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## **THE RELIGIOUS OTHER IN THE *HISTORIES* OF GREGORY OF TOURS**

**SUMMARY:** The question of the religious other is discussed from the perspective Gregory of Tours himself would have identified with: namely, that of eternal salvation (a necessary prerequisite for which is embracing the Catholic doctrine) or condemnation. Arians, Jews and Catholics lapsed into heresy shall eventually face. Gregory's portrayal of the followers of Arius (who, according to him, not only cannot be called Christians, but follow in footsteps of pagan Roman persecutors of Christianity) is discussed; the futility of theological debate as a mean to influence those non-Trinitarians is showed and the miraculous is stressed as the only effective tool of gaining them for the Church. Secondly, the question of Jews in Gregory's narrative: their loss of the chosen people status, their inability to read the Old Testament Christologically and their not partaking in the miraculous that proved so decisive for the conversion of Arians is stressed; the political pressure of secular and ecclesiastical authorities is presented as the only, albeit ineffective, way of integrating members of the Jewish community into the Church. Finally, the learned heresies produced by the Church elite, that can be effectively addressed by employing the theological discourse and hierarchical admonition, are contrasted with the unrest caused among common people by popular prophets challenging the Church authority and her monopoly on the miraculous.

**KEYWORDS:** Christianity, Jews, heresy, Arians, historiography, Late Antiquity

## INTRODUCTION

Important works on Gregory of Tours published in the past few decades treat the Gregory's portrayal of religious other only as a marginal question, although a few interesting observations have already been made.<sup>1</sup> The article will approach the question of the people remaining outside the Church from the perspective Gregory himself would have shared: i.e. the perspective of the eternal destiny of Arians, Jews and dissident Catholics. Here, it is not the sociological we/they opposition that is primary, rather, this opposition results from the religious distinction that precedes it.<sup>2</sup> Consequently, the integration of the unbelievers into the Church and the Catholic society by converting them is not a goal in itself, but constitutes the necessary condition enabling them to avoid the torments of hell and to achieve the eternal life. We shall examine how Gregory represents the religious other and what ways of bringing back into the flock the distinctive groups of non-Catholics, i.e. : Arians, Jews, and members of the Church that lapsed into heresy he sees.

### I. ARIANS

It will be useful to begin by describing how Gregory relates Arians to what he perceives as orthodox Christianity. A modern reader accustomed to see in Arianism a subdivision of the broader Christianity should be surprised to learn that, in Gregory's eyes, followers of Arius cannot be called Christians. Gregory employs the term *christiani* only when he is referring to the followers of Nicene Christology whom Arians are constantly contrasted with: *Per idem vero tempus persecutionem in christianus Trasamundus exercuit ac totam Hispaniam, ut perfidiam Arrianae sectae consentiret, tormentes ac diversis mortibus inellebat* (*Hist.* II 2).<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See indexes to: De Nie 1987, Goffart 1988 and Heinzelmann 2001.

<sup>2</sup> Blume (1970: 40-52) presents the religious difference primarily by employing we/they opposition. One should, however, keep in mind that, at least for Gregory, it is the religious, and not the sociological, that matters.

<sup>3</sup> Other examples: *Hist.* II 3: *Cumque ad persequendum christianus rex* [i.e. the Arian king of Vandals] *per diversa transmitteret, sanctum Eugenium episcopum* [...] in

Gregory denies Arians the right to be a part of the Church.<sup>4</sup> Consequently, their bishops are not true bishops.<sup>5</sup> Their degenerated character is perfectly summarized by the way Arius, their founding father, had left this world. Gregory delights in frequently evoking the image of the heresiarch dying in a latrine: *Arrius enim, qui huius iniquae sectae primus iniquosque inventur fuit, interiora in secessum deposita, infernalibus ignebus subditur* (*Hist.* III Praef.).

Of five mentions Gregory makes of Arius, four concern the shameful circumstances of his death, the manner of which constitutes a clear sign of divine reprobation Arius had been subjected to in this and the other world (*Hist.* III Praef.; II 23; V 43; IX 15).<sup>6</sup> The persistent stressing of this disgraceful detail is symptomatic for Gregory's way of portraying Arianism, which he depicts using the imagery of filth.<sup>7</sup>

Both the founder of the Arian doctrine and his followers appear to Gregory as repellent beings. Their act in a way that confirms this impression. The main activity the bishop of Tours associates with Arians is the persecution of Catholics, or, to use his own language, of Christians. The persecutions he depicts follow the pattern set by narratives about the persecutions the early Church suffered at the hands of pagan Roman emperors. This can be perfectly illustrated by the analysis of the persecution Huneric waged against the adherents of the Nicene creed.

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*suburbano civitates suae repperit persecutor; Hist.* II 4: *Nam et Athanaricus Gothorum rex magnam excitavit persecutionem; qui multus christianorum diversis poenis adfectus gladio detruncabat; Hist.* II 25: *Huius temporis et Euarix rex Gothorum, excidens Hispanum limitem, gravem in Galliis super christianis intulit persecutionem; Hist.* VI 18: *Christiani, qui nunc apud Hispanias conmorantur, catholicam fidem integre servant.*

<sup>4</sup> *Hist.* I Praef.: *Scripturus bella regum cum gentibus adversis, martyrum cum paganis, ecclesiarum cum hereticis.*

<sup>5</sup> *Hist.* II 3: *Igitur Cirola, falso vocatus episcopus, hereticorum tunc maximus habebatur assertor.*

<sup>6</sup> For Gregory's mentions of Arius, see *Index* to Krusch, Levison 1951: 541.

<sup>7</sup> Keely 1997: 105: *The striking feature of Gregory's imagery in respect of the Arians is that, for the only time in the Histories, the imagery of the unclean is deployed. The Catholic Clotild, daughter of Clovis and wife of the Arian, Amalaric, had 'dung and filth' thrown over her and sent a bloodstained towel to her brother. The Arian baptismal font is called the 'filthy font'. The waters of the font were stained with the menstrual blood of a young Catholic girl forced to undergo baptism.*

When attempts to persuade them to accept the teachings of Arius fail, Catholics are sentenced into exile,<sup>8</sup> or – in worse case – mutilated and killed.<sup>9</sup> As it had been the case at the time of the great persecutions waged by the Roman state, the astonishing perseverance of martyrs and confessors enduring earthly torments for *the sake of heavenly beatitude is contrasted with dramatic episodes of fall from faith*.<sup>10</sup>

As it has been shown, the adherents of Arianism described by Gregory have nothing in common with Christianity other than its terminology they usurp for themselves. On the contrary – in Gregory's typology they fulfill the type of monstrous persecutors of the true faith by following in Diocletian's footsteps. It is not without significance that the book II, the opening parts of which describe persecution Arians waged against the Catholics, is a direct continuation of the book I which describes martyrdom Christians suffered at the hands of Roman emperors. This, as well as the fact that Gregory chooses to conclude the book I by recalling past persecutions, appears to be a conscious measure taken by the Bishop of Tours to join Arian persecutors with the infamous Romans who had prefigured them.<sup>11</sup> This continuity expresses the fundamental conviction of Gregory: given that history is a process of struggle

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<sup>8</sup> Gregory addresses here the case of a Catholic bishop; *Hist.* II 3: *Nam cum imminente morte interrogatus fuisset, se mori pro fide catholica destinaret, respondit: 'Haec enim est sempiterna vita, pro iustitia mori'. Tunc, suspenso gladio, apud Albigensem Galliarum urbem exilio depotatus est; ubi et finem vitae praesentis fecit.*

<sup>9</sup> *Hist.* II 2: *Sanctum vero Vindimialem gladio percuti praecipit; quod ita impletum est. In hoc certamine et Octavianus archidiaconus et multa milia virorum ac mulierum hanc fidem asserentes interempta atque debilitata sunt.*

<sup>10</sup> *Hist.* II 3: *Sed pro amore gloriae nihil erant haec supplicia confessoribus sanctis, qui in paucis vexati, in multis bene noverant disponendus iuxta illud apostoli: Quia non sunt condignae passionnes huius tempores ad futuram gloriam, quae revelatur in sanctis. Multi tunc errantes a fide, accipientes divitias, inseruerunt se doloribus multis, sicut inflex ille episcopus nomine Revocatus est revocatus a fide catholica.*

<sup>11</sup> *Hist.* I 48: *Quod si quis requireret, cur post transitum Catiani episcopi unus tantum, id est Litorius, usque ad sanctum Martinum fuisset episcopus, noverit, quia, obsistentibus paganis, diu civitas Toronica sine benedictione sacerdotale fuit. Nam qui christiani eo tempore videbantur, occultae et per latebras divinum officium celebrabant. Nam si qui a paganis repperti fuissent christiani, aut adficiebantur verberibus aut gladio truncabantur.*

between saints and sinners (Goffart 1988: 174), the former shall always be subjected to violence perpetrated by the latter.

The villainy of Arians is a result of their perverted theology, which, in turn, incites them to persecute Catholics. Although they are powerful and may achieve some successes by deterring faithful ones from the orthodox doctrine, their final destiny has already been set: while the orthodox shall be compensated, be it in this or in the future life, the heretics are doomed not only to lose their earthly possessions (De Nie 1987: 67),<sup>12</sup> but shall also be subjected to the inextinguishable fire of hell.<sup>13</sup>

Arianism is a path leading its followers into eternal destruction. As a consequence, they are not prepared to grasp the true (i.e. Trinitarian) message of the Bible. Gregory's attempts to use the Scripture for establishing a common ground between him and his heretical disputants fail, thus revealing that despite their declared obeisance to the Scripture, the Arians hold it in contempt. This is best illustrated by Gregory's appeal to attachment to the Gospel his adversary could perhaps display: *Nam ut cognuscas, Patrem Fili facere voluntatem, si in te fides euangelica manet, audi, quid ipse Iesus deus noster; cum ad resuscitandum venit Lazarum, ait (Hist. V 43). Fides euangelica* is to be understood as "believing in the reliability of the Gospel account". A heretic's refusal to accept the Trinitarian dogma is for Gregory the sign of his denial of the whole Gospel, for the trust in Gospel presupposes the acceptance of that dogma, which has already been revealed in the Old Testament.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>12</sup> And they shall loose them precisely and only because they are Arians.

<sup>13</sup> *Hist. III Praef.: Arrius enim, qui huius iniquae sectae primus iniquosque inventur fuit, interiora in secessum deposita, infernalibus ignibus subditur; Hilarius vero beatus individuae Trinitatis defensor; propter hanc in exilium deditus, et patriae et paradiso restauratur. Hanc Chlodovechus rex confessus, ipsus hereticos adiuturium eius oppraesset regnumque suum per totas Gallias dilatavit; Alaricus hanc denegans, a regno et populo atque ab ipsa, quod magis est, vita multatur aeterna. Dominus autem se vere credentibus, etsi insidiante inimico aliqua perdant, hic centuplicata restituit, heretici vero nec adquerunt melius, sed quod videntur habere, aufertur ab eis. Probavit hoc Godigisili, Gundobadi atque Godomari interitus, qui et patriam simul et animas perdiderunt.*

<sup>14</sup> *Hist. III Praef.: Vellim, si placet, parumper conferre, quae christianis beatam confitentibus Trinitatem prospera successerint et quae hereticis eandem scindentibus fuerint in ruinam. Omittamus autem, qualiter illam Abraham veneratur ad elicem,*

And because the common system of references that Arians and Catholics could share proves to be a fiction, the miraculous working of God shows itself to be the only way to persuade the stubborn heretics. For their religion explicitly lacks miracles; as a result, they feel forced to fabricate them. Arian bishop Cyrola tries to imitate Catholic wonder-workers, and to achieve by deceit what he is not able to obtain by divine favour. He bribes his coreligionist to simulate blindness he could supernaturally cure. However, what follows is not a demonstration of Cyrola's miraculous power, but a tragedy: the eyes of the supposedly blind man start to hurt so much that he has to press them with his fingers to prevent them from bursting.<sup>15</sup> The unfortunate imposter acknowledges his sin and professes the Trinity in the presence of Catholic clergymen who then heal his eyes.<sup>16</sup> It is worth observing that the prayer evoking Trinity leads to the miraculous healing, while the prayer of Cyrola lacking the reference to Triune God has as its result the deterioration of health of the imposter. Heretics not only cannot cause miracles, they actually place others under curse.

Just like their attempts to heal, Arian Eucharist can be dangerous to those who receive it as well. The wife of Theodoric, the king of Italy, is given a poisoned Eucharistic chalice; she drinks from it and dies as a result. Gregory could not be more triumphant: the sacraments of Arians, being the work of devil, cause the heretics themselves to die. On

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*Iacob praedicat in benedictionem, Moyses cognuscit in sentem, populus sequitur in nubem eandemque paviscit in montem, vel qualiter eam Aaron portat in logium, aut David vaticinatur in psalmum, orans innovari se per spiritum rectum, nec sibi auferri spiritum sanctum, atque se confirmari per spiritum principalem. Magnum et hic ego cerno mistirium, quod scilicet, quem heretici minorem adserunt, principalem vox prophetica nuntiavit.*

<sup>15</sup> Hist. I 3: *Tunc hereticorum episcopus [...] quasi in virtute triumphaturus, elatus vanitate atque superbia, posuit manum super oculos eius, dicens: 'Secundum fidem nostram, qua recte Deum credimus, aperiantur oculi tui'. Et mox ut hunc nefas erupit, risus mutatur in planctum, et dolus episcopi patefactus in publico; nam tantus dolor oculos miseri illius invasit, ut eos digitis vi comprimeret, ne creparent.*

<sup>16</sup> Hist. II 3: *sanctus Eugenius crucem Christi super oculos caeci faciens, ait: 'In nomine Patris et Fili et Spiritus sancti, veri Dei, quem trinum in unam aequalitatem atque omnipotentiam confitemur, aperiantur oculi tui'. Et statim ablata dolore, ad pristinam rediit sanitatem.*

the contrary, the Catholics can drink poisons and remain in good health because of their faith in the Trinity (*Hist.* III 31).

Gregory repeatedly stresses the inefficiency of Arianism when it comes to miracle-working. Reccared, the king of Visigoths, decides to embrace Catholicism precisely due to the inability to perform supernatural healings exhibited by bishops of his religion.<sup>17</sup> Also, he recollects Cyrola's miserably failed attempt to simulate a miracle.<sup>18</sup>

It is therefore the supernatural (Goffart 1988: 127-153)<sup>19</sup> (not only miraculous healings bestowed upon the population by Catholic clergy, but also the *sui generis* Arian anti-miracle) that proves to be the decisive factor. Souls can be won not by refined debates centered around the Scripture and theology, but by a tangible beneficial sign.

## 2. JEWS

In Gregory's narrative, the great figures of the Old Testament establish the foundation upon which Christianity builds. The way the bishop of Tours treats Abraham illustrates this line of thought: the Christian faith begins with this patriarch of old; furthermore, he himself receives a direct revelation from Christ prior to the incarnation of the Son of God. The unity of both Testaments is underlined by the fact that, at least for Gregory, the place at which Abraham was to sacrifice his son Isaac is Calvary, the same site that witnessed Jesus' crucifixion. In addition, the bodily and visible sign of circumcision Abraham was commanded to

<sup>17</sup> *Hist.* IX 15: *Igitur eo tempore in Hispania Richaredus rex, compunctus miseratione divina, convocatis episcopis relegionis suae, ait: 'Cur inter vos et sacerdotes illus, qui se catholicus dicunt, iugiter scandalum propagatur et, cum illi per fidem suam signa multa ostendant, vos nihil tale agere potestis?'*

<sup>18</sup> *Hist.* IX 15: *Et praesertim, cum rex diceret, quod nullum signum sanitatis super infirmus ab hereticorum ostenderetur episcopis, ac in memoriam replicaret, qualiter tempore genitoris sui episcopus, qui se iactabat per fidem non rectam caecis restituere lumen, tacto caeco et caecitate perpetuae damnato, discessisse confusum [...] vocavit ad se seorsum sacerdotes Dei. Quibus perscrutatis, cognovit, unum Deum sub distinctione coli personarum trium, id est Patris et Filii et Spiritus sancti.*

<sup>19</sup> Goffart's chapter on Gregory's *Libri miraculorum* is relevant for the *Histories* as well.

undergo prefigures the spiritual circumcision of the heart, a distinctive feature of Christians.<sup>20</sup>

But the history of the Chosen People also has its darker side: [*Israhelitae*] *dum praecepta divina postponunt, saepe in alienigenarum servitio subiugantur. Sed cum conversi ingemiscunt, tribuente Domino, per virorum fortium brachium liberantur* (*Hist.* I 12). Jews are therefore capable of both obeying and disobeying God; if the latter is the case, they can always change their ways and return to God. Everything changes with the coming of the Son of God and his execution for which, according to Gregory, Jews hold responsibility. Their murderous acts not only cause them to lose the divine favour (Vlach 2009: 60-61) – as a matter of fact, they are also deprived of their very name. For Gregory regularly applies terms *Israhelitae* and *Hebraei* (as well as their derivatives) when referring to the Jews of the Old Testament. He replaces them with *Iudaei* precisely when he starts to narrate about Christ being rejected by the people of Israel: it is on Calvary that the *Israelites* are transformed into *Jews*.<sup>21</sup> Having lost their privileged status, they have only one mean to gain eternal life- they have to convert. But how does one integrate them into the Church?

A theological disputation is one mean Gregory makes use of to bring the Jews to the flock. Gregory tries to use the same strategy he applies to his Arian disputants: namely, he makes an effort to present the Old Testament as a Christian-Jewish point of reference (*Hist.* VI 5). But not unlike Arians, Jew Priscus does not accept what Gregory sees as the

<sup>20</sup> *Hist.* I 7: *Hic est Abraham initium fidei nostrae. Hic accepit repromissionis. Huic se Christus dominus noster nasciturum ac pro nobis passurum in victimae commutationem monstravit, ipso in euangelii sic dicente: Abraham exsultavit, ut viderit diem meum; et vidit, et gavisus est. Hoc vero holocaustum in monte Calvariae, quo Dominus crucifixus est, oblatum fuisse, Severus narrat in chronica, sicut et hodiequae in ipsa Hierusolimorum urbe celebre fertur. In hoc monte crux sancta, in qua Redemptor affixus est, stetit, de qua et beatus illi cruor effluxit. Hic ergo Abraham accepit signum circumcisiones, ostendens, ut quod ille gessit in corpore nos portemus in corde.*

<sup>21</sup> *Hist.* I 20: [*Christus*] *multa signa faciens manifestissime se Deum populis esse declarat, in Iudaeis ira succenditur, invidia exagitur, ac mens de sanguine profetarum pasta, ut iustum interimat, iniuste molitur. Ergo, ut veterum vatum complerentur oracula, a discipolo traditur, a pontificibus condemnatur, a Iudaeis inluditur, cum iniquis crucifigitur, a militibus, amisso spiritu, custoditur.*



Christ-announcing testimony of his own Scripture. It is also by persuasion that bishop Avitus decides to win the Jewish community of his diocese for the Church; with only one convert gained, his attempt turns out to be a failure. His arguments having failed, the bishop sees only one way left to influence the hardened hearts of Jews: they are either to receive baptism or to leave the city. This strategy shows to be more successful: although some Jews leave, many decide to convert. But Gregory knows well that this way of proselytizing is a mixed blessing: he notes that many of the Jews king Chilperic converted under pressure lapsed from Christianity they embraced only superficially and returned to their ancestral religion.<sup>22</sup>

Both Avitus, a colleague of Gregory, and king Chilperic, the villain of the *Histories* (Heinzelmann 2001: 41-51), use political pressure to achieve their religious goals. Therefore, it is not likely that Gregory was against this method as such; the usage his fellow bishop makes of it bears some fruit. It is almost certain that at least some of the Jews he pressured into accepting Christianity returned to Judaism; Gregory, however, chooses to stress this circumstance when he writes about the missionary zeal of Chilperic, which he detests: it is the wicked king who is not able to exercise a lasting influence over the souls of his Jewish subjects. But in spite of methods used by Avitus, successful as they seem to be, Gregory is conscious that their lasting effect is dubious.

The vision of Jews (or at least of Gregory's Jewish contemporaries, whose ancestors however actively partook in execution of Christ) presented in *Histories* is not, unlike Gregory's description of Arians, unequivocally bad.<sup>23</sup> We do not hear, however, of any Jew brought to the faith by the power of a miracle. Nor do we hear of any Jew actually healed that way. Arians at least are eager to accept this kind of divine

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<sup>22</sup> *Hist.* VI 17: *Rex vero Chilpericus multos Iudaeorum eo anno baptizare praecipit, ex quibus pluri excipit a sancto lavacro. Nonnulli tamen eorum, corpore tantum, non corde abluti, ad ipsam quam prius perfidiam habuerant, Deo mentiti, regressi sunt, ita ut et sabbatum observare et diem dominicum honorare videntur.*

<sup>23</sup> On Gregory's disputation with Priscus see Keely 1997: 111: *Gregory sought to exploit the common ground of Judaism and Christianity, the Old Testament. There was no vilification of the Jew himself nor of his beliefs.*

evidence legitimating the Catholic religion. And because theological arguments fail to change the mind of Jews (Goffart 1988: 143, n. 139) and they seem to be exempted from the benign influence of the miraculous, the only way to integrate them into the Church is blackmail and pressure. But the long term effectiveness of this approach may be seriously doubted. It seems that the followers of Arius are going into the kingdom of God ahead of the children of Israel.

### 3. LEARNED HERESIES AND POPULAR PROPHETS

The Gallic Church Gregory describes is challenged not only by Arianism and Judaism, but also by theological controversies and open heresies arising from the very population she takes pastoral care of. These challenges vary significantly among themselves; they are also dealt with in accordance to their respective character. First, we will examine controversies raised by the very elite of the Church and society: the clergy and the ruler.

The Easter controversy does not touch on the question of dogma. Rather, this strife over which local Church – that of Gaul or that of Spain – observes the correct date of the Easter is only an issue of the Church discipline. In Gregory's narrative, however, even such a petty detail needs to be given some miraculous response. Not surprisingly, it is the custom of the Gallic Church that ends up confirmed by the divine approval.<sup>24</sup>

It can happen that the things having little to do with theology may raise doubts: certain bishop questions, whether a woman (*mulier*) can be called a human being (*homo*).<sup>25</sup> The Bishop's confusion is caused

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<sup>24</sup> *Hist. V 17: In Galliis vero nos cum multis civitatibus quarto decimo Kalendas Maias sanctum paschae celebravimus. Alii vero cum Spanis duodecimo Kalendas Aprilis solemnitatem hanc tenuerunt; tamen, ut ferunt, fontes illi, qui in Spaniis nutu Dei complentur, in nostrum pascha repleti sunt.*

<sup>25</sup> *Hist. VIII 20: Extetit enim in hac synodo quidam ex episcopis, qui dicebat, mulierem hominem non posse vocitare. Sed tamen ab episcopis ratione accepta quievit, eo quod sacer Veteris Testamenti liber edoceat, quod in principio, Deo hominem creante, ait: Masculum et feminam creavit eos, vocavitque nomen eorum Adam, quod est homo*

not by his misogynist attitude, but rather stems from the change that the spoken language has undergone. In Early Romance *homo* stopped to denote a human being and started to signify a male only.<sup>26</sup> Fellow bishops solve the problem by pointing out the examples provided by the Bible, which conserves the older state of Latin where *homo* still denotes a human being.

This kind of hierarchical admonition turns out to be effective in the case of king Chilperic, from whose theological production (as reported by Gregory) we may learn that he tried to resurrect the old heresy of modalism.<sup>27</sup> The king rejects arguments of Gregory whom he regularly clashes with, and it is the authority of another bishop, Salvius, that makes him renounce his unorthodox doctrine. This shows that Chilperic is ready to submit to the authority of a bishop whose impartiality he acknowledges.

The doubts about the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead displayed by a member of the Catholic clergy give Gregory the opportunity to present his scriptural as well as theological erudition. As it is usually the case with Gregory, whose reasoning is deeply affected by typological schemes (Thürlemann 1974: 85-100), the new heresy is presented as the return of the old error: the doubting priest is presented as a resuscitator of the false teachings of the Sadducees. His error lies, on the one hand, in the selective reading of the Scripture from which he

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*terrenus, sic utique vocans mulierem ceu virum; utrumque enim hominem dixit. Sed et dominus Iesus Christus ob hoc vocitatur filius hominis, quod sit filius virginis, id est mulieris. Ad quam, cum aquas in vina transferre pararet, ait: Quid mihi et tibi est, mulier? et reliqua. Multisque et aliis testimoniis haec causa convicta quievit.*

<sup>26</sup> Rey 2010: 6085: *HOMME* n. m., attesté en 980 sous les formes *hom* et *om* [...], en ancien français *hom*, *hume*, *home*, est issu du latin classique *hominem*, accusatif de *homo* «être humain»; à partir de ce sens général se sont développées plusieurs acceptions à l'époque impériale: «créature raisonnable» (par opposition à *fera* «bête féroce»); *homo* se substitue alors à *vir*.

<sup>27</sup> *Hist. V 44: Per idem tempus Chilpericus rex scripsit indicolum, ut sancta Trinitas non in personarum distinctione, sed tantum Deus nominaretur, adserens indignum esse, ut Deus persona sicut homo carneus nominetur; adfirmans etiam, ipsum esse Patrem, qui est Filius, idemque ipsum esse Spiritum sanctum, qui Pater et Filius. 'Sic', inquit, 'prophetis ac patriarchis apparuit, sic eum ipsa lex nuntiavit'. Cumque haec mihi recitare iussisset, ait: 'Sic', inquit, 'volo, ut tu vel reliqui doctores ecclesiarum credatis'.*

accepts only those parts that seem to present death as the ultimate end of all human beings, and, on the other hand, in his “materialistic” conception of the resurrection; for the recreation of bodies that had been long since decomposed appears to him as improbable. To counter this opinion, Gregory uses various quotations from the Bible whose message he unifies in accordance with the orthodox teaching. Furthermore, he points out that the resurrection of both good and evil is a necessary condition that enables the society to function and to preserve the moral order. For the good shall be resurrected to enjoy the eternal life, while the sinners shall be condemned to hell. But Gregory appeals not only to the Scripture, but the *Book of Nature* as well: it is the vegetation cycle that presents a perfect prefiguration of the resurrection. The clergyman is lead to repentance and renounces his heretical view (*Hist.* X 13). It is one of the rare cases presented by the *Histories* in which the theological debate results in the acceptance of the orthodox view by the side that challenged it. Significantly, it is the erring orthodox and not an Arian or a Jew who is ready to correct his thinking having accepted the theological arguments of his opponent.

But alongside the learned heresies produced by the elite, theological-ly incorrect opinions shared by the common people can also be found in the *Histories*. Gregory notices the activity of popular prophets and healers; one of whom, Desiderius, challenges the “official” Gallic Church.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> *Hist.* IX 6: *Fuit eo anno in urbe Thoronica Desiderius nomine, qui se magnum quendam esse dicebat, adserens se multa posse facere signa. Nam et nuntius inter se atque Petrum Paulumque apostolos discurrere iactitabat. Ad quem, quia praesens non eram, rusticitas populi multa confluxerat, deferentes secum caecos et debiles, quos non sanctitate sanare, sed errore nigromantici ingenii quaerebat inludere. Nam hos, qui erant paralitici aut alia impediti debilitate, iubebat valide extendi, ut, quos virtutis divinae largitione dirigere non poterat, quasi per industriam restauraret. Denique adpraehendebant pueri eius manus hominis, alii vero pedes, tractumque diversis in partibus, ita ut nervi potarentur abrumpi, cum non sanarentur, demittebantur exanimis. Unde factum est, ut in hoc supplicio multi spiritum exalarent. Tantoque miser elatus erat, ut iuniorem sibi beatum Martinum esse diceret, se vero apostolis coaequaret. Nec mirum, si hic similem se dicat apostolis, cum ille auctor nequitiae, a quo ista procedunt, Christum se esse in fine saeculi fateatur. Nam de hoc animadversum est, ut superius diximus, errore nigromantiae artis fuisse inbutum, quia, ut adserunt qui eum viderunt, cum quisque de eo procul et abdita quicquam locutus fuisset mali, coram populo*

He usurps privileges enjoyed by the Church hierarchy (especially the bishops), such as direct access to saints, miraculous healing power and the apostolic dignity for himself. Moreover, he claims he is more spiritually mature than saint Martin himself. In Gregory's eyes this concurrent and usurper is clearly inspired by the devil: it is true that he exhibits some supernatural power, but the healings he performs result in the death of the people he deceived. Here we have an example of what may be called futurist typology (Thürlemann 1974: 88-89): Desiderius fulfills the type of the Antichrist who is yet to come. It is not the past that is reenacted, but the future that is being anticipated. The importance of this passages results also from the fact that it is the people of God, that is the ordinary faithful, who reject and remove the false prophet from the community.

False prophets benefit from the dire circumstances in which the society finds itself: people tormented by various disasters gather under the banner of another deceiver who, they think, may deliver them. Gregory is sure that behind the insects that bit him causing his insanity stands the devil who now inspires his actions. It is not only ecclesiastical hierarchy, but also the divine one that is challenged, for this particular deceiver claims to be Christ himself and orders his followers to adore him as such. Gregory does not deny his supernatural power, but it is, in his opinion, the power granted by the devil and not by God. The false Christ leads the popular uprising which is ultimately crushed. Unfortunately, his malicious influence survives his defeat: people he led astray will not be able to reconcile themselves with the Church, perhaps for the rest of their lives. This individual is another fulfillment of the Antichrist type; moreover, he is able to affect the souls of his supporters deeply.

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*adstante inproperabat, dicens, quia: 'Hoc et illud de me effatus es, quae sanctitate meae erant indigna'. Et quid aliud nisi nuntiantibus daemoniis cognoscebat? Habebat autem cucullam ac tunicam de pilis caprarum, et in praesente quidem abstinens erat a cybis et potu, clam autem, cum in diversurio venisset, ita inferebat in ore, ut minister non occurrerit tantum poscenti porregere. Sed detecta dolositas eius et a nostris depraehensa, eiectus est extra urbis terminum.*

## CONCLUSION

We have seen how Gregory presents those who find themselves *extra Ecclesiam*, as well as the possibility of integrating them into the Church. The followers of Arius fulfill the type of persecutors of Christianity; their appurtenance to the Church is merely declarative, their obeisance to the Scripture – only verbal. Lacking any common ground on which they could build intellectual understanding with Catholics, they can be brought into the flock only by the display of divine power. Jews had lost their privileged place in God's plan of history; being excluded from the benefits of the miracles administered by the Catholic clergy, they will enter the Church only when compelled to do so. It is not sure, however, whether they will become sincere Catholics; rather, what Gregory presupposes is the opposite. Popular prophets, who challenge not the orthodox doctrine as such but the official hierarchy behind it, are brought down by force; for them, there is no hope of reconciliation. The doubting intellectuals from the ranks of ecclesiastical hierarchy are the only group eager to submit to the authority of the Church by accepting the theological reasoning of their orthodox coreligionists. Thus, the theology shows itself to be no more than the inner affair of the Church, unable to exercise any influence over outsiders.

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