



The *epektasis* [ἐπέκτασις] and the exploits of the soul (ἡ ψυχή) in Gregory of Nyssa's *De anima et resurrectione*

La *epektasis* y las hazañas *De anima et resurrectione* de Gregorio de Nisa

Epektasis i les gestes de l'ànima a l'obra *De anima et resurrectione* de Gregório de Nissa

A *epektasis* e as façanhas da alma na obra *De anima et resurrectione* de Gregório de Nissa

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**Abstract:** The paper refers to a notion central to Gregory of Nyssa's theology – that of *epektasis* (ἐπέκτασις), i.e. progression of the soul (ἡ ψυχή) towards its Creator, as presented in the dialogue *De anima et resurrectione/On the Soul and the Resurrection*. The conversation between Nyssen and his sister Macrina, employing concepts peculiar to the most advanced science of their time, emphasizes that in the afterlife the soul does not leave the body (and neither does human memory). The interesting consequences of this state of affairs for both the resurrection of people and that of Jesus Christ are also discussed.

**Keywords:** Gregory of Nyssa – Resurrection – Macrina – *On the Soul and the Resurrection* – Progress (*epektasis*).

**Resumen:** El artículo se refiere a una noción central de la teología de Gregorio de Nisa: la de *epektasis* (ἐπέκτασις), es decir, la progresión del alma (ἡ ψυχή) hacia su Creador, como se presenta en el diálogo *De anima et resurrectione/Sobre el alma y la resurrección*. La conversación entre Nissa y su hermana Macrina, empleando conceptos propios de la ciencia más avanzada de su tiempo, enfatiza que en el más allá el alma no abandona el cuerpo (tampoco la memoria humana). También se discuten las interesantes consecuencias de este estado de cosas tanto para la resurrección de las personas como para la de Jesús Cristo.

**Palabras clave:** Gregorio de Nissa – Resurrección – Macrina – *Sobre el alma y la resurrección* – Progreso.

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The concept ‘*epektasis*’ (ἐπέκτασις) has received a thorough treatment in Gregory of Nyssa’s *Contra Eunomium*,<sup>2</sup> *The Life of Moses*,<sup>3</sup> and especially in *The Song of Songs*.<sup>4</sup> I elaborated somewhere else on the manner in which it happened within the later treatise.<sup>5</sup> What is specific to *De anima et resurrectione*<sup>6</sup> from the perspective announced in the title, and what I will be touching on here is the manner in which, when explaining the notion of ἐπέκτασις, Macrina (and the bishop who engaged himself in such a conversation) employed science (as physics, astronomy, maritime knowledge, and pagan philosophy). Nevertheless, I will only dwell shortly on this aspect because there is literature on how Gregory’s teacher uses subjects from those disciplines to construct her argument, especially about the communalities of this dialogues with Plato’s *Phaedo*, and about the possibility that Macrina has been modelled on the

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<sup>2</sup> GREGORY OF NYSSA. “[Contra Eunomium Libri I, II et III](#)”. In: *Gregorii Nysseni Opera Online*, edited by Werner Jaeger; Leiden: Brill. See also *Contra Eunomium I: An English Translation with Supporting Studies*, edited by Miguel Brugarolas, Series Vigiliae Christianae, Supplements, volume 148, 2018.

<sup>3</sup> GREGORY OF NYSSA. “De vita Moysis pentecosten”. In: [Gregorii Nysseni Opera Online](#), Werner Jaeger; GREGORY OF NYSSA. *De Vita Moysis*, PG 44, p. 298-434; GREGORY OF NYSSA. “De vita Moysis”. In: Herbert A. Musurillo (ed.). *Gregorii Nysseni Opera/GNO 7/1:4-5*, Leiden: Brill, 1964, reprint 1991. For the English translation see GREGORY OF NYSSA. *The Life of Moses* (edited and trans. by Abraham J. Malherbe and Everett Ferguson). The Classics of Western Spirituality, Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1978, reprint 1991.

<sup>4</sup> GREGORY OF NYSSA. “[In Canticum Canticorum](#)”. In: *Gregorii Nysseni Opera Online*, Werner Jaeger; GREGORY OF NYSSA. *Homilies on the Song of Songs*, Richard A. Norris Jr. (trans., Introduction, and notes), in J. T. Fitzgerald (gen. ed.), *Writings from the Greco-Roman World*, vol. 13, The Society of Biblical Literature, 2012, Atlanta, GA.

<sup>5</sup> ENE D-VASILESCU, Elena. “Love Never Dies: Gregory of Nyssa on *Theosis*”. In: ENE D-VASILESCU, Elena, and EDWARDS, Mark (eds). [Visions of God and ideas on deification in Patristic Thought](#). Routledge/Taylor & Francis, 2017, pp. 55-73.

<sup>6</sup> GREGORY OF NYSSA, “De Anima et Resurrectione”, in *Gregorii Nysseni Opera Online*, Werner Jaeger. Consulted online on 21 August 2019 <[http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/2214-8728\\_gnoo\\_aGNO\\_15\\_t](http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/2214-8728_gnoo_aGNO_15_t)> Leiden: Brill, c. 2019; Gregory of Nyssa, ‘De anima et Resurrectione inscribitur Macrinia dialogus’, in J.-P. Migne, *Patrologiae cursus completus (series Graeca)*, Paris: Imprimerie Catholique vol. 46, 1863, cols. 11-161. Nyssen has another text about Resurrection (of Christ): ‘In Christi Resurrectionem Oratio Quinque’, J.-P. Migne, *Patrologia Graeca* 44, Paris: Imprimerie Catholique, 1863, cols. 599-690.



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philosopher Diotime from *Symposium*.<sup>7</sup> There are some publications also about the manner in which Macrina used elements from sciences to uphold her arguments.<sup>8</sup> Here I am more interested in the implications of the nun's belief that the souls stays with the body after death (even when it physically dissipates) for her understanding of the resurrection of Jesus Christ and of people. The conversation between Macrina the Younger (c. 330-380) and Gregory (c. 335 - c. 395) took place following Basil's death in 379 and mostly because of it – Gregory needed consolation for his loss. That was before the nun's own death – also in 379.

**Image 1**



Icon of the Resurrection from Sinai.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>7</sup> CLARK, Elizabeth A., 'Holy women, holy words: early Christian women, social history and the 'linguistic turn'', in *Journal of Early Christian Studies*, 1998, 6:3 (e.g. p. 424).

<sup>8</sup> For instance, LUDLOW, Morwenna, 'Science and Theology in Gregory of Nyssa's *De anima et Resurrectione*: Astronomy and Automata', in *The Journal of Theological Studies*, volume 60, Issue 2, 1 October 2009, pp. 467–489, <https://doi.org/10.1093/jts/flp067>. The description of the automaton is in Gregory of Nyssa, PG46: 36-40. The edition of Franz Oehler, *Gregor's Bisshof's von Nyssa, Gespräch mit seiner Schwester Macrina, Über Seele und Auferstehung*, Leipzig, 1858. The precise passages under discussion in this paper are: Oehler pp. 325:41 – 327: 2, and pp. 327:28 – 328:39. The translation cited is that by W. Moore in the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers Series, second series, volume V (NPNF 5); for these passages see pp. 433-4 and pp. 435-6. I have also consulted the translation by Catharine P. Roth, *St. Gregory of Nyssa, On the soul and the resurrection*, St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, Crestwood, N.Y., 1993, see pp. 42-43.

<sup>9</sup> WEITZMANN, Kurt et al. (eds.), *Icons from South-Eastern Europe and Sinai*, translated from the original *Ikone sa Balkana*, by R. E. Wolf, London: Thames and Hudson, 1968; the page where fig. 33 is has no number.



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The traditional date for her passing is the 19<sup>th</sup> of July, but it might have been later in the year (late October or November). Gregory tells us that soon after their brother's passing, Macrina was terminally ill. In any case, Maraval's dating of the nun's demise (in 378) or any other – 390 was another possible year for this event – do not stand.<sup>10</sup>

Various aspects concerning the resurrection were discussed by some of the theologians who lived before Macrina and Gregory, notable by Origen [c. 184-c. 253] and Athanasius of Alexandria [296-373], but none of her predecessors employed the arguments the Cappadocian nun did. Origen was one of these forerunners, and we shall introduced here his assertion about this moment in Lord's incarnation: "The Resurrection of Christ, which followed from his Passion on the Cross, also contains the mystery of the Resurrection of **the whole body of Christ**" (*Commentary on John*, 10. 229).<sup>11</sup> Among those expressed by Athanasius is that "by the grace of the resurrection" Christ "put an end to corruption for all others as well".<sup>12</sup>

In the process of articulating a stance on *epektasis* the two Cappadocians discussed about the soul and body as well as about the relationship between these. One of the various definitions the nun uses to describe the soul is the following: it is "an intellectual essence which imparts to the organic body a force of life by which the senses operate. Now the soul is not thus operative only in our scientific and speculative intellect; it does not produce results in that world only, or employs the organs of sense only for their natural work (*De anim.* 21B). An even more precise description of the soul given by Macrina is thus: it is "a competent instructress; [...] she is an immaterial and spiritual thing, working and moving in a way corresponding to her peculiar nature, and evincing these peculiar emotions through the organs of the body. [...] The soul is an essence created, and living, and intellectual, transmitting from itself to an organized and sentient body the power of living and of grasping

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<sup>10</sup> Maraval, PIERRE (ed.), *Grégoire de Nysse. Vie de sainte Macrine*, Paris: Cerf, 1971, p. 149.

<sup>11</sup> ORIGEN, 'The Commentary on John', 10. 229, in Origen, *The Commentary of Origen on S. John's Gospel: the text revised with a critical introduction and indices* by Alan England Brooke, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1896, and Origen, *Commentary on the Gospel according to John*, books 13-32, edited by Ronald E. Heine, Washington: Catholic University of America Press, c. 1993, p. 205; emphasis added.

<sup>12</sup> ATHANASIUS, 'On the Incarnation', Ph. Scaff and H. Wace (eds.), NPNF4, second series, Edinburg: T&T Clark, 1891, p. 35.



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objects of sense, as long as a natural constitution capable of this holds together”.<sup>13</sup> (*De anim.* 29 A-B).

Macrina positioned herself in contradiction with theories that were concerned with the relationship soul-body but did not take God and his energies (“operations”) into account. She refers to the Stoics and the Epicureans (*De anim.* **21B**; **24C**) as being among those who built up such atheistic models. Epicurus, whose system was elaborated around the concept of atom in a “mechanical” “framework of things” – to use Macrina’s terms – did not believe in the resurrection of the soul, and conceived the body only as a “membrane” (*De anim.* **21B**) that existed as long as it is breath within it, after which it completely dissipates. Morwenna Ludlow points out that Macrina criticized Epicurus and others sharing in his view for not recognizing the Creator in his creation, because, as the nun says: “While the sight of a garment suggests to anyone the weaver of it, and the thought of the shipwright comes at the sight of the ship, and the hand of the builder is brought to the mind of him who sees the building, these little souls gaze upon the world, but their eyes are blind to Him whom all this that we see around us makes manifest.”<sup>14</sup>

The nun was not right in characterizing Epicurus’s philosophy as being mechanical because this latter philosopher allowed for **human free will** through the unpredictability of atoms’ movements, but within a Christian system she was right to point out the deficiency of the philosopher’s system that denies the immortality of the soul. From an opposite perspective to that of Epicurus, Macrina expressed her conviction that the soul as created by God has self-existence and does never disappear (*De anim.* **21B**).

Regarding the body, it is interesting to notice that the nun knew, as Epicurus did, that it is formed through the unification of atoms, which separate from one another when death occurs. But for the Teacher Macrina the dissolution of the human body is only a stage in the human existence, which continues both in spirit and matter by acquiring a new “nature” in what is usually called the afterlife. Macrina [and Nyssen, we understand] struggle to fathom how the soul is related to the scattered atoms that become free because of the body’s decay (*De anim.* **24C**). Using pure logical arguments

<sup>13</sup> GREGORY OF NYSSA, ‘De anima et resurrection’, PG 46, 1863; Gregory of Nyssa, *On the Soul and the Resurrection*, in H. Wace and P. Schaff (eds.), (NPNF5-02), p. 432.

<sup>14</sup> GREGORY OF NYSSA, ‘De anima et resurrection’, PG46: 24:4-10; Oehler 322:29-33; tr. NPNF2-05, p. 432.



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she emphasizes (and Gregory agrees) that “it does not follow that because the composite is dissolved, the incomposite must be dissolved with it” (*De anim.* **24C**).

The explanation they provide is that “while the framework of the body still holds together, each individual part possesses a soul which penetrates equally every component member” and “transmits life to all and each of such parts, so, when that framework is dissolved, and has returned to its kindred elements, there is nothing against the probability that the simple and incomposite essence which has once for all by some inexplicable law grown with the growth of the bodily framework should continually remain beside the atoms with which it has been blended, and should in no way be sundered from a union once formed” (*De anim.* **24C**).

It is the same with the human memory in the hereafter. A contemporary [to us] researcher, Susan Wessel, pays attention to it, even though Macrina only mentions it once. The Cappadocian nun believes that it is and will stay attached to the soul. Wessel rephrases Macrina’s position by affirming that, despite the fact that the memory “is quieted once the soul has lovingly experienced the Good, [it] is later revived to account for the individual’s bodily atoms at the resurrection.”<sup>15</sup> Going back to the nun, in the philosophical-scientific endeavour undertaken in the service of the theistic view she withstands, she also refers to the notion of space in relation to the two parts of a human being. Macrina underlines that this notion only applies to the body, and that the soul is not “detained in any place” “by necessity of its nature”; its immateriality makes such a freedom possible (*De anim.* **104A**).<sup>16</sup>

Gregory of Nyssa’s sister explicates why after the earthy death, which marks a change “as radical as that from a seed to a stalk of wheat”<sup>17</sup> (cf. *De anim.* **156D-157A**) people will still have a body: that is because having one is part of what it means to be human. She said that at death human nature gives up “dishonour, corruption, weakness,” and aging, “but it does not give up being itself” (*De anim.* **28B-C**).

This implies that in the eternal life people will be corporeal individuals, but their bodies will have a very different nature than they have now; (*De anim.* **24C**). She is

<sup>15</sup> WESSEL, Susan, ‘Memory and Individuality in Gregory of Nyssa’s *Dialogus de anima et resurrectione*’, *Journal of Early Christian Studies*, volume 18, number 3, Fall 2010, pp. 369-392.

<sup>16</sup> GREGORY OF NYSSA, “*De anima et resurrectione*”, 104A.

<sup>17</sup> PACHER, William C., *Jesus the Saviour. The meaning of Jesus Christ for Christian Faith*, Louisville, London: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001, p. 176.



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right and that becomes especially obvious if keeping in mind that on the road to Emmaus Cleopas and his companion were unable to recognize Jesus; only his acts – the teaching and the breaking of the bread – made their eyes to open, thus enabling the two men to acknowledge their fellow traveller as being Christ (**image 2**).

### Image 2



Jesus on the road to Emmaus, when he met Cleopa and his companion.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> PARRINDER, Geoffrey, *The Wisdom of Jesus*, Oxford: One World, 2000; the image is on p. 220.



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To illustrate her idea, Macrina uses as an example the story of Lazarus, and remarks that the finger that is referred to in this instance – that mentioned by the rich man when he said: “Father Abraham, have mercy on my, and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue!” (Luke 16. 24) – is something different from a finger in the earthly life. That because in the Kingdom of God the human body shall be completely different from what we know. Macrina believes that after the earthy life “a kind of all-inclusive human being will exist” “so that nothing of the resurrected person will be missing in the risen person, the newly-born, the infant, the child, the adolescent, the adult, the parent, the old person, and all the stages in between” – bodily but eternal (*De anim.* **141D-144A**).

The same effort by Nyssen to figure out what kind of body Christ had – respectively people will have – after the Resurrection is also to be found in his treatise *Against Eunomius*, Book 12. There he comments on Christ’s urge to Mary at the tomb: “Touch (ἅπτομαι) Me not, for I am not yet ascended to My Father!” (John 20:17). Was his body purely ethereal and on the way of becoming solid again? If so, would our own bodies undergo a similar process? There are many theological opinions with respect to the reason Christ made the statement written down by John. For instance, St. John Chrysostom believes that the Lord meant to tell Mary that after the Resurrection things will be different than they were before: “for matters are not in the same state, nor shall I henceforth be with you in the same way”.<sup>19</sup>

John Calvin thought that the Lord pointed out that “his state of resurrection would not be full and complete until he should sit down in heaven at the right hand of the Father”,<sup>20</sup> and therefore no-one should try to keep him within the earthly world. Charles John Ellicott<sup>21</sup> and H. A. W. Mayer<sup>22</sup> also have plausible explanations for Christ’s urge to Magdalene, and in the context of our discussion about the soul, it is worth mentioning the latter theologian’s assertion that Christ, “gazing into her

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<sup>19</sup> JOHN CALVIN, ‘Commentary on John 20: 17’, in John Calvin, *Commentary Upon the Acts of the Apostles*, transl. Christopher Fetherstone, Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans; vol. 1, 1949, repr. 1996.

<sup>20</sup> J. CALVIN, ‘Commentary on John 20: 17’.

<sup>21</sup> ELLICOTT, Charles John, *Bible Commentary: A Verse By Verse Explanation*, Grand Rapids, MI.: Zondervan Publishing House, 1971.

<sup>22</sup> MAYER, Heinrich August Wilhem, *Critical and Exegetical New Testament Commentary*, edited by Frederick Crombie, and trans. (from the sixth edition of the German) by Peter Christie, Edinburg: T. & T. Clark, 1880; New York (State): Funk and Wagnalls, 1884; the online version.





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[Mary's] soul" assured her that it is He who stands in front of her, and not his "glorified spirit who has again come down from heaven whither he had ascended".<sup>23</sup>

The explanation Gregory of Nyssa offers for Christ's reaction is that the Lord wanted to indicate that while the human nature yields itself to being touched, grasped, and handled [cf. Luke (24:39)], the Divine one, which he will completely assume soon in the supernal realm, is intangible. At least this is how I read the solution intimated by the Cappadocian. The bishop frames his answer by a reminder addressed to his readers that after the Resurrection in Israel Christ "associated [himself] with men by brotherhood", told them about his ascension, and allowed himself not only to be seen, but at a certain point to be touched (by Thomas, for example).

From everything said above it is clear that Macrina was convinced that the soul can exist by itself, is eternal (*De anim.* 88A), and always in an ascending movement towards its Creator.<sup>24</sup> Gregory strengthens the employment of the term *epektasis* through that of *πρόοδον* (progress, i.e. progressive movement), which is found in his *De hominis opificio/On the Making of Humankind* (*De hom.* 113A and also 141B).

Going back to the treaty *De anima...*, here is where the bishop of Nyssa affirms that for some people a "second resurrection" might be necessary in order for their souls to get increasingly closer to God, i.e. to be deified. This is the way to salvation for those who are too attached to earthly values. This is how the bishop formulates this puzzling state of affairs: people "still living in the flesh" must "free themselves [...] from its attachments by virtuous conduct, in order that after death they may not need a second death to cleanse them from the remnants that are owing to this cement of the flesh, and, when once the bonds are loosed from around the soul, her soaring up to the Good may be swift and unimpeded, with no anguish of the body to distract her [i.e. the soul]" (*De anim.* 88A-89A).<sup>25</sup>

We can corroborate further Gregory's ideas about *epektasis* with others stated by him in *The Homilies on the Song of Songs*. For instance, in Homily 8 he affirms that this process means "journeying towards the infinite by way of higher things" (*Hom.* 8: 5-

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<sup>23</sup> MAYER, H. A. W., *New Testament Commentary*.

<sup>24</sup> GREGORY OF NYSSA, 'De anima et resurrectione', in a few place; for instance in PG 46. 88A.

<sup>25</sup> GREGORY OF NYSSA, 'De anima et resurrectione', PG 46. 88A-89A.



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10).<sup>26</sup> In his most explicit writing about the progress of the soul, the above-mentioned treatise *On the Making of Humankind*, Gregory upholds that the soul and body come into existence together both *potentially* (in God's will) and *actually*, in the process of every human birth (when a person “comes into being by generation”); he does not believe in the pre-existence of the soul, but trusts not only that it will be resurrected – but also that *epektasis* will continue even after this event takes place.

Another argument Gregory uses to justify his conviction regarding the Resurrection is that of consistency; he maintains that since the Gospel is accurate with respect to other events (this is what a Christian believes), it should also be precise when referring to this reality. Additionally, Gregory reminds his readers that Christ raised to life various people; he does not list them, but we know them from the Bible: the son of the woman in Nain (Luke 7.11–17), the daughter of Jairus (Mark 5.21–43, Matthew 9.18–26, Luke 8. 40–56d), and Lazarus (John 11.1-44; 12), etc. (fig. 3).

As known, the episodes concerning Resurrections within the New Testament were prefigured in the Old part of the Scripture. Fred Craddock sees parallels between, among other episodes in the two books, that of the raising of the widow's son in Nain by Jesus and that regarding the raising of the son of the woman (widow) in Zarephath, when Elijah acted (1 *Kings* 17: 17-24).<sup>27</sup>

Given the resurrection acts performed by Christ and especially the fact that God's power is unlimited, there is no reason why the Son of God could have not resurrected himself or to have been resurrected by his Father, which is the same thing. A way of describing this reality is to say that the divine spirit that proceeds from the Father resurrected his offspring and will do the same to human beings. I. e. people are given

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<sup>26</sup> A more substantial quotation from Homily 8 is thus: “Neither, moreover, does the one who is mounting up ever cease to promote one starting point into another, nor does the starting point of ever-greater things find fulfilment simply in itself. For the desire of the soul that is ascending never rests content with what has been known. In turn mounting upwards by way of one greater desire towards another that surpasses it, that soul is always **journeying towards the infinite by way of higher things**”; GREGORY OF NYSSA, “Homily 8”, *The Homilies on the Song of Songs*, edited (with an Introduction) and translated by Richard A. Norris, Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2012, p. 260 in Greek and 261 in English, my emphasis.

<sup>27</sup> CRADDOCK, Fred, *Luke*, Louisville, London: Westminster John Knox Press, 1990, p. 8. In the Old Testament we have similar instances involving prophets: raising of the son of the widow of Zarephath by Elijah (1 *Kings* 17) and the raising of the son of the woman of Shunem (2 *Kings* 4).

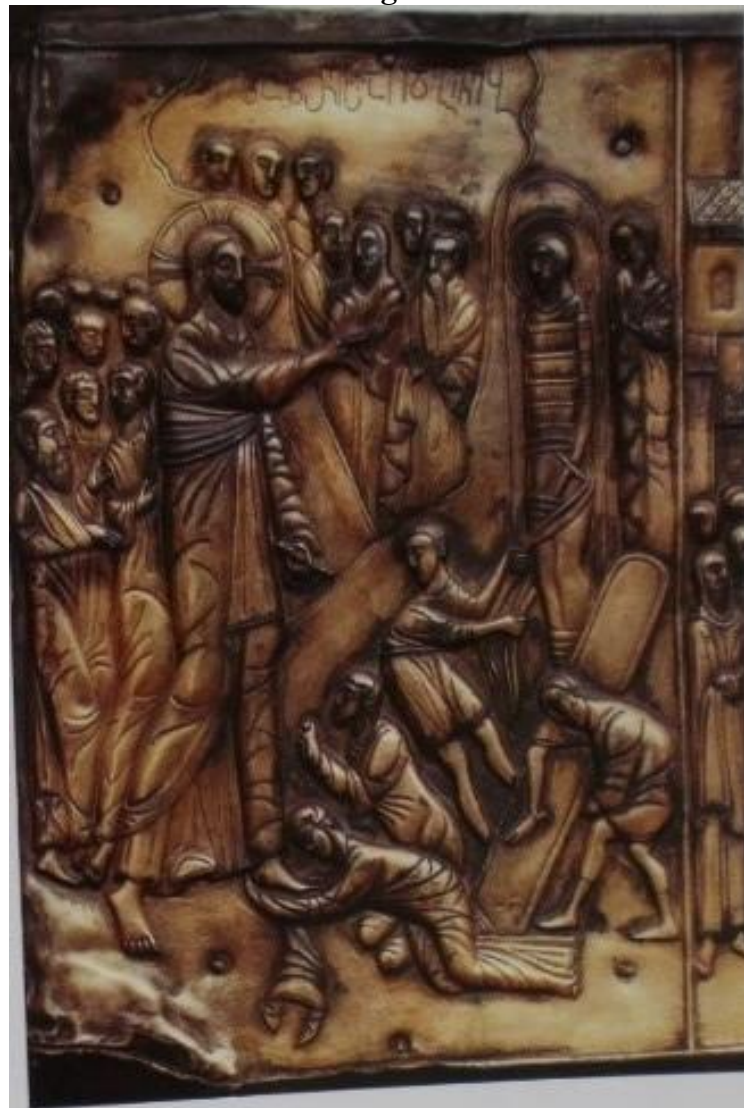


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life through the Spirit (through Christ in the Holy Spirit) at the beginning of their earthly existence and that will happen again at the second coming of Jesus.

**Image 3**



The Raising of Lazarus. Details from an embossed silver-gilt altar cross from Sadgeri (first half of the sixteenth century), now in the Georgian State Art Museum in Tbilisi; the image of the cross is reproduced on p. 206 and the enlarged scene concerning Lazarus is on p. 207.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> BERIDZE Vaxtang, ALIBEGASVILI, Gaianėš, VALSKAJA, Aneli, and XUSKIVADZE, Leila, *The Treasures of Georgia*, trans. by Bruce Penman, London: Century Publishing, 1984 (originally Milan: Arnoldo Mondadori Editores S. p. A, and Ljubliana: Mladinska Knjiga, 1983), pp. 206-207.



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I would conclude this paper by pointing out a line from Paul's Epistle to the Romans, which Nyssen uses in the treatise we chiefly discuss here: "The one who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to our mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you"; Rom. 8. 11<sup>29</sup>. This statement agrees to what we know that Corinthians 15. 20 says: "But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept."<sup>30</sup>) The Resurrection of people is based on that of Christ; it is because he went on the Cross and was able to rise that has made it possible.<sup>31</sup> In *De anima et resurrectione*, this reality is formulated thus: "Now the resurrection promises us nothing else than the restoration of the fallen to their ancient state; for the grace we look for is a certain return to the first life" (*De anim.* 146A).

I would like to believe that if one joins these who believe in Resurrection, they will be resurrected.

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<sup>29</sup> Romans 8. 11: "The one who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to our mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you".

<sup>30</sup> I Corinthians 15: <sup>3</sup>For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures;<sup>4</sup>And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures;<sup>5</sup>And that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve;<sup>6</sup>After that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep;<sup>7</sup>After that, he was seen of James; then of all the apostles.[...] 20. But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept. [King James Version (KJV)]

<sup>31</sup> VINZENT, Markus, *Christ's Resurrection in Early Christianity and the Making of the New Testament*, Farnham: Ashgate, 2011.



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## Appendix

Macrina about the soul:

1. Ἄλλοι μὲν ἄλλως, φησὶ, τὸν περὶ αὐτῆς ἀπεφάνησαν λόγον, κατὰ τὸ δοκοῦν ἕκαστος ὀριζόμενοι, ἡ δὲ ἡμετέρα περὶ αὐτῆς δόξα οὕτως ἔχει·

Ψυχὴ ἐστὶν οὐσία γεννητὴ, οὐσία ζῶσα, νοερά, σώματι ὀργανικῷ καὶ αἰσθητικῷ, δύναμιν ζωτικὴν καὶ τῶν αἰσθητῶν ἀντιληπτικὴν δι' ἑαυτῆς ἐνιοῦσα, ἕως ἂν ἡ δεκτικὴ τούτων συν ἔστηκε φύσις (PG 46, *De anim.* 21B).

“It declares the soul to be an intellectual essence which imparts to the organic body a force of life by which the senses operate. Now the soul is not thus operative only in our scientific and speculative intellect; it does not produce results in that world only, or employ the organs of sense only for this their natural work.” (PG 46, *De anim.* 21B).

2. Καὶ μάλιστα μὲν τοι, φησὶν ἡ παρθένος, τοῖς κατὰ τὸ σοφὸν ἐκεῖνο παράγγελμα γινώσκεις ἑαυτοὺς ἐπιθυμοῦσιν· εἰ κἂν ἡ διδάσκαλος τῶν περὶ ψυχῆς ὑπολήψεων αὐτὴ ἡ ψυχὴ, ὅτι αἰὼνός τις καὶ ἀσώματος, καταλλήλως τῇ ἰδίᾳ φύσει ἐνεργοῦσά τε καὶ κινουμένη, καὶ διὰ τῶν σωματικῶν ὀργάνων τὰς ἰδίας κινήσεις ἐνδεικνυμένη.

Ἡ γὰρ ὀργανικὴ τοῦ σώματος αὕτη διασκευὴ, ἔστι μὲν οὐδὲν ἧττον καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν ἀπονεκρωθέντων διὰ θανάτου, ἀλλ' ἀκίνητος μένει καὶ ἀνενέργητος, τῆς ψυχικῆς δυνάμεως ἐν αὐτῇ μὴ οὔσης. Κινεῖ δὲ τότε ὅταν ἡ τε αἰσθησις ἐν τοῖς ὀράνοις ἦ, καὶ διὰ τῆς αἰσθήσεως ἡ νοητὴ δύναμις διήκη ταῖς ἰδίαις ὀρμαῖς συγκινοῦσα πρὸς τὸ δοκοῦν τὰ ὀργανικὰ αἰσθητήρια ((PG 46, *De anim.*, 29 A-B).

“Most certainly, the Virgin replied, the soul herself [...], is a competent instructress; [...] she is an immaterial and spiritual thing, working and moving in a way corresponding to her peculiar nature, and evincing these peculiar emotions through the organs of the body. [...] The soul is an essence created, and living, and intellectual, transmitting from itself to an organized and sentient body the power of living and of grasping objects of sense, as long as a natural constitution capable of this holds together.” (PG 46, 29 A-B).



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**3.** Καὶ ἰμάτιον μὲν τις ἰδὼν τὸν ὑφάντην ἀνελογίσατο, καὶ διὰ τῆς νηὸς τὸν ναυπηγὸν ἐνενόησεν, ἢ τε αὐτοῦ οἰκοδόμου χεὶρ ὁμοῦ τῇ τοῦ οἰκοδομήματος ὄψει τῇ διανοίᾳ τῶν θεωμένων ἐγγίνεται.

Οἱ δὲ πρὸς τὸν κόσμον ὀρῶντες πρὸς τὸν διὰ τούτων δηλοῦ μενον ἀμβλυποῦσιν, ὅθεν τὰ σοφὰ ταῦτα καὶ δριμέα παρὰ τῶν τὸν ἀφανισμὸν ψυχῆς δογματι ζόντων προφέρεται (PG 46, *De anim.*, 24 A-C).

“While the sight of a garment suggests to any one the weaver of it, and the thought of the shipwright comes at the sight of the ship, and the hand of the builder is brought to the mind of him who sees the building, these little souls gaze upon the world, but their eyes are blind to Him whom all this that we see around us makes manifest.” (PG 46, *De anim.*, 24 A-C).



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