

treatment of Jewish religion in pre-War Italy attends almost entirely to the (often idiosyncratic) practices of the laity, without really touching on the development of the modern Italian rabbinate and its participation in the Jewish intellectual movements of the time. For example, despite the fact that the Collegio Rabbinico Italiano was the first modern institution of its kind, it does not feature at all in Klein's story. While the focus on popular practice is a welcome corrective to the more common error of attending entirely to "official" Judaism, the lack of attention to the few figures of Italian Jewry whose impact on Jewish thought is still felt is somewhat striking. Samuel David Luzzato (the premier Italian participant in the *Wissenschaft des Judentums* movement), for example, is mentioned only once in passing, while Umberto Cassuto (a Bible scholar and critic of the Documentary Hypothesis who eventually became Chair of Biblical Studies at the Hebrew University) is not mentioned at all.

These criticisms, however, are minor ones in light of the overwhelming strengths of Klein's achievement. Her book represents a major contribution to the rather underdeveloped secondary literature on Italian Jewry and in particular adds a new perspective to the study of modern Jewish negotiations of nationalism. The field of Jewish studies has traditionally been dominated by the experiences of North American and German Jews, while today the need to attend to Jewish experiences in the Middle East and North Africa is becoming more widely recognized, Klein's work makes a strong case for the relevance of the Italian community as well.

*Vincent Calabrese*  
*University of Toronto*

**Andrew Radde-Gallwitz.** *Gregory of Nyssa's Doctrinal Works: A Literary Study.* Oxford: OUP, 2018. xvi + 307 pp.

Studies of the late fourth century bishop, Gregory of Nyssa, continue to be produced by a number of capable scholars. This plenitude, no doubt, stems from Gregory's many works having been preserved from antiquity, as well as his status as a Father of the Church who has been recognized in the Latin West and the Greek East, both in Chalcedonian and non-Chalcedonian churches. The variety of Gregory's writings that have been preserved vary

from doctrinal to practical, from esoteric to mundane. His spiritual (i.e., allegorical) interpretation of Scripture ensured that the most mundane features of ancient stories could be turned to spiritual benefit – his *Life of Moses* being a prime example.

When a new study appears on such a familiar figure, we may wonder: what new insight can be gained? Dr. Andrew Radde-Gallwitz, however, offers his study as a means of understanding Gregory of Nyssa in a new and helpful way. He limits himself to Gregory's dogmatic works for a few reasons. Gregory's corpus is large enough that its entirety cannot generally be covered in one study. More significantly, there is something in the problem that Radde-Gallwitz has highlighted, which makes a study of Nyssa's doctrinal works apropos. He writes, "I focus on what Gregory variously calls 'the mystical [or revealed] dogmas' or 'the rationale of the faith' – that is, the creed and its attendant questions. These questions range from the divinity of the Son and the Holy Spirit to the unity of the three hypostases, to the mystery of Christ's incarnation, passion, and resurrection" (p. 6). He sees a problem in the studies of Gregory dating over the last century, viz., the perceived need for scholars to systematize Gregory's thought. As he writes, "In my view, such a systematic presumption was the major flaw in the initial generation of scholarly work on Gregory's Trinitarian theology, and it continues to appear in certain kinds of scholarship" (p. 7). He highlights this problem in Diekamp's dissertation from 1896 and even implicates John Behr and Khaled Anatolios in this movement (though to a much smaller degree).

Instead, Radde-Gallwitz is proposing an avowedly rhetorical reading of Gregory's dogmatic works: "In contrast to the systematic approach, I would prefer to think of my reading of the canon as literary and rhetorical analysis grounded in a sense of the works' various historical contexts. I cannot claim that such an approach is immune from any of the problems of other methods, but the procedure is intended to keep the focus on each work's original rhetorical aims" (p. 8). In responding to the criticism that Gregory's theology does not seem consistent, Radde-Gallwitz endeavours to read Gregory's texts in a performative manner. By this, he means that Gregory is often responding to specific circumstances in his writings. Sometimes he is arguing against non-Nicene heretics like Eunomius, while other times he is defending himself from fellow Nicene Christians who were questioning his *bona fides*. Throughout this book, then, Radde-Gallwitz goes to some

length to highlight Gregory's life situation and to establish against whom or for whom Gregory was writing. So Radde-Gallwitz writes at one point, "Such synoptic work enables us not only to flesh out arguments that are compressed or absent in *To Eustathius*, but also to gain an appreciation for Gregory as a self-conscious writer. The first strategy can be illuminating, but it can also lead to an overly synthetic portrait of Gregory, one that misses the ways in which each work is a unique performance aimed at a specific goal and employing its own strategies" (p. 60). This approach helps the reader to appreciate the circumstances and difficulties Gregory was experiencing in his ecclesiastical role as bishop/pastor, theologian, and sometime ambassador for other hierarchs.

Though Radde-Gallwitz eschews a systemizing approach to Gregory scholarship, he does offer some organizational principles in this book. The first thing we notice is that Radde-Gallwitz highlights baptismal practice as the meaningful locus of Trinitarian speculation in Gregory's writings: "in his dogmatic treatises, where textbook accounts might lead one to expect much more on the metaphysics of substance or relation, one finds a great deal on baptismal grace; in his sermons, reflecting on the occasion of baptism tends to prompt Trinitarian questions" (p. 1). Simply put, Radde-Gallwitz is asserting the *lex orandi, lex credendi* principle in Gregory's writings. The author notes that the ubiquity of three-fold baptism as stated in Matthew 28:19-20 in the ancient Church amongst Nicene and non-Nicene Christians allows Gregory space to parse what should be understood when one is baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. He helpfully reminds us of this baptismal focus throughout the work (e.g., "from the standpoint of our works thus far, Trinitarian theology is a matter of commentary on the vivifying action of God in baptism" [pp. 72-73]; "that the hypostases be ordered in accordance with the baptismal formula" [p. 114]; "the chief example of a divine activity for Gregory here and throughout his corpus is the giving of life in baptism" [p. 155]; "through the sacrament of baptism, souls participate in their own remedy, which has been wrought by Christ in his own sinless soul" [p. 214]).

Radde-Gallwitz offers another organizational principle in the form of chronology. He follows the dogmatic works in the order in which they were composed. This generally functions well as Gregory's early writings tend to address Trinitarian concerns more explicitly, since the time leading up to and immediately following the Second Ecumenical Council in 381 was

consumed with establishing the proper understanding of the *homoousios* of the Son with the Father and extending this debate to the nature of the Holy Spirit. Thus, the first section of the book is focused on the question of “who God is,” while the second part of the book is concerned with “what God does.” Though these questions cannot be dealt with in a strictly chronological fashion, there are general themes in different eras of Gregory’s life in which these questions come more to the fore.

I appreciate the emphasis that the author places on the Greek word *Energeia* in Nyssen’s writings, and how he highlights its semantic range from effect or actuality (e.g., the warmth of a fire) to activity (e.g., human acts). When applying *Energeia* to God, Radde-Gallwitz sees Gregory using this in terms of God’s *ad extra* relationship to creation, whereas he says inner-Trinitarian relations are more concerned with ordering and dignity. Discussion about *Energeia* in Gregory often tempts scholars to make Gregory a proto-Palamite (especially amongst Orthodox writers) – highlighting the Essence-Energy distinction in later Byzantine theology – but Radde-Gallwitz leaves Gregory in his own era and tries to appreciate him on his own merits.

The author states in the introduction that this work is intended for scholars and students. I would concur that this is an apt description, though I think that the term “student” would need some qualification. I doubt that a student who does not have familiarity with the theological debates of the fourth century would be able to appreciate the richness of this book. A first reading left this reviewer in awe. It is well researched and I have no doubt that Dr. Radde-Gallwitz is an astute scholar. The book, in fact, bears re-reading in order to appreciate the depth and volume of the scholarship assembled here.

*Greg Doyle*  
*McGill University*