

# *The Triumph of Pro-Nicene Theology over Anti-Monarchian Exegesis: Cyril of Alexandria and Theodore of Heraclea on John 14.10–11*

---

MATTHEW R. CRAWFORD

This article begins by identifying a previously unknown quotation in Cyril of Alexandria's *Commentary on the Gospel of John* as an extract from the Johannine commentary of Theodore of Heraclea, a leading member of the fourth-century Eusebian alliance. I argue that the relevant fragment from Theodore's commentary dealing with John 14.10–11 reveals his attempt to oppose Marcellus's Monarchian exegesis of John 10.38. In order to do so he drew upon third-century anti-Monarchian authors, most notably Origen. Cyril responded to Theodore's exegesis in a thoroughly pro-Nicene fashion, demonstrating that his exegesis fell short of the pro-Nicene consensus that developed in the latter half of the fourth century. Cyril's chief criticisms of Theodore's exegesis are that he applied corporeal categories to the Son, that he implied that the Son does not share the Father's infinity, and that he failed to adequately distinguish the Father/Son relationship from the Creator/creation relationship. This small episode highlights the shifting doctrinal concerns from the fourth to the fifth centuries, as well as the centrality of biblical exegesis to theological formulation during these years.

Recent scholarship on the 'Arian' conflict has attempted to uncover the various strands of pre-Nicene theology that provided the starting point for this intense debate, and the figure of Origen usually looms large in such discussions. In this article I will argue that some anti-Monarchian arguments employed by Origen were appropriated by some within the Eusebian alliance to resist the Monarchianism of Marcellus, but that these

arguments proved to be incompatible with the pro-Nicene theology of the later fourth and fifth centuries. From the 330s through to the early 350s, it would appear that those in the Eusebian alliance were far more concerned with resisting Marcellus's theology than with opposing Nicaea itself. In other words, being non-Nicene in these years did not necessarily mean being anti-Nicene. Nevertheless, later pro-Nicenes tended to look back on these figures as 'Arians,' viewing them in the categories of the more clearly defined pro- and anti-Nicene positions that emerged in the second half of the century. Through a consideration of a hitherto little noticed episode, I intend to highlight these commonplaces once again, noting one specific manner in which Origen influenced the Eusebians, and highlighting the conceptual distance between the theological concerns of these Eusebians and those of later pro-Nicenes.

The episode in question concerns Theodore of Heraclea and Cyril of Alexandria, both of whom authored commentaries on the gospel of John. These two works not only reveal the theological concerns of each author's respective milieu, but also bear a direct relation to one another, in that Cyril appears to have had recourse to Theodore's text when composing his own commentary. In the heat of the fourth-century 'Arian' conflict, Theodore appropriated Origen's third-century anti-Monarchian language in order to respond to Marcellus's Monarchian exegesis of John 10.38. By the next century, Cyril reacted to Theodore's theological language with suspicion and some confusion, and offered a thoroughly pro-Nicene critique of his supposedly 'Arian' reading of the text. My argument will proceed in four stages. First, I examine a previously unidentified 'Arian' fragment preserved in Cyril's *Commentary on the Gospel of John*, and conclude that it is an excerpt from Theodore's own Johannine commentary. Second, I look more closely at the exegesis of Theodore in this and related fragments to show that his concern was to oppose the Monarchianism of Marcellus. Third, I demonstrate that Theodore's exegesis is largely an adaptation of a third-century, anti-Monarchian approach to disputed passages. Finally, I explore Cyril's rejection of Theodore's theological language, and the fourth-century, pro-Nicene roots of Cyril's critique.

#### THEODORE OF HERACLEA AS CYRIL'S UNNAMED SOURCE

One of the main concerns of Cyril's lengthy *Commentary on the Gospel of John* is to offer an anti-Arian exegesis of contested biblical passages.<sup>1</sup> In the process of doing so, he drew upon a variety of sources and thereby

1. Whether Cyril's anti-Arian writings are directed at distinct Arian or Eunomian opponents in his own day is unclear, though in 412 Synesius of Cyrene reported in his

produced something of a synthesis of many of the debates that had raged throughout the fourth century. Rather intriguing is the fact that on seven occasions Cyril cites what appear to be extracts from his theological opponents, which he then proceeds to refute.<sup>2</sup> Only a handful of scholars have commented on these fragments. Jacques Liébaert noted several of the fragments, but could only conclude that Cyril had consulted “one or more Arian documents.”<sup>3</sup> Georges-Matthieu de Durand suggested that Cyril did not have a complete “Arian” commentary before him, but only some treatises or homilies that offered heterodox interpretation of certain verses, since he only quotes from his opponent a handful of times throughout his commentary.<sup>4</sup> De Durand’s suggestion was followed by Marie-Odile Boulnois in her study of Cyril’s Trinitarian theology.<sup>5</sup> Domenico Pazzini, in a recent study, disagreed with de Durand and proposed instead that these passages derive from a complete and systematic *Commentary on the Gospel of John*, which emerged from a fifth-century Arian/Eunomian milieu.<sup>6</sup> In this study I want to draw attention to a piece of evidence that has thus far been overlooked in these previous studies. One of the passages cited by Cyril matches a surviving fragment from the fourth-century *Commentary*

---

*ep.* 5 that followers of Eunomius were attempting to make converts in North Africa, and the same year in *ep.* 128 he wrote to console an Egyptian bishop who had been ejected for his refusal to subscribe to Arian tenets. It was also in 412 that Theophilus died and Cyril succeeded him as archbishop of Alexandria, though Cyril’s anti-Arian writings are usually dated to the mid-420s (cf. G. Jouassard, “L’activité littéraire de S. Cyrille d’Alexandrie jusqu’à 428,” in *Mélanges E. Podechard* [Lyons: Facultés Catholiques, 1945], 159–74). For a brief overview of Arianism and Eunomianism in the late fourth and early fifth centuries, see Georges-Matthieu de Durand, *Cyrille d’Alexandrie: Dialogues sur la Trinité: Tome I*, SC 231 (Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 1976), 17–22; Susan Wessel, *Cyril of Alexandria and the Nestorian Controversy: The Making of a Saint and a Heretic*, Oxford Early Christian Studies (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 57–61. The critical text for Cyril’s commentary can be found in P. E. Pusey, *Sancti Patris Nostri Cyrilli Archiepiscopi Alexandrini in D. Joannis Evangelium*, 3 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1872).

2. Cyril, *Jo.* 1.2; 14.11 (x4); 14.28; 15.1 (Pusey, 1:46–47; 2:434, 437, 443, 446–47, 519, 538–39). The fragment at Pusey, 2:443 is repeated twice at 2:449–50 and 2:451. I will argue later in this article that the supposed fragment at 2:446–47 is actually not an extract from another source, but is Cyril’s own imagined objection from his opponent.

3. *La doctrine christologique de Saint Cyrille d’Alexandrie avant la querelle nestorienne* (Lille: Facultés Catholiques, 1951), 74.

4. *Dialogues sur la Trinité: Tome I*, SC 231:32.

5. *Le paradoxe trinitaire chez Cyrille d’Alexandrie: Herméneutique, analyses philosophiques et argumentation théologique*, Collection des Études Augustiniennes, Série Antiquité 143 (Paris: Institut d’Études Augustiniennes, 1994), 538, n.32.

6. “Il *Liber adversariorum* nel *Commento a Giovanni* di Cirillo Alessandrino,” *SP* 42 (Peeters: Leuven, 2006): 199–203.

on the *Gospel of John* attributed to Theodore of Heraclea.<sup>7</sup> I suggest that this correspondence allows us to be much more precise about the source of at least some of the extracts cited by Cyril.

Of the seven fragments preserved in Cyril's commentary, four occur in his exposition of John 14.11 ("Believe that I am in the Father, and the Father is in me."). In this article I will consider only these four passages, leaving open for the moment whether the remaining three are somehow related to the four that are presently under consideration. As he begins his interpretation of this biblical passage, Cyril states that in his desire to exclude any possibility of the heretics causing harm, he has read "a little book of our opponents" (βιβλιδίω τῶν δι' ἐναντίας), to see what it says about the text at hand.<sup>8</sup> He then quotes a passage from this ostensibly 'heretical' work and offers a lengthy response.<sup>9</sup> Here is the passage that Cyril says he has found in the "little book":

Ὁ τοίνυν Υἱὸς οὐσιωδῶς περιεχόμενος ὑπὸ τοῦ Πατρὸς, τὸν Πατέρα ἐν ἑαυτῷ ἔχει, τὰ ῥήματα φεγγόμενον καὶ τὰ σημεῖα ἐπιτελοῦντα· ὅπερ ἐρμηνεύει λέγων "Ἄ ἐγὼ λαλῶ ὑμῖν ἀπ' ἑμαυτοῦ οὐ λαλῶ, ὁ δὲ Πατὴρ ἐν ἐμοὶ μένων ποιεῖ τὰ ἔργα αὐτός."<sup>10</sup>

Therefore the Son who is encompassed by the Father with respect to essence has the Father in himself, who utters the words and performs the miracles, which he [i.e., the Son] explains when he says, "The things that I speak unto you, I speak not from myself, but the Father dwelling in me, he does the works."

7. The edition of Theodore's fragments that I will use is J. Reuss, *Johannes-Kommentare aus der griechischen Kirche*, TU 89 (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1966).

8. Cyril, *Jo.* 14.11 (Pusey, 2:434). Pusey conjectured that the word should have been βιβλίω instead of βιβλιδίω (see 434, n.9). The difference is not a significant one, and does not affect the conclusions of this article. It would seem more fitting to speak of Theodore's commentary as a βιβλίον rather than a βιβλίδιον, since the surviving fragments show that it was a sizeable work. Lampe notes that βιβλίδιον can be used in a pejorative sense to refer to the writings of heretics (*Patristic Greek Lexicon* [Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1961], s.v., βιβλίδιον). It is possible that Cyril intended the word in this sense. However, de Durand took the term in a diminutive sense rather than the pejorative sense (SC 231:32, n.1), and Boulnois followed his lead on this point (*Le paradoxe trinitaire*, 538, n.32). Compared with Cyril's own lengthy commentary, Theodore's probably would have appeared as a "little book." Cyril uses βιβλίδιον to refer to some of his own works in *Oratio ad dominas* (ACO 1.1.5:62); *ep.* 40 (ACO 1.1.4:21). He uses a similar term, λογίδιον, to refer to the work of an exegetical opponent at *Os.* 1.3 (P. E. Pusey, *Cyrilli Archiepiscopi Alexandrini in XII Prophetas* [Oxford: Clarendon, 1868], 1:15), on which see Dimitrios Zaganas, "Cyrille d'Alexandrie aux prises avec un exégète allégoriste au début de son *In Oseam*: Didyme l'Aveugle ou Piérius d'Alexandrie?" VC 63 (2009): 1–12.

9. Cyril's response covers his entire treatment of John 14.11 (Pusey, 2:434–56).

10. Cyril, *Jo.* 14.11 (Pusey, 2:434).

For comparison here is fragment 255 from Theodore's *Commentary on the Gospel of John*:

Ἀρμόζει κατὰ Σαβελλίου· τὸν γὰρ ἐν ἄλλῳ ὄντα καὶ ἐν ἑαυτῷ ἄλλον ἔχοντα πῶς ἐγγωρεῖ ὑπονοεῖν μόνον ὄντα; ὁ τοίνυν υἱὸς οὐσιωδῶς περιεχόμενος ὑπὸ τοῦ πατρὸς οὐδὲν ἦττον καὶ αὐτὸς ἔχει ἐν ἑαυτῷ τὸν πατέρα.<sup>11</sup>

He added against Sabellius: For how is it fitting to think that the one who is in another and who has another in himself remains alone? Therefore the Son who is encompassed by the Father with respect to essence, nevertheless also has the Father in himself.

The word order of Cyril's fragment differs slightly from the Theodorean fragment, and also includes a phrase not found in Theodore (τὰ ρήματα φθεγγόμενον καὶ τὰ σημεῖα ἐπιτελοῦντα). However, these differences could easily be explained as Cyril's paraphrase and expansion of his source, or as the editing of the catenist. What is significant is the central phrase that occurs in both fragments, Ὁ Υἱὸς οὐσιωδῶς περιεχόμενος ὑπὸ τοῦ Πατρὸς, rather technical theological language to which, as we shall shortly see, Cyril strongly objects. Further confirmation that Theodore is Cyril's unnamed source is that the phrase οὐσιωδῶς περιεχόμενος occurs nowhere else in surviving Greek literature,<sup>12</sup> and that the key term περιέχω shows up also in fragments 256 and 257 from Theodore's *Commentary on the Gospel of John*.

This correspondence leaves open only two possibilities. Either Cyril is quoting from Theodore's commentary, or from some later commentary that also used Theodore as a source. I suggest that the former is more likely. Theodore, who would undoubtedly have appeared to Cyril as an 'Arian' given his ecclesiastical associations, and whom we know authored a Johannine commentary, is a better candidate for Cyril's source than some otherwise unknown 'Arian' or 'Eunomian' commentary that has left no other traces in the historical record. Moreover, as I shall demonstrate below, certain features of these extracts preserved by Cyril are particularly well suited to Theodore's theological context in the first half of the fourth century, rather than to the later stages of the 'Arian' controversy.

Although Theodore's name is little known today outside of specialists on the fourth century, from the early 330s through the mid-350s he would have been known to nearly all the major players in the first stage of the so-called 'Arian' conflict. I have elsewhere given a more extensive survey of Theodore's career and literary remains, so only a brief sketch

11. Theodore of Heraclea, frag. *Jo.* 255 (TU 89:131).

12. Based on word searches in *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae*.

of such matters is needed here.<sup>13</sup> He was apparently brought into office as a bishop of Heraclea by Eusebius of Nicomedia sometime between 328 and 334, and throughout his career he appeared as a member of the Eusebian alliance, opposing Athanasius on the grounds of his misconduct and Marcellus on the grounds of his Monarchianism.<sup>14</sup> The close proximity of Heraclea to the imperial capital positioned him well to play a central role in the court intrigues carried out by Eusebius and others. In 334 he first appears in the historical record, petitioning the emperor with charges against Athanasius, and in 335 he attended the Council of Tyre, where he served as a member of the Mareotic commission, travelling to Mareotis to investigate the Melitian accusations levied against Athanasius.<sup>15</sup> After Athanasius fled to the imperial court, Theodore was likely a part of a small delegation that travelled there to press the charges in person.<sup>16</sup> In other words, Theodore had a direct hand in the events that led to Athanasius's first exile. Throughout the late 330s, he persisted in his resistance to Athanasius, while also participating in the deposition of Marcellus in 336 and the opposition to Paul's attempt to gain the bishop's seat in Constantinople in 337.<sup>17</sup>

In the following decade Theodore's influence only increased. In 341 he was present at the Dedication Council of Antioch, for which he was criti-

13. See Matthew R. Crawford, "On the Diversity and Influence of the Eusebian Alliance: The Case of Theodore of Heraclea," *JEH* 64:2 (2013): 227–57. See also the older studies of Knut Schäferdiek, "Die Fragmente der 'Skeireins' und der Johanneskommentar des Theodor von Herakleia," *Zeitschrift für deutsches Altertum und deutsche Literatur* 110 (1981): 175–93 and "Theodor von Herakleia (328/34–351/55): Ein wenig beachteter Kirchenpolitiker und Exeget des 4. Jhs.," in *Romanitas—Christianitas: Untersuchungen zur Geschichte und Literatur der römischen Kaiserzeit*, ed. Gerhard Wirth, Karl-Heinz Schwarte, and Johannes Heinrichs (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1982), 393–410. Both are reprinted in Knut Schäferdiek, Winrich Alfried Löhr and Hans Christof Brennecke, eds., *Schwelienzeit: Beiträge zur Geschichte des Christentums in Spätantike und Frühmittelalter*, Arbeiten zur Kirchengeschichte 64 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1996).

14. For a recent study of the Eusebian alliance, see David M. Gwynn, *The Eusebians: The Polemic of Athanasius of Alexandria and the Construction of the 'Arian Controversy'*, Oxford Theological Monographs (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).

15. On his activities in 334, see Theodoret, *h.e.* 1.28.2; Sozomen, *h.e.* 2.25.1. On his attendance at Tyre in 335 and involvement in the Mareotic commission, see Sozomen, *h.e.* 2.25.19; Socrates, *h.e.* 1.31.3. Cf. Schäferdiek, "Theodor von Herakleia," 393–95; R. P. C. Hanson, *The Search for the Christian Doctrine of God: The Arian Controversy, 318–381* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2005), 260.

16. Sozomen, *h.e.* 2.28.13. Cf. Schäferdiek, "Theodor von Herakleia," 395.

17. On the opposition to Marcellus, see Eusebius, *Marcell.* 2.4.29, where Theodore is almost certainly the bishop of Thrace whom Eusebius mentions. So Sara Parvis, *Marcellus of Ancyra and the Lost Years of the Arian Controversy, 325–345*,

cized by Julius of Rome, who apparently recognized Theodore's leading role in the Eusebian alliance.<sup>18</sup> The following year he carried the so-called fourth creed of Antioch to the imperial court at Trier, as part of a delegation to Constans regarding the cases of Paul of Constantinople and Athanasius.<sup>19</sup> The clearest testimony to Theodore's significance in these years comes from the documents from the failed Council of Serdica in 343. Of the eight documents from the 'western' council, six mention Theodore by name, and five of these place him at the head of the list of the current leaders of the Eusebians. It was at this council that Theodore was formally condemned as an instigator of the 'Arian' heresy.<sup>20</sup> In the late 340s, he again participated in councils that condemned Athanasius and Paul, and around the same time he convinced Ursacius and Valens, who had agreed to drop the charges against Athanasius, to rejoin the Eusebians.<sup>21</sup> The last definite date that can be given for Theodore is his attendance at the Council of Sirmium in 351, which again underscores his opposition to Athanasius's conduct and Marcellus's theology.<sup>22</sup> By 355 he had apparently passed from the scene, since in that year Liberius, bishop of Rome, reported in an interview with the emperor Constantius that Theodore had died.<sup>23</sup>

Theodore's activities between the 330s and 350s suggest that he was one of a handful of bishops who took a leading role in the opposition to Athanasius and Marcellus. Moreover, unlike so many of the shadowy figures from these years, Theodore's literary corpus survives in several hundred fragments, mostly from his commentaries on the gospels of Matthew and John.<sup>24</sup> Despite his condemnation at Serdica, he received praise from

---

Oxford Early Christian Studies (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 129. On the opposition to Paul, see Sozomen, *h.e.* 3.3.1; Socrates, *h.e.* 2.7.1–3. On the continued opposition to Athanasius, see the events described in Theodoret, *h.e.* 2.3.8, which I place in 338.

18. Sozomen, *h.e.* 3.5.10; Athanasius, *apol. sec.* 21.1–35.8. Cf. Schäferdiek, "Theodor von Herakleia," 395–96; Hanson, *The Search*, 270, 284.

19. Socrates, *h.e.* 2.18.1. Cf. Schäferdiek, "Theodor von Herakleia," 397; Hanson, *The Search*, 293.

20. I provide a list and analysis of all eight documents in my "The Case of Theodore of Heraclea." See, e.g., the *Synodical Letter to All Churches* (Theodoret, *h.e.* 2.8.28), which places Theodore first in the list of the current leaders of the Eusebians. Cf. Schäferdiek, "Theodor von Herakleia," 399; Hanson, *The Search*, 296–300.

21. Sozomen, *h.e.* 4.8.4; *Historia acephala* 1.2; Athanasius, *h. Ar.* 28.1. Cf. Hanson, *The Search*, 282.

22. Hilary, *Frg. hist.*, Series B 7.9. Cf. Schäferdiek, "Theodor von Herakleia," 401; Hanson, *The Search*, 359.

23. Theodoret, *h.e.* 2.16.10–11. Cf. Schäferdiek, "Theodor von Herakleia," 401–2.

24. Jerome, *Vir. ill.* 90. Cf. Theodoret, *h.e.* 2.3.8.



Jerome for his measured exegesis, and was apparently used as a source for Chrysostom's homilies on the gospels and for the later Johannine commentary attributed to one Ammonius.<sup>25</sup> His influence also extended beyond the Greek-speaking world, as it appears his *Commentary on the Gospel of John* was translated into Gothic, perhaps by Ulfilla, bishop to the Goths.<sup>26</sup> Despite his leading role during the 330s–350s, Theodore's literary remains have garnered little attention in modern scholarship. I hope in this essay to fill this gap to some extent by considering the exegesis of John 14.10–11 offered by Theodore and Cyril. Doing so provides a window into the theology and exegesis going on within the Eusebian alliance, while also highlighting the differences between the theological concerns of the Eusebians and those of later pro-Nicenes such as Cyril. Given Theodore's career as a leader of the Eusebians, it is not surprising that Cyril, defender of Athanasius's legacy, would respond to him so vociferously. However, before we consider the Alexandrian's attack on Theodore, we need to see Theodore's fourth-century appropriation of a third-century anti-Monarchian tradition.

#### THEODORE'S ANTI-MONARCHIAN EXEGESIS

Theodore's fragment 255 begins with the phrase Ἀρμόζει κατὰ Σαβελλίου, clearly an addition by the catenist, but a comment that probably accurately reflects Theodore's original intent. On several occasions in the extant fragments of his *Commentary on the Gospel of John* Theodore opposes Sabellius, and, given his ecclesiastical context, it is certain that he had Marcellus in view, and was using Sabellius merely as a codeword for opposing his contemporary's theology.<sup>27</sup> In fact, on two occasions in

25. Theodore's influence on Chrysostom is asserted in Reuss, *Johannes-Kommentare*, xxi. On Ammonius, see Joseph Reuss, "Der Presbyter Ammonios von Alexandrien und sein Kommentar zum Johannes-evangelium," *Biblica* 44 (1963): 159–70.

26. See Schäferdiek, "Die Fragmente," who points out that one of the few surviving fragments of the Gothic Johannine commentary known as the *Skeireins* appears to be a translation of a Greek catena fragment attributed to Theodore. Schäferdiek includes both the Gothic and Greek passages and also highlights the overall theological similarities between the *Skeireins* and Theodore's literary remains from the Greek catena tradition.

27. For the explicitly anti-Sabellian fragments from Theodore, see Theodore of Heraclea, frag. *Jo.* 56; 215; 255; 269 (TU 89:80, 122, 131, 136). On the nature of these fragments see Schäferdiek, "Theodor von Herakleia," 408, and "Die Fragmente," 186, 190, who correctly sees the mention of Sabellius in the fragments as a codeword for Marcellus. On this point see also Parvis, *Marcellus of Ancyra*, 251; Joseph T.



Theodore's fragmentary remains, Marcellus and his followers are explicitly mentioned and opposed.<sup>28</sup> Theodore is likely giving his own summary of Marcellus's theology in the first line of fragment 255, when he rhetorically asks how it is fitting to think of God as though he were "alone" (μόνον).<sup>29</sup> If the Sabellian error is to conflate the Father and Son, then the Johannine passage at hand would seem to play directly into the heretic's hands, for Jesus declares in John 14.9–11 that he who has seen him has seen the Father, and that the Father, who is in the Son, is actually the one who has accomplished the works and spoken the words attributed to the Son. Such a statement taken on its own seems to suggest that the Son is merely the agency by which the Father operates, and thus lacks his own proper existence.

It is precisely such an interpretation of the passage that is implied in the surviving fragments of Marcellus. The exegesis of John 14.9–11 was central to the theologies of both Athanasius and Marcellus. Frequently Athanasius joins John 10.30, 14.9, and 14.11 to argue that the Son is intrinsic to the Father, and so inseparable from him.<sup>30</sup> Marcellus also refers to the notion of the Father being "in" the Son and the Son "in" the Father, though he usually does so by reference to John 10.38 ("The Father is in me and I am in the Father"), rather than John 14.11 ("I am in the Father and the Father is in me").<sup>31</sup> Marcellus uses this passage to emphasize the unity that obtains between Father and Son. For example, in fragment 52 he cites the text when interpreting the opening verses of the fourth gospel. Marcellus takes the statement that in the beginning the Word "was God" and was "with

---

Lienhard, *Contra Marcellum: Marcellus of Ancyra and Fourth-Century Theology* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1999), 210ff.

28. Theodore of Heraclea, frag. Jo. 40; 333 (TU 89:76, 152).

29. On Marcellus's description of God as a "monad," see Lienhard, *Contra Marcellum*, 56–58.

30. The references here are too many to list. See, e.g., Athanasius, *decr.* 16.2 (Hans-Georg Opitz, *Athanasius Werke* II/1 [Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1935], 13); C. Ar. 1.34.3 (Karin Metzler and K. Savvidis, *Athanasius Werke* I/1 [Berlin: W. de Gruyter, 1996–2000], 144). See also Lewis Ayres, *Nicaea and its Legacy: An Approach to Fourth-Century Trinitarian Theology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 110–17. The *Letter to all Bishops* attributed to Alexander of Alexandria and possibly written by Athanasius also uses the same passages to establish the unity of Father and Son against Arius (Hans-Georg Opitz, *Athanasius Werke* III/1 [Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1934], 9).

31. On Marcellus, see Ayres, *Nicaea and its Legacy*, 62–69; Parvis, *Marcellus of Ancyra*; Lienhard, *Contra Marcellum*. The extant fragments are collected and translated in Markus Vinzent, *Markell von Ankyra: Die Fragmente. Der Brief an Julius von Rom* (Leiden: Brill, 1997).

God” to mean, respectively, that the Word “was in the Father in power (δυνάμει)” and was with God in “active power” (ἐνεργείᾳ). Following this brief exegesis he further cites John 10.38 as an illustration of the unity of the Godhead.<sup>32</sup> This fragment suggests that Marcellus understood the Johannine indwelling language in the sense that the Logos is the power by which the Father operates.

Similarly, in fragment 73, directed against Asterius, who sees the Father and Son as united only because of their “exact agreement (ἀκριβῆ συμφωνίαν) in all words and deeds,” Marcellus cites John 8.42, 14.24, 16.15, and 10.38 to prove again that the Son is the “power of the Father” (δύναμις τοῦ πατρὸς).<sup>33</sup> In fragment 90 Marcellus joins John 10.38 with Ephesians 4.5–6 (“One Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father, who is over all and through all and in all”) to argue that the Apostle intentionally mentions the Lord with the Father, since the Logos “is not outside of God.”<sup>34</sup> Finally, in his *Letter to Julius of Rome*, Marcellus cites John 10.38, 10.30, and 14.9 as prooftexts that “the Son is the power of the Father, inseparable and indivisible from him.”<sup>35</sup> These fragments demonstrate that John 10.38 was one of a handful of key biblical texts central to his attempt “to assert the absolute unity of God.”<sup>36</sup> More specifically, Marcellus’s fragments suggest that the Johannine indwelling passages such as John 10.38 and 14.11 should be interpreted as if the Son were the “power” by which the Father operated. It is not difficult to see how such an interpretation might appear to some as implying that the Son is merely an attribute of the Father, rather than possessing his own eternal existence and distinction from the Father.

It is this heretical implication that Theodore attempts to guard against in fragment 255.<sup>37</sup> He first points out that the passage at hand (John 14.10–11) implies a distinction in the divine, rather than a mere unity, since the Son says that he is in the Father and the Father is in him. Such a statement clearly demonstrates that the Father is not “alone.” He next attempts to

32. Marcellus, frag. 70 (Vinzent, 60). I will refer to Vinzent’s numbering of the fragments that differs from that of Klostermann. On frag. 70, see Lienhard, *Contra Marcellum*, 54–55, who calls it the “key passage” for understanding Marcellus’s usage of the terms *dynamis* and *energeia*. I am adopting his translation of the terms.

33. Marcellus, frag. 74 (Vinzent, 62).

34. Marcellus, frag. 90 (Vinzent, 78).

35. Marcell, *ep. ad Jul.* (Vinzent, 128). See also Marcellus, frag. 95 (Vinzent, 84) where Marcellus asserts that Asterius denies the Father is in the Word.

36. Ayres, *Nicaea and its Legacy*, 65. Cf. Lienhard, *Contra Marcellum*, 67–68.

37. Theodore of Heraclea, frag. Jo. 255 (TU 89:131).

give a positive explanation of the mutual indwelling of John 14.9–11 by using “encompassing” language (περιέχω) to describe the relationship of the Father and Son, so as to distinguish clearly the Son’s existence as an individual from the Father’s own existence. Theodore’s usage of spatial terminology is probably intended as an alternative to Marcellus’s description of the Son as the Father’s “power” by which he operates. For Theodore, Christ’s statement that the Father is in him performing his works does not mean that the Son is the power of the Father, but rather that he is encompassed by the Father’s omnipresence and thus has the Father within him as he works. Moreover, he also appears to be aware of the opposite danger of classing the Son as merely one of the created beings. The usage of the term οὐσιωδῶς is probably meant to indicate the uniqueness of the Son’s relationship to the Father by asserting the necessity of the Father/Son relationship to the Son’s existence in contrast to contingent, created beings.

The fragments immediately before and after fragment 255 shed further light on Theodore’s theology of the Father-Son relationship. Although no mention of him is made in it, fragment 254 is also clearly directed against Marcellus, since the passage begins with a denial that the Father is the Son (Οὐ τοῦτο λέγει, ὅτι αὐτὸς ἦν ὁ πατήρ). In this fragment, Theodore’s anti-Monarchian interpretation of the phrase “whoever has seen me has seen the Father” (John 14.9) centers on the concept of the Son as the image of the Father. The Father is seen in the Son as “one sees by thought the archetype through the image” (διὰ τῆς εἰκόνοσ τοῦ ἀρχέτυπον τῆ διανοίᾳ θεωρῆσαι δυνατόν).<sup>38</sup> Through using the notion of “image,” he maintains the critical distinction between the Father and Son that Sabellius and Marcellus sought to deny, even while emphasizing the Son as the revelation in which humanity sees the Father.

Fragment 256 is also relevant, for it finds Theodore providing further elaboration on the Father/Son relationship and stressing the contrast between this indwelling and common divine indwelling within the saints.

38. Theodore of Heraclea, frag. *Jo.* 254 (TU 89:131). Note that “image” language appears in the Second Formula from the Dedication Council of Antioch in 341, preserved in Athanasius, *syn.* 23.3 (Opitz, *Athanasius Werke*, 2.1:249). Mark DelCogliano, “Eusebian Theologies of the Son as the Image of God Before 341,” *J ECS* 14 (2006): 459–84, has argued that prior to this council, there was no consensus among the Eusebians regarding what such “image” language meant. Theodore’s fragment does not seem to fit nicely within either the “participative” or “constitutive” approaches identified by DelCogliano. On the use of image language among the Eusebians, see also Gwynn, *The Eusebians*, 216–17.

Moreover, it again demonstrates Theodore using ἔχω and περὶ to articulate the relationship of the Father and Son. He writes,

The Son had the Father dwelling within him, not like one of the saints, but as life by nature had in itself life by nature, and had the whole life again round about its very self. For this reason both what he [i.e., the Son] said and did, insofar as the Father was wholly in him, he [i.e., the Father] spoke and performed what the Son did.<sup>39</sup>

As in fragment 255, the Son is apparently “encompassed” by the Father, and it is by virtue of such “encompassing” that the Son can speak the words of the Father and do the deeds of the Father. Someone might suppose that to say the Son is encompassed by the Father implies that the Son merely has the Father in him in the same way the saints have the Father in them. Theodore attempts to avoid this implication by using the phrase ὡς φύσει (“by nature”), which probably serves roughly the same function as οὐσιωδῶς (“with respect to essence”) in fragment 255. The Son has the Father in him “by nature” just as the Father encompasses the Son “essentially,” presumably unlike the relation of the creature to the divine. As suggested above, these terms are probably intended to highlight that the Father/Son relationship is intrinsic to the Son’s identity and existence in contrast to the contingency that marks created beings. Especially striking is that Theodore says both the Father and Son are “life by nature,” stressing their equality, and says that the Son has the Father in him wholly, implying no lacking of deity in the Son. Nevertheless, the distinction between Father and Son is implied in that the Son is said to be “encompassed” by the Father, while Theodore does not reverse this statement to assert that the Father is “encompassed” by the Son. The irreversibility of this statement is perhaps intended to preserve some sense of the Father’s primacy.

Finally, fragment 257 should also be noted, for here again Theodore uses περιέχω. This passage presents a mixture of Theodore’s anti-Monarchian language alongside language that is distinctly pro-Nicene. After an initial declaration that the Son is ὁμοούσιος with the Father, he declares that the Son ἔχει τὸν πατέρα ἐν αὐτῷ (“has the Father in himself”), and that the he is περιέχεται ὑπ’ αὐτοῦ (“encompassed by the Father”).<sup>40</sup> The use of

39. Theodore of Heraclea, frag. *Jo.* 256 (TU 89:131): Οὐχ ὡς εἰς τῶν ἀγίων εἶχεν ἐνοικον τὸν πατέρα ὁ υἱός, ἀλλ’ ὡς φύσει ζωὴ εἶχεν ἐν αὐτῷ τὴν φύσει ζωὴν καὶ ὅλην πάλιν εἶχε περὶ ἑαυτὸν αὐτόν. διὸ καὶ ἃ ἐλάλει καὶ ἐποίηε, καθὸ ἦν ἅπασ ἐν αὐτῷ ὁ πατήρ, αὐτὸς ἐλάλει καὶ εἰργάζετο, ἃ ὁ υἱὸς ἐποίηε.

40. Theodore of Heraclea, frag. *Jo.* 257 (TU 89:132).

ὁμοούσιος in this fragment is probably an addition by the catenist, since it is unlikely that someone in Theodore's historical context would have used the term.<sup>41</sup> However, the "encompassing" language in fragment 257 is certainly Theodore's own, since it occurs in fragments 255 and 256 as well.

From this examination of fragments 254–57, a picture emerges of Theodore's theology that fits well with what is known of his ecclesiastical career and the complicated nature of fourth-century politics and theology. Out of a concern to avoid the Monarchian error perceived in Marcellus, he used the language of "encompassing" to describe the Son's relationship to the Father. It would be going beyond the evidence to say that Theodore was an outright subordinationist since the purpose of his exegesis in these fragments is not to subordinate the Son to the Father, as one might expect from a supposedly 'Arian' author, but rather to refute Monarchianism. Moreover, he attempts to make clear that the Son's relationship to the Father is different than that of creation in general, since he says the Son is encompassed "with respect to essence" and has the Father in him "by nature." That this was Theodore's intent becomes clearer when we see his appropriation of prior anti-Monarchian exegesis.

### THE THIRD-CENTURY, ANTI-MONARCHIAN BACKGROUND TO THEODORE'S EXEGESIS

Before moving on to Cyril's response to Theodore, some background on Theodore's language will be useful. Theodore was responding to the Monarchianism he perceived in Marcellus, and he did so in large part by appropriating anti-Monarchian arguments from the third century. Some third-century Monarchians supported their case for an absolute divine unity by using exegesis of John 14.9–11, and their opponents responded by pointing out that the biblical passage speaks of both a Father and Son, implying a distinction within the divine.<sup>42</sup> The first line of Theodore's fragment 255 presents this same third-century tactic. Theodore's interpretation of the passage using the "image" language of fragment 254 also has

41. So also Schäferdiek, "Theodor von Herakleia," 406–7. Ayres, *Nicaea and its Legacy*, 96, noted that after the council in 325 "*homoousios* is not mentioned again in truly contemporary sources for two decades."

42. John 14.11 served a dual purpose for Tertullian. It was useful against Valentinus as proof that the Son emanates from the Father but is not separated from him (*Prax.* 8), and was also effective against Praxeas because it implies a distinction between the two (*Prax.* 24). Cf. Hippolytus, *haer.* 9.12.17; *Noët.* 7.4–6; Novatian, *Trin.* 28.

third-century roots, albeit without explicit anti-Monarchian overtones, since Origen on several occasions interprets the same text in terms of an “image” theology.<sup>43</sup>

Furthermore, there is some precedent for the quasi-technical language Theodore uses to explain the Johannine “in” statements. The most significant precursor in this respect is Origen. In his *De principiis* Origen argues that something must have a limitation (περιγραφὴν) in order to be comprehended (ἀπερίληπτον). Accordingly, even the power (δύναμις) of God must have such a limitation and cannot be infinite, “since the infinite is by nature incomprehensible” (τῆ γὰρ φύσει τὸ ἄπειρον ἀπερίληπτον).<sup>44</sup> Origen thus uses the language of “limitation” or “comprehending” to distinguish the divine nature, which is infinite, from the created order, which had limitations and is comprehended. This principle becomes significant later in book four, when Origen speaks of the Son’s relationship to the Father. Here, in a fragment preserved in Justinian’s edicts against Origen, is the closest parallel to Theodore’s description of the Father/Son relationship in fragment 255.<sup>45</sup> The emperor gives his own gloss on the passage, stating περιέχεται μετὰ τῶν ἄλλων κτισμάτων ὁ υἱὸς ὑπὸ τοῦ πατρὸς (“The Son is encompassed by the Father along with the other creatures”). He then provides the passage, the opening line of which is Ὁ δὲ πατὴρ ἐμπεριέχει

43. See, e.g., Origen, *princ.* 1.2.6–8 (Paul Koetschau, *Origenes Werke V*, GCS 22 [Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, 1913], 34–39); *Jo.* 20.7.47 (Cécile Blanc, *Commentaire sur saint Jean, Tome 4, Livres XIX–XX*, SC 290 [Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1982], 180); 32.29.359 (Cécile Blanc, *Commentaire sur saint Jean, Tome 5, Livres XXIII et XXXII*, SC 385 [Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1992], 342); *hom. in Gen.* 1.13 (W. A. Baehrens, *Origenes Werke VI*, GCS 29 [Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1920], 17); *hom. in Lc.* 1.4; 3.1–4 (Henri Crouzel, François Fournier, and Pierre Périchon, *Homélie sur s. Luc*, SC 87 [Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1998], 104–6; 120–26). The distinction Theodore makes in fragment 254 between seeing something according to the physical eyes and seeing something with the understanding probably also reveals the influence of Origen. See *princ.* 2.4.3 (GCS 22:130–31); *Cels.* 7.43 (Paul Koetschau, *Origenes Werke II*, GCS 3 [Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, 1899], 194).

44. Origen, *princ.*, frag. 24 (GCS 22:164). For the Latin of this fragment, see *princ.* 2.9.1 (GCS 22:164–65). The Latin translation in this instance is not as objectionable as the surviving Greek fragment, since it does not posit a limitation to God’s power. Still, for our purposes, it makes the same basic point. Created beings must have a ‘limit’ (*finis*), because if they did not have one, then they could not be ‘comprehended’ (*conpraehensio*) or have a ‘limitation’ (*circumscriptio*). The infinite, in contrast, is that which is ‘incomprehensible’ (*inconpraehensibilis*). In order for God to administer and arrange the creation, created beings must be finite and limited.

45. Origen, *princ.*, frag. 39 from *ep. ad Mennam* (GCS 22:360). This passage was also noted in Hanson, *The Search*, 69–70, who stated “Here no doubt the authentic Origen speaks, undoctored by Rufinus.”

τὰ πάντα, τῶν δὲ πάντων ἐστὶν ὁ υἱός, δῆλον ὅτι καὶ τὸν υἱόν (“The Father comprehends all things, and since the Son is among all things, it is clear that he comprehends the Son also”). The passages from Origen preserved by Justinian often must be treated with suspicion. However, in this case, Jerome preserves a translation of the same passage in an epistle, providing some verification for Justinian’s extract.<sup>46</sup>

The similarity between Origen’s statement and that of Theodore lies in the fact that both say the Son is encompassed by the Father. However, two important qualifications suggest that Origen did not intend for such language to be understood in the corporeal sense that the notion of “boundedness” might initially imply. The remainder of the Greek fragment is clearly about the Father’s *knowledge* of the Son and the Son’s *knowledge* of the Father, implying that the first line should be understood along similar lines.<sup>47</sup> Moreover, Jerome translated ἐμπεριέχω with *comprehendo*, a term that has a similar semantic range, but more often means intellectual understanding or comprehension rather than physical boundedness. In other words, Jerome understood Origen to be using ἐμπεριέχω in the sense of comprehension rather than in the sense of physical encompassing.<sup>48</sup> Still, the important point to note is that Origen classed the Son with the created order that can be comprehended by the Father, while neither the Son nor creation can comprehend the Father. Thus, he used the “encompassing” language to describe the relationship between the Son and the Father as an asymmetrical one, the same approach that we have seen in Theodore.

The picture becomes clearer when we consider not only the term περιέχω (“encompass, contain”), but also the related term περιγράφω (“circumscribe”) and its derivatives. The two terms have overlapping semantic domains, as evidenced by the fact that they often occur together in discussions of corporeality and incorporeality. In his concern to uphold the incorporeality of God, Origen denied that God was subject to any such circumscribed limitation (περιγραφή).<sup>49</sup> Moreover, he apparently extended

46. Jerome, *ep.* 124.13 (Isidorus Hilberg, *Sancti Eusebii Hieronymi Epistulae, Pars III*, CSEL 56 [Vindobonae: F. Tempsky, 1918], 115): *pater uero omnia comprehendit, inter omnia autem et filius est: ergo et filium comprehendit.*

47. So also Hanson, *The Search*, 69.

48. The metaphorical sense of περιέχω is attested in other sources as well. See *Patristic Greek Lexicon*, s.v., περιέχω.

49. Origen, *Jo.* 10.4.17 (Cécile Blanc, *Commentaire sur saint Jean, Tome 2, Livres VI et X*, SC 157 [Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1970], 392). Clement of Alexandria made a similar statement as well, *str.* 7.6.30.1 (Otto Stählin, *Clemens Alexandrinus III*, GCS 17 [Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1970], 22). In his refutation of Theodore’s περιέχω language, Cyril mentions περιγράφω, treating it as a synonym (*Jo.* 14.11 [Pusey, 2:436]).



this principle to the Son as well, stating that the Son is not circumscribed by space. The statement that the Son “descended” into human life is not true, he says, “in any spatial sense” (οὐ περὶ τόπου τὸ τοιοῦτον).<sup>50</sup> This is so because the Son is not “contained in any place” (*in loco aliquo contineri*).<sup>51</sup>

However, even though Origen denies that the Son is circumscribed in a physical place, he and others nevertheless use περιγράφω and its cognates to refer to the distinct individuality of human persons, as well as that of the Son. This usage can be traced back at least as far as Marcus Aurelius who spoke of the one intelligent soul that is distributed among individual natures and “circumscriptions” (ιδίαις περιγραφαῖς).<sup>52</sup> Similarly, a fragment from Heracleon preserved in Origen’s *Commentary on the Gospel of John* speaks of the “illumination” and “circumscription” granted to human beings as they come into existence.<sup>53</sup> Clement of Alexandria also testifies to this usage. In his attempt to describe the generation of the Son, he states that the Logos “became a Son” at the beginning “by circumscription and not in essence” (κατὰ περιγραφὴν καὶ οὐ κατ’ οὐσίαν).<sup>54</sup> Clement was attempting to avoid any division of the divine essence, and so relied on the language of “circumscription” to express the Son’s personal existence.

There is evidence that Origen also used this approach. Eusebius of Caesarea records the Monarchian error of a certain Beryllus, a bishop from Arabia, who denied that the Son had his own divinity and instead insisted that he only had that of the Father dwelling in him. Moreover, Beryllus asserted that the Son did not preexist according to his own individu-

50. Origen, *Cels.* 4.5 (Paul Koetschau, *Origenes Werke I*, GCS 2 [Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, 1899], 278). Cf. Clement of Alexandria, *str.* 2.2.6.2 (Otto Stählin, *Clemens Alexandrinus II*, GCS 15 [Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, 1906], 116). I was pointed to this passage in Origen by T. F. Torrance, “The Relation of the Incarnation to Space in Nicene Theology,” in *The Ecumenical World of Orthodox Civilization. Russia and Orthodoxy: Volume III: Essays in Honor of Georges Florovsky*, ed. Andrew Blane and Thomas E. Bird (The Hague: Mouton, 1974), 55. Torrance’s essay provides an overview of the theme of incorporeality in Origen and its transformation in Athanasius, and thus it overlaps somewhat with what I am discussing here. Although he points to *princ.* 4.4.8, which speaks of God “comprehending” all things, he does not comment upon the portion of the Greek fragment (frag. 39) that says the Son is comprehended by the Father (see 51–52).

51. Origen, *princ.* 4.4.1 (GCS 22:351).

52. Marcus Aurelius, *Med.* 12.30 (A. S. L. Farquharson, *The Meditations of the Emperor Marcus Antoninus* [Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1944], 1:248).

53. Origen, *Jo.* 2.21.137 (Cécile Blanc, *Commentaire sur saint Jean, Tome 1, Livres I–V*, SC 120 [Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1966], 298).

54. Clement of Alexandria, *exc. Thdot.* 19.1 (Otto Stählin and Ludwig Früchtel, *Clemens Alexandrinus III*, GCS 17 [Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1970], 112).

ality of essence (κατ' ἰδίαν οὐσίας περιγραφὴν) prior to the incarnation.<sup>55</sup> Eusebius records that it was Origen himself who had a conference with Beryllus and corrected his Monarchian errors.<sup>56</sup> According to Eusebius the minutes of Origen's meeting with Beryllus were still extant in his day, and Jerome mentions them as well, so there is good reason to think that Eusebius is recording the exact theological terminology Origen used at the conference.<sup>57</sup> Therefore this example demonstrates that Origen, like Clement, was willing to use περιγραφὴ to refer to the individuality of the Son in opposition to Monarchianism. Moreover, Eusebius does not treat the language as if it were strange or unusual, so it must have seemed perfectly acceptable to him as well, writing in the early fourth century.

Thus, language about "circumscription" or "encompassing" had been used prior to Theodore's day to describe the Son's individuality in anti-Monarchian polemic, and it is likely that this earlier usage informed his anti-Marcellan attack. Moreover, later in the fourth century, even pro-Nicenes like Basil of Caesarea and Gregory of Nyssa continued to use such language to refer to the irreducible individuality of the Son. In a letter to Apollinaris in which he expresses the difficulty of understanding *homoousios*, Basil asserts that Father and Son are both like lights which have no difference between them, and yet they are not the same because "each is in its own circumscription of substance (ἐν ἰδίᾳ περιγραφῇ τῆς οὐσίας)."<sup>58</sup> Similarly, Gregory of Nyssa, in his *Ad Ablabium*, draws a contrast between the contemplation of Peter, James, and John as one man in light of their single, indivisible human nature, and the contemplation of them "according to their individual circumscriptions" (κατ' ἰδίαν περιγραφὴν).<sup>59</sup> This usage of circumscription language by Basil and Gregory to express individual identities stands in continuity with pre-Nicene usage, and the fact that these two pro-Nicene thinkers continued to use such language, causes Cyril's rejection of Theodore's phrase to appear all the more striking. I suggest that Theodore's "encompassed in respect to essence" is best understood in this tradition of using "circumscription" language to express distinct and individual identity, and was thus not too far removed from the later pro-Nicene tradition.

55. Eusebius, *h.e.* 6.33.1 (Eduard Schwartz, *Eusebius Werke III/2*, GCS 6.2 [Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, 1908], 588).

56. Eusebius, *h.e.* 6.33.2 (GCS 6.2:588).

57. Eusebius, *h.e.* 6.33.3 (GCS 6.2:588); Jerome, *Vir. ill.* 60.

58. Basil, *ep.* 361 (Yves Courtonne, *Saint Basile, Lettres*, Collection Guillaume Budé [Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1966], 3:221); discussed in Ayres, *Nicaea and its Legacy*, 190.

59. Gregory of Nyssa, *Ablab.* (F. Mueller, *Gregorii Nysseni opera* 3.1 [Leiden: Brill, 1958], 53–54). Cf. Gregory of Nyssa, *ep. Pet.* 2 (=ps-Basil, *ep.* 38).

A similar picture emerges if we consider the other theologically significant term in Theodore's fragment 255, οὐσιωδῶς, a word that appears a handful of times in Origen's extant works to mean a property that is intrinsic to a being's identity or existence. In his *Contra Celsum*, he contrasts a quality that someone possesses "essentially" with a quality possessed merely "accidentally" (κατὰ συμβεβηκός) or "by addition" (ἐξ ἐπιγενήματος).<sup>60</sup> Particularly important for the purposes of this article is that he uses the term four times to refer to the Son's manner of existence, or specifically to his relationship to the Father. For example, he describes the Son as "subsisting essentially according to substance" (ὕφαστηκότης οὐσιωδῶς κατὰ τὸ ὑποκείμενον), and incorporeally permeating all creation.<sup>61</sup> Similarly, in his exposition of the Lord's Prayer, Origen says the "Son of God subsists essentially" (οὐσιωδῶς ὑφαστῶτος τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ), and goes on to say that Satan too "subsists," but notably he does not say that he does so "essentially" as does the Son.<sup>62</sup> In his exposition of Proverbs 8.22, a passage that became a highly contentious verse in the conflicts of Theodore's own day, Origen writes that "wisdom" is "eternal, existing essentially (οὐσιωδῶς) before the ages with God."<sup>63</sup> Finally, in his *Dialogue with Heraclides*, Origen says that he "attributes deity to Jesus Christ essentially" (οὐσιωδῶς οὕτω προσφέρων Ἰησοῦ Χριστῷ τὴν θεότητα).<sup>64</sup> The word is somewhat rare until the second half of the fourth century, and does not occur in any of the other surviving fragments from Theodore.<sup>65</sup> The rarity of the term serves as a further indication that Theodore has likely been influenced by Origen's works.

The *Dialogue with Heraclides* has another significant parallel with

60. Origen, *Cels.* 6.44 (GCS 3:114). Cf. Origen, *Jo.* 2.18.124 (SC 120:288–90) where the same contrast is made in order to distinguish between the way that God has blessedness "essentially," in contrast to the rational creation. The distinction has an Aristotelian background. See *Met.* 5.30.4; 10.1.1 (Hugh Tredennick, *Metaphysics, Volume I*, LCL 271 [London: Heinemann, 1933], 290; Hugh Tredennick and G. Cyril Armstrong, *Metaphysics, Volume II*, LCL 287 [London: Heinemann, 1935], 2).

61. Origen, *Jo.* 6.38.188 (SC 157:268).

62. Origen, *or.* 27.12 (GCS 3:371). Origen is commenting here upon the request for daily bread, which uses the rare and difficult word ἐπιούσιον (Matt 6.11; Luke 11.3).

63. Origen, *exp. in Prov.* 8.22 (PG 17:185).

64. Origen, *dial.* 5 (Jean Scherer, *Entretien d'Origène avec Héraclide*, SC 67 [Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1960], 66).

65. Eusebius of Caesarea uses the term in a discussion of the Son's generation at *d.e.* 5.1.19 (Ivar A. Heikel, *Eusebius Werke VI*, GCS 23 [Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, 1913], 213). See also Eusebius, *e. th.* 1.6.1 (Erich Klostermann, *Eusebius Werke IV* [Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, 1906], 65). The word also shows up once in Clement of Alexandria, *exc. Thdot.* 48.2 (GCS 17:122).

Theodore's fragments, for Origen quotes John 10.30 ("I and the Father are one"), a biblical passage that as we have seen was central in the theology of Marcellus and Athanasius. Origen explains the union of Father and Son with recourse to the analogy of the union of two human beings and the analogy of the union of Christ and a righteous person.<sup>66</sup> In a moment we will see that some of Theodore's fragments preserved by Cyril that do not survive in the catena tradition make this exact same move, attempting to maintain the distinction between Father and Son by using such analogies. Nevertheless, as we saw above, Theodore attempts to nuance such analogies by saying the Son is in the Father "by nature" or "essentially" in contrast to the way the created beings are in the Father. These parallels between Theodore and the *Dialogue with Heraclides* are particularly important for my purposes, since the *Dialogue* is essentially an anti-Monarchian text, akin to Origen's conference with Beryllus. In the work Origen is attempting to find the proper way to articulate the way the Father and Son can be two while still being one God, and he wants to avoid falling into "the opinion of those who are cut off from the church," who hold to "a delusion of a monarchy" (φαντασίαν μοναρχίας).<sup>67</sup>

The parallels between Theodore and Origen are sufficient to conclude that the bishop of Heraclea had access to and appropriated the writings of the great Alexandrian. Furthermore, we can be even more precise and tentatively propose that Theodore has likely turned to Origen's anti-Monarchian writings, such as the *Dialogue with Heraclides* and the now lost minutes of the conference with Beryllus, in order to answer the Sabelian challenge he perceived in Marcellus. In light of this indebtedness to earlier anti-Monarchian traditions, Theodore's exegesis of John 14.9–11 was probably not intended to subordinate the Son to the Father, but instead to highlight the distinctness of the Son's person. As such, it would be misleading to describe his exegesis as overtly "subordinationist." Nevertheless, his anti-Monarchian language was judged and found wanting by a later exponent of the Nicene cause, Cyril of Alexandria.

### CYRIL'S PRO-NICENE CRITIQUE OF THEODORE

Above I pointed out third- and early fourth-century passages in which *περιέχω* and *περιγράφω* are used to refer to the Son's distinct existence. The same language was also used during this period to contrast divine and created beings, in keeping with Origen's emphasis on divine incorporeality.

66. Origen, *dial.* 3–4 (SC 67:58–62).

67. Origen, *dial.* 4 (SC 67:60).

As William R. Schoedel has argued, the use of περιέχω goes back to the Greek philosophical tradition which “found it difficult . . . to associate the unlimited with the divine.” Philo and the church fathers reversed the Greek view of the infinite, and it became axiomatic to state that the divine “encompasses all things” while being “encompassed by nothing.” For Philo and the later eastern theological tradition, to say that God encompasses all things meant 1) “that God is immaterial and not in a place”; 2) “that he is unknowable in his essence”; and 3) “that he is creator of all things.”<sup>68</sup> At times the “encompassing . . . not encompassed” language was applied by Christian authors generically to the divine or, as in Origen for example, specifically to the Father.<sup>69</sup> In fact, in the *Dialogue with Heraclides*, a text we have noted above, Heraclides uses the formula to express the infinity of the Father, and Origen does not correct his usage.<sup>70</sup> Authors prior to the latter half of the fourth century appear hesitant to use the “encompassing . . . not encompassed” formula to state unequivocally the infinity of the Son, presumably because such language would imply two infinite beings. However, as the developing pro-Nicene consensus of the latter fourth century found it necessary to confess that everything which is true of the divine essence must be true of both Father and Son,<sup>71</sup> so this kind of language came to be applied unambiguously to the Son as

68. William R. Schoedel, “Enclosing, Not Enclosed. The Early Christian Doctrine of God,” in *Early Christian Literature and the Classical Intellectual Tradition: In Honor of Robert M. Grant*, ed. William R. Schoedel and Robert L. Wilken, *Théologie Historique* 54 (Paris: Beauchesne, 1979), 75–76.

69. Theophilus of Antioch used “encompassing” language to describe the relationship of the creation to the deity (*Autol.* 1.5). Irenaeus appropriated this tradition in order to argue against the Gnostics and Marcion (*haer.* 2.1.1–5). Basil of Caesarea said that God is incorporeal like the human soul, not “circumscribed by place” (περιγραφόμενον τόπω) (*Homilia in illud: ‘Attende tibi ipsi’* 7; Stig Y. Rudberg, *L’homélie de Basile de Césarée sur le mot ‘observe-toi toi-même’* [Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1962], 35). Similarly, Evagrius described a created being as having “received a material and circumscribed nature” (ἐνυλον καὶ περιγραπτὴν φύσιν), and then defined circumscription as being “encompassed by place” (τὴν περιεχομένην ὑπὸ τόπου) (*ep.* 2 [PG 32:249]). Gregory Nazianzus also, in his first theological oration, after proving that God is incorporeal, concluded that neither is he bounded by space, using both περιγράφοω and περιέχω (*or.* 28.10; Paul Gallay and Maurice Jourjon, *Discours 27–31*, SC 250 [Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1978], 120). Didymus attests to this same principle, stating that God is beyond quantity (*frag. Jo.* 17 [TU 89:184]).

70. Origen, *dial.* 2 (SC 67:56).

71. Ayres, *Nicaea and its Legacy*, 236, lists as one of the three central principles of pro-Nicene theology: “a clear version of the person and nature distinction, entailing the principle that whatever is predicated of the divine nature is predicated of the three persons equally and understood to be one.”

well, such that the Son was said to encompass all things and to be encompassed by nothing.<sup>72</sup>

With this principle in place, pro-Nicene theologians objected to those who used encompassing language to describe the Father/Son relationship on the grounds that they were introducing material conceptions of the deity. The best example of such an exchange, and the one that undoubtedly influenced Cyril, is Athanasius's *Orations against the Arians* 3.1–6 in which he treats John 14.10, the same text about which Theodore has commented.<sup>73</sup> Athanasius introduces the biblical text and then puts forward the interpretation of Asterius the Sophist, drawn from his *Syntagmation*.<sup>74</sup> To the phrase "I am in the Father and the Father is in me," Asterius asks, "How can the Father who is greater have space in the Son who is lesser?" ("Ἡ πῶς ὄλως δύναται ὁ Πατήρ, μείζων ὢν, ἐν τῷ Υἱῷ ἐλάττωνι ὄντι χωρεῖν;").<sup>75</sup> Athanasius's chief criticism of those who say such things is that they "understand immaterial things in a material manner" (τὰ ἀσώματα σωματικῶς ἐκλαμβάνοντες), whereas such corporeal categories are inapplicable to the Son.<sup>76</sup> Furthermore, Athanasius says that his opponents make a comparison between the way that all humans are in God and the way that

72. Athanasius, *inc.* 17.1–2 (Charles Kannengiesser, *Sur l'incarnation du Verbe*, SC 199 [Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 2000], 324–26); noted in Torrance, "The Relation of the Incarnation," 63. See also the similar statement "the Son of God encompasses all things by his essence, and is encompassed by nothing, just as God, his Father" (ὁ τοῦ Θεοῦ Υἱὸς . . . πάντα περιέχει τῇ οὐσίᾳ αὐτοῦ, καὶ ὅτι οὐ περιέχεται ὑπ' οὐδενὸς ὁ Υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ, καθάπερ ὁ Θεὸς ὁ Πατήρ αὐτοῦ) (frag. [PG 26:1324]). The latter fragment, though Athanasian in spirit, may be spurious, since it is also found in the *Disputatio contra Arium* (PG 28:444), a spurious work attributed to Athanasius. See also Epiphanius, *pan.* 70.8.5 (Karl Holl, *Epiphanius III*, GCS 37 [Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1985], 240); Apollinaris, *ep. Jov.* 2 (Hans Leitzmann, *Apollinaris von Laodicea und seine Schule* [Hildesheim: Georg Olms Verlag, 1970], 252); Didymus, frag. *Jo.* 17 (TU 89:184); Theodoret, *Trin.* (PG 75:1168). This passage from Didymus juxtaposes divine transcendence with the incarnation, illustrating Schoedel's contention that early Christian theologians could use *περιέχω* to illustrate both the divine transcendence and immanence: "the theme of incarnation powerfully reinforced the unwillingness of Christian theologians to permit a doctrine of God's transcendence to negate the possibility of revelation and the manifestation of the divine in time and space" ("Enclosing, not Enclosed," 85).

73. Athanasius, *C. Ar.* 3.1.1–6.7 (Metzler and Savvidis, 305–13). Boulnois, *Le paradoxe trinitaire*, 537–38, and Pazzini, "Il *Liber adversariorum*," 199–200, both noted the significance of this passage as background for Cyril's criticism of his unnamed source.

74. For the fragments from Asterius, see Markus Vinzent, *Asterius von Kappadokien. Die Theologischen Fragmente* (Leiden: Brill, 1993).

75. Asterius the Sophist, frag. 42 (Vinzent, 106); quoted in Athanasius, *C. Ar.* 3.1.2 (Metzler and Savvidis, 306). See also Asterius, frag. 38; 41 (Vinzent, 102, 104).

76. Athanasius, *C. Ar.* 3.1.3 (Metzler and Savvidis, 307).

the Son is in the Father, using as biblical support Acts 17.28 in which the Apostle Paul declares, “In him we live and move and have our being.”<sup>77</sup> He objects to the latter point on grounds that it confuses the divine Son with the creation. The Son cannot be in the Father in the same manner that all humanity is in God because he is the Father’s own offspring, in contrast to all created beings.<sup>78</sup> Thus, even as Theodore was responding to Marcellus’s Sabellian interpretation of John 14.10–11, so Athanasius was responding to Asterius’s subordinationist and quasi-materialist interpretation of the same text.<sup>79</sup> In the next century, these two conversations come together in Cyril’s polemic against Theodore, for Cyril appropriated Athanasius’s anti-Asterian argument to respond to Theodore’s anti-Marcellan exegesis.

We now come, finally, to Cyril’s response to Theodore in his *Commentary on the Gospel of John*.<sup>80</sup> Cyril sets up his quotation of Theodore by saying that out of his desire to prevent the harm arising from heretical interpretations, he has read a “little book of our opponents,” and has searched for what they have to say about the biblical passage at hand. His statement that he searched through the text to find out what the author says about this specific Johannine passage suggests that he had before him a verse-by-verse commentary on the fourth gospel, fitting with what we know of Theodore’s work. After quoting Theodore’s interpretation of the biblical text, it quickly becomes clear that the phrase that he specifically

77. Athanasius *C. Ar.* 3.1.2 (Metzler and Savvidis, 306). Acts 17.28 also occurs in a list of proof texts used by his opponents in Athanasius, *decr.* 20.

78. Athanasius, *C. Ar.* 3.1.6 (Metzler and Savvidis, 307). See also Athanasius, *decr.* 11.3 (Opitz, 10) where Athanasius contrasts humans who are “encompassed in place” (ἐν τόπῳ τυγχάνοντές εἰσι περιεχόμενοι) with God who “encompasses all things and is encompassed by none” (περιέχων τὰ πάντα καὶ ὑπ’ οὐδενὸς περιεχόμενος). Cf. Torrance, “The Relation of the Incarnation,” 66.

79. On Asterius’s theology, see Vinzent, *Asterius*, 38ff; Gwynn, *The Eusebians*, 205–11.

80. Athanasius’s influence on Cyril is evident from the latter’s earliest writings. His *Thesaurus*, an early attempt to articulate pro-Nicene Trinitarianism, borrows extensively from Athanasius’s own work. See especially the helpful chart listing the parallels between Athanasius’s *Orationes contra Arianos* and Cyril’s *Thesaurus* in Liébaert, *La doctrine christologique*, 24–25. In the *Thesaurus*, Cyril followed Athanasius in denying a corporeal interpretation of John 14.9–11, insisting instead that boundedness and other such corporeal attributes do not apply to the Son (*thes.* 7 [PG 75:96]). In fact, the entirety of chapter 12 of the *Thesaurus* is taken up with refuting Arian interpretations of John 14.11, and there Cyril, like Athanasius, suggests that Acts 17.28 is central to the Arian exegesis of the text (PG 75:177–205). See the discussion of this passage in Liébaert, *La doctrine christologique*, 30; Boulnois, *Le paradoxe trinitaire*, 538.



takes issue with *οὐσιωδῶς περιεχόμενος* (“encompassed with respect to essence”), since he spends the next several pages spelling out the problems with these terms. He initially confesses that he hardly even understands what it means (*οὐ σφόδρα συνίημι*), and he interprets this obscurity as an intentional ploy to disguise the heretical intention of the author.<sup>81</sup> Rather than boldly stating his blasphemy, Cyril says, “the wretched man buries his impiety towards the Only-begotten by his cleverly devised deceptions.”<sup>82</sup>

It is worth considering what implications this statement has for uncovering the theological nature of Theodore’s Johannine exposition. If the commentary had contained openly subordinationist or anti-Nicene statements, then Cyril certainly would not have hesitated to point them out. The fact that this fragment quoted by Cyril is apparently the most damning statement he can find, and that he can find in this fragment only a “covert” attempt to undermine Nicene orthodoxy, indicates that Theodore’s commentary was hardly an open attack on pro-Nicene theology. As I have suggested elsewhere, the fact that Theodore’s exegetical works were favorably received by other pro-Nicenes is another indication that his commentary was unlikely to have been openly subordinationist.<sup>83</sup> In fact, Cyril admits that *οὐσιωδῶς περιεχόμενος* could be understood in a Nicene sense, and he states twice that this author himself says in his work that Christ is God.<sup>84</sup> He even acknowledges that his interlocutor confesses the Son to be “truly God” (*θεὸν . . . ἀληθῶς*) and “God according to nature” (*θεὸν . . . κατὰ φύσιν*).<sup>85</sup> The latter phrase particularly resonates with what we have seen in Theodore’s fragment 256, which describes the Son as “life by nature.” Cyril’s puzzlement perhaps derives from the fact that Athanasius’s historical works name Theodore as an opponent, leading the archbishop to assume that the bishop of Heraclea has set out to oppose the Nicene cause. In other words, Athanasius’s narrative of fourth-century developments led Cyril to approach Theodore’s work with a hermeneutic of suspicion. Nevertheless, even if Cyril struggled to understand Theodore’s meaning, he found his interlocutor’s exegesis to be a useful foil against which to present an alternative, pro-Nicene exposition.

81. Cyril, *Jo.* 14.11 (Pusey, 2:434).

82. Cyril, *Jo.* 14.11 (Pusey, 2:441, 443).

83. Crawford, “On the Diversity and Influence of the Eusebian Alliance.”

84. Cyril, *Jo.* 14.11 (Pusey, 2:435, 443). Cf. Ayres, *Nicaea and its Legacy*, 14. “At issue until the last decades of the controversy was the very flexibility with which the term ‘God’ could be deployed.”

85. Cyril, *Jo.* 14.11 (Pusey, 2:442–43). Cf. Pusey, 2:444 where he again says his opponent worships the Son as God “according to nature.”

*Corporeality and Infinity*

Cyril's criticism of Theodore falls into three basic points. The first two are directed at Theodore's phrase οὐσιωδῶς περιεχόμενος, and the third concerns two further fragments cited by Cyril that also likely derive from Theodore's commentary. The bishop of Alexandria first points out that the fragment from Theodore is problematic because it applies the language of corporeality to the Son. His criticism here is in keeping with Athanasius's criticisms of Asterius surveyed above. To say that the Son is "encompassed" by the Father suggests that the Son is subject to "circumscription" (περιοχή), as if, like some "finite body" (ὡσπερ τι σῶμα πεπερασμένον), "the nature of the Son is enclosed within that of the Father."<sup>86</sup> The "properties" (ἴδια) that are proper to finite bodies include "existing in a place and size and shape and form" (τὸ εἶναι τυχὸν ἐν τόπῳ καὶ ποσῶ καὶ εἶδει καὶ σχήματι).<sup>87</sup> Therefore, to say that the Son is "encompassed" by the Father would be to make him a "brother to other created beings."<sup>88</sup> However, in contrast to such a notion, Scripture teaches that the Son possesses "incorporeality and infinity" (τὸ ἀσώματόν τε καὶ ἀπεριόριστον) and that as such he fills all space. Cyril's proof texts for this point is Psalm 138.7–10 (LXX), which speaks of the incorporeality of God's Spirit, but Cyril interprets the Spirit in the passage as standing in for the "person of the Son" (πρόσωπον τοῦ Υἱοῦ).<sup>89</sup> Therefore, Theodore's phrase οὐσιωδῶς περιεχόμενος fails as a description of the Son because of its corporeal connotations. It is unlikely that Theodore actually intended the phrase in a corporeal sense, since it is hard to imagine that a reader of Origen in the fourth century would have thought of the divine in corporeal terms.<sup>90</sup> However, even if he understood

86. Cyril, *Jo.* 14.11 (Pusey, 2:435). See also Wessel, *Cyril of Alexandria*, 225–30, where she examines the notion of space involved in Cyril's criticism of Nestorius's Christology. As often occurred in the Nestorian controversy, Cyril turned the anti-spatial argument that originated in the Arian debates against Nestorius.

87. Cyril, *Jo.* 14.11 (Pusey, 2:435). Cyril offers the same list of "properties" of bodies in *dogm.* 1 (Lionel R. Wickham, *Cyril of Alexandria: Select Letters*, OECT [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983], 184). Although I cannot find an exact parallel that includes all the "properties" of bodies Cyril lists here, his definition undoubtedly picks up on a tradition going back to Aristotle. See *Phys.* 3.5 (P. H. Wicksteed and F. M. Cornford, *Physics, Volume I*, LCL 228 [London: Heinemann, 1929], 242–44).

88. Cyril, *Jo.* 14.11 (Pusey, 2:435).

89. Cyril, *Jo.* 14.11 (Pusey, 2:436). Basil uses the same verse to argue for the incorporeality of the Son in *Spir.* 15 (Benoit Pruche, *Traité du Saint-Esprit*, SC 17 [Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1947], 129). See also Cyril of Jerusalem, *catech.* 8.2; ps-Didymus, *Trin.* 3.18 (PG 39:880).

90. Pazzini, "Il *Liber adversariorum*," 199–200, also concludes that materiality is not in view in the phrase οὐσιωδῶς περιεχόμενος, though for different reasons.

the phrase in a metaphorical or metaphysical sense, hints of corporeality nevertheless linger in the word's semantic range, too close to the divine nature for Cyril's pro-Nicene sentiments.

The second criticism that Cyril levies against Theodore flows from the first. He turns next to argue that the phrase οὐσιωδῶς περιεχόμενος implies that the Father is greater than the Son, since "that which is encompassed" (τὸ περιεχόμενον) is less than "that which encompasses" it (τοῦ περιέχοντος).<sup>91</sup> At this point Cyril likely gives an allusion to another passage in Theodore's commentary, though he does not directly quote from him. The Alexandrian cites John 14.9 and then rephrases his opponent's position (καθ' ὑμᾶς) as a statement in the mouth of Christ, saying, "although I am the imprint and image of the one who has begotten me, I am encompassed by him with respect to essence."<sup>92</sup> As we saw above, Theodore uses "image" (εἰκόν) language to interpret John 14.9 in fragment 254 of his commentary, the fragment immediately preceding the one that Cyril has quoted, so Cyril's statement here is probably a further allusion to Theodore's work.

In response to the implication that the Son is lesser than the Father, the archbishop of Alexandria states a fundamental pro-Nicene principle. When Jesus said, "He who has seen me has seen the Father" (John 14.9), he intended that we should "have such thoughts (ἐννοίας) about the Father as we also have about him."<sup>93</sup> Cyril's statement echoes the fourth-century anti-Eunomian argument of Basil of Caesarea that while God's οὐσία remains unknown, by ἐννοιαὶ or ἐπίνοιαὶ we can grasp true things about the divine essence.<sup>94</sup> Cyril's assumption is that the Father and Son have the same essence, and thus the ἐννοιαὶ of the Son must be identical to those of the Father. We can see at this point the shift in language occasioned by the pressure of pro-Nicene principles. Whereas earlier authors had used

91. Cyril, *Jo.* 14.11 (Pusey, 2:437). Cyril signals the start of his second criticism at Pusey, 2:437. The argument regarding what is greater and lesser goes back at least as far as Irenaeus who used it against the Gnostics. See *haer.* 2.1.2.

92. Cyril, *Jo.* 14.11 (Pusey, 2:437).

93. Cyril, *Jo.* 14.11 (Pusey, 2:437).

94. Basil, *Eun.* 1.6. See the discussion in Ayres, *Nicaea and its Legacy*, 191–98. He notes that Origen and Basil of Ancyra were likely sources for Basil of Caesarea's use of the terms. Andrew Radde-Gallwitz has recently argued for a more nuanced distinction between the two terms in Basil's works (*Basil of Caesarea, Gregory of Nyssa, and the Transformation of Divine Simplicity*, Oxford Early Christian Studies [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009], 144–45). Cyril's preference is apparently for ἐννοια, in both the verbal and noun forms, as they occur with far greater frequency in his writings. On Cyril's usage of this terminology, see Boulnois, *Le paradoxe trinitaire*, 171–77.

the “encompassing . . . not encompassed” formula as a shorthand for the divine infinity in generic terms, or perhaps with specific reference to the Father, Cyril now asserts that all such ἔννοιαι about the divine essence must be true of both Father and Son in the same way. Therefore, it is not permissible to speak of the Son’s being “encompassed” by the Father. In other words, “encompassing” language can no longer be used to refer to the distinct existence of the Son, but is now reserved solely for referring to the one, common, undivided divine essence in contrast to the created realm. Returning to the exegesis of John 14.9, Cyril asserts that it is only in this way that the Son can be the “perfect image” (ὀλόκληρος εἰκὼν) of the Father, since otherwise he would be merely a “partial” image.<sup>95</sup> Thus, on Cyril’s estimation, Theodore is right to see the Son as the image of the Father, but falls short of seeing that the ἔννοιαι of the Son must be the same as those of the Father in order for the Son to be a perfect image.

### *Contrasting Human and Filial Indwelling of the Father*

After offering these two criticisms, Cyril puts forward a new criticism based on a second extract from his unnamed source. The archbishop says he

marvels that they were not afraid to say additionally that, “Just as Paul had Christ in himself speaking and working the miracles (cf. 2 Cor 13.3), in the same way the Son also had the Father in himself speaking and performing signs. For this reason he says, ‘Believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me, or else believe on account of the works themselves’ (John 14.11).”<sup>96</sup>

This passage does not occur in the surviving catena fragments of Theodore’s commentary, but it is reasonable to suppose that it too comes from the same source as the passage we have already considered. Cyril’s criticism of the previous fragment, as well as this second one, forms a single, sustained argument against some unnamed opponent. Moreover, this passage fits well with Theodore’s anti-Monarchian agenda. The fragment may be read as an argument that the Father and Son are irreducibly distinct

95. Cyril, *Jo.* 14.11 (Pusey, 2:437). The phrase ὀλόκληρος εἰκὼν could be an allusion to Athanasius, *C. Ar.* 1.20.4 (Metzler and Savvidis, 130), which speaks of ὁ χαρακτήρ ὀλόκληρος.

96. Cyril, *Jo.* 14.11 (Pusey, 2:437): θαυμάζω δὲ ὅπως οὐ κατέδεισαν ἐπὶ τούτοις εἰπεῖν “Καθάπερ ὁ Παῦλος τὸν Χριστὸν εἶχεν ἐν ἑαυτῷ λαλοῦντα καὶ ἐνεργοῦντα τὰς δυνάμεις, τὸν αὐτὸν δὴ τρόπον καὶ ὁ Υἱὸς τὸν Πατέρα λαλοῦντα καὶ τὰ σημεῖα ποιοῦντα εἶχεν ἐν ἑαυτῷ· διὸ φησι „Πιστεύετε, ὅτι ἐγὼ ἐν τῷ Πατρὶ καὶ ὁ Πατὴρ δὲ ἐν ἐμοί· εἰ δὲ μὴ, διὰ τὰ ἔργα αὐτὰ πιστεύετε.” Pazzini, “*Il Liber adversariorum,*” 202, rightly recognizes this as another extract from Cyril’s source.

despite their mutual indwelling, even as Paul and Christ remain irreducibly distinct despite Christ's indwelling of the apostle. As we saw above, Origen uses the analogy of the union of two humans in his *Dialogue with Heraclides*, so this passage might be another example of Theodore's dependence upon Origen.<sup>97</sup>

However, Cyril reads the passage in a different light and asserts that Theodore's analogy makes the Son to be a creature rather than "truly God." His comparison would reduce the Son to the level of a "God-bearer" (θεοφόρον) or to someone who "participates in God" (Θεοῦ μέτοχον), as does the Apostle Paul.<sup>98</sup> As we saw above, in the catena fragments Theodore goes out of his way to avoid this objection by saying the Son is in the Father "by nature" or "with respect to essence," but this nuance does not stop Cyril from inveighing against his opponent. The archbishop's response was no doubt influenced here by Athanasius, who, as I noted above, had levied this same criticism against his opponents in the *Orations against the Arians*, focusing especially upon their usage of Acts 17.28. Cyril too asserts that his opponent used Acts 17.28 to draw a comparison between the divine indwelling all humanity and the Father indwelling the Son.<sup>99</sup> In none of the surviving fragments does Theodore refer to Acts 17.28, but the passage supports the same point he seems to be trying to make with his human analogy. He could easily argue that Paul says all humanity exists in God, and yet the identities of human persons are not for that reason dissolved into the divine being. In the same way, Theodore could argue that the Son is in the Father, yet without the conflation of Father and Son. If Cyril is accurately reporting Theodore's usage of Acts 17.28, it might serve as evidence for some degree of continuity between Theodore and the opponents whom Athanasius targets in the *Orations*.

After developing this line of thought for several pages, Cyril comes eventually to offer a third extract from his source, which he finds so objectionable that he cites it three times with slight variations. Referring to his opponent as "this noble man" (ὁ γεννάδας οὐτοσί), he implies that this passage comes from the same source as the previous two, so we may

97. Origen, *dial.* 3–4 (SC 67:58–62). See also Origen, *Cels.* 8.12 (GCS 3:229), where he uses Acts 4.32 (believers are "of one heart and soul") as a proof-text for the analogy.

98. Cyril, *Jo.* 14.11 (Pusey, 2:438). For an analysis of Cyril's notion of participation in this section, see Daniel A. Keating, *The Appropriation of Divine Life in Cyril of Alexandria*, Oxford Theological Monographs (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 179–82.

99. Cyril, *Jo.* 14.11 (Pusey, 2:443, 444).

conclude that this too likely comes from Theodore's Johannine commentary. The passage reads

Then he writes thus, "But just as, although we are said to be in him, we nevertheless have our subsistence unmixed with him, in the same way the Son also, although existing in the Father, nevertheless has his substance distinct from the Unbegotten."<sup>100</sup>

This passage builds upon the previous one and reads as the theological conclusion to be drawn from the analogy employed previously of Christ indwelling Paul. Once again, the fragment is best read as an attempt to avoid the Monarchianism of Marcellus by asserting the distinct identities of Father and Son. The passage uses the key terms *ὑπόστασις* and *οὐσία* in a synonymous fashion, which again fits with Theodore's context, since he was writing at a time before these words had been clearly distinguished.<sup>101</sup> It should be recalled that the canons of Nicaea itself treated the words as synonyms, so Theodore cannot be faulted for his failure to understand these terms in the sense they took on later in the fourth century.<sup>102</sup> In other words, the passage quoted by Cyril is exactly the sort of thing we would expect from a member of the Eusebian alliance of the 330s–350s, in its concern to avoid Monarchianism and its ambiguity regarding key terms. I suggest that this is a more plausible reading of the passage than Pazzini's suggestion that it comes from a fifth-century "Arian" or "Eunomian" commentary.<sup>103</sup>

There is a fourth and final extract cited by Cyril that Pazzini took as coming from the same source as the three I have considered above.<sup>104</sup> Pusey as well, in his nineteenth-century edition of the text, marked this passage as a citation from Cyril's source. However, I would suggest caution in assum-

100. Cyril, *Jo.* 14.11 (Pusey, 2:443): Γράφει τοίνυν ὁδὶ "Ἄλλ' ὡςπερ ἡμεῖς ἐν αὐτῷ εἶναι λεγόμενοι, φησὶν, ἀμιγῆ πρὸς αὐτὸν ἔχομεν τὴν ὑπόστασιν· τὸν αὐτὸν τρόπον καὶ ὁ Υἱὸς ἐν τῷ Πατρὶ τυγχάνων διακεκριμένην τοῦ ἀγενήτου ἔχει τὴν οὐσίαν." Cyril cites the same extract again at Pusey, 2:449–50, 451. The latter two citations differ slightly from the first one, most notably in that while the first one reads τοῦ ἀγενήτου, the second has τοῦ ἀγεννήτου Θεοῦ and the third reads simply τοῦ Θεοῦ. These differences are best explained as Cyril simply loosely citing the text rather than striving for exact precision.

101. It is unclear who was the first to clearly distinguish between these terms, but it appears to have occurred in the late 350s and early 360s, after Theodore's death in 355. See Ayres, *Nicaea and its Legacy*, 202–4 for a list of possibilities.

102. On the meaning of these terms at Nicaea, see Ayres, *Nicaea and its Legacy*, 92–98, who points to "the seeming equation of *ousia* and *hypostasis*" (98).

103. Pazzini, "Il *Liber adversariorum*," 200–201.

104. Pazzini, "Il *Liber adversariorum*," 201–2.

ing that this must be an authentic piece of argument from Cyril's opponent. The passage instead is best read as a potential counter-objection that Cyril places in the mouth of his interlocutor, using the rhetorical device known as *prosopopoiia*.<sup>105</sup> In this section the momentum of Cyril's argument carries him beyond his source text to dealing with imagined further heretical statements. The tone of this passage is markedly different than in the others I have considered. The most obvious difference is that the supposed author of the fragment uses the second person in addressing Cyril directly (ὦ οὗτος), and is obviously responding to the objection Cyril has just brought against him.<sup>106</sup>

Further indication that this fourth extract is Cyril's own creation is that after citing and refuting it, the archbishop returns to his refutation of the third passage which relied on the analogy between humanity's relationship to the divine and the Son's relationship to the Father. Quoting the passage two more times, he suggests that his opponent's "one purpose" (σκοπὸς) is to show that the Son is "entirely alien and foreign to the essence of the Father."<sup>107</sup> Thus, the Alexandrian spends the rest of his exposition of this biblical passage refuting Theodore on the basis that he denies the unity of essence of Father and Son and construes the Father/Son relationship as analogous to the Creator/creation relationship. Cyril assumes that any analogy between human indwelling of the divine and the Son's indwelling of the Father is impermissible because of the fundamental Creator/creature distinction. Instead he asserts that the Son is in the Father on account of their unity of essence, while the saints are in the Son on account of their imitation of his virtue.<sup>108</sup>

## CONCLUSION

When viewed in light of Theodore's own context, Cyril's supposedly 'Arian' writing hardly appears to be the radically subordinationist piece of literature he takes it to be. Pazzini, apparently agreeing with Cyril's assessment, held that the intent of this unnamed author was to place the Son in the

105. So also Boulnois, *Le paradoxe trinitaire*, 542. Wessel, *Cyril of Alexandria*, 200–201, noted Cyril's usage of this tactic against Nestorius.

106. Cyril, *Jo.* 14.11 (Pusey, 2:446–47). Cyril has just set forth τῆς θεοπνεύστου γραφῆς τὴν συνήθειαν regarding the phrase Ἐν Θεῷ, and in the following fragment the author disagrees with this ἱερῶν γραμμάτων παρενεχθεῖσαν συνήθειαν.

107. Cyril, *Jo.* 14.11 (Pusey, 2:449): σκοπὸς εἰς αὐτοῖς, ἀλλότριόν τε καὶ ἔκφυλον παντελῶς τῆς τοῦ Πατρὸς οὐσίας ἀποφῆναι τὸν Υἱόν. Cyril shifts back to his criticism of the human analogy at 2:448, and cites the third passage again at 2:449–50 and 2:451.

108. Cyril, *Jo.* 14.11 (Pusey, 2:452–56).



creaturely order.<sup>109</sup> However, I suggest that, if indeed this fragment comes from the Johannine commentary of Theodore of Heraclea, as I have here argued, then Theodore is much more concerned with resisting Marcellan Monarchianism than he is with the subordination of the Son to the Father. While Theodore's commentary clearly runs afoul of the language of Nicaea in its attempt to distinguish between the *ousiai* of Father and Son, he was writing at a time when there was little clarity about the meaning of such terminology, and, as I suggested above, this assertion is best read as an attempt to preserve the distinct identities of Father and Son against some who interpreted Nicaea in a Monarchian fashion. We should recall again that Cyril even admits that Theodore confesses the Son to be "truly God" and "God according to nature," though it would seem that he lacked any technical term to refer to the unity of the divine since both *ousia* and *hypostasis* served for him to describe the divine three. Nevertheless, Cyril also regarded Marcellus's theology as problematic, and had he realized the identity of Theodore's and had he not been swayed by Athanasius's tendentious historical narrative, perhaps he would have been prompted to a more charitable reading of the commentary by the bishop of Heraclea.<sup>110</sup>

Even though it seems that Cyril failed to grasp Theodore's original intent to oppose Marcellan Monarchianism, it is clear that in his polemic we witness an expression of a robust pro-Nicene theology, insofar as he argues that the Son is Creator and not created, that there are not degrees of deity, and that therefore what is true of the Father must also be true of the Son. In light of such principles, to say that the Son is "encompassed" by the Father is an inappropriate way to refer to the individuality of the Son, since it suggests that the Son does not share the Father's infinity. Moreover, the lingering hints of corporeality suggested by such language are problematic. Therefore, although the exegesis and terminology employed by Origen in the third century against the Monarchians proved successful, and although Theodore's fourth-century appropriation of this same approach goes some way in avoiding the error of Marcellus, further refinement was needed to find a way to express adequately the equality between Father and Son while also preserving their irreducible distinction. Pro-Nicene theologians in the latter fourth century provided just such further refine-

109. Pazzini, "Il *Liber adversariorum*," 201.

110. Cyril mentions Marcellus together with Photinus at *inc. unigen.* 679c (G. M. de Durand, *Cyrille d'Alexandrie: Deux dialogues christologiques*, SC 97 [Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 1964], 192), and defines their error as saying that the Word is "without *hypostasis*" (ἀνυπόστατον).

ment, and it was their understanding of the Trinitarian mystery that was passed on to later generations.

A final word should be said briefly about two broader implications of my argument for the sources of Cyril's *Commentary on the Gospel of John*. Pazzini asserted, though with little detailed explication, that there is "una continuità" between the seven "Arian" and "Eunomian" extracts preserved in the commentary.<sup>111</sup> However, if I am write that Theodore was the source of the three fragments considered above, then all seven passages cannot derive from the same source, since the first of the seven, which relates to John 1.2, is explicitly attributed to Eunomius, who did not become a significant player in the fourth-century controversy until after Theodore's death.<sup>112</sup> Whether the remaining two fragments pertaining to John 14.28 and John 15.1 belong to Theodore I leave as an open question for the time being.<sup>113</sup> Furthermore, we should note the significance of the fact that Theodore was the target of Cyril's polemic rather than some contemporary, fifth-century opponent. This could suggest that Theodore's commentary enjoyed usage among some Arians or Eunomians of the fifth century, or perhaps that there simply were no contemporary anti-Nicenes around who were producing writings for Cyril to refute. In any case, this study highlights the enduring influence of the fourth-century conflict well into the first quarter of the fifth century.

*Matthew R. Crawford is a Postdoctoral Researcher at Durham University*

111. Pazzini, "Il *Liber adversariorum*," 202–3.

112. Cyril, *Jo.* 1.2 (Pusey, 1:46–47). Further discussion of this passage may be found in Domenico Pazzini, *Il Prologo di Giovanni in Cirillo di Alessandria* (Brescia: Paideia, 1997), 192–200.

113. Cyril, *Jo.* 14.28; 15.1 (Pusey, 2:519, 538–39). These passages are discussed in Boulnois, *Le paradoxe trinitaire*, 194–95, 282–84. If Boulnois is correct that these passages present a Eunomian coloring, then they too would presumably bear no relation to Theodore's fragments.