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ИОАНН СКОТТ ЭРИУГЕНА

ГОМИЛИЯ  
НА ПРОЛОГ ЕВАНГЕЛИЯ  
ОТ  
ИОАННА

Вступительная статья,  
перевод с латинского и примечания  
В.В.Петрова

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**Эриугена, Иоанн Скотт**

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*Philippo et Maiae*

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**V**ocantur talibus scotti exant. *145*  
 Vox spiritualis aquile. auditum pullat cordis. Exterior sensus  
 transiente accipiat sonum. Interior animi manente penetrat  
 intellectum. Vox alacris volantis. si aera corporum ut ethera ut  
 coeli sensibilibus mundi ambra supuolant. si omnem theozam. ut  
 omnia que sunt et q̄ n̄ se actualiter intingit theologis penitus. claris  
 sine superatq; contemplationis obamb; transcendentes. Dico autē  
 q̄ se. q̄ sine humanū sine anglicam n̄ omnino fugiunt sensū. Que  
 uad n̄ se. q̄ pfecto om̄s intelligente uires relinquunt. cū post dñm  
 sint. et eoz numerū q̄ ab una omnium causa condita se n̄ pcedat.  
 Supuolat itaq; beatus theologus iohs. n̄ solū q̄ intelligi ac dici  
 possunt. uerū etiā in ea q̄ sepant om̄e intellectū & significam  
 onē supuolant. p̄tāq; om̄ia ineffabili mentis uolam in archa  
 na unita omnium principū p̄tā. incomprehensibilēq; ipsius  
 principū & uerbi. hoc ē. patris & filii unita supessentalitate.  
 nec non & distincta supsubstantialitate pure. dinoscant. tian  
 actum suū inchoat dicens. In principio erat uerbū;  
**De iohs.** non inuenit uocatus iohs. f̄ditū nomen est  
 iohs. cui interpretatio grec̄a significatio. latine u. cui donatū ē. Cui  
 enī theologor; donatū ē. quod ē ē. donatū. ab illa uidelicet sūmi  
 boni pietate iustitia. et ea que tibi reuelata & declarata se hu  
 manus mentib; ac sensib; maneat. Dic̄ quō. cui tanta ac talis ē. donat.  
 gr̄a. fortassis quis dicit sūmo uerbi ap̄oz. p̄tā dico. qui dño int̄  
 rogata que se ē. uoluerat. respondit. Tu es x̄p̄e. hinc dicit uir.  
 Sed non tenet ut optio. quis dixerit. p̄tā in q̄po h̄da & actiois.  
 quā scientie & contemplationis p̄tā talia dixerit. Ea scilicet p̄tā  
 one. qua p̄tā in forma actionis ac h̄da ponit. iohs autē contempla  
 tionis atq; scientie q̄p̄a unitatē. Unus siquidem int̄debat sup p̄tā  
 donatū qd ē. contemplationis sacramentū. Alter sepe traibabat  
 quasi p̄tā actionis h̄dolum. Acro nāq; multiplicatoz dimnoy.  
 p̄tā quā ueniat in h̄dū. p̄tā aliquando distatit species unita  
 ti. aliquando fallit et̄ iudiciū. carnalium cogitatioz obambatū.  
 Int̄te n̄ theorie doct. postquā semel ueritas p̄tā uitaū. neq;  
 quā reperant. non quā fallit. nulla caligine grec̄a in p̄tā.

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## SUMMARY

VALERY V. PETROFF

### JOHN SCOTTUS ERIUGENA HOMILY on the PROLOGUE to St JOHN'S GOSPEL

The only substantial study of Eriugena in Russian was published almost a century ago. It was the fundamental work by A. I. Brilliantoff, *The Influence of Eastern Theology on Western Theology in the Works of John Scotus Eriugena*, St Petersburg 1898, 514 pp.

For Russian students this book is what the work of M. Cappuyns is for European ones. This fact has determined the task and the plan of the present edition. Its purpose has been twofold: to produce something like a guide for those who are first entering into the world of Eriugena, and to note some moments which seem to be of interest to specialists.

So in the introduction, *Accessus*, an attempt has made to sum up the main results achieved in the last decades by several generations of scholars. In this attempt, the author took his cue from E. Jeauneau's excellent *Introduction* to the *Homily* and J. O'Meara's capital summarizing work *Eriugena*. Also the works of M. Brennan (see *Selected Bibliography*) were used.

Another aim of the introductory essay was to collect and to make accessible a considerable number of texts of the Carolingian epoch, which concern the spiritual and cultural atmosphere of the period and shed

light on the circle of Eriugena and of course on himself. Accordingly, the titles of the chapters are excerpts from documents of that time.

The Latin text of the *Homily* (except two readings) and the *Index verborum* are these of E. Jeauneau. Comments are based on the notes of E. Jeauneau, but they are recast and supplemented with new materials. The parallel passages from the *Periphyseon* are given.

The *Accessus* begins with a survey of the cultural and historical peculiarities of the IXth century.

Ch. 1, *Renovatio*, deals with the phenomenon of the "Carolingian Renaissance": the reform of the Church, and the emergence of a network of monastic and cathedral schools, collecting texts of ecclesiastical and classic authors. It is emphasized that the creation of the cultural and educational institutions was a deliberate act: *translatio studii*, which Cicero and Boethius had called for, was eulogized by Heiric of Auxerre in his *Admonitio* to Charles the Bald.

It is worth mentioning that when, in his *Admonitio*, which is full of citations from Cicero, Heiric paraphrases *Resp.* 473cd of Plato: *felicem fore rempublicam, si vel philosopharentur reges vel philosophi regnarent*, he seems to have in mind another fragment — *Resp.* 501e — where Plato says that the State can have no prosperity unless it is ruled by τὸ φιλόσοφον γένος. Just a little further, Heiric mentions Ireland *paene totam cum grege philosophorum ad littora nostra migrantem*. Is this word-combination printed in bold only a coincidence? If it is not, then we have a remarkable and early example of the kind of cultural game which erudites belonging to the third generation of scholars of that time were capable of. It is possible that fragments of *Respublica* were among

collections of notes of various kinds, chiefly excerpts from classical authors, which Carolingian codices contained.

Ch. 2, *Apices hesperii*, the title of which could be translated as *Scriptures* or *Pillars of the West*, concerns the authors and the writings that played a weighty part in transmitting the heritage of antiquity to the Middle Ages. The fortunes of the works of Macrobius, Martianus Capella, Boethius and Chalcidius in the VIIIth and, especially, in the IXth centuries are surveyed.

It is worth notice that the words of Alcuin concerning *Egyptians* in the palace of Charles the Great may have nothing to do with the Irish, as has been suggested, but may concern adherents of Heraclides Ponticus' astronomical theory, which during the Middle Ages was referred to as the "Egyptian" system on the authority of Macrobius (*In somn. Scip.* I, 19, 2). If so, then this is further evidence of the fact that the *Commentarius* of Macrobius had already been circulating in the first generation of Carolingian scholars.

Further, special attention is paid to studying the works of Virgil and the Venerable Bede in the IXth century.

At that time, which Ludwig Traube has called *aetas Vergiliana*, Virgil was esteemed not only as the Poet, but as a sage and a philosopher, whose writings contain *et poeticae figmentum et philosophiae veritatem*.

The influence of the cosmological ideas of the *Speech of Anchises* can be traced from the time of Seneca. Thus, when discussing the world's constitution, Eriugena just mentions two common hypotheses: one of Plato and one of Virgil. The culmination of this we can see in MS *Parisinus 7960*: with its marginal

epithets applied to the poet: *apostolus, levita, presbiter, sacerdos, pontifex, papa, patriarcha* etc.

But of particular interest to us is studying the Venerable Bede's tractates on natural science, which the scholars of the period were devoted to. Thirty-nine manuscripts of the *De natura rerum* have survived!

The similarity of the prologue of the *Periphyseon* and of certain fragments of Augustine and Bede has already been noted (G. Madec, *ESSQ* 80-1; B. Stock, *Ibid.* 86-8). It is suggested in the present chapter as well that there is a connection between the prologues of Bede and John Scottus: the former had influenced the primary plan of the latter in what concerned the fourfold division of the universe.

*De natura rerum* was the object of many commentaries. One of them is of special interest for one who studies the *Periphyseon*. These are anonymous glosses which explain the text of Bede by turning to the *Periphyseon*. For example, the definition of *natura* borrowed from Eriugena is given. Further, the glossator discusses the division of all into those things that are and those that are not. He tells about the genus *creans sive creatum*, and explains why it is possible to call God *natura*, although this is not necessary to the text of Bede. A pair *tempora aeterna — tempora saecularia* is mentioned (see comm. 29) etc.

It has often been remarked that the so-called *Auxerre glosses* belong to Heiric. But now we have good reason to think that its author might have been Remigius of Auxerre (see p. 23, n. 25). *Appendix III* is dedicated to considering the question. The situation is that we have three texts which coincide almost literally. Two of them are adduced in n. 25: the beginning of the anonymous glosses on Bede's introductory verses

to *De natura rerum* (PL 90,104, MS Paris BN lat. olim Sorb. 1827) and a fragment from a comment of Remigius on Donatus' *Ars maior*. The third fragment is also a commentary on introductory verses (but now of Alcuin) to the ps.-Augustinian *Categoriae Decem* (MS Paris BN lat. 12949). This manuscript was copied after Heiric's death, so it certainly had to pass through the hands of Remigius who succeeded Heiric as master of the school of Auxerre.

And what is more: Heiric's *Homily I,11* — where such common terms from the other works of Eriugena as *primordiales causae*, *theophania*, and *monades* are used, and in which Heiric has incorporated about half of the *Vox spiritualis* — bears no mention of the main division into things that are and things that are not. The most characteristic expression of John Scottus, from which his *Vox spiritualis* begins, is just ignored. And it is also ignored in Heiric's *Vita S. Germani*, some passages of which were inspired by Eriugena too. But this very expression appears to be the core of our three extracts!

Is it an accident that the part of the anonymous glosses on the *De natura rerum* which is under consideration comments on the introductory verses and so-called glosses of Heiric do the same? Both coincide literally. Both are under the influence of Eriugenian teaching. How can we interpret this? Had it been a standard formula, depending on the *Periphyseon*, which Remigius applied to both verses introducing the works Eriugena was following? Could Remigius just repeat the material which his teacher Heiric had used in the same case? Was it Remigius at all? No answer for the moment. We need a textual analysis of other works of Heiric and Remigius, including, of course, the investigation of manuscripts.

In ch. 3, *Cunabulum philosophiae*, the genesis of philosophy from the bosom of grammar is considered. The writings of Fridugisus and Godescalc are examples of what J. Jolivet has called "platonisme grammatical". Special attention is paid to intensive study of dialectics, i.e. Aristotelian logic, which started from Alcuin and was continued by his colleagues and pupils.

It is enough to name Fridugisus, Macarius the Irishman, John Scottus and to point to some anonymous manuscripts in order to show that there was a strong tendency to consider the doctrinal *nihil* as something real. A starting-point of such a view was, according to Rathramnus of Corbie, a passage from *Contra Eutychem I* of Boethius.

Besides, knowledge of treatises of Marius Victorinus is emphasized. They were known at least to Alcuin, Hincmar of Reims and Eriugena. And it is a special characteristic of the period to separate *ratio* from *auctoritas* deliberately. Alas, the cultural development stimulated by royal power has come abruptly to an end with the fall of the Carolingians.

Ch. 4, *Salomon sapientissimus*, introduces the personality of Charles the Bald. In spite of never-ending wars, Charles presided over what is sometimes called the Second Carolingian Renaissance. He was known as the "philosopher king" and was referred to as Solomon. He valued books, and there was an atelier associated with his court. Today we have about a dozen richly decorated manuscripts and among them his prayer book, Psalter and the famous *Codex aureus* — a magnificent Gospel. In this chapter the "palace school" is discussed. Godescalc of Orbais (c.849) and Heiric of Auxerre (c.870) wrote about it. Charles himself was the *apex* of the school.

Ch. 5, *Grege philosophorum*, discusses the role

played on the Continent by the Irish. The great saints — Patrick, Brigit, Colum-cille, Columbanus — are mentioned, and their missions are described.

The phenomenon of *filid*, who were the official *savants* and *littérateurs* of Ireland, is examined. It is important to fix a stylistic similarity that can be seen between the literary language of the *filid*, who in former times underwent a "Latinist" influence, and the *Kunstprose* of such continental writers of the IXth century as Eriugena.

For example, *Hesperica famina* and *loricae* are written in rhetoric, i. d. periodical, rhythmical and alliterative prose. So are other treatises: the majority of the sentences are divided into balanced periods, more or less rhythmical and with occasional rhyming endings.

They were known on the Continent at that time. Is it an accident that the style of the *Vox spiritualis* as well, according to P. Dronke, is "riche en structures rythmiques, rimes, et parallélismes vigoureux"?

There always were a lot of Irish monks on the Continent. In the ninth century the typical Irishman was the "scholar", not the "saint". We know that Benedict of Aniane warned his pupil against the verbose deception of the Irish, who used the *sylogismus delusionis* in speaking about the Trinity. In this syllogism a difference between Greek and Latin trinitarian terminology was played up. This is evidence that long before Eriugena, who preferred the Greek formula, the Irish had been aware of this difference.

When Charlemagne started his cultural reform, the learned Irishmen gathered to his court. Sometimes there was hostility towards them from continental scholars, e.g. Einhard. Theodulf of Orleans even thought up a pun *scottus* — *sottus* — *cottus* (Irishman

— dolt — bolster). Half a century later, that spiteful joke would be brilliantly parried by John Scottus.

There were two scholarly associations of the period: in Liège (the circle of Sedulius Scottus) and in the north of France at Laon, Quierzy and Compiègne. The activities of both are considered. The library of Laon is described, and also the career of Martin Scottus, who was the master of the cathedral school of Laon, and the cultural influence of the Irishmen is observed.

The second part of the *Accessus* concerns Eriugena himself. Ch. 1, *Scholasticus et eruditus*, deals with the beginning of his career. The important thing to observe here are the biblical glosses of John Scottus, collected probably by Heiric. In addition, the commentary of Servius on Virgil in *Bernensis* 363 is worth examining.

Somebody wrote "*Ioh(annes)*" in the margin of the commentary of Servius in order to draw attention to what John Scottus had either written or said in his lectures about the contents of certain notes of Servius on the meaning of passages in Virgil. The themes that are singled out concern the return of all to God, the statement that everything is created of four elements and of God is noted etc.

Since there is a similar statement in the margin of a famous codex of Virgil (*Bernensis* 165, f. 131r), the anonymous author's notions of nothing, elements and the world's soul are discussed again. The concepts of Varro, Augustine and John Scottus, who turns to the authority of Plato, Virgil and Gregory of Nyssa, are considered. The original solution of the problem of nothing by Eriugena in *Periphyseon* I is examined.

Ch. 2, *Annotationes in Marcianum*, introduces the IXth-century commentaries on Martianus Capella.

John Scottus attaches great importance to the *artes liberales* in his system. "All the arts are naturally innate in all men", he writes; "they make the human soul immortal"; and further, we meet the famous sentence: *nemo intrat in celum nisi per philosophiam*. It is because, as Saint Augustine said, true philosophy is true religion.

And after these references to Saint Augustine John Scottus interprets Martianus from the point of view of Macrobius (*Ann.* 21,32-22,19 Lutz), freely mixing doctrines of both of them. To Macrobius' words "the area between the moon and the earth was known as the infernal regions of the dead" (*In somn. Scip.* I,11,6) are added discussions of Martianus' view that in the underworld the fiery stream Pyrrhlegethon flows, whose name originates in the planetary circle of Mars (*De nuptiis* 75,2-4 Dick). Yet Prudentius of Troyes wrote about Eriugena's acquaintance with the cosmological concepts of Varro (*PL* 115,1294).

Ch. 3, *Impugnator veritatis*, deals with the ninth-century controversy on predestination. The main theses of this work of John Scottus are discussed. The starting-point of the dispute was Isidore's word-combination *gemina praedestinatio* (cf. ps.-Plutarch's *De fato*). Godescalc developed it into a theory. The teachings of Godescalc and Eriugena are summarized with references to other debaters.

Attention is drawn to the bizarre Eriugenian interpretation of Augustine. Some of his theses John Scottus proposes to consider as merely a rhetorical figure of speech called *antiphrasis*. He adduced examples of antiphrases borrowed firstly from Martianus and then found with his own hand in the Bible.

It is said that from the orthodox point of view the objections of Prudentius are irreproachable. John

Scottus is wrong to assert that God's predestination must be part of his substance. As Florus of Lyons wrote against Eriugena, predestination is single in the mind of God, but in its distributive effect upon man it is twofold. By the way, the East Orthodox Church distinguishes divine energies and the substance of God as well.

Prudentius of Troyes in his turn accused Eriugena of forsaking the quadriga of the Gospels for the quadrivium of dialectics (*PL* 115,1293-4). Then he enumerates the four cardinal virtues (prudence, temperance, courage, justice) and accordingly the four species of divine speech: historical, moral, allegorical and anagogical.

It is worth mentioning that when Eriugena says that the punishment for sin comes from within the sinner himself, he draws a picture of a palace (*aula regalis*). Its beauty would be there to enjoy both for the sons of the Master and for his slaves. But the sinners, overcome by greed, would merely suffer at the sight of such magnificence. It is probable that here Eriugena has in mind the scene described by Macrobius that concerned the ruthless tyrant Dionysius of Syracuse, who in the splendor of the Sicilian court suffered fear that never ceased and called it a sort of death (*In somn. Scip.* I,10,16).

Ch. 4, *Reversus ad graecos*, deals with Eriugena's translations of works of Dionysius Areopagiticus, Maximus the Confessor and, probably, Gregory of Nyssa. The preface to his translation of the *Ambigua ad Iohannem* is examined. Here John Scottus has named things that he had learned from Maximus. He says, and it is important, that through positive and negative theologies, the ranks of celestial essences are discerned and put in order. And also: the unity of the



three divine hypostases and the three hypostases of the divine unity constitute the mystical *senarius*. In this way theology is united with classic arithmology.

In ch. 5, *Periphyseon*, Book I is under examination. The stylistic dependence of the first paragraph on Cicero's *De inventione I* is noted. The term *natura* in Eriugena is similar to that of Boethius (*Contra Eutycken I*) and Seneca (*Ep. moral. LVIII,14*). The frequent expression "things that are and things that are not" is borrowed from Marius Victorinus (*Ad Cand. and Adv. Arium*), who in his turn had merely translated the same formula of Porphyry.

If for Porphyry "things that are" were for the most part "the intelligibles", then for Eriugena they are objects of knowledge, which gives existence to things. For Eriugena, knowledge doesn't coincide with things, as it did for Plotinus and Dionisius, but exceeds them (774A). Knowledge constitutes being. It generates the orders of the universal hierarchy (Cf. 444C and the *Praefatio* to his translation of Maximus).

The primary fourfold division of nature gives way to the principal one — into things that are (that are known) and things that are not (that lie beyond the power of intellect).

Being, as the object of knowledge, is inseparably linked with the idea of *locus*. Eriugena revises this category. It is not a position of the body with respect to other bodies, it is a *logical definition* of things whether these be corporeal or incorporeal (474B). This conception, and it is important, occurred to John Scottus from his acquaintance with the *artes liberales*. Indeed, the *τόποι* of dialectic and rhetoric were called *loci* by the Latins. The definition of *locus* made by Cicero had become classic. It was repeated by Marcianus Capella, Boethius, Cassiodorus, Alcuin and Eriugena himself.

By the way, Boethius noted that Marius Victorinus had been trying to combine the physical and logical concepts of *locus* (*In Top. Cic. comm. VI*). So Eriugena too, not having forgotten to cite Cicero, resolutely introduces *loci* into the other liberal disciplines (447CD).

The sentence that crowns this discussion is: *non esse locum nisi in animo* (475B), and further: *non aliud esse locum nisi actionem intelligentis atque comprehendentis virtute intelligentiae* (485D). Therefore *locus omnis, quia definitio est defines* being. A formless piece of reality gets existence by being separated from the background, being outlined. The indication of created being, as Maximus had said, is ἡ περιγραφή (see p. 234, n. 16). This is most accurately elaborated by Marius Victorinus (*Adv. Arium II,4,12-24*): "being is some figure, and it must be framed". And so Eriugena: *quidquid enim omnino caret forma et specie, non immerito potest vocari nihil* (664D).

In the beginning of the *Periphyseon* five modes of interpretation of the formula "things that are and things that are not" are given. Such classifications of being, which had already been outlined by Aristotle (*Metaph. IX,10*), early penetrated to the Latin West (Cf. Seneca, *Ep. moral. LVIII,16-22*; Marius Victorinus, *Ad Cand. IV-X*). It has already been mentioned that John Scottus knew the works of Victorinus.

The first mode: all things that fall within the perception of sense or intelligence are said to be; those which, because of the excellence of their nature, elude all sense and intellect, seem not to be.

The second mode is seen in the orders of created natures. An affirmation concerning the lower order (man, mortal) is a negation concerning the higher and vice versa.

The third. What is manifest in matter, form, time, and place "is by a certain human convention said to be". Whatsoever is still held in the folds of nature and is not manifest is said not to be.

The fourth mode. According to the philosophers only those things which are contemplated by the intellect alone *truly are*.

The fifth mode is that which reason observes only in human nature: when through sin it renounced the divine image in which it was properly substantiated, it lost its being and therefore is said not to be. And when it is restored by grace to the condition in which it was made after the image of God, it begins to be.

Non-being based upon privation of substance and accidents should certainly not be admitted in this classification, repeats John Scottus after Marius Victorinus. Philosophy can't manage pure nothingness.

If we look at the *Ad Candidum* IV,1-5 of Victorinus we will see that his second and third modes correspond to the second and third modes of Eriugena, but the mode with which the Roman rhetor had closed his list has become the first and the principle in Eriugena.

Of course, the real picture is more complicated and John Scottus, as always with him, remade the themes he had borrowed.

If we consider these modes of being and not-being we will easily discover other sources of Eriugenian thought. Besides John Scottus, Marius Victorinus and Dionisius wrote on not-being *per excellentiam*. The connection between being and the object of knowledge had been set up already by Plato (*Soph.* 248c-249b). It is in Plotinus (*Enn.* V,1,4,32-3: τὸ δὲ ὄν κατὰ τὸ νοούμενον) and Dionisius (*Ad Gaium*, PG 3,1065A).

In the *Periphyseon* man is some notion in God's

mind. In their turn, notions in human minds constitute substances of the whole created nature subordinate to man (769A). Cognition becomes creative.

It has always been felt that Greek words γένεσις, γένος and γινώσκω have a common root γν- (Cf. Plato, *Crat.* 411d). Eriugena displays that intuition in Latin: *nascor* (archaic *gnascor*), *natio*, *natura* and *nosco*, *cognosco*. We create things that are lower than we in the act of knowing them. On the other hand, turning the eyes of one's mind to the higher level means making oneself similar to it. As pure intellect becomes unified with what it knows, the contemplator becomes unified with what he contemplates. For the theologian, this means deification.

The second mode is borrowed from Victorinus, taking into account the arguments of Maximus (cf. *Praefatio ad Ambigua*). The third and the fourth modes most likely are borrowed from Victorinus (*Ad Cand.* IV, 1-5 and VII, 13-4) as well.

The fifth and last division has its origin in the teaching of Gregory of Nyssa, for whom the substance of human nature is to be an image of God, to be a mind gazing into divine mystery. And the turning to the sensible region is considered as a loss of this substance, i.e. a loss of being. One must keep all this in mind while reading ch. XIII of the *Homily*, where the Word of God *forms* our nature, containing it through nature, and *reforms* it, deifying it through grace.

Ch. 6, *Theologus Iohannes*. Here the fragment from *Expositiones* VI, 9 is under consideration. Having turned to Boethius' *De arithmetica*, Eriugena regards the twenty-seven combinations that can be produced by the nine ranks of the celestial hierarchy as the *perfectissimus cubus et primus imparis numeri* (cf. *In*

somn. Scip. I,6,15: the first two cubes of all numbers are eight (even) and twenty-seven (odd)). Again, as in *Praefatio ad Ambigua*, John Scottus uses arithmology in examining the 6 surfaces, 12 edges, 8 angles of that divine cube.

According to Boethius "they called the cube geometrical harmony" (*De arithm.* II,49). The numerical relations of that cube, adds Eriugena, produce the musical intervals: the sesquitercian (4/3) gives the interval known as *dia tessarōn* (the fourth), the sesquialter (3/2) — *dia pente* (the fifth). Double proportion produces the interval known as *dia pason* (the octave); nine to eight produces the tone. And above all: *nichil aliud esse celestes essentias, nisi summe ac sanctissime Trinitatis quam annuntiant epiphantias et theophantias in perfectissimis senarii numeri rationibus substitutas... Et cetera que de cubicis proportionibus et proportionalitatibus disseruntur, non aliunde nisi ex celestium essentiarum adunationibus, in quibus primo condita sunt, in noticiam humanorum intellectuum provenire crediderim vere.*

In this exegetical masterpiece John Scottus unites the theology of Dionysius and classic arithmology. What is important is his conclusion: arithmetical and harmonical proportions, have their base in the concordance of heavenly essences, which are epiphanies and nothing more than theophanies of the Trinity. In this way, the metaphysics of numbers and classic arithmology become Christian. Structures of science, art and the universe itself turn out to be explications of the divine Trinity lying beyond being and knowledge.

It's typical of Eriugena to play up the polysemy of words. In this particular passage ἐπιφάνεια means not only "manifesting of God", but it is also a geometrical term standing for a "surface" (cf. n.196). Eriugena

tells about *celestes essentias... ueluti intra octo angulos, intra soliditatem uidelicet mysticam future adhuc nobis, non illis, uel certe et nobis et illis, beatitudinis constitutas*. Here again we can see the interplay of the species of the *artes liberales*: arithmetic and theology. It was Macrobius who said that the number eight represented a solid body (*In somn. Scip* II,2,10: *qui numerus solidum corpus imitatur*). And those were Dionysius' words, that in the environment of celestial virtues we would receive divine beatitude, if we became equal to angels (*De cael. hier.* III,9). While we are only going to have beatitude, angels probably have already got it.

Nothing is known about the last days of Eriugena. There are some legends, and the most elaborate one narrates that after Charles the Bald's death he went to England to the court of King Alfred, where at Malmesbury he was stabbed with the styles by his pupils. William of Malmesbury, who is the source of that story, also retells two witty anecdotes. One of them is called the best *bon mot* of the Middle Ages. It is assumed in this chapter that both table-talks really took place. They are self-sufficient, as myth is. We must take them into account in judging the personality of John Scottus. On the other hand, the story of the murder has to be considered a literary compilation: in this way, for example, Julius Caesar was killed, and Svetonius, well-known at the time of William, mentions styles and a great number of wounds (cf. also Seneca, *De clem.* I,15,1). It doesn't suit John Scottus to quote someone else's death in his own.

Ch. 7, *Gaudia Verbi*, deals with the *Homily* itself. Special attention is given to the artistry of this short sermon. Here the use of poetic images is deliberate. P. Dronke (see n.219) has already observed *la fonction*

*anagogique des images* in the *Kunstprosa* of the *Homily*. In this chapter an ontological aspect of Eriugena's resorting to "fictitious, i.e. invented sacred imaginations" (n. 219) is emphasized. How could we face celestial essences that have no *forma* or *figura*? Unless they are described and perceived by the human mind, they *are not* to us. Theology *valde artificialiter* puts invisible virtues into proper frames of images and in this way, according to Eriugena, they begin to exist for us.

Another characteristic feature of the same fragment of the *Expositiones* is that theology is called a virtue naturally innate in human souls. In the beginning of his career Eriugena had already applied such words to *Sapientia*, by which he meant the liberal arts. The head of these arts was Philosophy. Now he states: *naturales et liberales disciplinae... adunantur [in Christum qui est] summus fons totius sapientiae*. It seems that the liberal arts must dissolve in theology. And that was so for everybody but Eriugena. Further, John Scottus writes that within the limits of these arts *tota divina concluditur scriptura. Nulla enim sancta scriptura est, quae regulis liberalium careat disciplinarum* (*Expos.* I,21).

This is another example of the remarkable and constant identification of philosophy and theology, *ratio* and *auctoritas*, which Eriugena has been insisting on all through his life. Once, in his younger days, he wrote: *error eorum, qui aliter, quam Patres sancti sentiunt de praedestinatione, ex liberalium disciplinarum ignorantia inolevit* (*De praed.*, PL 122,430). But this time it is an identification of Philosophy and Christ typical for that time. Later in the XIth century some Benedictine would say: *ipsa Philosophia Christus* (iconographic study of the subject see in M. d'Alver-

ny's "Le cosmos symbolique...", pp.57-8). This text of Eriugena is one of the earliest and most striking examples of such personified identification. We must remember it while reading, for example, such a paradoxical formula as *theologia veluti quaedam poetria*. If in the *Annotationes* the liberal arts were means of salvation, then now it comes through Christ. They are inseparable. Therefore, when in the *Homily* Eriugena speaks about *deificatio hominum* (295BC), he recollects the argument *a fortiori* by which *rei de qua dubitas possis fidem accomodare* (see n.164). Even here, touching the mystery of the Incarnation and the deification of human beings, Eriugena without embarrassment resorts to the tools of the liberal arts.

The *Homily* ends with a beautiful image where John Scottus appears to be an exegete and a poet at once. Writing of Christ, who was filled with the gifts of the Holy Spirit, and of the lamps of grace shining in Him as it were on top of the mystical candelabrum of the Church (296C), Eriugena not only bears in mind the Old Testament candlestick of the prophet Zechariah, mentioned in *P II,564B*, but also recalls the vision of Revelation, where John saw seven gold *candelabra* which were the seven churches (*Rev* 1,20), and seven lamps which were the seven spirits of God (*Rev* 4,5).

In this way, as usual with Eriugena, art meets religion, an artistic sight becomes the vision of a theologian, and things that formerly lay beyond the range of our intelligence now find their existence in us. After all, it's they who admit us and let us ascend back to where we once belonged.