

St. Augustine's *Filioque* in the Treatise 99 on the Gospel of John

1. Introduction

The treatise that we are interested in is included in a long chain of homilies which refer to two verses of the Gospel of John (16, 12-13): "Ἐτι πολλὰ ἔχω ὑμῖν λέγειν, ἀλλ' οὐ δύνασθε βαστάζειν ἄρτι· ὅταν δὲ ἔλθῃ ἐκεῖνος, τὸ πνεῦμα τῆς ἀληθείας, ὁδηγήσει ὑμᾶς ἐν τῇ ἀληθείᾳ πάση· οὐ γὰρ λαλήσει ἑαυτοῦ ἀλλ' ὅσα ἀκούσει λαλήσει καὶ τὰ ἐρχόμενα ἀναγγελεῖ ὑμῖν. The Latin version that Augustine used would be as follows: *Adhuc multa habeo vobis dicere, sed non potestis portare modo, cum autem venerit ille Spiritus veritatis, docebit vos omnem veritatem; non enim loquetur a semetipso, sed quaecumque audiet, loquetur.* The commentary of these two verses is divided into five homilies (96-100); however, it is also necessary to consider homily 92, where Augustine does not touch on a question from John 15, 26: "Ὅταν ἔλθῃ ὁ παράκλητος ὃν ἐγὼ πέμψω ὑμῖν παρὰ τοῦ πατρὸς, τὸ πνεῦμα τῆς ἀληθείας ὃ παρὰ τοῦ πατρὸς ἐκπορεύεται, ἐκεῖνος μαρτυρήσει περὶ ἐμοῦ (*Cum autem venerit Paracletus quem ego mittam vobis a Patre, Spiritum veritatis qui a Patre procedit, ille testimonium perhibebit de me*), but it appears in the homily 99, 8-9. How can these two interesting things be explained, the first: why exactly six homilies? And the other: why was the question of the procession of the Holy Spirit not asked in the ninety second homily but in the ninety-ninth? In the first fifty-four treatises, Augustine was rather prolix, but later on he is more concise. However, suddenly we come across a long homily (99), so long that Augustine himself felt the necessity to

excuse himself in front of his flock because of its utmost extensiveness.¹ I see the solution to this enigma in the difficulty of the argument that Augustine came across.² He confirms on two places in this homily (of course in the *exordium*, where attention is drawn) that the theme is more than difficult: “But in reference to the person of the Holy Spirit, a considerable difficulty arises,” and “A difficult question; yea, too difficult.”³ This difficulty is big because it treats the third person of the Most Holy Trinity, the Holy Spirit. It is advisable to avoid that problem, if possible, at all.⁴ Since it was impossible to avoid it, Augustine makes it easier by dividing it. In that way he deepens it step by step. What the primary difficulties were, we shall see afterwards. Now I would like to point out briefly two moments: 1) The controversy about the Holy Spirit started as late as a 360 A.D; consequently, the early fathers’ elaboration of this theme is still poor; therefore, Augustine is among pioneers; 2) *Lex orandi* and *lex credendi* did not go arm in arm; the Holy Spirit existed in Christian devotion – though an unenlightened form – but His *proprius* was unknown and difficult to understand: His name did not imply the relation, or connection, as it was the case with the names of the Father and the Son.

2. Structure and contents of Treatise 99

Introduction (1-2): He goes to an argument straight away because it continues with the previous exegesis: Why shall the Holy Spirit not speak by Himself (John 16, 13)? That is the expression that fits in with the context of Lord’s assertion of Himself: *I can do nothing by myself* (John 5, 30). Christ’s words, may be interpreted as referring to

¹ *Tractatus in evangelium Iohannis (Io. ev. tr.)* 99, 9: *Sed quia iste iam prolixus est, in alium sunt differenda sermonem.*

² In the same way, before Augustine, St. Gregory the Theologian also complained of the difficulty (δυσχερέεζ) of coherent speech of the Holy Spirit (cf. *or.* 31, 1, 1-2).

³ *Io. ev. tr.* 99, 1: “In persona vero Spiritus sancti quomodo accipiamus quod ait: *Non enim loquetur a semetipso, sed quaecumque audiet, loquetur*; cum in ea non sit alia divinitatis, alia humanitatis, vel alterius creaturae cuiuscumque substantia, magna exoritur difficultas”. Further on (*Io. ev. tr.* 99, 2) he says: “*Non enim loquetur a semetipso, sed quaecumque audiet, loquetur?* Ardua quaestio, nimis ardua”.

⁴ On an other occasion (*sermo* 71, 5, 8), Augustine admits that he was avoiding to talk on Matthew 12, 32 (“And whosoever shall speak a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him; but whosoever shall speak against the Holy Spirit, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, nor in that which is to come”): “I’m telling your graces, there is probably no greater, no more difficult problem to be found in all the holy scriptures. That is why - and here I have a little confession to make about myself - in the sermons I have preached to the people I have always hitherto avoided this difficult and troublesome problem. Not that I never had any kind of thoughts about it - on such an important point I wouldn’t dream of neglecting to seek, to ask, to knock - but that I didn’t think that with the words which occurred to me at any particular moment I could do justice to the glimmer of understanding that was opened up to me”.

Him as a man, but it is very difficult to apply that solution on the Holy Spirit for, how dare we think that He appears in a human form or adopts some created nature? In the Trinity it was only the Son who assumed the form of a servant uniting it with Himself in the unity of person (*Filius formam servi accepit, quae forma illi ad unitatem personae coaptata est*). Although the persona of the Holy Spirit remains a great difficulty. It is true that the Holy Spirit appears in the form of a dove (Matt. 3, 16), but that was just a momentary and temporary appearance; the dove was not accepted in the unity of the Holy Spirit. The question is difficult because the words *He shall not speak of Himself*, are spoken in connection with Him as God.

Central part - narratio (docere): In the fundamental part of the discourse (3) Augustine explains what hearing and feeling mean to God, because in Him there are no senses located on the surface of the body. For Him, to hearing and to feeling is just one and the same thing. (4) Divine essence is the one that it possesses. When it is claimed that the Holy Spirit *shall not speak of himself*, it should be understood that those words refer to a simple nature which is endlessly more superior compared to the nature of our consciousness. It is it that it has, and possesses knowledge in such a way that what she knows does not differ from what it is: both being and knowing are the same in the divine essence. The Spirit *shall not speak of Himself*, because He is not from himself; but *He shall say what he hears*, that is, what he hears from whom he proceeds. (5) Augustine removes the possible criticism which would refer to the use of the future: *what he hears, he shall say*. The Spirit's hearing is eternal, because his knowledge is eternal. In this unchangeable and unutterable nature there is neither "was" nor "will be", but only "is": namely, only it "is" for real, because it cannot be changed; The Holy Spirit has always known, knows and will know. (6) Here begins the thorny theme of the origin of the Holy Spirit: the question is asked whether the Holy Spirit also proceeds from the Son. The Holy Spirit is not only the Spirit of one of them, but both of them, and there is a multitude of texts, on the basis of which it clearly derives that what is in the bosom of Trinity is the Holy Spirit; He is the Spirit of the Father and the Son. (7) Both the Father and the Son are also spirit, because *God is the spirit* (cf. John 4, 24). Still, the name that we equally attribute to all Persons of the Trinity is more characteristically given to the

third Person, who makes a chain of unity between one and another. (8) In the end he asks himself whether the Holy Spirit can proceed from the Father and the Son, for it was said: *He proceedeth from the Father* (John 15, 26). Augustine finds a possible solution in the habit of the Son to attribute to the Father also what proceeds from Him himself. The Father, from whom the Son receives to be God, causes the Holy Spirit to proceed also from the Son. (9) Concluding with certain reservations, Augustine confirms that it is because of this double procession that he speaks of the Spirit as “proceeding”, not as “being born”. This will be a favorite argument of St. Thomas Aquinas against the Greeks.

Consequently, there are two essential questions that Augustine was interested in: 1) In what way is the Holy Spirit “smaller” comparing to the Father? – He finds the answer in the fact that the Holy Spirit owes his being to the Father, 2) How could one explain the double proceeding (*ab utroque*) of the Holy Spirit from the Father and the Son?

3. Filioque in Tractatus in Evangelium Iohannis 99, 8-9

We deal with the problem of the *filioque*, which is, as it is well-known, of great importance in the controversy between Greek Orthodoxy and Roman Catholicism. Augustine himself had special sympathy with this solution (probably he considered it as very successful) and repeated it in the *De trinitate*:

But because it is most difficult to distinguish generation from procession in that co-eternal, and equal, and incorporeal, and ineffably unchangeable and indivisible Trinity, let it suffice meanwhile to put before those who are not able to be drawn on further, what we said upon this subject in a sermon to be delivered in the ears of Christian people, and after saying wrote it down. For when, among other things, I had taught them by testimonies of the Holy Scriptures that the Holy Spirit proceeds from both (*de utroque procedere Spiritum Sanctum*).⁵

⁵ *trin.* 15, 27, 48.

From that oration Augustine rewrote a lengthy passage “but I spoke to the believers and not to the non-believers then.” Thus, if we understood literally this statement of his, it would turn out that his prior reflection was of no great value; but in reality was not like that. It is sufficient to ask oneself: if prior reflection was on a lower level, why should one repeat it in the version that is more than demanding? Let us have a look at what the famous Doctor repeated; I add also the seventh chapter (in fact, he rewrote the eighth and ninth chapters) for the purpose of clarity:

Nec ob aliud existimo ipsum vocari proprie Spiritum: cum etiamsi de singulis interrogemur, non possimus nisi et Patrem et Filium spiritum dicere; quoniam *spiritus est Deus* (cf. Io 4, 24), id est, non corpus est Deus, sed spiritus. Quod ergo communiter vocantur et singuli, hoc proprie vocari oportuit eum qui non est unus eorum, sed in quo communitas apparet amborum. Cur ergo non credamus quod etiam de Filio procedat Spiritus sanctus, cum Filii quoque ipse sit Spiritus? Si enim non ab eo procederet, non post resurrectionem se repraesentans discipulis suis insufflasset dicens: *Accipite Spiritum sanctum* (Io 20, 22). Quid enim aliud significavit illa insufflatio, nisi quod procedat Spiritus sanctus et de ipso?... Si ergo et de Patre et de Filio procedit Spiritus sanctus; cur Filius dixit: *De Patre procedit* (Io 15, 26)? Cur putas, nisi quemadmodum ad eum solet referre et quod ipsius est, de quo et ipse est? Unde illud est quod ait: *Mea doctrina non est mea, sed eius qui me misit* (Io 7, 16). Si igitur intellegitur hic eius doctrina, quam tamen dixit non suam, sed Patris; quanto magis illic intellegendus est de ipso procedere Spiritus sanctus, ubi sic ait: *De Patre procedit*, ut non diceret: De me non procedit? A quo autem habet Filius ut sit Deus (est enim de Deo Deus), ab illo habet utique ut etiam de illo procedat Spiritus sanctus: ac per hoc Spiritus sanctus ut etiam de Filio procedat, sicut procedit de Patre, ab ipso habet Patre. Hic utcumque etiam illud intellegitur, quantum a talibus quales nos sumus, intellegi potest, cur non dicatur natus esse, sed potius procedere Spiritus sanctus. Quoniam si et ipse Filius diceretur, amborum utique Filius diceretur, quod absurdissimum est. Filius quippe nullus est duorum, nisi patris et matris. Absit autem, ut inter Deum Patrem et Deum Filium tale aliquid suspicemur. Quia nec filius hominum simul et ex patre et ex matre procedit: sed cum in matrem procedit ex patre, non tunc procedit ex matre; et cum in hanc lucem procedit ex

matre, non tunc procedit ex patre. Spiritus autem sanctus non de Patre procedit in Filium, et de Filio procedit ad sanctificandam creaturam; sed simul de utroque procedit: quamvis hoc Filio Pater dederit, ut quemadmodum de se, ita de illo quoque procedat. Neque enim possumus dicere quod non sit vita Spiritus sanctus cum vita Pater, vita sit Filius. Ac per hoc sicut Pater cum habeat vitam in semetipso, dedit et Filio habere vitam in semetipso; sic ei dedit vitam procedere de illo, sicut procedit et de ipso.⁶

In the above text the crucial words are:

Spiritus, communitas, procedere, nasci and *principaliter* (the word which is absent here).

The scheme of his course of thinking would be the following: *The personal characteristic of the Holy Spirit would be one of connecting and therefore he may not be only from one but from both persons which he connects, and because of that he was not born – i. e. he is not the Son – but he proceeds.* Simply? Everything but not simply.

4. Ab utroque as a principle of the personal characteristic of the Holy Spirit

St. Augustine was troubled from the very beginning of his trinitarian reflection with the difficulty about how to define what is characteristic of the Holy Spirit. How can He be differentiated from the Son? There is only one Onlybegotten. Following from the beginning the thought of Gaius Marius Victorinus⁷ also called “Victorinus Afer”⁸ (i.e. Victorinus the African), Augustine was inclined to confuse the Holy Spirit with the Son, as he himself testifies in *De trinitate*.⁹ On the other side, this confusion was caused by linguistic imprecision: *proceed* can also be translated as *to be born*, and on the other hand *to be born* figuratively means *to derive, proceed, originate from* etc. It seems, and it complicates things more, that in the Latin linguistic tradition the term *procedere* was used

⁶ *Io. ev. tr.* 99, 8-9; *trin.* 15, 27, 48.

⁷ M. SIMONETTI, “Marius Victorinus”, *Patrology*, ed. A. DI BERNARDINO, trans. P. SOLARI, vol. IV, Westminster, Maryland: Christian Classics, Inc., 1991, p. 73.

⁸ HIERONYMUS, *De viris illustribus*, 101.

⁹ Cf. *trin.* 5, 12, 13. See also N. CIPRIANI, *La retractio agostiniana sulla processione-generazione dello Spirito Santo*, in *Augustinianum* 37 (1997) 436-437.

for ἐκπορεύομαι and even more times for ἐξέρχομαι or also for πέμψω.¹⁰ This distinction will be of great importance for the Greek Fathers, but this is beyond the scope of this paper.

So, *procedere* should mark something different from *being born*. The bishop of Hippo was aware as far as in 393 that the Holy Spirit should be strictly differentiated in comparison with the Son:

With respect to the Holy Spirit, however, there has not been as yet, on the part of learned and distinguished investigators of the Scriptures, a discussion of the subject full enough or careful enough to make it possible for us to obtain an intelligent conception of what also constitutes His special individuality (*eius proprium*): in virtue of which special individuality it comes to be the case that we cannot call Him either the Son or the Father, but only the Holy Spirit; excepting that they predicate Him to be the Gift of God (*donum Dei*), so that we may believe God not to give a gift inferior to Himself. At the same time they hold by this position, namely, to predicate the Holy Spirit neither as begotten, like the Son, of the Father (*nepotem summi Patris*).¹¹

If the Holy Spirit had his origin only from the Father, then he would also be the son, the second son, but that is directly contrary to the Holy Scriptures. I have already mentioned how Thomas Aquinas developed concept:

¹⁰ “According to Greeks the term ἐκπορεύομαι refers to eternal proceeding of the Spirit, and πέμψω to his sending to the world. “Since the Latin Bible (the Vulgate and earlier Latin translations) had been translated Jn 15:26 (*para tou Patros ekporeutai*) by ‘*qui a Patre procedit*,’ the Latins translated the ‘*ek tou Patros ekporeuomenon*’ of the Symbol of Nicaea-Constantinople by ‘*ex Patre procedentem*’ (MANSI, VII, 112 B). In this way, a false equivalence was involuntarily created with regard to the eternal origin of the Spirit between the Oriental theology of the *ekporeusis* and the Latin theology of the *processio*. The Greek *ekporeusis* signifies only the relationship of origin to the Father alone as the principle without principle of the Trinity. The Latin *processio*, on the contrary, is a more common term, signifying the communication of the consubstantial divinity from the Father to the Son and from the Father, through and with the Son, to the Holy Spirit. In confessing the Holy Spirit ‘*ex Patre procedentem*,’ the Latins, therefore, could only suppose an implicit Filioque which would later be made explicit in their liturgical version of the Symbol”. Cf. *The Greek and Latin traditions about the procession of the Holy Spirit*”, Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, Description: Issued June 29, 1995 in response to a request by John Paul II to ‘clarify the traditional doctrine of the *Filioque* present in the liturgical version of the Latin *Credo* to highlight its full harmony with the Creed professed at Constantinople’ (<http://www.catholicculture.org>).

¹¹ *De fide et symbolo* 9, 19.

Non potest autem secundum aliam habitudinem spiritus sanctus dici spiritus filii Dei nisi secundum aliquam originem: quia haec sola distinctio in divinis invenitur. Necesse est igitur dicere quod spiritus sanctus sic sit filii quod ab eo procedat.¹²

Saint Thomas explicitly refuses to accept the argument of St. Gregory the Theologian, who saw the difference between the Son and the Holy Spirit in a different way in which they receive their beings from the Father:

ὁ καθ' ὅσον μὲν ἐκείθεν ἐκπορεύεται, οὐ κτίσμα καθ' ὅσον δὲ οὐ γεννητόν, οὐχ Υἱός καθ' ὅσον δὲ ἀγεννήτου καὶ γεννητοῦ μέσον Θεός. Καὶ οὕτω σου τὰς τῶν συλλογισμῶν ἄρκυς διαφυγῶν Θεὸς ἀναπέφηνε, τῶν σῶν διαιρέσεων ἰσχυρότερος. Τίς οὖν ἢ ἐκπόρευσις; Εἰπέ σὺ τὴν ἀγεννησίαν τοῦ Πατρὸς καὶ τὴν γέννησιν τοῦ Υἱοῦ φυσιολογήσω, καὶ τὴν ἐκπόρευσιν τοῦ Πνεύματος, καὶ παραπληκτίσομεν ἄμφω εἰς Θεοῦ μυστήρια παρακύπτοντες.¹³

¹² *Summa Contra Gentiles*, 4, 24, 2. Apart from other things he says: “Habetur in determinatione quinti Concilii: sequimur per omnia sanctos patres et doctores Ecclesiae, Athanasium, Hilarium, Basilium, Gregorium theologum et Gregorium Nyssenum, Ambrosium, Augustinum, Theophilum, Ioannem Constantin., Cyrillum, Leonem, Proclum: et suscipimus omnia quae de recta fide et condemnatione haereticorum exposuerunt. Manifestum est autem ex multis auctoritatibus Augustini, et praecipue in libro de Trinitate, et super Ioannem, quod spiritus sanctus sit a filio. Oportet igitur concedi quod spiritus sanctus sit a filio sicut et a patre (*c. Gent.* 4, 24, 7)... A patre est filius et spiritus sanctus. Oportet igitur patrem referri et ad filium et ad spiritum sanctum ut principium ad id quod est a principio. Refertur autem ad filium ratione paternitatis, non autem ad spiritum sanctum: quia tunc spiritus sanctus esset filius; paternitas enim non dicitur nisi ad filium. Oportet igitur in patre esse aliam relationem qua referatur ad spiritum sanctum, et vocetur spiratio. Similiter, cum in filio sit quaedam relatio qua referatur ad patrem, quae dicitur filiatio, oportet quod in spiritu sancto sit etiam alia relatio qua referatur ad patrem, et dicatur processio. Et sic secundum originem filii a patre sint duae relationes, una in originante, alia in originato, scilicet paternitas et filiatio; et aliae duae ex parte originis spiritus sancti, scilicet spiratio et processio. Paternitas igitur et spiratio non constituunt duas personas, sed ad unam personam patris pertinent: quia non habent oppositionem ad invicem. Neque igitur filiatio et processio duas personas constituerent, sed ad unam pertinerent, nisi haberent oppositionem ad invicem. Non est autem dare aliam oppositionem nisi secundum originem. Oportet igitur quod sit oppositio originis inter filium et spiritum sanctum, ita quod unus sit ab alio” *c. Gent.* 4, 24, 9; cf. and 4, 24, 1.

¹³ *or.* 31, 8: “Who, inasmuch as He proceedeth from That Source, is no Creature; and inasmuch as He is not Begotten is no Son; and inasmuch as He is between the Unbegotten and the Begotten is God. And thus escaping the toils of your syllogisms, He has manifested himself as God, stronger than your divisions. What then is Procession? Do you tell me what is the Unbegottenness of the Father, and I will explain to you the physiology of the Generation of the Son and the Procession of the Spirit, and we shall both of us be frenzy-stricken for prying into the mystery of God.”

In the Western World Augustine was the only one who elaborated the idea that deriving from the Father and the Son, distinguishes the Spirit from the Son, who proceeds only from the Father, in the East Epiphanius, Bishop of Salamis in Cyprus, shared his opinion.¹⁴

5. *The Spirit as a common element*

Before I continue with my elaboration of Augustine's reflections, I would return to the beginning, i.e. to the sixth chapter of this homily. In this place he uses the method that has already been used by the Fathers: it starts from the Scriptures testimonies in order to prove the divinity of the Holy Spirit. There are two directions which are followed then: the Holy Spirit in the Scriptures has divine characteristics distinctive to the Father and the Son; the Spirit does the same deeds as the Father and the Son and He joins them. The Spirit is the Spirit to the Father and the Son. How can it be understood? Augustine was the first one who set such statements of the Scriptures on an ontological plan. Ambrose, for example, wrote about the Holy Spirit in the treatise *De Fide ad Gratianum* (380) and in *De Spiritu Sancto* (381). He led the Greek spirit and especially depended on Didymus the Blind. He intervened between the Alexandrian and Cappadocian traditions. He deepened a little the debate concerning personal relations in the Trinity; he insisted on the unity and the difference between persons, although he was more cautious about the word "persona" *se non riluttante*.¹⁵ A characteristic of the Spirit is to sanctify the creature. He *procedit a patre et filio*, but that does not refer to his origin but to his mission (*missio*) to the world.¹⁶

According to Augustine, the Holy Spirit has his origin from both of them. He should be called the Spirit in the real sense of the word – although the other two persons

¹⁴ Cf. *Ancoratus*, 8. 9. 67. 70. 71.

¹⁵ Cf. M. SIMONETTI, *La crisi ariana nel IV secolo*, in *Studia Ephemeridis Augustinianum*, 11, Roma 1975, p. 524-525; M. G. MARA, *Ambrogio di Milano*, in *Dizionario Patristico e di Antichità Cristiane*, a cura di A. DI BERARDINO, Casale Monferatto, vol. I, 147-152; L. DATTRINO, *Introduzione*, in *Lo Spirito Santo nella testimonianza dei Padri e degli Scrittori cristiani (I-V sec.)* ed. G. DI NOLA, Roma 1999, p. 29.

¹⁶ Cf. SIMONETTI, *La crisi ariana*, p. 501. About the difference between θεωλογία and οἰκονομία Louth writes: "This conclusion is not at all original, for much the strongest argument of Orthodox theologians against Western doctrine of *Filioque*, the doctrine that the Spirit proceeds from the Son as well as from Father, is that this doctrine only gains what credence it has by confusing θεωλογία and οἰκονομία, by applying ideas about the Spirit's mission in the οἰκονομία to his eternal procession within the Trinity" (cf. A. LOUTH, *Saint Augustine and the Greek Fathers*, in *Augustinian Studies* 33/1 (2002) 1-16; here p. 16).

of the Trinity are the spirit - for God is the Spirit (cf. John 4, 24). In a word, what is a common characteristic of the three persons is their immateriality, spirituality.¹⁷ The Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit are the spirit; *substantia dei* is the common element which connects the three hypostases. In Augustine's thinking it is felt the echo of the previous reflections which understood the divine substance as something spiritual, like a spirit. The same Augustine in his use did not avoid the danger of materialism, because he identified the Stoic notion of the spirit (πνεῦμα) with subtle matter. Tertullian in *Adversus Praxean* 7, 8-9 understood the spirit as a fine matter *corpus sui generis*, while Origen refused the concept of the spirit as *substantia dei* for he saw in Him material substrate which divides into two parts.¹⁸ Augustine did not hesitate to define the spirit as God's substance¹⁹ since the Platonic philosophy entered more and more in the Christian surroundings, also the term πνεῦμα was reinterpreted in the Platonic key, dematerialized – similar to when we oppose the spirit to the matter. Consequently, a shift happened in a philosophical sense: the stoic term πνεῦμα fell into a Platonic mainstream and dematerialized. This so important shift happened between the III and IV centuries. We should notice how deep eastern thinkers from the II century and in the West from the III century were deeply influenced by Stoic philosophy. The typical Old Testament and Judaic materialism coincided more easily with stoic materialism than with platonic spirituality. Origen and Plotinus introduced Platonism in the Christian and pagan world. The notion of the spirit in educated circles was used in the Platonic sense with no fear that it could be interpreted in a materialistic sense.

In order to understand Augustine's pneumatology it is always necessary to start from his thought in the mentioned *De fide et symbolo*, 9, 19. He only wanted to transmit the opinions of others, and thus a considerable reserve is noticed with young Augustine who had not deepened the themes that he had to talk about yet. In homily 99 the Spirit is a substance, albeit immaterial. More precisely, the spirit is the common element of three

¹⁷ Cf. *Io. ev. tr.* 99, 7.

¹⁸ Cf. *De principiis*, I, 1, 6; IV, 4, 1.

¹⁹ Novatian rejected the idea of God as a spirit before that (cf. *trin.* 7, 37). About the Spirit in the West before Augustine cf. M. SIMONETTI, *Il regresso della teologia dello Spirito santo in Occidente dopo Tertuliano*, in *Augustinianum* (1980) 655-669.

persons, because it is the substance. In *De fide et symbolo*, 9, 19 the Spirit is defined as divinity:²⁰

Some, however, have gone so far as to believe that the communion of the Father and the Son (*Ausi sunt tamen quidam ipsam communionem Patris et Filii*), and (so to speak) their Godhead (*deitatem*), which the Greeks designate θεότητα, is the Holy Spirit; so that, inasmuch as the Father is God and the Son God, the Godhead itself, in which they are united with each other, - to wit, the former by begetting the Son, and the latter by cleaving to the Father, - should [thereby] be constituted equal with Him by whom He is begotten. This Godhead, then, which they wish to be understood likewise as the love and charity subsisting between these two [Persons], the one toward the other, they affirm to have received the name of the Holy Spirit. And this opinion of theirs they support by many proofs drawn from the Scriptures; among which we might instance either the passage which says, *For the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit, who has been given unto us* (Rom. 5, 5), or many other proofs texts of a similar tenor: while they ground their position also upon the express fact that it is through the Holy Spirit that we are reconciled unto God; whence also, when He is called the Gift of God, they will have it that sufficient indication is offered of the love of God and the Holy Spirit being identical. For we are not reconciled unto Him except through that love in virtue of which we are also called sons: (cf. 1 John 3, 1) as we are no more *under fear, like servants*, because *love, when it is made perfect, casteth out fear* (cf. 1 John 4, 18); and [as] *we have received the spirit of liberty, wherein we cry, Abba, Father* (Rom. 8, 15). And inasmuch as, being reconciled and called back into friendship through love, we shall be able to become acquainted with all the secret things of God, for this reason it is said of the Holy Spirit that *He shall lead you into all truth* (John 16, 13). For the same reason also, that confidence in preaching the truth, with which the apostles were filled at His advent (cf. Acts 2, 4), is rightly ascribed to love; because diffidence

²⁰ Hilary of Poitiers also does not define the Spirit as a person in *De trinitate* (cf. L. F. LADARIA, *El Espíritu santo en Hilario de Poitiers*, Madrid 1977, p. 275 ss.). He prefers to call (cf. *trin.* 2, 29) the Holy Spirit by the name taken from the Scriptures: *donum, munus*, etc. These names had enormous importance for Augustine's understanding. About this see: R. L. WILKEN, *Spiritus sanctus secundum scripturas sanctas: Exegetical Considerations of Augustine on the Holy Spirit*, in *Augustinian Studies* 31/1 (2000) 1-18.

also is assigned to fear, which the perfecting of love excludes. Thus, likewise, the same is called the Gift of God (cf. Eph. 3, 7), because no one enjoys that which he knows, unless he also love it. To enjoy the Wisdom of God, however, implies nothing else than to cleave to the same in love... Wherefore, if in this passage mention is made of the Holy Spirit, when it is said, *For God is a Spirit*, they maintain that we must take note that it is not said, *for the Spirit is God*, but, *for God is a Spirit*; so that the very Godhead of the Father and the Son is in this passage called God, and that is the Holy Spirit. To this is added another testimony which the Apostle John offers, when he says, *For God is love*. (cf. 1 John 4, 16) For here, in like manner, what he says is not, *Love is God*, but, *God is love*; so that the very Godhead is taken to be love.

The extract quoted is long, but important. Not only does he expose the Fathers' opinions here but he also exposed the Scriptures' testimonies. Θεότητα becomes the Spirit. From an impersonal notion we are slowly approaching the image. Persons see each other through the Spirit; they communicate with each other.²¹ This really is great news.

6. Generation and proceeding

In order to prove that the Spirit has His own characteristic due to His double origin Augustine uses the method *per reductionem ad absurdum*, showing that He cannot be the son:

In connection with this, we come also to some understanding of the further point, that is, so far as it can be understood by such beings as ourselves, why the Holy Spirit is not said to be born, but to proceed: since, if He also were called by the name of Son, He could not avoid being called the Son of both, which is utterly absurd. For no one is a son of two, unless of a father and mother. But it would be utterly abhorrent to entertain the suspicion of any such intervention between God the Father and God the Son. For not even a son of human parents proceedeth at

²¹ Augustine took over the idea *communio* from Marius Victorinus, but he essentially changed its role that he had with African philosopher and rhetorician. The Spirit brought the Son closer to the Father because the Son had moved away (cf. SIMONETTI, *La crisi ariana*, pp. 293-294). The African calls the Spirit *patris et filii copula*: "Adesto, sancte Spiritus, patris et filii copula" (*Hymni*, I, 3).

the same time from father and from mother: but at the time that he proceedeth from the father into the mother, it is not then that he proceedeth from the mother; and when he cometh forth from the mother into the light of day, it is not then that he proceedeth from the father. But the Holy Spirit proceedeth not from the Father into the Son, and then proceedeth from the Son to the work of the creature's sanctification; but He proceedeth at the same time from both: although this the Father hath given unto the Son, that He should proceed from Him also, even as He proceedeth from Himself.²²

If we should take this argument not as a rhetorical one but as a dialectical (using Augustine's vocabulary) we would fall into the gutter. Yet, if the son is always from two, from father and mother, how then the Son isn't from the two? The argument is weak because it already implies that it is one of the two. In other words, it is said that it is one of the two but is not a child. It is something else. That is why it is said "proceed" but not "generate". The essence of the argument is to show absurdity of using the notion of generating because it would imply sexual intercourse between the Father and the Son which is blasphemous. This is why the proof is rhetorical and not dialectical. The argument (*quanto magis illic intellegendus est de ipso procedere Spiritus sanctus, ubi sic ait: De Patre procedit, ut non diceret: De me non procedit?*)²³ is also subsidiary but not essential, because in that way everything desired can be proved .

Sticking to Augustinian analysis, we can be sure that the Greek formula *διὰ through, across, over* would not be accepted for him.²⁴ This formula would represent

²² *Io. ev. tr.* 99, 9.

²³ *Io. ev. tr.* 99, 8.

²⁴ It seems that at first St. Gregory of Nyssa (Cf. *Ad Ablabium quod non sint tres dei*, ed. F. MUELLER, vol. III 1, p. 56: τὸ μὲν γὰρ προσεχῶς ἐκ τοῦ πρώτου, τὸ δὲ διὰ τοῦ προσεχῶς ἐκ τοῦ πρώτου, ὥστε καὶ τὸ μονογενὲς ἀναμφίβολον ἐπὶ τοῦ υἱοῦ μένειν, καὶ τὸ ἐκ τοῦ πατρὸς εἶναι τὸ πνεῦμα μὴ ἀμφιβάλλειν, τῆς τοῦ υἱοῦ μεσιτείας καὶ αὐτῶ τὸ μονογενὲς φυλαττούσης καὶ τὸ πνεῦμα τῆς φυσικῆς πρὸς τὸν πατέρα σχέσεως μὴ ἀπειργούσης; *Contra Eunomium* I, 26: ἐκ μὲν τοῦ θεοῦ τῶν ὄλων καὶ αὐτὸ τὴν αἰτίαν ἔχον τοῦ εἶναι, ὅθεν καὶ τὸ μονογενὲς ἐστὶ φῶς, διὰ δὲ τοῦ ἀληθινοῦ φωτὸς ἐκλαμψάν.) exposed the idea that the Holy Spirit differs from the Son in a way that He perceives the existence from this. Gregory usually determines the Holy Spirit with the phrase "not generating". In Antiochia "proceeding" is added to "not generating". This addition had a great many representatives in order to be included in Credo of the Second Ecumenical Council. The Fathers obviously accepted this expression because it was more appropriate than the awkward and negative "of Father without generating". Nyssen's reflection was integrated in theological understanding of St. Maximus the Confessor and John of Damascus according to whom proceeding of the Spirit from the Father is through the Son. We may agree with a clear conscience with Zizioulas: "The reference to the well known passage from Saint Gregory Palamas describing the Spirit as 'some kind of

generation for Augustine, although the Greeks themselves would rather use the preposition ἐκ, which would correspond more to the process of generating. The ancients understood generation in a wrong way. They thought, namely, that a complete fetus generates only from a male sex. The spermatozoid is a complete person. The man inserts it in to a woman, and she simply feeds it. For example, Pseudo-Hippolytus said briefly: καὶ γίνεται ἡ τοῦ ἄρρενος τροπὴ γένεσις, ἡ δὲ τῆς θηλείας τροπὴ τροφὴ τῷ γεννωμένῳ.²⁵ Therefore Augustine – a man of his own epoch - confirms, as we have already seen, that

for not even a son of human parents proceedeth at the same time from father and from mother: but at the time that he proceedeth from the father into the mother, it is not then that he proceedeth from the mother; and when he cometh forth from the mother into the light of day, it is not then that he proceedeth from the father.

Facing another problem Augustine writes about generating in the following way:

For everyone knows that the parent who sows the seed is the one who most of all or first of all (*aut potius aut prius*) generates a child and that the woman either does not generate, but bears a child - or, if bearing a child is correctly called generation, she first conceived from the man who generates the child and afterwards generates the child she has conceived.²⁶

Augustine was reading Matthew who wrote that “Abraham *begat* Isaac,” (1, 2) and “Salmon *begat* Boaz of Rahab” (1, 5). In Greek: Ἀβραὰμ ἐγέννησεν τὸν Ἰσαὰκ... Σαλμών δὲ ἐγέννησεν τὸν Βόες ἐκ τῆς Ῥαχάβ. It was translated into Latin as *genuit* and prepositions *de* or *ex* are used. The man generates *from* or *by* a woman and not *with* (*cum*) her.

love (ἔρωσ) of the Father towards the Son or to that from St. John of Damascus who speaks of the Spirit as ‘resting’ (ἀναπαύομενον) in the Son, should not be justified on the ground of the economy.” Cf. J. D. ZIZIOULAS, *One Single Source*, www.romanity.org/cont.htm.

²⁵ *Refutatio omnium haeresium*, 6, 17, 5.

²⁶ *Opus imperfectum contra Iulianum*, 3, 85.

So, the formula *ab utroque* wanted to express the concept of origin different from generation. However, from today's perspective the result is quite the opposite: the son is *ab utroque*. Now we know that the son bears the genetic material from father and mother. He proceeds from both of them at the same time, *simul de utroque procedit*. The conclusion is paradoxical because it means that Augustine himself would use the Greek expression *διὰ* today in order to avoid equality of the Holy Spirit with the Son and blasphemical consideration in connection with the Holy Spirit. In that way we see that it would be a big mistake to petrify the formulae; fossilizing attitude would also present the betrayal of Augustine's spirit, since he himself called the readers innumerable to become his collocutor but and not a passive recipient .

7. *Principaliter*

Another difficult problem Augustine had to solve was the monarchy of God the Father because this is incompatible with the binary position developed here. But in homily 99 the notion *principaliter* is missing as I have already emphasized. The Easterners say that the hypostases are independent, but not that there are three gods or three principles. Ἀρχή is the only one, the Father, from whom proceeds the Son and the Holy Spirit. Confessing only one divinity, one kingdom, one principle, the successful unity is pointed out: one is the kingdom, one is the principle because the Father is the cause of divinity. How then can the monarchy fit with the idea of two principles?

Let us look at what Bishop of Hippo thought of the problem of the One, but the tendency to read his works in the scholastic key is present today. Moreover – as it seems to me - his two main theological works: *De trinitate* and the *Tractatus in evangelium Iohannis* are read separately. From the first one the essential conclusions are drawn, from the other personalistic ones. Both directions would be correct but only when Augustine would not write one or another book. That's why the reality is much more complicated; the problems that Augustine solved were various and that is why the solutions are different.²⁷ Some authors believe that Augustine, wishing to solve the problem of one and

²⁷ Bailleux wrote: "Although having put the stress on the unity of activities that Trinity God... acts outward, *De Trinitate* does not fall into a tactless essentialism for which he is sometimes criticized because it is read

multitude in God, replaced Plotin's One with one divine essence. But for such an opinion there are no written proofs. On the contrary, the One is identified as the Father. Of course, this One is one because it is one Principle, one ἀρχή, one cause of the divine being. The unity is comprehended as a unity through one ἀρχή, the idea which existed in Greek philosophy as well as in monarchical theologies, orthodox and non-orthodox. I add one of early Augustine's texts that confirms undoubtedly that God is one because he is the Father:

In the Father is unity, in the Son equality, in the Holy Spirit the harmony of unity and equality; and these three <persons> are all *one because of the Father*, all equal because of the Son, and all harmonious because of the Holy Spirit.²⁸

What is the difference between this claim and statement of Basil the Great: Εἷς Θεὸς ὅτι καὶ Πατήρ?²⁹ The cause is one and that is why God is one.³⁰

in a hurry. Divine deeds, creative as well as enlightening, although they are one, correspond to the characteristics based on the characteristics of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit... In the same way as the Father creates us with the help of the Son in the Holy Spirit, so in the Holy Spirit, with the help of a Word, calls us to Himself in order to realize our eternal blessedness" (E. BAILLEUX, *Dieu Trinité et son oeuvre*, in *Recherches Augustinienne* 7 (1971) pp. 189 and 217). Father Agostino Trapé was not silent, in front of the fashion, which still diminishes step by step today, and which opposes the Cappadocians to Augustine: "Lo studio dei Padri greci per il rinnovamento della teologia trinitaria sarà certamente molto utile, ma non meno utile sarà, ne siamo certi, una lettura attenta, meno scolastica, del *De Trinitate* di S. Agostino" (A. TRAPÈ, *Introduzione*, in *La Trinità*, Opere di Sant'Agostino, NBA IV, Roma 2003, p. LXV).

²⁸ *De doctrina christiana*, 1, 5, 5: Res igitur quibus fruendum est, Pater et Filius et Spiritus Sanctus, eademque Trinitas, una quaedam summa res, communisque omnibus fruendum ea; si tamen res et non rerum omnium causa, si tamen et causa. Non enim facile nomen quod tantae excellentiae conveniat, inveniri potest, nisi quod melius ita dicitur Trinitas haec, unus Deus ex quo omnia, per quem omnia, in quo omnia. Ita Pater et Filius et Spiritus Sanctus et singulus quisque horum Deus, et simul omnes unus Deus et singulus quisque horum plena substantia, et simul omnes una substantia. Pater nec Filius est nec Spiritus Sanctus, Filius nec Pater est nec Spiritus Sanctus, Spiritus Sanctus nec Pater est nec Filius, sed Pater tantum Pater et Filius tantum Filius et Spiritus Sanctus tantum Spiritus Sanctus. Eadem tribus aeternitas, eadem incommutabilitas, eadem maiestas, eadem potestas. *In Patre unitas, in Filio aequalitas, in Spiritu sancto unitatis aequalitatisque concordia. Et tria haec unum omnia propter Patrem, aequalia omnia propter Filium, connexa omnia propter Spiritum sanctum.*

²⁹ *Sermo* 24, PG 31, 605.

³⁰ Cf. *trin.* 5, 13, 14: "The Father is called so, therefore, relatively, and He is also relatively said to be the Beginning, and whatever else there may be of the kind; but He is called the Father in relation to the Son, the Beginning in relation to all things, which are from Him". There are many brains which indicate the tesi of monarchy of the Father in Augustine. What means that - he write - "The Father hath life in Himself" (John 5, 26)? Not elsewhere hath He life but in Himself. His living, in fact, is in Him, not from elsewhere, nor proceeded from another. He does not, as it were, borrow life, nor, as it were, become a partaker of life, of a life which is not what Himself is: but "hath life in Himself," so that the very life is to Him His very self... that there may be only this difference between the Father and the Son, that the Father hath life in Himself, which none gave Him, whilst the Son hath life in Himself which the Father gave" (*Io. ev. tr.* 19,

Not wishing to be over extensive, I will quote one more extract from *De trinitate*, the work, which according to some has little in common with the “personalistic” approach of the eastern Fathers:

Because, also, when He had said, “Whom the Father will send,” He added also, “in my name” (John 14, 26). Yet He did not say, Whom the Father will send from me, as He said, “Whom I will send unto you from the Father,” (John 15, 26) - showing, namely, that the Father is the beginning (*principium*) of the whole divinity (*totius divinitatis*), or if it is better so expressed, deity (*deitatis*).³¹

So, *Pater enim solus non est de alio*.³² The Father giving birth timely a Son hands Him over His being, without changing His own nature. Substance or essence are not in the first place, but rather the Father is the one who “dominates” it. These would be the texts that induce me not to accept the opinion of the Dominican scientist Régnon, who opposed Latin and Byzantine tradition from this aspect, namely: “Latin philosophy – asserts he – considers the nature in itself and proceeds to the agent; Greek philosophy considers the agent first and passes through it to find the nature. The Latin think of personality as a mode of the nature; the Greeks think of nature as the content of the person”.³³ The Latin starts from the divine nature in order to get to the Face, the Greek starts from the Face in order to

11). This is how he continues in the same oration: “Behold, sayest thou, thyself confessest that the Father hath given life to the Son, that He may have life in Himself, even as the Father hath life in Himself; that the Father not lacking, the Son may not lack; that as the Father is life, so the Son may be life; and both united one life, not two lives; because God is one, not two Gods; and this same *is to be life* (ibid. 12)... The Father is life not by being begotten; the Son is life by being begotten. The Father is of no father; the Son is of God the Father. The Father in His being is of none, but in that He is Father, ‘tis because of the Son. But the Son also, in that He is Son, ‘tis because of the Father: in His being, He is of the Father (ibid. 13)”.

³¹ *trin.* 4, 20, 29: “non tamen dixit: *Quem mittet Pater* a me, quemadmodum dixit: *Quem ego mittam vobis a Patre*, videlicet ostendens quod totius divinitatis, vel si melius dicitur deitatis, principium Pater est. Qui ergo ex Patre procedit et Filio, ad eum refertur a quo natus est Filius”.

³² *trin.* 15, 26, 47: “For the Father alone is not from another, and therefore He alone is called unbegotten, not indeed in the Scriptures... And the Son is born of the Father; and the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father principally (*de Patre principaliter*)”.

³³ T. RÉGNON, *Études de théologie positive sur la Sainte Trinité*, I, Paris 1892, p. 433, from J. MEYENDORFF, *Byzantine Theology: Historical Trends and Doctrinal Themes*, London & Oxford: Mowbrays 1975, p. 175. He wrote again: “In the West, however, especially since the time of Augustine, the unity of the divine being served as the starting point of Trinitarian theology. Obviously, as long as the two schools of thought remained open to dialogue and mutual understanding, they could have developed in a complementary way. Unfortunately, the bitter polemics on the *filioque* issue led to a stiffening of positions and become one of the major causes of the schism”. Cf. J. N. D KELLY, *Early Christian Doctrines*, London: Black 1958, pp. 253-279; G. L. PRESTIGE, *God in Patristic Thought* London: SPCK, 1952 pp. 233-241; V. LOSSKY, *La teologia mistica della Chiesa d'Oriente*, Bologna 1985, pp. 45-51.

reach God's nature. Such a consideration could go well in theology at the end of XIX century, which represents the sum of western thinking about the primacy of the essence,³⁴ but whose results suffered significant criticisms. In Augustine's reflection, no divine essence can exist that would be *al pari* with three persons and which would in that way constitute a quartet; persons possess the divine nature, and they have one and the same nature, because the divinity is simple.³⁵

The doctrine of the One as well as the one of *Logos* is significantly subordinate. Since the Logos is the mediator between God and people it is unavoidable that his position is a bit lower in comparison with the Father's. The whole ante-nicene Christology is subordinate and thus common with Plotin's trichotomic scheme. It was Arius who, exaggerating, first threw the Logos out of the divine sphere. There were two spheres of beings: God and the world. The Logos is in the middle of them. But, the question is what sphere does He more aspire to? The Ante-nicene Fathers put him in the divine sphere, although with different hints, in which he participated although on a more inferior level than God the Father. The One is an extremely strong phrase. Assigning it only to Father, other persons become beings of the second order. The one is indivisible. If the One were one nature, if in other words "unity" were the thing precisely defined and in the possession of the One alone, than other hypostases would be of the other nature or the

³⁴ As an example of such reading, and which was criticized as the "official" catholic teachings by a famous Greek theologian Zizioulas and his disciples, we may find it in *The Catholic Encyclopedia, cap. The Blessed Trinity, (V. The Doctrine as Interpreted in Greek Theology; VI. The Doctrine as Interpreted in Latin Theology)*: "The Greek Fathers approached the problem of Trinitarian doctrine in a way which differs in an important particular from that which, since the days of St. Augustine, has become traditional in Latin theology. In Latin theology thought fixed first on the Nature and only subsequently on the Persons. Personality is viewed as being, so to speak, the final complement of the Nature: the Nature is regarded as logically prior to the Personality. Hence, because God's Nature is one, He is known to us as One God before He can be known as Three Persons. And when theologians speak of God without special mention of a Person, conceive Him under this aspect. This is entirely different from the Greek point of view. Greek thought fixed primarily on the Three distinct Persons: the Father, to Whom, as the source and origin of all, the name of God (Theos) more especially belongs; the Son, proceeding from the Father by an eternal generation, and therefore rightly termed God also; and the Divine Spirit, proceeding from the Father through the Son. The Personality is treated as logically prior to the Nature... Didymus even employs expressions which seem to show that he, like the Latins, conceived the Nature as logically antecedent to the Persons. He understands the term God as signifying the whole Trinity, and not, as do the other Greeks, the Father alone: "When we pray, whether we say 'Kyrie eleison', or 'O God aid us', we do not miss our mark: for we include the whole of the Blessed Trinity in one Godhead" (De Trin., II, xix)... It is plain that these Fathers would have rejected no less firmly than the Latins the later Photian heresy that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father alone... Deus is for him (Augustine) not God the Father, but the Trinity".

³⁵ Cf. *ep.* 120, 3, 13: "But now hold with unshakeable faith that the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit are a Trinity and that there is, nonetheless, one God, not that the divinity is common to these as if it were a fourth (*non... quasi quarta divinitas*), but that it is itself the ineffably inseparable Trinity".

second order. So, namely, it is in Plotin's system. The One is above the Mind and Soul. Different regions of beings are described by subordinationism; the One is out of any activity and is enlightened instead of another, in the Mind.³⁶

Pagan thought dealt with the relationship between the One and the multitude in the context of the general organization of the beings, which was not enough for the Christians; namely, God discovered Himself as the One and the Trinity, as three individual persons, as Basil and the next Fathers convince us. According to Christian symbols of religion, there are three who participate in the one and same divine life. Only by placing to the same ontological plan of the divine persons it is possible to speak of reciprocal relation. The primacy of the Father in this context is not a primacy that implies subordination of ante-nicene type. Although the Father is "bigger" than the Son since he is the cause of his being, he is not bigger (more different) by nature. There is no subordination but differing of the persons. This teaching was confirmed on the Second Ecumenical Council 381. and in primarily "essential's" symbol *Quicumque*, which was wrongly attributed to Athanasius, Hilary, Ambrose or Venantius Fortunatus, and from whom Augustine borrows certain phrases. *Quicumque* confirms unity and equality between persons and later differences between them.³⁷

Let us return to the homily. It can be noticed that Augustine avoids to mention the Principle. He confirms that the Son receives from the Father to proceed the Spirit. The

³⁶ Even though Plotinus put Mind and Soul in the divine's sphere, and used model of the image for describe second hypostasy (this second god proceed from One without impoverishing him, "like light from the light"), he affirm that One could exist also without νοῦς-α. In other words he declares in *Enneades*, V, 5, 12: "The Good is the older- not in time but by degree of reality- and it has the higher and earlier power, all power in fact, for the sequent holds only a power subordinate and delegated of which the prior remains sovereign. Not that God has any need of His derivatives (οὐ δεηθεὶς οὗτος τῶν ἐξ αὐτοῦ γενομένων): He ignores all that produced realm, never necessary to Him, and remains identically what He was before He brought it into being. So too, had the secondary <καλὸν> never existed, He would have been unconcerned (ἐπεὶ οὐδ' αὖ ἐμέλησεν αὐτῷ μὴ γενομένου), exactly as He would not have grudged existence to any other universe that might spring into being from Him, were any such possible; of course no other such could be since there is nothing that has not existence once the All exists. But God never was the All; that would make Him dependent upon the universe: transcending all, He was able at once to make all things and to leave them to their own being, He above".

³⁷ Here are some articles from this symbol: "QUICUMQUE vult salvus esse, ante omnia opus est, ut teneat catholicam fidem... Fides autem catholica haec est: ut unum Deum in Trinitate, et Trinitatem in unitate veneremur. Neque confundentes personas, neque substantiam seperantes. Alia est enim persona Patris alia Filii, alia Spiritus Sancti: Sed Patris, et Fili, et Spiritus Sancti una est divinitas, aequalis gloria, coeterna maiestas. Qualis Pater, talis Filius, talis Spiritus Sanctus. Increatus Pater, increatus Filius, increatus Spiritus Sanctus... Ita Deus Pater, Deus Filius, Deus Spiritus Sanctus. Et tamen non tres dii, sed unus est Deus... *Spiritus Sanctus a Patre et Filio*: non factus, nec creatus, nec genitus, sed procedens... Et in hac Trinitate nihil prius aut posterius, nihil maius aut minus: sed totae tres personae coeternae sibi sunt et coequales".

Father entrusted (*dedit*) to the Son this function. On its basis proceeds terminus technicus *principaliter* that we meet in *De trinitate*. The Father who is the principle, now from Himself *principaliter* proceeds the Spirit. It is natural that Augustine had to find out a specific term in order to define his thinking. At the beginning of the reflection he says that the Father enables the Son with this possibility, and then he finds out the adverb of frequency *principaliter*, mainly with which he describes that enabling. However, it is not easy at all to comprehend how he understood the term *principaliter*.³⁸ Is it only the way to express the primacy of honour? I am not sure that we should follow that direction. The problem arises with *simul*. The honour is the logical primary which implies the primacy, although it is not temporal. *Simul* on the contrary should unite the principle, *principaliter* divides it. Augustine could not accept the two principles, which were always identified with persons. In the already quoted speech *De Fide et simbolo*, 9, 19 he resolutely rejects such an idea:

While they do not affirm Him to owe that which He is to no one, but [admit Him to owe it] to the Father, of whom are all things; lest we should establish two Beginnings without beginning (*ne duo constituamus principia sine principio*), which would be an assertion at once most false and most absurd, and one proper not to the catholic faith, but to the error of certain heretics.³⁹

The Principle is one and is identified as the Father. Two principles would mean two Gods, an illogical thing – but not recognizable as heretical. As a matter of fact, I

³⁸ “It is extremely important - Zizioulas affirms - in my judgment, to clarify the point concerning the ‘source’ (πηγή) or ‘principle’ (ἀρχή) or ‘cause’ (αἰτία) in the Holy Trinity. This is crucial perhaps decisive. The document of the Vatican <Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, *The Greek and Latin traditions*...> sees no difference between the monarchia of the Father, i.e. the idea that the Father is the sole ‘principle’ in God’s Trinitarian being, an idea strongly promoted by the Greek Fathers, and St. Augustine’s expression that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father ‘principaliter’. However, *before we can come to the conclusion that the two traditions, Eastern and Western, understand this matter in the same way, we must raise the following questions*: a) Does the expression ‘principaliter’ necessarily preclude making the Son a kind of secondary cause in the ontological emergence of the Spirit? *The Filioque seems to suggest two sources of the Spirit’s personal existence*, one of which (the Father) may be called the first and original cause (*principaliter*), while the other one (the Son) may be regarded as a secondary (not *principaliter*) cause, but still a ‘cause’ albeit not *principaliter*” (cf. J. D. ZIZIOULAS, *One Single Source*).

³⁹ Nec tamen id quod est, nulli debere, sed Patri, ex quo omnia; ne duo constituamus principia sine principio, quod falsissimum est et absurdissimum, et non catholicae fidei, sed quorumdam haeticorum errori proprium.

would not know to whom I should attribute the assertion of the two principles.⁴⁰ Nowhere do we come across the mentioned heretics, not even in *De haeresibus* (428).

So, monotheism as monarchism does not allow two principles. In the homily 99, Augustine does not talk about the principle because he could not insert it into this binary scheme. Continuing to think about this problem, he created the adverb *principaliter* but he parallelly uses another solution: the Father and the Son are one principle.

If, therefore, that also which is given has him for a beginning by whom it is given, since it has received from no other source that which proceeds from him; it must be admitted that the Father and the Son are a Beginning of the Holy Spirit, not two Beginnings; but as the Father and Son are one God, and one Creator, and one Lord relatively to the creature, so are they one Beginning relatively to the Holy Spirit. But the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit is one Beginning in respect to the creature, as also one Creator and one God.⁴¹

It is noticeable that Augustine moved the specific meaning of the principle in the other referential system. The place is changed. *Causa* is no longer tied only in the sphere of the divine being, but it is tied to His action *ad extra*.⁴² The persons are different from each other, but from the outside they appear as one God. One principle (can be understood in this way: a great many causes can be considered as one cause if they produce a unique product) comparing to a creature is used in order to achieve the unity within the binary scheme applied to the problem of the Holy Spirit.

⁴⁰ Antonio Pieretti does not have such a problem: “Indubbiamente Agostino ha di mira l’arianesimo; ma non è da escludere che voglia riferirsi anche alla gnosi o, più in generale, alla filosofia profana.” Cf. *La vera religione*, NBA VI/1 a cura di A. PIERETTI, note 65. How is it that, if one thing is doubtless, the same is applied to many subjects? CIPRIANI, *La retractio agostiniana*, p. 436 stops on a logical solution of this problem not asking the question who these heretics could be.

⁴¹ *trin.* 5, 14, 15.

⁴² *trin.* 5, 13, 14: “Therefore, God is spoken of as one Beginning in respect to the creature, not as two or three beginnings”.