and the Spirit, are each mentioned twice in close parallelism.

*For **perverse counsels** separate man from **God** ... Because into a soul that plots evil **Wisdom** enters not ... For the **Holy Spirit** of discipline flees deceit ... For **Wisdom** is a kindly spirit ... Because **God** is the witness of his inmost self ... For the **Spirit of the Lord** fills the world ...*

I conclude that the OT offers no clear teaching whatever regarding the doctrine of the Filioque, which should hardly be surprising. There are, however, certain themes evident in the above which will be worth keeping in mind as we continue. *If* we allow that the economic Trinity *reveals* the immanent Trinity-and I believe that we must-it seems that the theme of the Spirit as the eschatological agent of *unity* may carry implications for the role that the Spirit plays within the Trinity *ad intra*. On the other hand, the passages above which associate Wisdom/Word and Spirit would seem to indicate that they are *both* caused solely by God *without reference to, or dependence upon,* each other (though when a "word" is spoken, the coming forth of the

"breath" is intrinsic to, and, in a sense dependent upon the latter). Texts which speak of the "Spirit of Wisdom" (Deut. 34:9; Wis. 7:22) must be disregarded for present purposes.

B. The New Testament

Since the above mentioned article on the Holy Spirit sufficiently addresses the Spirit's functions regarding power, revelation, and restoration, I will dedicate the whole of my focus on the New Testament with reference to the Spirit's unitive role, alongside his parallel mission with regard to the Son.

It is with the baptism of Jesus (Mt. 3:16f.) that the *unitive* role of the Spirit first comes into view. *With* the descent of the Spirit *from* the Father *upon* the Son that we hear the words, "This is my Son, the Beloved". And likewise, *immediately afterwards* it is the Spirit who *leads* the Son upon his mission (Mt. 4:1), a mission whose ultimate term is a *return to* the Father, (Mk. 14:62; Lk. 24:51) and whose ultimate goal is the restoration of creation (via the agency of the Spirit, Mt. 12:18ff.), and the union of creation with God. (Mt. 11:27ff.; Jn. 17:21) Eternal life is to "know" God and Christ (Jn. 17:3), and it is the Spirit who effects this in the believer (Jn. 14:26). It is by the Spirit that we are "born again" (Jn. 3:5, 3) and thus become "begotten" by God. (Jn. 1:13)

The Spirit scatters the Apostles throughout the world (Acts 2:1-11) only in order to unite all together. (Acts 2:42ff.) The Spirit distributes a "variety of gifts" (1 Cor. 12:4), but it is only "for the common good" (1 Cor. 12:7); it is by the Spirit that we are baptized "into *one* body" (1 Cor. 12:13), and we are thus made into one "whether Jew or Greek, slave or free". Those in Christ must "preserve" the "unity" which "has the Spirit *for its origin*" (Eph. 4:3), and thus also the "communion" (2 Cor. 13:13) of the Holy Spirit is the blessing Paul wishes for believers.

What we see here is, I believe, confirmation of the Trinitarian pattern I argued for regarding the life of Christ: the Spirit goes from the Father to the term, and *unites* the term to the Father in a return movement. For the "heavenly dwelling" with God, God has "given us the Spirit" (2 Cor. 5:5) as a pledge, and for this purpose God "lavishes" (Gal. 3:5) the Spirit upon us. As with the Son (Heb. 9:14), so too with us who "in" (Eph. 1:6, 4:12-13; Col. 2:12) the Son share in that sonship, (Gal. 4:6) it is by the Spirit that we have communion with the Father (Eph. 6:18) and are led to the Father. (Eph. 2:18) Thus I suggest abandoning the classic notion that the Spirit is, first and foremost, the "power" of God. This "power" exists not in a vacuum, but in reality, and thus must be understood in light of *the effects* it brings about. Therefore, as evident in the economy of salvation, I recommend that the Spirit be thought of as characterized primarily as one who effects *communion*.

Before moving on, the *personal* nature of the Holy Spirit must be brought to the fore. The Spirit "leads" (Rom. 8:14) and "gives witness with our spirit". (Rom. 8:16) Just as Christ "intercedes" for us (Rom. 8:34), so too the Spirit "helps us in our weakness" and "makes intercession for us with groanings that cannot be expressed". (Rom. 8:26) The Spirit "scrutinizes" (2 Cor. 2:10) and "knows what lies at the depths of God" (2 Cor. 2:11), and therefore the Spirit can "teach" (2 Cor. 2:13) us "spiritual things in spiritual terms". Just as the Father (2 Cor. 12:6) "accomplishes all", so too the Spirit (2 Cor. 12:11) "produces all" as "he wills"; and just as the Father (Rom. 8:11) "gives life", so to the Spirit (2 Cor. 3:6) "gives life". We are to do nothing to "sadden" the Spirit (Eph. 4:30), and we are to receive the "joy that comes from" the Spirit. (1 Thess. 1:6)

A point which serves the double emphasis of highlighting the personhood of the Spirit, alongside leading us to an examination of the way the Spirit is related to the Son, is the close parallelism between the two. Yves Congar (Con-IBHS1 37-38) gives a list of such passages. "Righteousness": Christ (2 Cor. 5:21), Spirit (Rom. 14:17); "Justified in": Christ (Gal. 2:17), Spirit (1 Cor. 6:11); "In": Christ (Rom. 8:1, 10), Spirit (Rom. 8:9); "Joy in": Christ (Phil. 3:1), Spirit (Rom. 14:17); "Peace in": Christ (Phil. 4:7), Spirit (Rom. 14:17); "Sanctified": Christ (1 Cor. 1:2, 30), Spirit (Rom. 15:16; 2 Thess. 2:13); "Speaking from": Christ (2 Cor. 2:17), Spirit (1 Cor. 12:3); "Fullness of": Christ (Col. 2:10), Spirit (Eph. 5:18); "Dwelling place": Christ (Eph. 2:21),

Spirit (Eph. 2:22). This lists not only argues against imagining that the "functional" aspect of the Spirit automatically entails the negation of his personhood, it also suggests that the Son of God and the Spirit of God both share a similar relation to God, therefore mirroring each other regarding their origin therefrom (as opposed to the Filioque, which introduces a notable distinction). This, I suggest, is the strongest argument we have in the New Testament *against* the Filioque, and while Paul is quite capable of speaking of the Spirit as being the Spirit "of" the Son (Rom. 8:9, Gal. 4:6; Phil. 1:19), it would be an extreme anachronism to regard this as a "vindication" of the Filioque, since, first of all, Paul doesn't specify *how, exactly* the Spirit is "of" the Son, and second, because "this fluid use of language most likely results from the fact that Paul's concern with both Christ and the Spirit is not ontological (= the nature of their *being* God), but soteriological (= their role in salvation)". (Fee-GEP 838)

The theme of the parallelism in function between the Son and Spirit is further born out by John (Con-IBHS1 55-56). "Given by the Father": Son (3:16), Spirit (14:16); "With the disciples": Son (3:22; 13:33; 14:20; 14:26), Spirit (14:16ff.); "World cannot receive": Son (1:11; 5:53), Spirit (14:17); "World does not know, only believers know": Son (14:19; 16:16ff.), Spirit (14:17); "Sent by the Father": Son (5:37), Spirit (14:26); "Teaches": Son (7:14ff.; 8:20; 18:37), Spirit (14:26); "Comes from the Father": Son (16:28; 18:37), Spirit (15:26; 16:13, 7); "Bears witness": Son (5:31ff.; 8:13ff.; 7:7), Spirit (15:26); "Speaks only what he has heard": Son (7:17; 8:26, 28, 38; 12:49ff.; 14:10), Spirit (16:13); "Glorifies": Son (17:1, 4), Spirit (16:14); "Unveils, communicates": Son (4:25, 16:25), Spirit (16:13ff.); "Guides into truth": Son (1:17; 5:33; 18:37; 14:6), Spirit (16:13). The list is impressive, and might seem to confirm what was suggested above regarding the Filioque, but there are a few factors that militate against immediately arriving at this conclusion.

First of all, John is the New Testament witness *par excellence* of Wisdom theology (see Ben Witherington's *John's Wisdom* for a comprehensive evaluation of this theme), and therefore we must take into account the theological motif of *expression*, whereby the person who *comes from* the other *images* his activity. (cf. Jn. 14:9-13) It cannot be denied that the Spirit is described as, in some manner, "coming from" the Son in John's gospel. It is indeed worth pointing out that the "water", which is the Spirit (Jn. 7:37), given by Jesus (Jn. 4:14), comes from the very heart of the Son (Jn. 19:34, cf. 19:30). Hence rather than suggesting that the parallel functions imply a *symmetrical* relation to the Father between the Spirit and the Son, the Johannine theological template of *expression and image* actually suggests the opposite.

Yet does John go so far as to suggest that the Spirit proceeds from the Father *and* the Son "as from one principle", in the (hardened and polemical) sense affirmed by those who argue for the Filioque. It seems to me that this conclusion has no warrant whatsoever within the gospel itself. In a series of passages, John states that the Spirit is "given" by the Father (Jn. 14:16) "in the name of" the Son (Jn. 14:26). The Spirit, in fact, "comes from" ("proceeds from") the Father, and is "sent" by the Son "from the Father" (Jn. 15:26). It is worth mentioning at this point that this text is the key text used by the Orthodox for the refutation of the Filioque. In it, they see not only the affirmation of the fact that it is the *Father* (only) from whom the Spirit proceeds, but also an explanation of the texts that speak of the Spirit being "of" Christ and "sent" by Christ—the Spirit is sent by the Son *in the economy*, which is (clearly) distinguished from the Trinity *ad intra*. Against this two things can be said. First, whence the dichotomy between theology and economy? Does not Jn. 1:1,18, at least in principle, suggest we adopt the opposite methodology? And second, the fact that the passage in question speaks of "the Spirit of truth" who proceeds from the Father suggests, in conjunction with the fact that this procession is expressly stated as being for "bearing witness" on behalf of the Son, that John is not here speaking at the level of "theology" (granting even that he would have recognized, still less accepted, such a dichotomy). I therefore conclude that John offers no evidence either for (in the sense which *the East rejects it* or against (in the sense which *the West affirms it* the Filioque. The real doctrine regarding the Son's eternal relationship to the Spirit seems to me to be more subtle. We will give this a fuller exploration in section VII.

C. Conclusion

After our brief overview of Scripture, I think that it must be affirmed that Scripture is not precise enough to

either affirm or reject either the East or West's doctrine of the procession of the Holy Spirit. What we have seen, however is the following. First, that the Spirit is the Spirit of God (the Father) in an absolutely primary sense. Hence the notion that the Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son *as from a single principle*, if understood as meaning "in an absolutely identical manner", must be regarded as without Scriptural warrant. This fact, however, avails our difficulty but little, for the simple reason that the West *does*, and always has, affirmed that the Spirit proceeds from the Father "principally". Second, and this is, I think, the theme that must receive a stronghold on our attention in what follows, the Spirit is revealed as being essentially *unitive*. The import of this will become clearer in section VII. Finally, the New Testament suggests that the Son, in some manner, plays a role in the procession of the Spirit. At the very least it must be said that, while we can't affirm this in any precise manner with certainty, we can certainly reject the negation of it. And this too is of little avail in resolving the issue for the reason that the East *does not deny* that the Son is absolutely foreign to the eternal origin of the Spirit. The Filioque, then, is an issue that cannot be settled on the basis of the testimony of Scripture—in fact, I think it is safe to say that the testimony of Scripture is fully compatible with *both* the East and the West, and that it rejects the doctrine of neither party. We now turn to the testimony of the fathers.

V. TRADITION AND THE FILIOQUE

A. Procession Primarily from the Father

That the procession of the Spirit is, in an unequaled and primary sense, from the Father, is a fact more born out at the implicit than explicit level within the testimony of the earliest fathers. The theological context for this claim can be found in J. P.'s article on the Holy Spirit, and since I have, in my [article](#) on Nicene Christology, gone some distance in illustrating this fact already, only a brief summary is necessary. The "Spirit of" is, in Scripture, almost always the Spirit "of God" (= "the Father"), with very few exceptions. Hence by implication alone we are bound to view the origin of the Spirit primarily in reference to the Father. In the Apologists (Justin Martyr, Second Apology 6; Athenegoras of Athens, Supplication for the Christians 10, etc.) this primacy of the Father is absolutely clear as well.

With Tertullian (Against Praxeas, 8), Hippolytus (Against Noetus, 10-11), and Novatian (The Trinity, 31), a more explicit teaching comes into view, and as we'll see below, it is affirmed that the Son plays some role in the procession of the Spirit. At the same time, the monarchy of the Father is also a theological given. The primacy of the Father is even more clearly emphasized by Origen (On First Principles, 4:4), and the form given by him to this core datum of Christian theology passed into the teaching of the Nicenes, especially Athanasius (Orations Against the Arians, 3:3), and the Cappadocians (Gregory of Nazianzus, Oration 20:6-7; Basil of Caesarea, Epistolae 125:3), not to mention Hilary (The Trinity, 2:6), Didymus (The Trinity, 1:31), and Ambrose (The Faith, 1:2:16). Marius Victorinus (Against the Arians, 1:13-14), though it seems he operated in a theological context less dependant on Tradition (and more dependant on his own speculative power) also clearly affirms the monarchy of the Father. Following Ambrose and the faith of the Church, Augustine (The Trinity, 4:20:28) teaches the same. John Damascene (An Exact Exposition of the Orthodox Faith, 1:8-13) is, in my opinion, the most successful exponent of this fact (along with the father of the finest exposition of Trinitarian faith to be found in the patristic era, in my opinion), and I recommend that those who wish to enquire further read his *An Exact Exposition of the Orthodox Faith*, especially book I. Hence the monarchy of the Father is a fundamental affirmation of patristic Trinitarian theology in both the East and West. This affirmation must be kept in mind as we examine the evidence offered below regarding the Son's role in the origin of the Spirit, along with being maintained by any who wish to be orthodox in their Trinitarian faith.

B. The Son's Relation to the Origin of the Spirit

That the Father, then, is the sole principle of the Godhead--*the Origin behind which nothing more can be sought* (vonB-CC, 32)—is absolutely clear. Any tampering with this rock bottom foundation of Trinitarian theology is bound to lead to 'shipwreck in the faith'. (1 Tim. 1:19) And let it be granted that the Western

Tradition has articulated the doctrine of the Trinity in such a way that, even though never losing sight of this fact, it has obscured it to a point that, especially within the context of dialogue with the East, rapprochement has been burdened (see section VI. B below). On the other hand, as will be shown below, the Fathers of the Church *also taught that the Son was, in some sense, involved in the procession of the Spirit*. And as the West has tended to obscure the fact of the Father's primacy, so too, I think it can be said that the East has failed to do justice to this fact.

The following texts are nothing new to Orthodox readers. Although he considers it something of an overstatement, Pelikan's citation of Brehier, that *'nothing can surpass the monotony of these erudite treatises on the Procession of the Holy Ghost ... which repeat over and over again the same arguments and appeal continually to the same authorities'*, (Pel-CT2, 184) does give voice to a somewhat commonplace sentiment. Hopefully my manner of utilizing these (see section VII.) will free me of the charge of monotony. At any rate, the passages oughtn't be ignored, and deserve consideration as an element that is certain to play a role in unity, if unity is to be achieved. In citing these passages, I in no way use them as 'proof-texts' against Orthodoxy, imagining that their existence in itself 'vindicating' the Catholic Church.

All these promises find their confirmation when we believe in Christ, for it is he himself who summons us, through his Holy Spirit, with the words, 'Come my children ...' St. Clement of Rome, 1 Clem. 22

... whose appointment with him is approved by Jesus Christ, and confirmed and ratified, according to his will, by his Holy Spirit. St. Ignatius of Antioch, Ep. Phil. salutation

The above passages from the two earliest post-Apostolic Fathers say nothing explicitly at the level of theology, and it is extremely dubious that any 'unpacking of the texts' would yield anything definite. On the other hand-and this fact must be kept in mind throughout our overview of the ante-Nicene fathers, an explicit distinction between *theology* and *economy* was not recognized, much less a *dichotomy* between the two. As with the New Testament, we are here merely granted that the Spirit of the Father is, in some sense, the Spirit of the Son.

(The Father) is ministered to in all things by his own Offspring, and by the latter's Likeness: that is, by the Son and by the Holy Spirit, by the Word and by the Wisdom, whom all the angels serve and to whom they are subject. St. Irenaeus, Ag. Her. 4:7:4 The situation is different here. If we are willing to grant that Irenaeus speaks knowingly of the Son as Logos in anything like the Trinitarian theological sense of the term-and we ought to do this, since he speaks of the Logos as the 'Offspring' of the Father-it would also seem that talk of the Spirit as the Son's 'Likeness' carries something by way of implication for the present issue. In saying this, again, I reiterate that I'm *not* trying to vindicate the Catholic side. I'm merely trying to point to common ground from which a solution might be sought after.

I believe that the Spirit proceeds not otherwise than from the Father through the Son. Tertullian, Ag. Prax. 4:1 Another helpful verse, but not definitive.

Anything which proceeds from another must necessarily be a second to that from which it proceeds; but it is not on that account separated from it. Where there is a second, however, there are two; and where there is a third, there are three. The Spirit, then, is third from God and the Son, just as the third from the root is the fruit from the stem, and third from the fountain is the stream from the river, and third from the sun is the apex of the ray. *ibid.* 8:7

Those of us who accept the Filioque readily welcome such passages as the above, but I would caution reading more into the above series of analogies (*and* the 'and the Son' phrase) than we need to. That Tertullian taught that the Son is intrinsic to the procession of the Spirit cannot be denied. Neither the East nor the West disagree. Equally certain is the fact that Tertullian did not leave any evidence that he believed in the Filioque *in the form in which the East rejects it*.

Thus the connection of the Father in the Son, and of the Son in the Paraclete, produces three who, though coherent, are distinct one from another. Tertullian, *ibid.* 25:1 Helpful, but not definitive.

We believe, however, that there are three Persons, the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit; and we believe none to be unbegotten except the Father. We admit, as more pious and true, that all things were produced through the Word, and the Holy Spirit is the most excellent and the first in order of all that was produced by the Father through Christ. Origen, *Co. Joh.* 2:6

First of all, Origen's mode of expression needs a bit of explanation. 'That he teaches subordinationism has been both affirmed and denied; St. Jerome does not hesitate to accuse him of doing so, while Gregory Thaumaturgos and St. Athanasius clear him of all suspicion. Modern authors like Regnon and Prat also acquit him.' (Qua-P2, 77) I side with Ss. Athanasius and Thaumaturgos on this issue, for the reason that the assumption of Origen's orthodoxy (on this issue) *can* cohere with his 'subordinationist' passages, whereas the assumption of his heterodox subordinationism *cannot* cohere with his orthodox passages. For example-

Third, they handed it down that the Holy Spirit is associated in honor and dignity with the Father and the Son. Origen, *De. Pr.* 1:4

For these very words 'when' and 'never' are terms of temporal significance, while whatever is said of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, is to be understood as transcending all time, all ages, and all eternity. For it is the Trinity alone which exceeds every sense in which not only 'temporal' but even 'eternal' may be understood. It is all other things, indeed, which are outside the Trinity, which are to be measured by times and ages. *De. Pr.* 4:4:1 In light of my conclusions in my essay on Nicene Christology-namely, that *only if it is affirmed either that the Son was a contingent creation created ex nihilo, or that the Son is of a substance other than the Father, can an ante-Nicene Father be accused of heretical Christology*-Origen's Trinitarian theology is orthodox. His stating that the Spirit is 'the most excellent and the first in order of all that was produced by the Father through Christ' in no way means that he regarded the Spirit as a 'creature'. Origen places the Spirit on the divine side of the divine/creature dichotomy.

But does such talk throw any light on the Filioque? The context of the passage seems to make it clear that Origen is speaking at the level of theology. Hence it seems fair to say that Origen speaks of 'the eternal procession of the Spirit through the Son.' (Con-HS3, 21) As such, the passage is helpful, but not definitive. As with Tertullian, Origen definitely teaches that the Son is intrinsic to the being of the hypostases of the Holy Spirit who proceeds from the Father. Any conclusions beyond this fact in favor of the Filioque would, however, be severely anachronistic.

And one Holy Spirit, having substance from God, and who is manifested-to men, that is-through the Son; Image of the Son, Perfect of the Perfect; Life, the Cause of living; Holy Fountain; Sanctity, the Dispenser of Sanctification; in whom is manifested God the Father who is above all and \in all, and God the Son who is through all. St. Gregory Thaumaturgos, *Cr.* The talk of being manifest *to men* through the Son seems to relegate the Son's role to the level of economy, yet there seems no reason why we should take talk of 'Image of the Son' in any sense other than theological. A helpful passage, but not definitive.

Wherefore there is nothing either created or subservient in the Trinity, nor anything caused to be brought about, as if formerly it did not exist and was afterwards introduced.

Wherefore neither was the Son ever lacking to the Father, nor the Spirit to the Son; but without variation and without change, the same Trinity forever. *ibid.* Same as above. The fact that the Son intrinsically 'has' the Spirit doesn't get to the bottom of the issue. Helpful, but not definitive.

Now we enter the Nicene era, and the passages therefore gain more force due to the context in which they were written. Yet is there anything therein to definitively settle the issue?

The peculiar relationship of the Son to the Father, such as we know it—we will find that the Spirit has this to the Son. And since the Son says, 'everything whatsoever that the Father has is mine,' we will discover all these things also in the Spirit, through the Son.

St. Athanasius, Ep. Ser. 3:1 -- A substantial passage. The context at first glance seems to indicate that Athanasius is speaking at the level of theology. Can we conclude from his citation of Jn. 16:15, in relation to the Son, that Athanasius therefore believed that the Spirit 'proceeds from the Father and Son as from a single principle'? I don't think so, for in Ep. Ser. 1:11, when Athanasius was confronted with the objection that if the Spirit *also* proceeds from the Father, then the Spirit would therefore simply be another Son, Athanasius was given a prime opportunity to, if he believed in the Filioque, put the objection to rest. Yet instead he simply responds that it-

is enough to know that the Spirit is not a creature and is not listed along with created things, for nothing alien is associated with the Trinity, but it is inseparable and consistent in itself. This doctrine is enough for believers. Beyond that the cherubim cover with their wings.

This would seem to indicate that Athanasius' theological reflection on the Spirit is confined to the level of economy, and that he had not yet come to a definitive conclusion regarding the distinct mode of the Spirit's subsistence in eternity. This is, of course, not to say that *if* the Church, upon further theological reflection, came to a definite conclusion regarding the procession of the Spirit that Athanasius would therefore be at odds with it. Yet I wonder at the soundness of posing such a dichotomy in the theological thought of the Nicenes. At the very least I think it is certain that they denied that the *missions* in the economy were totally unrelated to the manner of the hypostases subsistence in eternity.

Indeed, if the Trinity is eternal, the Spirit is not a creature, because he co-exists eternally with the Word and in him. St. Athanasius, Ep. Ser. 3:6

Again, helpful, but not definitive. From St. Athanasius we learn that the Son and Spirit are eternally related, and, I think it is safe to say, that the Son is involved-in some sense-in the origin of the Spirit. Yet it seems to me that Athanasius need not be seen as affirming anything more than that the Spirit proceeds *through* the Son. Certainly anything beyond this would lack justification from the texts.

The Father gives to the Son, and the Son shares with the Holy Spirit. For it is Jesus himself, not I, who says, 'Everything is delivered to me by my Father,' and of the Holy Spirit, he says, 'When he, the Spirit of Truth shall come,' and so forth, 'he shall glorify me, for he shall receive of what is mine, and shall announce it to you.' The Father through the Son with the Holy Spirit gives every gift. St. Cyril of Jerusalem, Ca. Lec. 16:24
It would seem a stretch to see more than a discussion at the economic level here.

Concerning the Holy Spirit, however, I ought not remain silent nor yet is it necessary to speak. Still, on account of those who do not know him, it is not possible for me to be silent. However, it is not necessary to speak of him who must be acknowledged, who is from the Father and the Son, his sources. St. Hilary of Poitiers, *ibid.* 2:29

He receives, therefore, from the Son, by whom also he is sent; and he proceeds from the Father. Now I ask you, is it the same to receive from the Son as it is to proceed from the Father? But even if it be believed that there is a difference between receiving from the Son and proceeding from the Father, certainly it will be admitted that to receive from the Son is one and the same as to receive from the Father. St. Hilary of Poitiers, *ibid.* 8:19

In the fact that before times eternal your Only-Begotten was born of you, when we put an end to every ambiguity of words and difficulty of understanding, there remains only this: he was born. So too, even if I do not grasp it in my understanding, I hold fast in my consciousness to the fact that your Holy Spirit is from

you through him.

St. Hilary of Poitiers, De. Tr. 12:56 -- Hilary's doctrinal proximity, if not *identity*, with the Filioque is well documented. In fact, that 'only the doctrine of the Filioque can make sense of the theology in Books II and VIII of Hilary's *On the Trinity*' (Pel-DCD, 126f.) shouldn't even be contested. Yet on the other hand, it also needs to be kept in mind that Hilary *did not displace the monarchy of God the Father* in his affirmation of the Filioque-

The Father is he to whom all that exists owes its origin. He is in Christ, and through Christ he is the source of all things. Moreover, his existence is existence in itself, and he does not derive his existence from anywhere else. Rather, from himself and in himself he possesses the actuality of his being. ... This is the truth of the mystery of God, and of the impenetrable nature which this name 'Father' expresses. St. Hilary of Poitiers, *ibid.* 2:6

Those properties, therefore, which are in the Son, are from those properties in the Father. ... That which is in the Father is in the Son also; that which is in the Unbegotten is in the Only-Begotten also; one from the other, and both are one; not one made up of two, but one in the other ... The Father is in the Son, because the Son is from him. The Son is in the Father, because his sonship has no other source--the Only-Begotten is in the Unbegotten, because the Only-Begotten is from the Unbegotten. St. Hilary of Poitiers, *ibid.* 3:4

It is important to note that in Hilary, we have the monarchy of the Father, procession through the Son, and the Filioque. The principle of *perichoresis*--the mutual indwelling of the divine persons--articulated in the last citation of Hilary is worth bearing in mind here. For now, I merely wish to reiterate that *the manner in which Hilary affirmed the Filioque did not entail the denial of the essential monarchy of the Father within the Godhead.*

The only-begotten Holy Spirit has neither the name of Son nor the appellation of Father, but is called Holy Spirit,"and is not foreign to the Father. For the Only-begotten himself calls him the Spirit of the Father,"and will receive of mine,"so that he is reckoned not being foreign to the Father nor to the Son, but is of their same substance, of the same Godhead; He is Spirit divine ... of God, and he is God. For he is Spirit of God, Spirit of the Father, and Spirit of the Son, not by some kind of synthesis, like soul and body in us, but in the midst of the Father and Son, of the Father and of the Son, a third by appellation.

St. Epiphanius of Salamis, *Anch.*, 8 -- As with Marius Victorinus below, Epiphanius speaks of the Spirit as being "begotten", yet this doesn't at all imply that he thought the Spirit therefore to be another "Son" (cf. *ibid.*, 7: "The Holy Spirit is ... not begotten ... not a brother ..."), rather, he simply means "generated". Hanson says of Epiphanius that "if any ancient writer can be thought to support the Filioque it is he. The Spirit, he says, 'is believed (to be) from Christ or from both' (Father and Son), and he speaks of 'the Holy Spirit from both, out of spirit' (i.e., what God is), and of 'the Son from whom he (the Spirit) receives, and the Father for whom he proceeds ... (the Spirit) who is from the Father, who is from the Son', and of the Spirit 'proceeding from the Father and the Son ... from Father and Son, with Father and Son.' (Han-CDG, 788-789) Yet, as Hanson goes on to note, even with all of this, we cannot assign to Epiphanius a belief in the Filioque *in the sense in which the East rejects it.* There is no reason to believe--indeed, there is reason to *disbelieve*--that Epiphanius vocabulary operated within as nuanced a context as would arise in later years. Hence, as with most of the above, we can only conclude with confidence that for Epiphanius, the Son is intrinsic to the procession of the Spirit.

To live, then, is Christ; and to understand is the Spirit. Therefore the Spirit receives from Christ, Christ himself is from the Father--and in this way the Spirit too is from the Father. All, therefore, are one, but from the Father.

Marius Victorinus, *Ag. Ar.* 1:13-14 -- The Spirit *as receiving from the Son* is from the Father, and the

monarchy of the Father is clearly affirmed. Marius's point is not, however, elaborated at great enough length to derive any substantial conclusions, but in my view, this is the most auspicious formulation we've seen yet. Unfortunately, Marius was, it might be said, *too audaciously bold* as a speculative theologian, hence his theological views cannot be taken for granted as reflecting the views of the entire Church. That said, given the fact that pneumatological reflection was, at this stage, still in its infancy, it seems fair to say that Marius' reflections certainly seem within the bounds of what we've seen so far.

Know, then, that just as the Father is the fount of life, so too, there are many who have stated that the Son is designated as the fount of life. It is said, for example, that with you, Almighty God, your Son is the fount of life, that is, the fount of the Holy Spirit. For the Spirit is life, just as the Lord says: 'the words which I have spoken to you are Spirit and life', because where the Spirit is, there is life; and where there is life, there too the Holy Spirit. St. Ambrose of Milan, De Spirit. Sanct., 1:15:152

And when he (the Son) comes out from the Father he does not move from a place nor is he as if he were a body separating from a body, nor when he is in the Father is he as if he were a body contained in a body. The Holy Spirit, too, when he proceeds from the Father and from the Son is not separated. He is not separated from the Father, he is not separated from the Son.

St. Ambrose of Milan, *ibid.*, 1:2:120 -- Here it seems we actually do have a clear affirmation of the Filioque, yet we must qualify this with the same caution as with Epiphanius. Keeping that in mind, it must be admitted that to take Ambrose as affirming the Filioque in the sense defined by the Roman Catholic Church would be no difficult task; certainly he is the closest we have seen so far. Still, it must be maintained that Ambrose doesn't obviously affirm the Filioque in the sense rejected by the East. At last we arrive at the Cappadocian Fathers, three of my favorite theologians. For those of us in the West, it is St. Augustine who has had the greatest influence on the Christian Tradition as we have received it, but 'his place in Western Christian history has its counterpart in the joint achievement of three Eastern Christian thinkers belonging to the generation immediately following that of Nicea and preceding Augustine: Basil of Caesarea ... his brother Gregory of Nyssa ... and Gregory of Nazianzus'. (Pel-CCC, 6) Cappadocian theology is truly a thing of beauty, and to be joined to *their prayer* when reading their works has for me something like the effect of being mentally danced upon by a diamond studded rainbow, with flashes of light wrapping themselves around bewildering colors as they fall from the sky--one is left with the impression that they have been immersed in the *rhythm* of God. If it is St. Clement of Alexandria who told us that Christ is 'the New Song' (Ex. Gr. 1:7:3), it would seem that the Cappadocians teach us that God is also Eternal Dance. It truly is a blessing, of the highest order, that the Church was granted three such as these at the moment when Nicene Trinitarian theology was being given its definite shape. An aesthetic overtone accompanies the mind who seeks God on the path that they have cleared, wherein 'our thought must be in *continuous motion*, pursuing now the one, now the three, and returning again to the unity; *it must swing ceaselessly* between the two poles of the antinomy, in order to attain to the contemplation' of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. (Los-MTEC, 46) And I think that it is this above all else, this *theology of motion*--an ontological aesthetic--that can lead us back home. More on that later. As for the issue of the Filioque, can our search be settled with recourse to the Cappadocians?

Basil of Caesarea, the brother of Gregory of Nyssa, composed an important work entitled *On the Holy Spirit* sometime around the year 375 in which he defends the deity of the Holy Spirit against the *pneumatomachoi*, or 'Spirit-fighters', who were something like the last vestige of Arianism before its downfall six years later. Interestingly, the pneumatomachoi argued that the Spirit was a creature as opposed to claiming that he was an impersonal power, which is the stance advocated by modern Arians. In passing, it is also worth mentioning that in this work, Basil *never once* calls the Spirit 'God', choosing rather to elucidate on his *functions and properties* so as to *perceive* the person of the Spirit as he is encountered in Scripture, salvation history, and Tradition. This theological method, so distinct from the arid deductionism of heretics, no doubt finds its explanation in the fact that Basil was a monk (the founder of Eastern cenobitic monasticism) and therefore a mystical theologian. Theology is not a matter of deduction, *it is a matter of perception*--a series of footnotes appended to the *experience of God* in the worship of the Church.

Since, therefore, the Holy Spirit, from whom the whole abundance of good things is poured out upon creation, is linked with the Son, with whom he is inseparably joined, and has his existence from the Father as from a source, whence also he proceeds, he has this as the characteristic mark of the individuality of his person: that he was made known after the Son and with him, and that he subsists from the Father. ... anyone who perceives the Father both perceives him by himself and likewise includes the Son in that perception. And anyone who perceives the Son does not separate him from the Spirit but, sequentially in order and conjointly in nature, expresses the faith so commingled in himself in the three together. And anyone who makes mention of the Spirit alone, does also embrace in this confession him of whom he is the Spirit. And since the Spirit is of Christ and of God, as Paul says, just as a man who grasps one end of a chain at the same time draws the other end to himself, so too, anyone who draws the Spirit, as the Prophet says thereby draws also the Son and the Father. ... It is quite impossible to conceive of any sort of separation or division by which the Son could be thought of apart from the Father, or the Spirit disjoined from the Son; rather, the communion and the distinction apprehended in them, are, in a certain sense, inexpressible and unimaginable, since the continuity of their nature is never broken by the distinction of persons, nor are their notes of proper distinction ever confessed in their community of essence.

St. Basil of Caesarea, Ltr. Gr., 38:4 -- Basil seems to make it clear that the Father is the sole *source* of the Spirit-his speaking of the Spirit as being "of Christ" cannot be taken as modifying the fact of the Father's primacy in this regard. At the same time, it must be noted that *for Basil each of the persons entails the other two and is presupposed by them as well*. In other words, as with all of the above fathers, the Son is intrinsic to the being of the Spirit. But in what way does this tie into the *procession* of the Spirit? And if no clear answer is forthcoming to this question, what can be inferred given Basil's ontology of communion?

The words of baptism are the same, and they declare that the relation of the Spirit to the Son equals that of the Son with the Father. If the Spirit is ranked with the Son, and the Son with the Father, then the Spirit is obviously ranked with the Father also.

St. Basil of Caesarea, De Spirit. Sanct., 17:43 -- Without doubt Basil is speaking here at the level of theology. What, then, of the Spirit's "relation to the Son" equaling that of the Son with the Father? The only thing that follows is that the Spirit is *of the same essence* as the Father and the Son, and not that the Spirit is in any sense "caused by" the Son in the same way that the Son is caused by the Father. It is wrong to use this passage as a direct support of the Filioque. However, as the next passages will show, there is something implicit in the *order* of the persons.

*This is not our only proof that the Holy Spirit partakes of the fullness of divinity; the Spirit is described to be 'of God', not in the sense that all things are of God, but because he proceeds from the mouth of the Father, and is not begotten like the Son. ... He is also called the Spirit 'of Christ', since he is naturally related to him. ... Only the Spirit can adequately glorify the Lord: 'He will glorify me,' not as a creature, but as the Spirit of truth, since he himself is truth shining brightly. He is the Spirit of Wisdom, revealing Christ, the power of God and the Wisdom of God, in his own greatness. ... The Spirit is glorified by his communion with the Father and the Son, and by the testimony of the Only-begotten: 'every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men, but blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven.' Basil of Caesarea, *ibid.*, 18:46*

*The way to divine knowledge ascends from one Spirit through the one Son to the one Father. Likewise, natural goodness, inherent holiness and royal dignity reaches from the Father through the Only-begotten to the Spirit. Thus we do not lose the true doctrine of one God by confessing the persons. Basil of Caesarea, *ibid.*, 18:47*

Here Basil undeniably describes the Son as intrinsic to the hypostasis of the Spirit at the level of ontology, and yet at the same time the monarchy of the Father is definitely affirmed. And it is worth mentioning that even though the Cappadocians distinguished between theology and economy, as we see here, there is a direct

correlation between the two. From this I propose that it follows that we have the right to draw inferences- albeit cautiously- from the Trinity *ad extra* to the Trinity *ad intra*. Here we have the basic elements that, I believe, should serve as the foundation stones for readdressing the doctrine of the Filioque. First, the fact of communion, whereby each of the persons is intrinsic to the other two (albeit, necessarily, in absolutely distinct ways) *at the level of ontology*; second, the monarchy of the Father, who *as Father* (which, alongside denoting the Father as being the *fontalis* is also here a *relational predication*) is the source of *both* the Son and the Spirit (though he is not the Father of the Spirit); third, recognition of the fact that the Son *is in some sense* involved in the procession ("coming to be", *source*, though not "cause", at the ontological level) of the Spirit; and finally, that there is a correlation between the Trinity *ad extra* and the Trinity *ad intra*. But more on this in section VII.

Though Gregory of Nazianzus was capable of using analogies that seem to imply an order of sorts amongst the three persons, we would do better to emphasize the fact that he regarded the manner of subsistence as a mystery in the strict sense.

The Father is the begetter and producer, but I mean without passion, timelessly and incorporeally. The Son is the offspring, and the Spirit the product. I do not know how to name them, altogether removing visible things. We will not dare to mention an overflow of goodness, which a certain Greek philosopher had the audacity to say, as if a certain bowl overflows. ... Then let us not introduce the generation as involuntary, as some natural superfluity, hard to hold, least appropriate for opinions about deity. Thus stopping at our limits, we introduce the unbegotten and the begotten and the one which proceeds from the Father, as somewhere God himself, also the Word, says. St. Gregory Nazianzus, Orat. 3:2

What, then, is procession? Tell me first what is the unbegottness of the Father, and then I will physiologize for you on the generation of the Son and the procession of the Spirit, and we will both be stricken mad for prying into God's mysteries. St. Gregory Nazianzus, Orat. 5:31:8

Keeping that in mind, Gregory of Nazianzus does seem to hold to a specific doctrine which may be relevant to our topic- that the persons are, in some sense, *defined by their relations of opposition*.

*And when did the Father come into existence? There was not when he was not. And this is the case with the Son and the Holy Spirit. Ask me, again, and again I will answer you. When was the Son begotten? When the Father was not begotten. When did the Spirit proceed? When the Son was not proceeding but was timelessly begotten beyond reason. St. Gregory Nazianzus, *ibid.*, 3*

*Therefore he did not later become a Father, for he has no beginning. Rightfully he is Father because he is not also Son. Just as rightfully he is Son because he is not also Father. St. Gregory Nazianzus, *ibid.*, 4*

*... the Father is a name neither of a substance, O most clever ones, nor of an action, but that the Father is the name of the relation in which the Father is to the Son or the Son to the Father. St. Gregory of Nazianzus, *ibid.*, 16*

This theme will receive more attention when we come to Augustine, yet it should be noted that, for Gregory of Nazianzus, the force of this fact should not be exaggerated. As shown in the first passage above, Gregory believes in no "source" other than the Father. Were it to be argued that he believed the Son to be "directly" involved in the procession of the Spirit, it should be replied that we fail to gain this notion from any explicit statement in his writings themselves. That said, to think that his thought on this issue is capable of being *developed* in accordance with the principle of relations of opposition cannot, and should not, be rejected outright.

The first thing that should be noted regarding Gregory of Nyssa's Trinitarian theology is that, as with Basil and the ante-Nicenes, he *does not posit a dichotomy* between theology and economy, but rather, "we see Gregory

reading the 'economic Trinity' back into the 'immanent Trinity', by virtue of the thesis that all our terms for the latter are based on terms for the former." (William Alston, *Substance and the Trinity*, in TIS, pg. 192)

But in reference to divine nature ... every activity which pervades from God to creation and is named according to our manifold designs starts off from the Father, proceeds through the Son, and is completed by the Holy Spirit. St. Gregory of Nyssa, *To Abl.*

Therefore, when we ask from where this good thing came to us, we find through the guidance of the Scriptures that it is from the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. But though we presuppose that there are three persons and names, we do not reason that three lives have been given to us-individually one from each of them. It is the same life, activated by the Holy Spirit, prepared by the Son, and produced by the Father's will. St. Gregory of Nyssa, *ibid.*

Thus also in reference to the word for deity, Christ is the power of God and the Wisdom of God. The power of oversight and beholding-which we say is deity, the Father, the God doing all things in Wisdom-effects through the Only-begotten, the Son who perfects all power in the Holy Spirit and judges. St. Gregory of Nyssa, *ibid.*

For, as it has been stated above, the principle of the power of oversight and beholding in Father, Son, and Holy Spirit is one. It starts off from the Father as from a spring; it is effected by the Son, and by the power of the Spirit completes its grace. ... No postponement occurs, or is thought of, in the movement of divine will from the Father through the Son to the Spirit. But deity is one of the good names and thoughts, and not reasonably is the name to be used in the plural, since the unity of activity prevents a plural counting. St. Gregory of Nyssa, *ibid.*

Here we see clearly that for Gregory of Nyssa the unity of the operations *ad extra* serves as the basis for the perception of the Trinity *ad intra*.

Father conveys the notion of unoriginate, unbegotten, and Father always; the only-begotten Son is understood along with the Father, coming from him but inseparably joined to him. Through the Son and with the Father, immediately before any vague and unfounded concept interposes between them, the Holy Spirit is also perceived conjointly. ... since the Spirit is from the God of all things, he has for the cause of his being that from which the Only-begotten is light, through which True Light he shines forth. Neither on grounds of duration nor by reason of an alien nature can he be separated from the Father or from the Only-begotten. St. Gregory of Nyssa, *Ag. Eun.*, 1

Hence I suggest that it is because of his adherence to the correlation of the economic and immanent Trinity that Gregory "not only teaches the divinity and consubstantiality of the Holy Spirit and his proceeding from the Father, but he also makes a deeper study of his relation to the Son than the two other Cappadocians." (Qua-P3, 287)

And now we arrive at Augustine, who alongside being the most important witness amongst the fathers on this issue, is probably the greatest theologian in the patristic era. I won't exaggerate this fact-indeed, I personally feel the allure of the Eastern fathers to be far more powerful than the Western, and am certainly more indebted to the influence of Origen, Athanasius, and Basil than to Tertullian, Ambrose, and Augustine. The Eastern fathers, it seems to me, show evidence of a theological vitality that is foreign to the West; what Pelikan calls 'the "theological lag" of the West behind the East'. (Pel-CT2, 184) Let it not be assumed that I here wish to degrade the doctors and fathers of the West; it has far more to do with my own particular manner of thinking, which is (like that of the East) more "image-based" than analytic. In other words, for me, to say that the Son is the "radiance of the Father, who is the Source without source and the fountain of all being" is more intuitive and meaningful than to say that "the Father is God unbegotten, and the Son is God begotten; the two being alike in all things except for their distinct manners of subsistence", however

complimentary the two statements may be. That said, the greatness of Augustine-his Trinitarian theology included-cannot be emphasized enough. I won't here offer a full analysis of Augustine's Trinitarian theology, as I plan on doing this in the future.

Regarding the methodology of Augustine, it must be firmly stated that he *does not* allow Platonism, or "dry abstract philosophy", to dominate his Trinitarian thought; in point of fact, the opposite is the truth. Augustine begins with Scripture ("first we must establish by the authority of the holy scriptures", De Trin., 1:1:4), Tradition ("the purpose of all the Catholic commentators I have been able to read on the divine books", *ibid.*, 1:1:7), and the faith of the Church ("this also is my faith *inasmuch as* it is the Catholic faith", *ibid.*, 1:1:7), and *only then* does he turn to philosophical speculation, and this for the double purpose of refuting the heretics (who, it should be noted, don't *fail* to philosophize, but fail to *do it well*, and further investigating the deposit of faith. Indeed, the very lay-out of his work on the Trinity makes this evident. Books 1 through 4 deal with Scriptural arguments, books 5 through 8 with logical coherence, and most of the remainder with speculation grounded on that which preceded. In other words, the theological method of Augustine is absolutely sound.

*... Father and Son are one and the same being, seeing that the Father's very *is* has reference not to himself, but to the Son, and that he has begotten this being, and by this being is whatever he is. So neither of them is with reference to himself, and each is said with reference to the other.*

*So we are left with the position that the Son is called being by way of relationship, with reference to the Father. And this leads us to the most unexpected conclusion that being is not being, or at least when you say being "you point not to being but to relationship ... St. Augustine, *ibid.*, 7:1:2*

*So the Father and the Son are together one being and one greatness and one truth and one wisdom. But the Father and the Son are not both together one Word, because they are not both together one Son. Just as Son is referred to Father and is not said with reference to self, so too Word is referred to him whose Word it is when it is called Word!" St. Augustine, *ibid.*, 7:1:3*

Here we see in Augustine the same doctrine expounded which we saw above in Gregory Nazianzus (and which was also present in the other Cappadocians as well)-that the persons are distinguished by the way they are related to each other. Yet there does seem to be a difference between the two, in that for Augustine, the relations *by themselves* served as the *only possible* distinction between the persons, whereas for the Cappadocians the relations *do not*, by themselves, constitute the sole distinction between the persons. In other words, for Augustine it would seem that the Father is not the Son because the Son is begotten; for the Cappadocians the Son who is begotten is the Son and *because he is the Son* (and not "because he is begotten") he is not the Father.

At this point I think it should be said that the two doctrines of relationship are not mutually exclusive. It rather seems to me that Augustine has failed to fully develop the communion aspect of relationality-yet there doesn't seem to be anything in such a development that would contradict or undermine what he wished to affirm regarding the divine unity. Also, it could, I think, be argued that the Cappadocians failed to draw all the conclusions which follow from the affirmation that the Father, Son, and Spirit are of one substance. Again, it doesn't seem to me that such an endeavor would contradict what they wished to affirm regarding the real distinctions between the persons. For now it is sufficient to note that *if* the doctrine of relational identity is strictly adhered to, *the doctrine of the Filioque follows as a matter of logical necessity*. In other words, if the Spirit simply proceeds from the Father, then it would follow that he *must* be identical with the Son. The *only way* the Spirit can, if he proceeds from the Father, be distinct from the Son, is if he proceeds from the Son as well. In this case, the persons could be identified thusly: the Father is God-original, unbegotten and not proceeding; the Son is God-begotten, not unbegotten and not proceeding; the Spirit is God proceeding, not unbegotten and not begotten.

The major objections I have to such a schema are the following. It defines the Father by what he is not rather

than what he is; in static rather than dynamic terms. Second, and as a result of the above, the *personal relationship in communion* seems to be relegated to the background. This is the exact opposite of what I think we need to affirm—we need to, I think, make *personal communion* intrinsic to the processions. But more on this in section VII below.

Augustine's point of departure for affirming the Filioque *is not* the philosophical schema outlined above, but rather the testimony of Scripture.

Thus he says of the Holy Spirit, When I have gone I shall send him to you. 'Not we shall send' but as though only the Son would send him, and not the Father too; while elsewhere he says, These things have I spoken to you while remaining among you; but the advocate, the Holy Spirit whom the Father will send in my name, he will make all things clear to you. 'Here again it sounds as if the Son is not going to send him, but only the Father. As in this case then, so with those words of his, but it is for those it has been prepared for by my Father, 'he wished himself to be understood together with the Father as preparing thrones of glory for whom he would. St. Augustine, ibid., 1:4:25

*And just as for the Holy Spirit his being the gift of God means his proceeding from the Father, so his being sent means his being known to proceed from him. Nor, by the way, can we say that the Holy Spirit does not proceed from the Son as well; it is not without point that the same Spirit is called the Spirit of the Father and of the Son. And I cannot see what else he intended to signify when he breathed and said Receive the Holy Spirit. "... By saying then, Whom I will send you from the Father, 'the Lord showed that the Spirit is both the Father's and the Son's. Elsewhere too, when he said, Whom the Father will send, 'he added, 'in my name.' He did not however say, Whom the Father will send from me "as he had said Whom I will send from the Father, "and thereby he indicated that the source of all godhead, or if you prefer it, of all deity, is the Father. So the Spirit who proceeds from the Father and the Son is traced back, on both counts, to him of whom the Son is born. St. Augustine, ibid., 4:5:29 Hence the double procession of the Spirit is, for Augustine, affirmed because it is biblical. This theological affirmation in no way entails the denial of the fact that the Father *only* is the "source of all godhead". Only *after* the Scriptural evidence is affirmed can philosophical speculation serve the purposes of theology.*

So because Father and Son and Holy Spirit are one God, and because God of course is holy and God is spirit, "the triad can be called both holy and spirit. And yet that Holy Spirit whom we understand as being not the triad but in the triad, insofar as he is properly or peculiarly called the Holy Spirit, is so called relationship-wise, being referred to both Father and Son, since the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of the Father and of the Son. St. Augustine, ibid., 5:3:12

And with reason being used in order to defend what faith has already affirmed, the joint conclusion is subsumed under Augustine's dominating theological template—that "God is Love".

So the Holy Spirit is something common to Father and Son, whatever it is, or is their very commonness or communion, consubstantial and coeternal. Call this friendship, if it helps, but a better word for it is Love." And this too is substance because God is substance, and God is Love." St. Augustine, ibid., 6:1:7

Yet once again we must emphasize that the affirmation of the Filioque does not, for Augustine, entail the denial of the Father's monarchy.

But the Son is born of the Father and the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father principally, and by the Father's wholly timeless gift from both of them jointly. St. Augustine, ibid., 15:6:47

In bringing our analysis of Augustine to a close, I first wish to reaffirm the greatness of his achievement. His theological method is perfect, and should serve as an example for those of us who follow him. His relational ontology, though valid to a point, seems to me to be underdeveloped, and this both stunted the development

of Trinitarian doctrine in the Latin West in later centuries (Ever wonder why an extremely muddled understanding of the Trinity which tends toward modalism is commonplace amongst fellow believers? This undoubtedly is part of the reason, though this statement must be qualified by mentioning that it is not true to the spirit of Augustine.), and made rapprochement with the East more difficult. That said, if we take personhood rather than substance as our theological point of departure for Trinitarian speculation, Augustine provides us with the ideal theological template within which to operate, and for this reason his relational ontology should, in my opinion, be affirmed and developed rather than rejected.

Finally, we come to John Damascene, who will be the last father we will be investigating. First, it must be pointed out that John explicitly rejects the Filioque, or at the very least materially so.

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, but yet we call Him the Spirit of the Son. St. John Damascene, De Fide 1:8

The Father is the source and cause of the Son and the Holy Spirit: Father of the Son alone and producer of the Holy Spirit. The Son is Son, Word, Wisdom, Power, Image, Effulgence, Impress of the Father and derived from the Father. But the Holy Spirit is not the Son of the Father but the Spirit of the Father as proceeding from the Father. For there is no impulse without Spirit. And we speak also of the Spirit of the Son, not as through proceeding from Him ... St. John Damascene, ibid., 1:12

It also must be kept in mind that John, in accordance with the Tradition of the Eastern fathers, confesses a strict agnosticism regarding what, exactly, constitutes "procession", or the difference between procession and "generation" (the Son's being "begotten").

For no other generation is like to the generation of the Son of God, since no other is Son of God. For though the Holy Spirit proceedeth from the Father, yet this is not generative in character but processional. This is a different mode of existence, alike incomprehensible and unknown, just as is the generation of the Son. Wherefore all the qualities the Father has are the Son's, save that the Father is unbegotten, and this exception involves no difference in essence nor dignity, but only a different mode of coming into existence. St. John Damascene, ibid., 1:8

Hence if, as I argued above, in such language as "the Spirit of the Son", there is nothing to *stop* us from thinking that the Filioque may be entailed at the implicit level, here we have unambiguous evidence that there is no reason to imagine that the author in question *is* operating under such assumptions. Yet it would be false to simply take this as an *absolute exclusion* of the Son in the eternal subsistence of the Spirit.

And when I think of the relation of the three subsistences to each other, I perceive that the Father is super-essential Sun, source of goodness, fathomless sea of essence, reason, wisdom, power, light, divinity: the generating and productive source of good hidden in it. He Himself then is mind, the depth of reason, begetter of the Word, and through the Word the Producer of the revealing Spirit. 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. St. John Damascene, ibid., 1:12

The Son is the Father's image, and the Spirit the Son's, through which Christ dwelling in man makes him after his own image. The Holy Spirit is God, being between the unbegotten and the begotten, and united to the Father through the Son. St. John Damascene, ibid., 1:13

And thus we arrive at the heart of John Damascene's Trinitarian theology, which is *perichoresis*--the mutual indwelling of the persons within one another. I consider this theme to be so important, and so necessary for rapprochement, that I here offer a lengthy passage from John Damascene.

*For there is one essence, one goodness, one power, one will, one energy, one authority, one and the same, I repeat, not three resembling each other. But the three subsistences have one and the same movement. For each one of them is related as closely to the other as to itself: that is to say that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are one in all respects, save those of not being begotten, of birth and of procession. But it is by thought that the difference is perceived. For we recognise one God: but only in the attributes of Fatherhood, Sonship, and Procession, both in respect of cause and effect and perfection of subsistence, that is, manner of existence, do we perceive difference. For with reference to the uncircumscribed Deity we cannot speak of separation in space, as we can in our own case. For **the subsistences dwell in one another, in no wise confused but cleaving together**, according to the word of the Lord, *I am in the father, and the father in Me*, "nor can one admit difference in will or judgment or energy or power or anything else whatsoever which may produce actual and absolute separation in our case. Wherefore we do not speak of three Gods, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, but rather of one God, the holy Trinity, the Son and Spirit being referred to one cause, and not compounded or coalesced according to the synaeresis of Sabellius. For, as we said, they are made one not so as to commingle, but so as to **cleave to each other, and they have their being in each other** without any coalescence or commingling. St. John Damascene, *ibid.*, 1:8*

So, what can be said about John's stance regarding the Filioque? That John believed that the Father *alone* is the source, cause, and fount of godhead cannot be denied, and the force with which he advances this point makes it necessary to recognize this as a dominating theme of his Trinitarian theology which establishes a context within which to interpret the whole of his work. On the other hand, John seems clearly to advocate that each of the persons exists, in some sense, *essentially* in reference to the other two. In other words, there is an ontological entailment that obtains between all three of them; to speak of one implies the other two just as to speak of "left" implies something that is to the "right" of left. Within this logic of co-entailment, there is a clear distinction between the senses in which one entails the other two. The Father only is the fountain and cause in the active sense, and behind him there can be, in this sense, no hypostatic or ontological ground other than himself. The Son is begotten of the Father, thus finding his source in the Father. The Son constitutes the person of the Father (as the necessary object of his essential relationship), but it must be kept in mind that it is *the Father* who causes the Son, and therefore, the Father constitutes himself in the ultimate sense. The Son is related to the Spirit in a way that the Spirit is not related to the Son--"Further we do not speak of the Son of the Spirit, or of the Son as derived from the Spirit." (St. John Damascene, *ibid.*, 1:8) Though this relationship cannot be described in terms of causation, I think we can, without doing an injustice to John, claim that it is a relationship of constitution. For these reasons, I think that John Damascene offers us a Trinitarian theology that can and must serve as an essential point of departure for dialogue between the East and the West.

D. Conclusion

Hence it is my conclusion that, just as with Scripture, *there is no sustained explicit pre post-Nicene evidence either for or against the Filioque*. With Augustine, it cannot be claimed that his Trinitarian theology necessarily entails an affirmation of the Filioque in the sense in which the East rejects it; with Damascene, it cannot be claimed that *his* Trinitarian theology necessarily rejects the Filioque *in the sense which the West affirms it*. Perhaps it would be safer to claim that there seems to be *a way* of articulating the procession of the Spirit that *can* affirm the thrust of *both* the East and West's Trinitarian theology. As was shown above (section II), both the East and West can develop the patristic statements to an extreme. Yet I believe that the evidence offered above proves unambiguously that such developments are the result of exaggerating certain of the patristic claims while obscuring others.

If a Catholic wishes to advance the claim that the Spirit proceeds from the Son in *the exact same manner* as the Spirit proceeds from the Father--causally, ontologically, and hypostatically, rather than constitutively--it

can be, I think, clearly affirmed that the patristic testimony will not warrant such a claim. Even the fathers who offer (material) statements that do affirm the filioque either do so within a theological context wherein the monarchy of the Father is assumed, or offer qualifying statements that explicitly affirm the monarchy of the Father.

On the other hand, if an Orthodox wishes to advance the claim that the Son plays *no part whatever* in the procession of the Spirit or the constitution of the hypostasis of the Spirit, likewise, it can be countered that the patristic testimony will not accord with them. As was shown above, to simply relegate all talk of the Son's involvement in the procession of the Spirit to the level of "economy" (as opposed to "theology"), as Lossky is wont to do when he claims that such patristic statements "usually refer to the mission of the Holy Spirit *in the world* [and by implication, not in eternity] through the mediation of the Son" (Los-MTEC, 55-56), is absolutely unwarranted. The fathers, though distinguishing between theology and economy, clearly affirmed the correlation between the two such that the activity of the Trinity in the economy *depends on* the manner in which the persons subsist in eternity, and *therefore*, according to the logic of patristic thought, theology can be inferred from economy and economy serves as the point of departure for theological speculation. What the situation requires from both sides is *not* the mere repetition of the fathers, but rather the *adoption of the spirit of the fathers*. To simply "repeat" the testimony of the ages that preceded us would be *absolutely contrary* to this spirit. And if, to this the Orthodox point out the content agnosticism of certain of the fathers (Gregory of Nazianzus, Damascene) regarding the procession of the Spirit and claim that to advance beyond this agnosticism is unwarranted, it is sufficient to point out that Irenaeus claimed that, with regards to the generation of the Son, "If anyone says to us 'how then was the Son produced by the Father?', we reply to him that no man understands that production or generation or calling or by whatever name one may describe his generation, which is in fact altogether indescribable", (Ag. Her. 2:28:6), and yet this did not stop Alexander, Athanasius, Gregory of Nyssa and others from forming more definite and exact statements, in accord with the deposit of faith and worship of the Church, *when the situation called for it*. And, with regards to the procession of the Spirit, the situation certainly calls for a similar effort on *our* part today. A simple repetition of the fathers' *words* therefore is a departure from the fathers' *spirit*, and had the fathers contented themselves with such an attitude in *their* day, Christianity would not only lack the vitality that is intrinsic to the life of the Church, but would probably either not exist at all, or never have gotten beyond the borders of Palestine.

As said above, within the context of the doctrine of the Filioque, the patristic era offers no clear testimony; what testimony it does offer excludes the extremes of both parties. All of the fathers agree that the Father only is the source, cause, and fount of the godhead. This is just as clear in Tertullian as it is in Origen, in Hilary as in Athanasius, in Ambrose as in Basil, in Augustine as in Damascene—it was a constitutive element in the Trinitarian theology of the entire patristic era. There is also a clear affirmation that the Son is involved in the procession of the Spirit, a teaching found in Irenaeus, Tertullian, Origen, Gregory Thaumaturgus, Athanasius, Hilary, Didymus, Epiphanius, Basil, Gregory of Nyssa, Ambrose, Augustine, John Damascene, and others. There is no clear affirmation that the Son plays no part at all in the procession of the Spirit, and there is likewise no clear affirmation that the Son's role in the procession of the Spirit entails his being, in any sense, "font", "origin", "source", or "cause" in the same sense as the Father. What is needed is for, *in accordance with* the testimony of the fathers and worship of the Church, this doctrine to be developed. Who, then, is willing to, in submitting to the same Spirit, become a new father of the Church in our day?

VI. RE-EXAMINATION OF POINTS OF CONCORD

A. Father as Sole Principle

B. The Son as Not Un-related to the Procession of the Spirit

VII. TOWARDS UNITY

A. Firm Rejection of Placing the Substance before the Persons

B. Firm Rejection of the Photian Disjunct

C. Causation

D. Answers to Zizioulas' Questions

E. Tentative Conclusions
