

ON DIVINE PHILANTHROPY\*  
FROM PLATO TO JOHN CHRYSOSTOM

BY  
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III. ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM: CHRONOLOGICAL APPROACH  
TO HIS USE OF *PHILANTHROPIA*

Chrysostom was fortunate in having received the best education of the day in his native Antioch under Libanius<sup>1</sup> and Diodorus (+ 394), later to be bishop of Tarsus.<sup>2</sup> In this highly sophisticated capital of Graeco-Roman Syria, Christians and pagans «did in fact share the same culture, but this common possession would itself serve to accentuate the differences between them.»<sup>3</sup>

Before I start my chronological inquiry into Chrysostom's use of *philanthropia*, it is desirable that I should present at least the general framework of his life.

Chrysostom was born during the reign of Constantius (337-361), between 344 and 354, the latter date being held the more probable.<sup>4</sup> Still a boy under the short reign of Julian the Philosopher (361,363) he lived through his adolescence and youth under Valens (363-378), grew into adult manhood during the rule of Theodosius I (379-395) and reached full maturity while Arcadius (395-408) reigned in Constantinople.<sup>5</sup>

Before making any comparison with other contemporary thinkers I must explore the internal significance of the term of *philanthropia* for Chrysostom himself, as it was used during the many years of his literary activity.

The former pupil of Libanius<sup>6</sup> and the enthusiastic novice in

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\* Συνέχεια ἐκ τῆς σελ. 1083 τοῦ προηγούμενου τόμου.

1. A. J. Festugière, *Antioche*, p. 181.

2. H. von Campenhausen, *The Fathers of the Greek Church*, p. 132.

3. G. Downey, *Ancient Antioch*, p. 198.

4. Baur, *op. cit.*, I, 3.

5. For more details on chronology, A. J. Festugière, *Antioche*, pp. 412-14 *et passim*.

6. G. Downey, *Ancient Antioch*, p. 193. Cf. Paul Petit, *Les Etudiants de Libanius* (Paris, 1957), p. 41, n. 129.

Caius Fabricius wrote in *Zu den Jugendschriften des Johannes Chrysostomus: Untersuchungen zum Klassizismus des vierten Jahrhunderts* (Lund, 1962), p. 199: «Johannes Chrysostomus mehrfach kräftig Libanios imitiert.»

Diodorus' exegetical school<sup>7</sup> was indeed well-prepared to intertwine the multiple threads of both pagan and Christian philanthropy. Even though it seems that Diodorus himself did not very often use the word *philanthropia*,<sup>8</sup> he must have inculcated in the impressionable mind of Chrysostom his own exegetical method according to which one must have a historical flair and respect for every single word in the Scriptures, *philanthropia* included.<sup>9</sup> But the greatest service Diodorus did for his pupil was to introduce him to the literature of his younger fellow alumni from the university of Athens — the Cappadocians<sup>10</sup> — so important, as we have seen, for the fixation of theological terminology in general and that of *philanthropia* in particular.

I am using the text of Migne, as mentioned above, and recent critically edited works whenever available.<sup>11</sup> *Dubia* and, needless to say, *spuria*, do not enter into the scope of my inquiry.<sup>12</sup>

7. Chrysostom was eighteen years old when he met Diodorus. See Socrat. *H. E.* VI, 3 PG 67, 665 B, cited by A. J. Festugière, *Antioche*, p. 71.

8. In the extant works of Diodorus I have found very few instances, such as φιλανθρωπως (humanely) in PG 33, 1578 B. David is *philanthropos* and prophet, foreknowing the calling of all the nations: PG 33, 1595 D. *Philanthropos* going together with ἡμερότης: PG 33, 1627 B.

Theologically only two cases are important: *philanthropia* is the fulfillment of the Old Testament promises (PG 33, 1619 A) and once χάρις is closely related to *philanthropia*. There is, also, one case of the divine *chréstotés* (PG 33, 1582 A).

9. Quasten, *op. cit.*, III, 398-99. It is not known by whom Chrysostom was baptized in 372. Cf. A. Wenger (ed.), *Huit catéchèses baptismales inédites* (Paris, 1957), p. 39.

10. C. Baur, *op. cit.*, I, 96.

11. Madame Anne-Maria Malingrey has recognized the great achievement of the edition of Sir Henry Savile (Eaton, 1612) upon which all later editions are firmly based. See «Vers une édition critique des oeuvres de Saint Chrysostome,» *Studia Patristica*, III, ed. F. L. Cross (Berlin, 1961), 81-84, especially p. 84.

The critically edited works of Chrysostom are the following:

*De Sacerdotio*, ed. J. Arbuthnot Nairn (Cambridge, 1906);

*Sur l' incompréhensibilité de Dieu*, ed. Ferdinand Cavallera and Jean Daniélou (Paris, 1951);

*Les Cohabitations suspectes* and *Comment observer la virginité*, ed. Jean Dumortier (Paris, 1955);

*Huit catéchèses baptismales inédites*, ed. Antoine Wenger (Paris, 1957);

*Sur la Providence de Dieu*, ed. Anne-Marie Malingrey (Paris, 1961);

*Lettre d'exile — A Olympias et à tous les fidèles (Quod nemo laeditur)*, ed. Anne-Maria Melingrey (Paris, 1964);

*A Théodore*, ed. Jean Dumortier (Paris, 1966);

*La Virginité*, ed. Herbert Musurillo and Bernard Grillet (Paris, 1966);

12. Of great help, in this respect, is the recent work of J. A. de Aldama: *Repositorium Pseudochrysostomicum* (Paris, 1965), especially pp. 228-38.

Auguste Comte liked to say that one knows generalities better than details.<sup>13</sup> This is especially true in the case of Chrysostom who was rather restrained in disclosing other secrets than those of his religious life. He did not spell out the name of his own mother even though he spoke of her so movingly.<sup>14</sup> Hence the approximative value of the dating of the majority of his works, as well as the rather hypothetic character of my assumptions concerning Chrysostom's antagonistic attitude toward Themistius' use of *philanthropia* and toward Theodore of Mopsuestia's Christology.<sup>15</sup>

In the earliest work of Chrysostom, *Ad Theodorum lapsum* (To the Fallen Theodore),<sup>16</sup> we find a few but significant uses of *philanthropia*. Since the addressee of the letter — allegedly the young Theodore of Mopsuestia<sup>17</sup> — had to be moved to repentance in order to persuade him to return to the monastery he had quitted, Chrysostom warned him that a misunderstood human philanthropy can be sacrilegious. Saul's sentimental philanthropy in the act of sparing a king made prisoner was condemned as the betrayal of God's plan, while, on the other hand, the murder of Phineas was accounted as praiseworthy.<sup>18</sup>

When the divine philanthropy appears for the first time it is, also, disturbingly stern: the Godhead being by definition passionless (*ἀπαθείς*), when it punishes and chastizes, it does not do so out of wrath, but out of philanthropy and concern (*κρηδεμονία*), therefore one may be confident of the efficacy of the penitence.<sup>19</sup> On another occasion, God is called philanthropic because He has frightened the proud king of Babylon with His miracle of the three youngsters in the furnace.<sup>20</sup>

13. Cited by Raymond Aron, *L' Histoire et ses interprétations: Entretiens autour de Arnold Toynbee sous la direction de Raymond Aron* (Paris-Laffaye, 1961), p. 131.

14. *De Sacerdotio* I, I (Nairn), pp. 5-6.

15. For the chronology of Chrysostom's works still the most useful is Louis Mayer, *op. cit.*, esp. pp. xv-xxxviii. Also, H. Lietzmann, «Johannes Chrysostomus,» *Kleine Schriften*, I (Berlin, 1958), 326-47, esp. pp. 327-38. Cf. Berthold Altaner, *Patrologie* (7th ed.; Freiburg-Wien, 1966), pp. 322-28.

16. According to J. Dumortier (*Cohabitations*, p. 15), it was written in 372-374. The same author in *A Théodore*, p. 10, n. 2, came to the conclusion that it is even earlier, namely from 367-368. A. J. Festugière, *Antioche*, p. 192, thinks it is of much later date: 383-386.

17. J. Dumortier, *A Théodore*, p. 23.

18. *Ibid.*, p. 62.

19. *Ibid.*, p. 96.

20. *Ibid.*, p. 102

But there is, also, a sweet example of God's philanthropy seen in the eternal bliss given by God for man's struggle on earth of a short duration.<sup>21</sup>

There is an obvious opposition between misanthropy and philanthropy,<sup>22</sup> but the main message in this work of Chrysostom is the optimistic message that the nature of divine philanthropy consists in never refusing sincere repentance.<sup>23</sup>

After the period of his monastic seclusion (375-381)<sup>24</sup> Chrysostom became deacon in 381, being ordained by Meletius.<sup>25</sup> Here belong a group of writings overlapping the period spent in the monastery and his early diaconate in Antioch: *De Compunctione* I-II (On Compunction), *Ad Stagirium* (To Stagirius), *Ad Stelechium* (To Stelechius), *Ad viduam juniorem* (To a young widow), *De non iterando conjugio* (On not remarrying), *De virginitate* (On virginity), *Adversus oppugnatorem vitae monasticae* (Against those who oppose monastic life), *Contra eos qui subintroductas habent virgines* (Against the celibate clergy cohabiting with consecrated virgins) and *Quod regulares feminae viris cohabitare non debeant* (That nuns ought not cohabit with men).<sup>26</sup> The underlying theme in these early writings is the enthusiastic predilection for the ideal of virginity as seen by the contemporary Syrian ascetics.<sup>27</sup> The young monk and deacon did not, however, forget the literary craftsmanship taught in the classroom of Libanius, and is considered one of the best representatives of the Second Sophistic.<sup>28</sup> First, we have an exclamatory expression of thanksgiving to God who is qualified as philanthropic<sup>29</sup> and, later on, the statement that there is an excess (ὕπερβολή) of divine philanthropy.<sup>30</sup> Theologically of greater importance is a balanced view

21. *Ibid.*, p. 134.

22. *Ibid.*, p. 232.

23. «Τοιαύτη γὰρ ἡ τοῦ Θεοῦ φιλανθρωπία: οὐδέποτε μετανοίας... ἀποστρέφεται.» *Ibid.*, p. 106. Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 224 and 232.

24. A. J. Festugière, *Antioche*, p. 329.

25. *Ibid.*

26. L. Meyer, *op. cit.*, pp. xvii-xxi. Cf. J. Dumortier, *Cohabitations*, p. 15, and B. Grillet, *La virginité*, p. 21.

27. Arthur Vööbus, *History of Asceticism in the Syrian Orient*, I (Louvain, 1958), 90-92.

28. J. Dumortier, *A Théodore*, p. 25. C. Fabricius, *op. cit.*, p. 131, wrote apropos: «Johannes Chrysostomus weist also einen unverkennbaren klassizistischen Einschlag in Form von Nachahmung klassischer Wendungen, Phrasen und Stellen auf.»

29. *Ad Stagirium*, I, 1 PG 47, 426.

30. *Ad Stagirium*, I, 3 PG 47 432.



that not only the promise of the Kingdom of heaven, but the threat of hell, also, is motivated by divine philanthropy, since there is nothing else, except fear, which would incite the careless to practicing virtue.<sup>31</sup> Elsewhere, salvation is said to proceed from *φιλανθρωπία τοῦ Θεοῦ*.<sup>32</sup> As an example of human philanthropy we have Esau who treated his hated brother Jacob *α χρηστῶς καὶ φιλανθρώπως* (kindly and humanely).<sup>33</sup> The meekest David, however, glorified the philanthropy of God which consists in His forgiving our sins.<sup>34</sup> But, without a shadow of sentimentalism, Chrysostom prefers to juxtapose the two extremes in order to safeguard the mystery: God is a terrible Master because offended by our great and many sins;<sup>35</sup> however, He is not cruel — on the contrary, He is meek and philanthropic — but because of the excess of our sins He, being kind and merciful, does not pardon easily.<sup>36</sup> The calling to heavenly honors, offered through the divine philanthropy, is in danger of being jeopardized by our indolence (*ῥαθυμία*).<sup>37</sup> This indolence comes from the love of the world (*τοῦ κόσμου φιλία*).<sup>38</sup> Even almsgiving, materially given, is nothing in the eyes of God if it is not effected by genuine mercy and philanthropy.<sup>39</sup>

For the first time we see the concluding doxology «*ἀγάριτι καὶ φιλανθρωπία τοῦ Κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, μεθ' οὗ τῷ Πατρὶ, ἅμα τῷ ἁγίῳ Πνεύματι, δόξα...*»<sup>40</sup> which will become, later on, a sort of homiletic «signature» of Chrysostom.<sup>41</sup>

31. «τῆς γὰρ Βασιλείας τῶν οὐρανῶν οὐκ ἔλαττον ἢ τῆς γεέννης ἀπειλὴ παρίστησι τὴν φιλανθρωπίαν αὐτοῦ... Οὐδὲ γὰρ ἀρκεῖ μόνῃ ἢ τῶν χρηστῶν ἐπαγγελία προτρέψαι πρὸς ἀρετὴν, μὴ καὶ τοῦ φόβου τῶν δεινῶν ὠθοῦντος τοὺς ραθυμότερον πρὸς ἐκείνην διακειμένους.» *Ad Stagirium*, I, 3 PG 17, 430.

32. *De compunct. Ad Stelech.* II, 5 PG 47, 417.

33. *Ad Stagirium*, II, 11 PG 47, 467.

34. *Ad Stagirium*, I, 5 PG 47, 436.

35. *La Virginité* (Musurillo-Grillet), p. 194.

36. *Ibid.*, p. 196.

37. *Quod regulares feminae (Comment observer la virginité)* 3 (Dumortier), p.

104. There is also «*φιλόανθρωπος Θεός,*» *ibid.*, p. 103.

38. *Ibid.*

39. *Contra eos qui subintroductas (Les Cohabitations)* 7 (Dumortier), p. 68.

40. *Ibid.*, p. 94.

41. Such a «signature» is not yet to be found in *Ad Theodorum* PG 47, 308 (Dumortier), p. 78 and PG 47, 316 (Dumortier), p. 218, nor in the following early writings: *Adversus oppugnatores* (PG 47, 332; 348; 386); *Ad viduam juniorem* (PG 48, 610); *De non iterando conjugio* (PG 48, 620); *De virginitate* (PG 48, 596, Dumortier, p. 394); *De compunctione* (PG 47, 410; 422) and *Ad Stagirium* (PG 47, 448; 472; 494).

In the year Chrysostom was ordained priest (386) by Patriarch Flavian<sup>42</sup> he composed *De sacerdotio* (On Priesthood), «one of his most beautiful compositions,»<sup>43</sup> and preached the theologically most important sermons on the unknowability of God (*De incomprehensibili* I-V).

In spite of the fact that the intrigues around the election of a bishop deserve gehenna, nevertheless, Christ who patiently awaits the conversion of a sinner offers him His philanthropy.<sup>44</sup> A few lines further on, after having indicated repentance as the only exit for a sinner, Chrysostom exclaims as one amazed on contemplating the bottomless abyss of Christ's *philanthropia*.<sup>45</sup>

Saul in trying to excuse his sins as if they were inseparable from kingship, actually dared to say that God's philanthropy — by which he became the first king of Israel — would be the ultimate cause of his sins.<sup>46</sup>

The central event in the eucharistic service, felt like a sort of liturgical ecstasis because of the tangible presence of the Lord on the altar, is punctuated by a few words which in fact reveal Chrysostom's ultimate verbal means when saluting the ineffable: ὦ τοῦ θαύματος, ὦ τῆς τοῦ Θεοῦ φιλανθρωπίας, (oh, wonder! oh, divine philanthropy!).<sup>47</sup>

Here we have a confirmation of Chrysostom's apophatic teaching of the year 386 when he asked his Arian opponents: If the riches of God are unsearchable, how much more is the Giver of the riches unsearchable?<sup>48</sup>

In praising the virtue of humility, Chrysostom points out the humility of God who is ready — in His ineffable philanthropy — to receive anyone, not only the humble, whoever generously acknowledges his own sins.<sup>49</sup> Hence the victory of the tax-collector over the Pharisee: by a few words of humblemindedness he became an object of divine philanthropy (ἐφιλανθρωπέυσατο)<sup>50</sup>.

Ending the second homily Chrysostom prays to the philanthropic

42. C. Baur, *op. cit.*, I, 180.

43. *Ibid.*, p. 181.

44. *De sacerdotio* III, XV (Nairn), p. 80.

45. *Ibid.*, p. 81.

46. *Ibid.*, p. 99.

47. *Ibid.*, p. 52.

48. *De incomprehens.* IV (Flacellière), p. 218.

49. *Ibid.*, p. 296.

50. *Ibid.*, p. 300.

God who wishes that all men be saved by coming to the light of knowledge which is in the Trinity.<sup>51</sup>

In the homily *On St. Pelagia*, however, the term of *philanthropia* is absent,<sup>52</sup> while in the homilies *On Christmas* and *On St. Ignatius* the only time it appears is in the closing doxology.<sup>53</sup> Out of five homilies *On the unknowability of God* four terminate with the doxology beginning with «χάριτι και φιλανθρωπία» (by grace and philanthropy).<sup>54</sup>

Toward the end of the same year Chrysostom started to preach his series of homilies *Against the Jews (Adversus Judaeos)*.<sup>55</sup>

In the first homily *philanthropia* appears only once, as the closing formula.<sup>56</sup> In the second, both grace and philanthropy are described as δωρεά (gifts).<sup>57</sup> Once, in the line of Hellenistic ruler-worship, philanthropy is qualified as βασιλική (royal).<sup>58</sup> God's philanthropy, moreover, is manifested even in His permission for granting divorce,<sup>59</sup> but more commonly in His dealing with repentant sinners,<sup>60</sup> as well as in His acts of punishment.<sup>61</sup>

David, who through his prophetic clairvoyance has foreseen the conversion of the nations and even of the less sophisticated Jews to Christian «philosophy», had a glimpse also of the ineffable divine philanthropy which surpasses any understanding,<sup>62</sup> and was astonished by the new sacrifice of Christ's Body for the whole universe.<sup>63</sup>

Soteriologically important is the assertion that no one would be saved were it not for the fact that God is φιλόανθρωπος και ἡμερος (philanthropic and gentle), by this showing His great providence (πρόνοια) in helping men after the fall.<sup>64</sup> It is understandable, then, why the Samaritan is also said to have been philanthropic and gentle.<sup>65</sup>

51. *Ibid.*, p. 160.

52. *In S. Pelagiam* PG 50, 579-584.

53. *In diem natalem* PG 49, 362. *In S. Ignatium* PG 50, 596.

54. (Flacellière), pp. 110, 204.

55. L. Meyer, *op. cit.*, p. xxiv.

56. PG 48, 856.

57. PG 48, 858.

58. PG 48, 860.

59. *Ibid.*

60. PG 48, 916.

61. PG 48, 874.

62. «την ἀφάρτου τοῦ Θεοῦ φιλανθρωπίαν τὴν ὑπερβαίνουσαν ἅπαντα νοῦν» PG 48, 918.

63. PG 48, 918.

64. PG 48, 929.

65. PG 48, 932.

The eventful year of 387 which saw the famous insurrection of Antioch was for Chrysostom rich in the outpouring of creativity.<sup>66</sup> Before I examine the Jewel of Chrysostomic oratory, the homilies addressed to the people of Antioch in distress, I should examine other works of shorter length.

It is significant for Chrysostom's self-understanding that for him God, who invests the preacher with the ministry of spreading His good news, is defined as the philanthropic God.<sup>67</sup>

In the exegetical sermon on the parable of the debtor, Peter is represented as having well understood that his Master's inclination is that of philanthropy,<sup>68</sup> but he did not yet grasp that our human goodness, our readiness to pardon seven times, is nothing in comparison with the ineffable *philanthropia* of God.<sup>69</sup> The paedagogical strictures of God proceed from His philanthropy.<sup>70</sup> And the word ἀπάνθρωπος (inhumane) is opposed to St. Paul, one who experienced the ineffable divine *philanthropia*.<sup>71</sup> Contrition, which comes from the remembrance of our sins, is the only precondition for being sensitive to the divine philanthropy, as St. Paul was, while, on the contrary, to be forgetful of our remitted sins means to lose all we have received from the divine philanthropy.<sup>72</sup>

In the renowned series of exhortations entitled *Ad populum Antiochenum* (To the people of Antioch), of twenty-one homilies one is dubious,<sup>73</sup> and only one is without the term *philanthropia*.<sup>74</sup> Otherwise, the affixing of Chrysostom's homiletic «signature» is almost standard. Of twenty homilies here, seventeen have the closing doxology with the steady introduction «χάριτι καὶ φιλανθρωπίᾳ», and only three are «irregular», of which the very last has in its conclusion *philanthropia* alone, without its usual correlated term of χάρις.<sup>75</sup>

Putting aside the homilies in which the term occurs only in the

66. L. Meyer, *op. cit.*, p. xxvii.

67. *De Lazaro concio* I PG 48, 963. There, also, is the opposition of φιλάνθρωπος to ἀπάνθρωπος. PG 48, 990.

68. *In parabolam debitoris* PG 51, 20.

69. *Ibid.*

70. *Ibid.*, PG 51, 25.

71. *Ibid.*, PG 51, 27.

72. *Ibid.*

73. J. A. de Aldama, *op. cit.*, p. 84.

74. The XVIIth—PG 49, 171-180.

75. XXI PG 49, 222. Cf. PG 39, 136.

closing doxology<sup>76</sup> we still have a rich harvest on our hands: fourteen instances where philanthropy designates human virtue and twenty-five cases where it is a divine attribute.

Divine *φιλανθρωπία* is made to sound almost synonymous with *κηδεμονία* and *ἀγαθότης*<sup>77</sup> and in the case of God's friendly behaviour toward King Saul, His philanthropy is coupled with *ἐπιείκεια*.<sup>78</sup>

In the story of Job, Chrysostom judged his philanthropic care of the poor and needy as relatively easy, since it meant only giving up the surpluses of his rich household,<sup>79</sup> but he dubbed him a philosopher for being able to thank God even after having heard that all of his progeny had been killed.<sup>80</sup>

Jonas in his turn, through his maritime trials and tribulations nonetheless remained *φιλάθρωπος καὶ ἡμερος* (lovingkind and gentle) toward all, the sea included.<sup>81</sup>

The most conspicuous aspect of human philanthropy is, no doubt, the imperial one. In the imaginary pleading which Bishop Flavian was supposed to have addressed to Theodosius on behalf of the rebellious Antioch, the Emperor is exhorted to show his *philanthropia* toward his own co-servants so as to have, in return, God as a mild judge toward him in the Last Day.<sup>82</sup> There is the Hellenistic courtly way of addressing the Emperor as «your philanthropy»,<sup>83</sup> and the inevitable flattery—or wishful thinking—according to which the Emperor Theodosius is a living example of philanthropic behaviour,<sup>84</sup> especially since he has refrained from capital punishment in consideration of his impotence to resurrect the executed again afterward.<sup>85</sup> Immediately there follows Flavian's request that he apply, here and now, his royal philanthropy to the fearstricken Antioch for the sake of the imminent Easter festivities and because the Emperor himself will be in need of the divine philanthropy in the Day of Judgment.<sup>86</sup>

76. Homilies VIII, IX, X, XIII, XV, XVI, XVIII, XX.

77. VII PG 49, 93.

78. XIV PG 49, 129.

79. Cf. Mark 12:44.

80. I PG 49, 29.

81. V PG 49, 78.

82. III PG 49, 48.

83. XXI PG 49, 217.

84. VI PG 49, 84.

85. *Ibid.*

86. *Ibid.*

However, after this improvisation, Chrysostom flatly enjoins all to trust in God's mercy more than the philanthropy of the Emperor.<sup>87</sup>

Another example showing that the philanthropy of God is not sentimental is the emphasis on the philanthropic character of the sacrifice of Jephthah's daughter, since this divine permission, once given, excluded all human sacrifices forever.<sup>88</sup> In any case, this permission was not according to the will of God,<sup>89</sup> and that He does not care for such horrible things one can see from the story of Isaac.<sup>90</sup>

The liberating impact of Christ's philanthropy is felt in the ethical life wherein physical weakness is no impediment for keeping the essential commandment,<sup>91</sup> and above all in the gracious fact that God's philanthropy covers the inadequacy of our repentance.<sup>92</sup>

The Ninevites also experienced God's *philanthropia*,<sup>93</sup> and, later on, that was the content of Paul's kerygma.<sup>94</sup> Hence whenever Chrysostom is in the mood to give thanks to God, he praises Him as *philanthropos*,<sup>95</sup> even though he may be in the midst of trials.<sup>96</sup>

During the years 388-389 Chrysostom reached his zenith in the development of his philanthropology. His main achievement is to be found in the *homilies on Genesis*.<sup>97</sup>

In the short homily dedicated to the memory of the martyrs Juventinus and Maximinus, two soldiers executed at the order of Julian,<sup>98</sup> it is said that we have a philanthropic Lord who, by once offering the sacrifice, reconciled the whole universe.<sup>99</sup> The martyrs, in their

87. «Καὶ πρὸ τῆς φιλανθρωπίας τοῦ βασιλέως, τῷ ἐλέει θαρροῦμεν τοῦ Θεοῦ.» III PG 49, 49.

88. XIV PG 49, 47.

89. *Ibid.*

90. *Ibid.*

91. XX PG 49, 198.

92. VI PG 49, 83.

93. V PG 49, 76-77.

94. XIII PG 49, 127.

95. «Ἐὐχαριστῶμεν τῷ φιλανθρώπῳ Θεῷ, καὶ θαυμάζωμεν αὐτοῦ τὴν δύναμιν καὶ τὴν φιλανθρωπίαν.» XXI PG 49, 211. Cf. PG 49, 220.

96. XI PG 49, 126.

97. L. Meyer, *op. cit.*, pp. xxvii-xxxii.

98. P. Peeters, in «La Date de la fête des SS. Juventin et Maximin,» *Analec-ta Bollandiana*, XLII (1924), 77-82, especially p. 77, wrote: «Personne n'élève de doute sur l'existence historique de ces deux soldats martyrisés à Antioche, sous Julien, vers le début de l'année 363.»

99. *In S. martyres Juventinum et Maximinum* PG 50, 571-578.

turn, when they see churches destroyed and all the faithful fleeing then offer themselves to their Lord, thus imitating His philanthropic self-offering.<sup>100</sup> On the purely human level, Lazarus the beggar was a good occasion for the rich man to exercise his philanthropy.<sup>101</sup> And Chrysostom draws the conclusion that one should give without examining the worthiness of the beggar, in order that «we unworthy may receive — as beggars — of God's philanthropy.»<sup>102</sup>

God as a philanthropic *agonothetês* permits even the untrained newly baptized to enter the spiritual Olympic games all because of His philanthropy.<sup>103</sup> Some did receive great gifts, even the power to work miracles, not because of their saintliness, but because of the divine philanthropy.<sup>104</sup> Φιλανθρωπία is, as usual, opposed to ἀπανθρωπία, and what is more important, logically philanthropy as a virtue precedes that of ἐλεημοσύνη (almsgiving).<sup>105</sup>

Opposed to the natural birth, there is a spiritual one — baptism: «a birth out of the grace and philanthropy of God.»<sup>106</sup>

The Crucified Christ has manifested His philanthropy by overlooking the outcry of the Jews (Mt. 27:25), because everything He did was circumscribed by the divine ineffable *philanthropia*.<sup>107</sup>

Chrysostom drafted a map of virtues for the newly-baptized by specifying that *philanthropia* comes after σωφροσύνη (chastity), σεμνότης (modesty) and between ἐλεημοσύνη (almsgiving) and ἀγάπη (love).<sup>108</sup> Semantically this precision is indeed valuable. Here also he is spurring on the attention of the youngsters by declaiming solemnly: «Take a look at divine philanthropy.»<sup>109</sup>

The homilies on Genesis (*Homiliae in Genesin*)<sup>110</sup> constitute the masterpiece of Chrysostomic philanthropology. *Philanthropia* is to be found in almost every column, but in a few of them the notion

100. *Ibid.*

101. *De Lazaro concio* II PG 48, 987.

102. *Ibid.* PG 48, 990. Chrysostom insists three times in that one column that philanthropy comes from above (ἐνωθεν).

103. *In inscriptionem altaris et in principium Actorum* PG 51, 76.

104. *In inscriptionem Actorum* II PG 51, 81.

105. *Ibid.* PG 51, 85.

106. *De utilitate lectionis Scripturarum. In princip. Act. III* PG 51, 97.

107. *Cur in Pentec. acta etc. In princip. Act. IV* PG 51, 111-112.

108. *Ad illuminandos catechesis* II PG 49, 238.

109. «Καὶ σκόπει Θεοῦ φιλανθρωπίαν.» *Ibid.* PG 49, 239.

110. A Wenger, *op. cit.*, p. 64, contends that only the first thirty-two of them are genuine: PG 53, 21-305.

occurs up to four or five times.<sup>111</sup> Frequently we find the term used in a rhetorical way with the purpose of introducing a new development of thought or as the conclusion of a long pastoral exhortation.<sup>112</sup> However, the importance of the term used here is not obtained by regarding the simple numerical frequency. Chrysostom seems to be in such full possession of all his talents that he is able to elevate himself above the minutiae of a pedestrian exegesis. Of course, there are still the inevitable ethical exhortations, but they are put in the larger framework of the divine philanthropy.<sup>113</sup>

He assures all and everyone that through fasting and abstinence from evil, one acquires more daring (*παρρησία*) and is enabled to participate more abundantly in the divine *philanthropia* both in this life and in the day of the terrible judgment to come.<sup>114</sup>

The soteriological connotation of the term *divine philanthropy*<sup>115</sup> appears particularly clear in the passages wherein the theme of *metanoia* (repentance) is developed. Thus, Noah's generation could have averted the cataclysm if only they had repented.<sup>116</sup> God warned them in advance<sup>117</sup> and mixed His rebuke with His philanthropy,<sup>118</sup> but they abused the latter,<sup>119</sup> provoking His wrath even more.<sup>120</sup> Their case proves that God is ready to bestow His philanthropy upon the least good movement of the heart of man.<sup>121</sup> Therefore, Noah's growing thankfulness to God was honored with the greater philanthropy of God.<sup>122</sup> There follows a non-sentimental peroration above the diluvian grave of the wicked generation, namely, that the Flood was motivated by the philanthropy of God, who wanted to cut off incurable evil.<sup>123</sup> Strictly speaking He applied His philanthropy equally to the good and to the evil.<sup>124</sup>

111. PG 53, 86; 138; 233; 244.

112. PG 53, 151; 171; 190; 196; 221; 229; 235; 239; 244; 249; 253; 254; 255; 277; 301.

113. PG 53, 56; 274.

114. PG 53, 81.

115. PG 53, 261.

116. PG 53, 222.

117. PG 53, 221.

118. PG 53, 190.

119. PG 53, 192.

120. PG 53, 193.

121. PG 53, 198. Cf. PG 53, 208; 220.

122. PG 53, 233; 237.

123. PG 53, 253. Cf. PG 53, 79.

124. PG 53, 185-186.



The same man-befriending (φιλόανθρωπος) God gradually introduced time for repentance according to the need of the Ninevites and the brigands crucified with Christ.<sup>125</sup> The time of Lent is accorded for reconciliation with the divine philanthropy.<sup>126</sup> And the philanthropic God is ready to reward even a more good intention, not works, as He praised Job even before his exploits.<sup>127</sup> Only a merciless man who keeps a grudge against his fellow is, according to Chrysostom, deprived of the divine lovingkindness.<sup>128</sup>

Noteworthy is the emphasis put on theodicy,<sup>129</sup> but Chrysostom's greatest attention was given to the anthropological problem in the context of creation.<sup>130</sup> The fundamental theme in these homilies, in my opinion, is the optimistic vision of man's central position among all visible creatures, since that is the way God willed it in His pre-eternal philanthropy, as well as in His historical plan of salvation.<sup>131</sup>

On the crucial question *Cur creatio* our author answers confidently with his own digest of the Gospel: «Recognize the philanthropy of the Master in that before the creation and before bringing man (into being), He prepared for him millions of good things, thus showing what kind of providence is put into action for the sake of our race, since He wants to save all.<sup>132</sup> Immediately after that theological flight Chrysostom lands on the ground of ethical application: since we have such a Lord, so philanthropic, so good, so meek, we ought to care for our salvation, as well as for that of our brothers.<sup>133</sup>

Chrysostom keeps the balance by asserting the self-sufficiency of God, who needed nothing, but if He decided to create at all, did so because of some mysterious love toward mankind and because of His goodness, (ἀλλά φιλανθρωπία τινί, καὶ ἀγαθότητι τὰ πάντα ἔτεκμήνατο).<sup>134</sup>

125. PG 53, 247.

126. PG 53, 217.

127. PG 53, 202.

128. PG 53, 248.

129. PG 53, 133; 138-139; 141; 144 *et passim*.

130. PG 53, 66; 170. Cf. PG 53, 60.

131. «διὰ γὰρ τοῦτο καὶ τὴν κτίσιν ταύτην ἔπασαν παρήγαγε, καὶ ἡμᾶς ἐδημιούργησεν, οὐχ ἵνα ἀπολώμεθα... ἀλλ' ἵνα σώσῃ, καὶ τῆς ... βασιλείας τὴν ἀπόλαυσιν ἡμῖν δωρήσῃται.» *In Genes*. III PG 53, 36.

132. «Ὅρα φιλανθρωπίαν Δεσπότη, ὅπως καὶ πρὸ τῆς δημιουργίας, καὶ πρὶν ἢ παραγαγεῖν τὸν ἄνθρωπον, τὰ μυρία αὐτῷ ἀγαθὰ ἠτύτρεπισε, δεικνὺς ὅσῃ πρόνοιαν ποιεῖται τοῦ γένους τοῦ ἡμετέρου, καὶ ὅτι πάντας βούλεται σωθῆναι.» *Ibid*.

133. *Ibid*.

134. *In Genes*. III PG 53, 35. Cf. PG 53, 60; 66; 254,

Like a tireless drummer, he beats over and over the same message: «What I have already said, I say now and I will not stop saying continually, that the philanthropy of our common Lord toward our race is great and ineffable.»<sup>135</sup>

Chrysostom noticed a characteristic of God's behavior rarely emphasized by other theologians, namely the divine politeness as an aspect of God's philanthropy: He did not give orders to Adam, He entreated him.<sup>136</sup> Not less disarming is the remark of Chrysostom that God, in his manner of creating Eve, was the first practitioner of anaesthetic surgery.<sup>137</sup>

In this relatively short of homilies the term *philanthropia* appears not less than two hundred sixty times.

In the year 390 Chrysostom preached his ninety homilies on the Gospel of Matthew,<sup>138</sup> and eight catechetical orations.<sup>139</sup>

In his exegesis of the First Gospel Chrysostom underlined the «crucified» aspect of the divine philanthropy: Christ died a shameful death in having been crucified, but the more shameful is death, the more evident is His philanthropy.<sup>140</sup>

The greatness of God's philanthropy is also seen in His readiness to accept repentance.<sup>141</sup> Still, the weeping of those who mourn for their sins has no value in itself, but only because of the divine philanthropy.<sup>142</sup> Even more stern is Chrysostom's warning that God's will is co-extensive with His *philanthropia* and His Kingdom, while hell depends entirely on our indolence (*ἀσθυμία*).<sup>143</sup>

Non-resistance to evil (Mt. 5:39a) is understood in a personalist way as non-resistance to the Evil one, since only a personal agent can be a «mover» in the sphere of the ethical life of human persons.<sup>144</sup> And not to resist the Evil one means, of course, not to resist him on his own terms, because fire cannot be extinguished by fire, but by water. Again, this whole passage is understandable only in the larger context that

135. PG 53, 105. Cf. PG 53, 106; 108; 240.

136. *In Genes.* XIV PG 53, 114.

137. PG 53, 120.

138. L. Meyer, *op. cit.*, p. xxxi.

139. A. Wenger, *op. cit.*, pp. 63-65.

140. *Comment. in Matthaëum* III PG 57, 34.

141. *Ibid.* PG 57, 69.

142. *Ibid.* PG 57, 226.

143. *Ibid.* PG 47, 249.

144. *Ibid.* PG 57, 265; cf. PG 57, 282.

ultimately God's justice is mysteriously moderated by His philanthropy and that man's strength is measured by his capacity to endure evils.<sup>145</sup>

The divine philanthropy is inseparable from the Church, since the remission of sins after baptism is the work of the exceeding philanthropy of God.<sup>146</sup> Even human paternal love is nothing in comparison with the overflowing divine philanthropy. The greatest proof of this is the fact that God gave His own Son for men's salvation.<sup>147</sup>

The *philanthropia* of Jesus is palpably revealed in His miraculous healing.<sup>148</sup> However, the prerequisite disposition necessary for enjoying Christ's philanthropy is active faith, otherwise all would be automatically saved.<sup>149</sup> Repentant whores and debauched men deny the fatalistic error of the Manichaeans by their change.<sup>150</sup> As far as Christ is concerned, He makes salvation to be rather easy.<sup>151</sup> As a good and philanthropic God He is ready to pardon not seven times only but infinitely.<sup>152</sup>

However, there is a clear-cut cleavage between φιλοχρήματοι (lovers of money) and φιλόανθρωποι (lovers of mankind),<sup>153</sup> and the «sword» of God separates even families for the sake of His terrifying unsentimental philanthropy.<sup>154</sup> In this perspective, awareness of having offended Christ is worse than any hell. But if one escapes such a sin, one is saved also from hell, because of the grace and philanthropy of Christ.<sup>155</sup> Therefore, in interpreting the parable of the wedding of the king's son Chrysostom exhorts us to revere the philanthropy of the Inviter.<sup>156</sup> In the parable of the ten virgins the oil of the wise virgins is interpreted as being their philanthropy.<sup>157</sup> But the Lord also is *philanthropos*, and in contradistinction to the Devil, His royal characteristics are not arms and weapons, but modesty and meekness (ἐπιείκεια

145. *Ibid.*

146. *Ibid.* PG 57, 280.

147. *Ibid.* PG 57, 313.

148. *Ibid.* PG 57, 337. Cf. PG 57, 364; 468; 469.

149. *Ibid.* PG 57, 377.

150. *Ibid.* 57, 340.

151. *Ibid.* PG 58, 474.

152. *Ibid.* PG 58, 589. Cf. PG 58, 593.

153. *Ibid.* PG 57, 440.

154. *Ibid.* PG 57, 406.

155. *Ibid.* PG 57, 420.

156. *Ibid.* PG 58, 651. Cf. PG 58, 655.

157. *Ibid.* PG 58, 712.

καὶ πραότης).<sup>158</sup> That Christ was especially philanthropic toward the Jews of Jerusalem is clear, according to Chrysostom, from the fact that He did not take into account their furious self-condemnation by taking His blood upon themselves and their children.<sup>159</sup>

In this longer series of homilies I have found the term *philanthropia* used a hundred fifty-nine times, which represents a slight decrease in comparison with the homilies on Genesis.

The recently-discovered and published *Eight catechetical orations* of Chrysostom<sup>160</sup> offer a few but important theological uses of the notion of *philanthropia*.

The infinite and ineffable philanthropy of the Bridegroom of the Church is visible in the fact that He does not fall in love only with the beauty of the young candidates for baptism, but even with the ugly sinners.<sup>161</sup>

In a short commentary on the Creed, in the first article about God the Father, Chrysostom emphasizes His apophatic nature and also the philanthropic purpose of His creation.<sup>162</sup> The *philanthropia* of the Lord washes even unmentionable sins completely away.<sup>163</sup> On our part, we should preserve all the gifts of baptismal purity received from the lovingkindness (*φιλανθρωπία*) of God.<sup>164</sup>

One becomes Christian through the philanthropy of God and one keeps this philanthropy through vigilant daily confession to the philanthropic God.<sup>165</sup> His reward is adoption in baptism.<sup>166</sup> One is bound to glorify Him even though His divine philanthropy surpasses every understanding.<sup>167</sup> Even when He has imposed misery upon the unbridled human race, that, also, was done in His philanthropy.<sup>168</sup>

If there are no cosmetics efficient enough to re-capture the pristine beauty of our body, with the divine philanthropy the beauty of

158. *Ibid.* PG 58, 715.

159. *Ibid.* PG 58, 766

160. A. Wenger, *op. cit.*, pp. 7-21.

161. *Ibid.*, p. 110; cf. *ibid.*, p. 111.

162. *Ibid.*, p. 119.

163. *Ibid.*, p. 121.

164. *Ibid.*, p. 260. There are cases where *philanthropia* serves as an introductory stimulant, a kind of *captatio benevolentiae*: *Ibid.*, pp. 133; 135. Cf. pp. 185; 229.

165. *Ibid.*, p. 257

166. *Ibid.*, p. 188. Cf. pp. 212; 244.

167. *Ibid.*, p. 183.

168. *Ibid.*, p. 208.

our soul can be recovered through serious repentance.<sup>169</sup> And he concludes on a joyous note: God, who created us out of nothing for the sake of His *philanthropia*, will not refuse us His providential care.<sup>170</sup>

The commentary on the Gospel of St. John appeared in 391.<sup>171</sup> John Chrysostom adroitly opens the series of eighty-seven homilies by arousing the curiosity of his audience about Johannine revelations of which even the angels were ignorant.<sup>172</sup> He insists on the fact that this Gospel could not be the work of a fisherman or of a rhetorician trained in the worldly *paideia*.<sup>173</sup>

Except in the closing formula, the term *philanthropia* is used for the first time as the presupposition of almsgiving.<sup>174</sup> Theologically more important is the deduction of the freedom of men from God's philanthropy, since He does not force anyone to be His, by the very fact of His being philanthropic.<sup>175</sup> The *philanthropia* of God is graciously given by the Holy Spirit together with faith and the equality of all in the same faith.<sup>176</sup> Stephen the martyr, for example, rejoiced because he saw the philanthropy of God and His *créstotês* in all.<sup>177</sup>

Whenever something great and exalted about God needs to be said, than He is called *χρηστός και φιλόανθρωπος* (kind and philanthropic) because He takes upon Himself the sins of the world and saves gratuitously.<sup>178</sup> We should all be ashamed before God's love (*ἀγάπη*) and *philanthropia*, since He gave up His Only Son for us, when we are not ready to sacrifice even such a small thing as our money.<sup>179</sup>

The question is raised: where are the proofs of God's philanthropy, if we are to receive punishment for our sins as they deserve?<sup>180</sup> The answer follows: the evidence of His abundant philanthropy is in the fact that God not only gave His own Son, but He also postpones the

169. *Ibid.*, p. 213. Cf. p. 258.

170. *Ibid.*, p. 258.

171. L. Meyer, *op. cit.*, p. xxxi.

172. *In Joannem* I PG 59, 26.

173. *Ibid.* PG 59, 30.

174. *Ibid.* PG 59, 65.

175. *Ibid.* PG 59, 73.

176. *Ibid.* PG 59, 75.

177. *Ibid.* PG 59, 74.

178. *Ibid.* PG 59, 115.

179. *Ibid.* PG 59, 160.

180. *Ibid.* PG 59, 161.

time of the judgment, in order that sinners and unbelievers might have an opportunity to repent.<sup>181</sup>

The worst kind of cruelty and ἀπανθρωπία (inhumaneness), however, may be committed by those who go unworthily to the communion.<sup>182</sup>

The miracles of Christ are for Chrysostom of the essence of philanthropy.<sup>183</sup>

In 392 Chrysostom explicated the main Pauline epistles: To the Romans; First and Second to the Thessalonians; to the Galatians.<sup>184</sup>

For some, the commentary on the Epistle to the Romans is a great success on Chrysostom's part.<sup>185</sup>

The imperial *philanthropia* is mentioned as saving men from punishment<sup>186</sup> or as a social virtue.<sup>187</sup>

The divine χρηστότης and φιλανθρωπία precede the threat of chastizement.<sup>188</sup> Even the divine philanthropy toward the Jews is genuine, regardless of their unbelief.<sup>189</sup>

The tremendous greatness of the divine philanthropy obliges us to return to our pristine nobility, especially since God, despite our sinfulness, lets us enjoy the whole of His creation.<sup>190</sup> God's *philanthropia* is realized in the consolation of the fallen man,<sup>191</sup> mainly in the fact that He spoke to them directly Himself<sup>192</sup> and, above all, in salvation.<sup>193</sup>

In facing the thorny problem of the free will (ἀντεξούσιον) in Rom. 9:19-24, Chrysostom recommends first that the analogy of the potter and the clay be not pressed so as to draw exhaustive conclusions from it.<sup>194</sup> Pharaoh, for example, by remaining incorrigible after so long a show of patience on the side of God, cannot blame anyone but

181. *Ibid.* PG 59, 161.

182. *Ibid.* PG 59, 334.

183. *Ibid.* PG 59, 334.

184. L. Meyer, *op. cit.*, p. xxxi.

185. B. Altaner, *Patrologie*, p. 326.

186. *In Romanos* II PG 60, 409.

187. *Ibid.* PG 60, 594.

188. *Ibid.* PG 60, 424.

189. *Ibid.* PG 60, 438.

190. *Ibid.* PG. 60, 492.

191. *Ibid.* PG 60, 530.

192. *Ibid.* PG 60, 534.

193. *Ibid.* PG 60, 536.

194. *Ibid.* PG 60, 559. Otherwise, a coarse dealing with this imagery would imply that God pre-judged everything at the outset of creation.

himself for his lot, since he also was the object of the divine kindness (*chrêstotês*).<sup>195</sup> Chrysostom did not miss the occasion to emphasize that it depends entirely on the deliberate choice (*προαίρεσις*) of men to be either «vessels of mercy» or to be «vessels of wrath», while God exercises His kindness (*χρηστότης*) on both equally.<sup>196</sup>

In the same column *φιλανθρωπία* is equated with *χάρις*,<sup>197</sup> and the glory of those who shall be glorified is the main concern of the divine philanthropy.<sup>198</sup> Even the foreknowledge of God is «crucified» between the little something that men are expected to contribute in their cooperation with God<sup>199</sup> and the great dependence of men on the steady philanthropy of God.<sup>200</sup> With such a style of thinking Chrysostom could remain an apophatic theologian by wisely asserting the parallelism of the divine and of human freedom, without rationalizing the mystery of their cooperation. He thus preserves joy as the hallmark of the Epistle to the Romans, according to which, God channelizes His kindness (*chrêstotês*) and His love toward mankind (*philanthropia*) through all. The only shadow that remains is the eventual refusal of some to respond to the grace of the philanthropic God, who forces no one.<sup>201</sup>

Since the main message of the Epistle to the Romans is salvation by grace,<sup>202</sup> on the one hand, and the grace became identified with *philanthropia*,<sup>203</sup> I am entitled to conclude that this commentary is also a commentary on the divine philanthropy. In this respect, it is second only to the philanthropological commentary on Genesis.

The identity between the divine philanthropy and grace is asserted also in the commentary on I Corinthians.<sup>204</sup>

The warning is given again: even if God is the *philanthropos*, He is not, therefore, sentimental.<sup>205</sup> Chrysostom is, naturally, stressing

195. *Ibid.* PG 60, 560.

196. *Ibid.* PG 60, 561.

197. *Ibid.* PG 60, 561. Cf. PG 60, 650.

198. *Ibid.* PG 60, 561.

199. «εἰ γὰρ καὶ τὸ πλεον ἐστὶ τοῦ Θεοῦ, ἀλλ' ὅμως καὶ αὐτοὶ τι μικρὸν εἰσήνεγκαν.» *In Romanos XVI* PG 60, 561.

200. «δεῖ μὲν γὰρ καὶ θέλειν καὶ τρέχειν, θαρρεῖν δὲ μὴ τοῖς οἰκείοις πόνοις, ἀλλὰ τῆ τοῦ Θεοῦ φιλανθρωπίᾳ.» PG 60, 561.

201. *In Romanos XIII* PG 60, 579.

202. PG 60, 441; 445; 476; 579 *et passim*.

203. *In Romanos XVI* PG 60, 561.

204. *In Epist. I ad Cor.* PG 61, 13.

205. *Ibid.* PG 61, 135.

the less puzzling side of God's activity, which even the human mind partially discerns as the unique glory belonging to the One who is *Philanthropos* par excellence.<sup>206</sup> Implicitly, there is the idea of *mimesis* (imitation) of God, since it is said: it behooves Christians to behave philanthropically (*φιλανθρωπεῦσαι*) toward a brother.<sup>207</sup>

The commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians re-echos St. Paul's humble teaching that all is grace.<sup>208</sup>

The main theme is: Christ has liberated us from the sentence to death, and indeed, from death itself. All this because of love and in the context of *κηδεμονία* (care, concern).<sup>209</sup>

Here we find clearly indicated for the first time that human *philanthropia* is not meant to be applied in an ethically limited area, but on a world-wide scale.<sup>210</sup>

In 394 Chrysostom interpreted the minor Pauline Epistles.<sup>211</sup>

The commentary on the Epistle to the Ephesians, by repeating that salvation is not from works but from the grace and philanthropy of God, only re-asserts the identity of these two notions.<sup>212</sup>

Salvation is the greatest proof of God's philanthropy.<sup>213</sup> Thus, concretely, the intervention of God for St. Paul in prison is the sign of divine *philanthropia*.<sup>214</sup> Also, on the Judgment Day we will experience divine philanthropy if we are now just to one another.<sup>215</sup> We dare to call God our Father neither because we are of the same nature with Him, nor by any virtue of our own, but only if we have in us philanthropy and mercy.<sup>216</sup>

In the commentary on the Epistle to the Philippians the Incarnation is explicitly motivated by divine *philanthropia*.<sup>217</sup>

Nothing pleases God so much as almsgiving. The symbol of God's *φιλανθρωπία* was oil, which is in its turn the symbol of mercy.<sup>218</sup>

206. *Ibid.* PG 61, 343. Cf. PG 61, 389.

207. *In Epist. II ad Cor.* XIV PG 61, 501.

208. *In Galatos* PG 61, 634.

209. *Ibid.* PG 61, 646.

210. *Ibid.* PG 61, 677.

211. L. Meyer, *op. cit.*, p. xxxi.

212. *In Ephesios Comment.* PG 62, 34.

213. *Ibid.* PG 62, 37. Repeated twice.

214. *Ibid.* PG 62, 60.

215. *Ibid.* PG 62, 96.

216. *Ibid.* PG 62, 104. Cf. PG 62, 116; 176.

217. *In Philipp. Comment.* PG 62, 182.

218. *Ibid.* PG 62, 210. *Φιλοπτώχια: ibid.* PG 62, 216.



God always acts philanthropically (φιλανθρωπεύεται)<sup>219</sup> and Jesus' philanthropy will be sealed by His Second coming.<sup>220</sup>

In the shorter commentaries on the Epistles to Timothy the greatness of God's φιλανθρωπία and κηδεμονία is enhanced by the fact that it is exercised over the sinners.<sup>221</sup>

One can be responsible for others, also, only if one wants to be «ordained» by the divine philanthropy and the fear of God.<sup>222</sup>

God is philanthropic with all His threats of the Last Judgment.<sup>223</sup>

When one examines the commentary on the Epistle to Titus one is rather disappointed to see that Chrysostom, after having quoted the New Testament *hapax* of divine philanthropy, (Tit. 3:4) pays no attention to it but skips over it.<sup>224</sup> The sixth homily, however, opens with the notion of divine philanthropy, κηδεμονία being added to it instead of the Scriptural χρηστότης.<sup>225</sup> Twice these two terms are linked together as a practical invitation to apply them in almsgiving.<sup>226</sup>

Once divine philanthropia is apophatically qualified with the epithet ὑπερβάλλουσα (exceeding).<sup>227</sup>

In the homily *Habentes eundem spiritum*, where almsgiving is a chance given to those who became rich by unjust devices,<sup>228</sup> we find a reminiscence of Titus 3:4: «Ὅρα πόση φιλανθρωπία τοῦ Δεσπότου, πόση χρηστότης».<sup>229</sup>

Nonetheless, it is a fact in the latter years of Chrysostom's Antiochene period (386-398), the notion of the divine philanthropy became less frequent in his writings.

Once elevated to the patriarchal throne of Constantinople (398-404),<sup>230</sup> Chrysostom wisely reduced the superfluous banquets on the busy schedule of the first among the bishop in the East and dedicated his evenings to his literary activity.<sup>231</sup> Nonetheless, his productiv-

219. *Ibid.* Cf. PG 62, 212.

220. *Ibid.* PG 62, 286.

221. *In I ad Timoth. Comment.* PG 62, 521.

222. *Ibid.* PG 62, 574.

223. *In II Timoth.* PG 62, 615.

224. *In Titum Comment.* PG 62, 694.

225. *Ibid.* PG 62, 695.

226. *Ibid.* PG 62, 695.

227. *Ibid.*, PG 62, 695.

228. PG 51, 299.

229. *Ibid.*

230. C. Baur, *op. cit.*, II, 1-14.

231. *Ibid.*, p. 93.

ity, in comparison with that of his priestly days in Antioch, is somewhat decreased.

There are a few shorter homilies of this period that do not contain the notion of *philanthropia* at all.<sup>232</sup> And two of them which have it only in the closing doxology.<sup>233</sup> His attachment to the notion of *philanthropia* remained still the same as in the later period of his Antiochene activity, and the oratorical spell of Chrysostom did not weaken, since the crowds applauded him in Constantinople<sup>234</sup> as they did in Antioch.<sup>235</sup> Chrysostom, no doubt, was a preacher by the grace of God. «Basil the Great, Gregory of Nazianzus... sat longer at the feet of rhetoricians, and even attended the higher schools of Athens; but Chrysostom far surpassed them as a pulpit orator.»<sup>236</sup>

The Emperor Arcadius would only confirm the popularity of Chrysostom by coming in person to listen to his sermons.<sup>237</sup> However, in the presence of the son of Theodosius I Chrysostom was even more parsimonious in proffering the ancient attributes of the Hellenistic ruler than he was in Antioch. He did not call him *philanthropos* at all, but only a «benefactor of the universe» who comes to the church to honor greater benefactors than himself, namely, the martyrs.<sup>238</sup> *Philanthropia*, as if jealously safeguarded for higher theological use, appeared later on: the fall of Adam was corrected by the divine *philanthropia* and not merely corrected, but through it God has led Adam into an even higher status, from paradise into heaven.<sup>239</sup>

In the commentary on the Epistle to the Colossians,<sup>240</sup> the term *philanthropia* appears four times as a human virtue,<sup>241</sup> and twice as the theological notion indicating the divine reality by which the sacrifice of the Son of God is ultimately motivated.<sup>242</sup>

Elsewhere, Chrysostom used it in an eschatological context:

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232. *Contra ludos et theatra* PG 56, 263-270, *Filius ex se nihil facit* PG 56, 247-256 and *Pater meus... operatur* PG 63, 511-516.

233. *Postquam presb. Gothus* PG 63, 499-510. *Postquam reliquiae martyr.* PG 63, 467-472 and *Messis Quidem* PG 63, 515-524.

234. C. Baur, *op. cit.*, p. 85.

235. *Ibid.*, I, 231, 207.

236. *Ibid.*, p. 210.

237. Thus, in 398: *Praesente Imperatore.* PG 63, 473-478.

238. *Ibid.* PG 63, 473.

239. *Ibid.* PG 63, 474.

240. According to L. Meyer, *op. cit.*, p. xxxvi, written in 399.

241. *In Coloss. Comment.* PG 62, 307; 372.

242. *Ibid.* PG 62, 311. Cf. PG 62, 313.

if we do not suffer from the Pharisaic disease, we can find pardon and philanthropy at the judgment seat of God.<sup>243</sup>

The divine philanthropy and ineffable goodness were known to Moses,<sup>244</sup> while Peter, who is supposed to help his brothers, must practice great philanthropy.<sup>245</sup>

On 17th of August 399 Chrysostom preached the memorable sermon *On Eutropius*,<sup>246</sup> wherein his point on the vanity of all earthly achievements happened to be dramatically confirmed by the imploring attitude of the once all-powerful consul Eutropius. Chrysostom proclaims the strength of the Church which patiently endured the attacks of the same courtier before his downfall, as well as the philanthropy of the Church toward her persecutor now begging for her protection.<sup>247</sup> Chrysostom is ready to intercede for him before the emperor, even more, to pray the philanthropic God to quench the wrath of the ruler.<sup>248</sup>

Here we have before us not only a masterpiece of ecclesiastical oratory, but also a mature conception of hierarchically structured philanthropy. On the top of this invisible pyramid is the philanthropic God; beneath Him stands the emperor, and below him all the others, together with the imperial city of Constantinople also, collectively taken.<sup>249</sup>

In this relatively shorter sermon, the term *philanthropia* is used ten times and in a theologically significant way.

The year 400 was astonishingly fertile in long commentaries.<sup>250</sup> In the one on the First and Second Epistle to the Thessalonians<sup>251</sup> we read that God's philanthropy is everywhere,<sup>252</sup> and that the glory of the philanthropic God is in the multitude of the saved.<sup>253</sup>

In the commentary on the Acts of the Apostles<sup>254</sup> the term *philanthropia* as used to designate human virtue, does not acquire any new

243. *Adv. catharos*, PG 63, 494.

244. *Quod frequenter conveniendum* PG 63, 465.

245. *Ibid.* PG 63, 466.

246. L. Meyer, *op. cit.*, p. xxxiv.

247. *In Eutropium* PG 52, 393-394.

248. *Ibid.* PG 52, 395.

249. *Ibid.* PG 52, 396.

250. L. Meyer, *op. cit.*, p. xxxvi.

251. *In I ad Thessal. Comment.* PG 62, 391-468; *In II ad Thessal. Comment.* PG 62, 467-500.

252. *Ibid.* PG 62, 446.

253. *Ibid.* PG 62, 488; «δὲξα γὰρ τοῦ φιλανθρώπου Θεοῦ τὸ πολλοὺς εἶναι τοὺς σφζομένους.»

254. *In Acta Apostol.* I-LV PG 60, 13-384.

semantic connotation,<sup>255</sup> except in one case where it is affirmed that the barbarians also, through hospitality, have proved to know about philanthropy.<sup>256</sup>

Theologically, *philanthropia* is again identified with grace.<sup>257</sup> One is earnestly warned not to expect everything from the divine philanthropy, but to contribute something of his own.<sup>258</sup>

The hero of faith, Abraham, enjoyed the great philanthropy of God,<sup>259</sup> as well as Moses by way of His many theophanies.<sup>260</sup>

St. Paul presented his missionary successes to the pillars of the Mother Church of Jerusalem as the work of the philanthropy of God.<sup>261</sup>

Chrysostom is eager to interpret the Cross and the Resurrection as being acts of the divine philanthropy.<sup>262</sup>

In the commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews,<sup>263</sup> philanthropy is inseparable from justice.<sup>264</sup>

Theologically, there are two significant texts. The creation through the Son is the work of the Father's *philanthropia* which made it possible for the Son to become a model for others, as well as the cause of salvation.<sup>265</sup> A genuine apophatic thought follows: to create the world out of nothing was indeed the act of divine philanthropy, but that the Son would assume flesh in order to suffer as He did, this is something even greater.<sup>266</sup> Here we have a fine incarnational supplement to the *philanthropia* of the commentary on Genesis which was, naturally, creation-oriented.

The commentary on the Epistle to Philemon<sup>267</sup> tackles the problem of a sentimental conception of philanthropy. One Marcionite maintained that God would have been really good and philanthropic only

255. *Ibid.* PG 60, 53; 147.

256. *Ibid.* PG 60, 375.

257. *Ibid.* PG 60, 23.

258. *Ibid.* Here in just one column the term is used nine times.

259. *Ibid.* PG 60, 123.

260. *Ibid.* PG 60, 130.

261. *Ibid.* PG 60, 321.

262. *Ibid.* PG 60, 52.

263. Posthumously edited by the priest Constantine. See L. Meyer, *op. cit.*, p. xxxvi.

264. *In Hebraeos* XXXVII PG 63, 186.

265. *Ibid.* PG 63, 40.

266. *Ibid.*

267. *In Philemonem* PG 62, 701-720, was also written in 400 A. D. See J. Dumontier, *Les Cohabitations*, p. 20.

if He were about to save all men.<sup>268</sup> As an answer to him, Chrysostom develops his passionate theodicy. First, punishments coming from God the sign of His philanthropy and goodness. If we had nothing to fear from the coming Judgment, life itself would degenerate into bestiality: like fishes we would swallow each other,<sup>269</sup> we would surpass in rapacity even wolves and lions, so that the mythical labyrinth would be nothing in comparison with the universal disorder. Who would respect his father? Who would pity his mother? Who would contain self-indulgence and bridle evil?<sup>270</sup> Hence, the idea of an ill-timed, anarchist goodness would not be worthy of God. Therefore, not to punish the unrepentant sinner would mean that God Himself was in connivance with evildoers. All that precedes gave Chrysostom the basis for his non-sentimental conclusion: exactly because God is good He has prepared gehenna.<sup>271</sup>

Chrysostom closed the commentary with the optimistic exhortation: if we do fear the warnings from above, we will never experience them. And then he prayed the philanthropic God that all may be thinking so soberly, in order to be deemed worthy of the ineffable good things through the grace and philanthropy of the Trinity.<sup>272</sup>

After the mock-trial in 403 presided over by Theophilus, pope of Alexandria — held on the instigation of the Court outside the city gates in a monastery by an oak tree—Chrysostom was recalled from his first banishment. However, he did not use this second chance, helpless as he was in the face of the intriguers.<sup>273</sup>

On Easter of the year 404, the empress Eudoxia, duped as she was by the enemies of Chrysostom,<sup>274</sup> unwittingly won the title of a new Herodias<sup>275</sup> by forcing the prophetically indomitable bishop John to go on his way to martyrdom.<sup>276</sup>

In such a tragic predicament the uncanonically ousted archbishop of Constantinople turned for the moral support of his colleagues

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268. *Ibid.* PG 63, 717.

269. *Ibid.*

270. *Ibid.* PG 62, 718.

271. *Ibid.* PG 62, 718.

272. *Ibid.* PG 62, 720.

273. H. von Campenhausen, *op. cit.*, p. 141.

274. C. Baur, *op. cit.*, II, 357.

275. H. von Campenhausen, *op. cit.*, p. 141.

276. *Ibid.*, p. 142.

in the West: Innocent, pope of Rome, Venerius, bishop of Milan and Chromatius, bishop of Aquileia.<sup>277</sup>

In his letter to Bishop Innocent,<sup>278</sup> God who gives eternal crowns is described as philanthropos.<sup>279</sup>

First in Cucusus in Armenia, «the most forsaken corner of the earth»<sup>280</sup> and afterward in a small frontier town of Arabissus,<sup>281</sup> Chrysostom spent his three years of exile. He was even able to receive visitors, especially many from Antioch.<sup>282</sup> The indefatigable churchman was concerned in helping the missions in Scythia, Phoenicia and Syria, as well as among the Gothic tribes.<sup>283</sup>

The monotonous existence, however, was filled with epistulary preaching. That was the swan song of Chrysostom.<sup>284</sup>

The notion of *philanthropia* appears twenty-eight times only in the correspondence of the exiled bishop. In a few instances the notion is theologically quite important.

On the level of human virtue, philanthropy is recommended to a provincial magistrate Gemellus<sup>285</sup> and praised in bishop Kyriakus.<sup>286</sup> In the letter to deaconess Olympias it carries the meaning of mercifulness<sup>287</sup> and of the generosity of Job.<sup>288</sup>

Bishop Aurelius of Carthage is assured in a letter of Chrysostom's that the philanthropic God will adorn him with greater crowns for having troubled himself about the welfare of the churches throughout the universe.<sup>289</sup>

Olympias is exhorted to bear all humbly and to glorify the philanthropic God,<sup>290</sup> since trials come from Him.<sup>291</sup> Greater are the rewards

277. C. Baur, *op. cit.*, II, 299-301.

278. J. Dumortier, in *Les Cohabitations*, p. 20, gave an approximate date of this letter: «Peu après la Pâque de 404.»

279. PG 52, 536.

280. «ἐρημότατος»: *Epist.* 87, PG 52, 654 *et passim*.

281. C. Baur, *op. cit.*, II, 371.

282. *Ibid.*, p. 383.

283. *Ibid.*, 387; 92.

284. Anne-Marie Malingrey, in *Lettre d' exile*, p. 32, admires «son optimisme, son goût de la lutte jusqu' à l' héroïsme ... en ces temps de persécution.»

285. PG 52, 678. Cf. *ibid.* 701; 703; 704; 705; 706; 707; 708; 709.

286. PG 52, 644; cf. 672; 699.

287. PG 52, 554.

288. *Ibid.* 578; cf. A. M. Malingrey, *Lettre d' exile*, pp. 86, 94.

289. PG 52, 700.

290. PG 52, 621.

291. *Ibid.* 620.

than the pains endured by those persecuted for God's name. This is the reason why the philanthropic God did not grant Paul healing when he asked it.<sup>292</sup> Malchus is similarly exhorted to look forward to the reward from the philanthropic God.<sup>293</sup>

Theologically, the divine philanthropy stands here for the gratuitous remission of sins, as the opposite of human vengefulness.<sup>294</sup>

In the very last writing of Chrysostom, *De Providentia Dei*,<sup>295</sup> we can see the unbroken continuity of the theme of divine philanthropy up to the very end of his life. As if sealing both periods of his philanthropological vision of theology, one in Antioch and the other in Constantinople, Chrysostom sums himself up in a phrase with an apophatic openness toward new divine surprises: «Διὰ φιλανθρωπίαν δὲ μόνην ἡμᾶς παρήγαγε καὶ ἅπαντα ταῦτα ἐποίησε δι' ἡμᾶς καὶ ἔτι πολλῶ πλείονα τούτων.»<sup>296</sup> His very definition of the God who rewards all the persecuted much more than their sufferings require is that incisive, humbly colloquial definition: «τοιούτος γὰρ ὁ φιλόανθρωπος Θεός.»<sup>297</sup>

The writer of such simple and optimistic definitions knew how to die in simplicity and confidence. On the road from Cumane to Pithyonte, near the chapel of St. Basiliscus, Chrysostom distributed the last possessions he had, his clothes, put on the white vestment and prayed calmly in expectation of his death.<sup>298</sup>

In lieu of a formal conclusion to this chapter I shall compare the notion *philanthropia* with other more or less synonymous terms.

First of all, there may be the reality of the concept of philanthropy without the explicit appearance of the term.

As the notion of divine philanthropy covers mainly the reality of salvation,<sup>299</sup> it is obvious that the term «fiery lover» (ἐραστής), when

292. *Ibid.* 582.

293. *Ibid.* 648; cf. PG 52, 656; 657; 669; 670; 675; 698; 700; 719; 726.

294. A.-M. Malingrey, *Lettre d' exille*, p. 106.

295. A.-M. Malingrey, *Sur la providence*, p. 7, specifies that, probably, it was written in Cucusus, early, in the year of 407.

296. «He brought us into being exclusively on account of His philanthropy, and He created all these things for us and even much more than these.» *De Providentia Dei* VII 38 (Malingrey), p. 130.

297. «Such is indeed the philanthropic God.» *De Providentia Dei* XXIV, 8 (Malingrey), p. 276.

298. J. H. Gruninger, «Les Dernières années de Saint Jean Chrysostome: 404-407,» *Proche Orient Chrétien* (1956), 3-10, especially p. 10.

299. *In Romanos XVI* PG 60, 560 *et passim*,

applied to God is interchangeable with *philanthropos*, since God's desire for our salvation is compared with the desire of man in love.<sup>300</sup>

*Philanthropia* is also close to the meaning of the notion *πρόνοια* (Providence)<sup>301</sup>.

On the human level, the behaviour of the Emperor Constantine who did not punish those who maltreated his status, could be described as philanthropic. To the amazement of all, the first Christian emperor while examining his forehead jokingly retorted; «I do not feel any injury on my face.»<sup>302</sup>

In the struggle against the Devil, God is called *σύμμαχος* (fellow warrior),<sup>303</sup> which is close to *philanthropos* in the context of struggle. The habit of God is, according to Chrysostom, to change human tragedy into man's triumph over the Devil.<sup>304</sup> The notion of the philanthropy of God is practically interchangeable with the concept that God wants all men to be saved.<sup>305</sup>

*Philanthropia* already appears along with *chrêstotês* in Titus 3:4. In Chrysostom's use they are synonymous.<sup>306</sup>

*Κηδεμονία* (care, solicitude, concern) also partially reflects the rich meaning of divine *philanthropia*.<sup>307</sup> In the permission given to divorce a prostituted wife both terms appear together.<sup>308</sup> Also in the context of the forgiveness of sins.<sup>309</sup>

*Ἀγαθότης* (goodness) runs parallel with *philanthropia* and *ke-demonia*, easily replacing them.<sup>310</sup>

300. *Ad Theodorum lapsum* 14 PG 47, 296 (Dumortier), p. 162.

301. *Adversus oppugnat. vitae monast.* III PG 47, 365. Cf. *ibid.* PG 47, 392. *De Providentia Dei* VII, 38 (Malingrey), p. 130. Also at the end of the dubious treatise *Comparatio regis et monachi* PG 47, 392.

302. *Ad popul. Ant.* XXI PG 49, 216.

303. *De Lazaro concio* I PG 48, 976. Cf. *In Genes* XXI PG 53, 183.

304. *In S. Romanum mart.* I PG 50, 610.

305. *In Genes.* XXIX PG 53, 267.

306. *In Joannem* X PG 59, 74. *In Romanos* XIX PG 60, 590. *Ad Stagirium* I PG 47, 432. *In Romanos* V PG 60, 424.

307. *Ad Theodorum lapsum* 4 PG 47, 281 (Dumortier), p. 96.

308. *Adversus Jud.* II PG 48, 860.

309. *In Genesin* XXXII PG 53, 295. Cf. *ibid.* XX PG 53, 169. Also *In Romanos* XX PG 60, 595; *Huit catéchèses baptismales* (Wenger), p. 112. *In Joannem* XV PG 59, 100 *et passim*.

310. *Ad popul. Ant.* VII PG 49, 93-94. *Cur in Pentec. acta ... In princip. Act.* IV PG 51, 111. Cf. *In Genes.* XVIII PG 53, 152; *Huit catéchèses baptismales* (Wenger), p. 122.



Practically synonymous, *agapê* and *philanthropia*, on the theological level, are closely knit together.<sup>311</sup> St. Paul is said to have gone higher than the heavens in order to search after the *agape* of Jesus.<sup>312</sup>

On the level of human virtue *philanthropia* in some cases has actually replaced *agape*.<sup>313</sup> However, «by the limitations of its etymology it is able to serve as a substitute for *agape* only in respect to the love of God for men and to the love of men for one another. The love of man for God was one aspect of *agapê* which *philanthropia* could not replace.»<sup>314</sup>

This is undeniable, but Chrysostom would instead use φίλοςθεός or «friend of God» for this specific God-oriented aspect of *agapê*.<sup>315</sup> The friendship which Peter and Paul have toward Christ is proven by their pastoral care for Christ's followers,<sup>316</sup> and in the case of martyrs by their death.<sup>317</sup> In the instance of friendship (*philia*) we have a name for the astounding divine condescension so deep as to see God intermingling with men on terms of informal equality.<sup>318</sup> Each and every baptized person becomes through his regeneration a friend of the Lord.<sup>319</sup> However, there is one case in which *philia* is used in a negative way,<sup>320</sup> which is never the case with *philanthropia*. Chrysostom even specifies that friendship and peace among men depends on the grace and philanthropy of Christ.<sup>321</sup>

*Philia* is used in the same way as *erôs*<sup>322</sup> and *agapê*,<sup>323</sup> Chrysostom

311. In *Joannem* XXII PG 59, 160.

312. *De laud. S. Pauli* I PG 50, 475.

313. G. Downey, «Themistius and the Defence,» p. 271.

314. G. Downey, «Philanthropia' in the Fourth Century,» p. 200.

315. *De Lazaro concio* III, 5 PG 48, 1002. As *philia* could replace *agapê* (*In Matth.* LX PG 58, 588) then the notion of a friend of God had practically the same meaning as *philotheos*. Cf. *Contra eos qui subintroductas*. PG 47, 506. *In S. Ignatium* PG 50, 587; *In Genes.* XIV PG 53, 114 *et passim*. St. Paul is said to have a *philotheos psychê*. PG 53, 96; cf. PG 60, 546-547.

316. *De beato Philogonio* VI PG 48, 752.

317. *De ss. mart. Bernic. Prosdoc. et Domnina* PG 50, 640.

318. Τὸ δὲ φιλεῖν, τοῦτο κοινὸν ἡμῶν καὶ τοῦ Θεοῦ. *De Laud. S. Pauli* III PG 50, 483.

W. Schubart, *loc. cit.*, p. 12, wrote that «φίλια, ein Verhältnis unter gleichen... ausdrücken.»

319. *In utilit. lectionis Script. In princ. Act.* III PG 51, 98.

320. *In Matth.* XVIII PG 57, 265.

321. PG 51, 98.

322. PG 60, 621.

323. PG 60, 618-619; 60, 647. Chrysostom does not hesitate to call the love of God a pure hedonism. PG 60, 622.

has been called, and rightly, the prophet of *agapê*.<sup>324</sup> This love, in Chrysostom's understanding, is socially oriented to a marked degree: everything in this world, except the good deeds of men, belongs to God exclusively. Hence genuine love (*agapê*) ought to be proved by the social equality of all.<sup>325</sup> Eberhard F. Bruck<sup>326</sup> underlined the radical attitude of Chrysostom when he recommends giving up one's whole property to the poor.<sup>327</sup> Chrysostom, discreetly, leaves to every donor full freedom to decide for himself what percentage he wants to give to the poor.<sup>328</sup>

After an examination of my selective examples of Chrysostom's use of *philanthropia*, one should come to the conclusion that this notion, in both its ethical and theological bearing, plays a central role in Chrysostom's vocabulary.

My chronological study, it seems, does not justify any particular scheme of evolution in Chrysostom's predilection for the term *φιλο-θρωπία*. There are, at the most, philanthropological «seasons» in his creative life, but these are without discoverable explanation.

The documents prove abundantly that regardless of the differences between the literary genres used by Chrysostom the divine *philanthropia* appears in almost all his writings as a key notion in his theology. The reason for its importance, in my view, can be partially explained in the light of the confrontation between paganism and Christianity.

The all-inclusive semantic wealth of Chrysostom's notion of divine *philanthropia* will be dealt with in the conclusion of the next chapter.

(To be continued)

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324. Georges Florovsky, «'Ο Άγιος 'Ιωάννης ὁ Χρυσόστομος: ὁ προφήτης τῆς ἀγάπης,» *AKTINEΣ*, No 156 (January, 1955), pp. 5-10, especially p. 9.

325. *Ibid.*, p. 8. A materialistic communism, however, is not endorsed by Chrysostom, since for him God is the only legitimate owner of everything (p. 9), and monastic communities were dedicated to prove that this is the evangelical norm of social life.

326. *Kirchenväter und Soziales Erbrecht* (Berlin, 1956), p. 23.

327. Cf. PG 58, 708.

328. E. F. Bruck, *op. cit.*, p. 26. The same writer, in «Die Gesinnung des Schenkers bei Johannes Chrysostomus,» *MNHMOΣYNA IIΔIIITOYAIΔ*, pp. 65-83, especially p. 80, opposes Cicero's approval of public liberality displayed for the sake of fame to Chrysostom's recommendation of secrecy in almsgiving.