Late Antique Cultures of Breath: Politics and the Holy Spirit

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Around the turn of the fifth century CE the Roman grammarian Servius wrote a commentary on the *Georgics*, a poem written by Vergil in the first century BCE.¹ Near the beginning of the first book of the *Georgics*, Vergil talks about the processes by which farmers begin to till the land. Servius weaves his comments into the poem's text (in italics), clarifying philological points and connecting these lines to other works by Vergil and the poet Lucretius:

Before we split the unknown plane with iron, that is, before it has been ploughed ... Moreover, we should understand 'plane' to refer to the earth, saying it's flat, like 'in fury he forces Dares across the whole plane' [Vergil, *Aeneid* 5, l. 456]. From this it is said that the sea is a plane.

[*let it be our concern to learn in advance*] *the winds* because different winds are common in different places. This is meant: you ought to know to which wind your land is subject.

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and the changeable custom of the heavens, that is, air: Lucretius: ‘this heaven which is called air’ [Lucretius, *De rerum natura* l. 132]. So this is said: Moreover, you should know your sky, whether it rejoices in rain, whether it’s warm or cold.²

The first book of *Georgics* is a complicated and allusive work. Focussed on farming and the development of culture that agricultural settlement brings, the poem also positions human communities as radically contingent, inevitably threatened by political collapse and civil war.³ In the early lines quoted here, the poem looks ahead to the moment when plough breaches earth for the first time. In the poem this ploughing leads to crops, livestock, a hearth, a household, all the goods of culture that follow, and then, later, civil war and dissolution. In her analysis of this section of *Georgics*, Ika Willis argues that this ploughing is a mark on the ground that makes the earth political space. After the metal strikes soil, there is a difference between the untilled—unknown—earth and the cultivated terrain of farming and human settlement. In the passage above, however, all this is mere potential. Before he can cut a furrow that will realise this future, the farmer must know the air and earth.⁴

Servius understood this. His comments emphasise the plough’s capacity to make space political and situate this future-making as an event of cosmic significance. He tells us that this soil is called a ‘plane’ (*aequor*) because it is flat and undifferentiated (*ab aequalitate dictam*). The comparison is to the sea, another place unmarked, unknown, and unowned.⁵ Servius draws out the cosmological import of the first furrow with a reference to Lucretius: the air the farmer observes is merely one part of a much larger thing reaching up into the sky, including the stars and what lies beyond them.⁶ Air was therefore part of the wider cycling of time and space which determined how humans lived in the world.⁷ In this way, Servius draws out the poem’s claims about nature and human communities. The dip-and-ridge of ploughing makes a place for people to live together, a moment in time that should be understood in the wide, cosmic context of earth, air, and human life.

In late antiquity, commentaries like this served to order people’s knowledge of the world.⁸ Certain works, like Vergil’s, were held to be reservoirs of divine knowledge that might be used to learn about far more than poetic form and grammar. For men like Servius, to know the world was to approach it through the stores of divine knowledge available in this textual patrimony to those who knew how to cultivate it.⁹ This constant

working and re-working of texts was ‘circular’, in the words of Raffaella Cribiore.¹⁰ One text could be laboured over again and again, like a tilled field, producing new knowledge about the world. Commentators like Servius linked these texts to other works by the ‘ancients’ (*ueteres*).¹¹ As they did so, they laid out the subtle connections that revealed a deeper cosmic order subtending these inscribed words. Education in late antiquity was participation in this textual patrimony. Vergil told them that the beginning of all this was the plough marking soil, a moment around which space and bodies were ordered as the commentator ordered verse. But the beginning of ploughing is wind and ‘this heaven which is called air’. It was this cosmic, primordial thing that was breathed in late antiquity.

This essay argues that late antique discussions of breath worked in two registers. Breath was part of material human life and so was drawn into wider models of community and politics. In effect, to breathe placed one in the human world that Vergil said began with the plough’s furrow. The manner of one’s breathing was a means by which humans could be differentiated. At the same time, breath also took on cosmic significance as a site of primordial becoming. The beginning of things and how they were sustained could be described using the language of breath and breathing. These two registers overlapped with and determined each other. In late antiquity, political accounts of breath had metaphysical overtones, and cosmic accounts of breath also said something about the everyday life of embodied humans. This blending of the cosmic and the political is the principal character of late antique cultures of breath.

BREATH AND HUMAN DIFFERENCE IN LATE ANTIQUE ROME

One place where breath becomes visible in late antiquity is in the work of grammarians. Grammarians taught boys and girls the structures of language, how to read, and how to write. As Servius’ commentary indicates, instruction in grammar was also an induction into the wider social and cultural world of late antiquity. As the grammarian guided students through the canonical texts of late antique society, lessons covered areas as diverse as the climate, the social structures and alimentary habits of animals, the precise ways in which bird flight presaged disaster, and all the other information that constituted the knowledges of late antique people. These topics were not introduced haphazardly but were part of a careful induction into the structures by which people orientated themselves in

the world. Reading texts, then, was an ethical practice because it showed boys and girls the principles and standards by which they should behave. Grammatical instruction carried young people into the world of adulthood. It made them visible as users of language and hence as political actors. It taught them to live in the world.

One of the things that these students learned was theories of language. Aelius Donatus was a grammarian who lived and worked in Rome in the third quarter of the fourth century CE. His curriculum began with a focus on the nature of sound and its relationship to human language:

A sound is air that has been struck (*uox est aer ictus*) and which, barring other factors, can be heard. Every sound is either articulated or confused. An articulated sound is one that can be captured by the letters of the alphabet; a confused sound is one that cannot be written down. The letter is the smallest element of articulated sound. Some letters are vowels, some are consonants.¹²

Noise (*uox*) is made by striking air, a definition found in other grammars from late antique Rome.¹³ The distinction in Donatus' text is between noise that can be differentiated, ordered, articulated, and noise that cannot be differentiated and is mere confusion. The former—*uox articulata*—is human language. This *uox* is held by the letters inscribed on the page, tablet, or stone. Donatus is referring particularly here to the human voice, as it sounds human language that can be inscribed. This discussion of the vocal character of language opens the formal study of grammar and begins the student's movement into the social world of late antiquity. The struck air in this context is breath.

These remarks are particularly important given the position of spoken language in late antique society. In the later Roman Empire, relationships between people were often understood in terms of mastery. Mastery over others began with a surveillance and mastery of the self.¹⁴ Control of the emotions and body denoted fitness to hold mastery over others and in this way models of mastery and slavery determined how people imagined themselves in relation to others.¹⁵ This discourse was also gendered. To be a man meant being sovereign over the self—not overwhelmed and unmanned by emotions—and over others. Spoken language was a key part of this model of relationality. Words said, and the timbre of the saying, were images of an interior state. To master the tongue was to speak well and, consequently, to hold off the violence that inflected life in

the late ancient world. One's position in this complex web of mastery and violence therefore became socially legible through the way that one spoke. The manipulation of language was one of the principal means by which humans were differentiated from each other. The beginning of language was breath.

Donatus addresses the breath's role in the production of spoken language. Given the importance of speech to late antique relationality, the passage implicitly addresses the role of breath in the constitution, reproduction, and maintenance of difference. In this sense, breath is part of the wider play of mastery and power in late antique society. Breath is struck, as a master might strike a child, slave, or animal.¹⁶ In late antique society, such a blow indicated the striker's mastery over the struck. In Donatus's example, the striking of the breath denotes the speaker's mastery over the breath, and hence, over speech. Breath is therefore positioned within the wider discourse of mastery and slavery that determined relationships between people. However, the importance of speech to late antique understanding of human relationality actually means that, for Donatus, breath is the grounds of this discourse. Without breath, there is no language, not even writing, because all writing is breath being held (*comprehendi*). The striking of breath splits the air moving out of the mouth, producing a *uox* made of parts joined together (*articulatus*). This incision begins grammar and makes it possible to pass on the patrimony to the next generation of students. Without this patrimony, there can be no society. Like the cleft in the soil that heralded the possibility of cultivation, culture, and imperial civilisation, this breathy cut opens out the space of the political in later Roman society.

To speak of breathing in late antiquity, then, is to refer to the movement of air around bodies rendered master and mastered. The way this air is moved, struck, and inscribed has a direct isomorphic relationship to the way that the bodies of slaves, children, women, and animals might be moved, struck, and inscribed. In this way, breath is subsumed within the discourses of mastery and property ownership by which social and political relations were understood. Breath is an index of the properties held by a body: its masculinity, its mastery, the material things over which it holds sovereignty.¹⁷ It concerns the capture and ownership of things and the disposition of people in space. This emphasis recurs in other late antique texts.

The poet Prudentius wrote a generation after Donatus. In the first book of the poem written in reply to Symmachus he presents the Emperor

Theodosius, victorious in battle against usurpers in 394, encouraging Roman senators to give up their paganism.¹⁸ At the opening of this speech, Theodosius addresses the city itself. Under his rivals Rome had been ‘besieged by the black smoke’ of pagan sacrifices and covered by ‘hovering clouds’ that were the habitat of demons.¹⁹ Theodosius encourages the city to ‘raise your exalted face above the air’ and remember that God has decreed that all of the earth should be subject to Rome.²⁰ In this section of the poem, Rome is restored to her divinely appointed mastery of the world. In Prudentius’s account, air becomes a way of marking the political transition from pagan usurper to rightful, Christian emperor. The dirty air—a billowy substance that sustains the demonically non-human—is swept away and Rome is restored.

Embedded in Theodosius’s speech is an account of how the city of Rome was conquered by the emperor Constantine and first made Christian. In this passage Constantine triumphed over Maxentius, the usurper who held the city. This usurper had disrupted the natural order of things, but Constantine’s victory makes Rome the greatest city in the world, placing the Christian God at Rome’s head. Natural order is therefore restored, a process presented as mirroring Theodosius’s own achievements. In his description of Rome under the usurpers, Prudentius states that women were rounded up and taken away from their husbands and fathers:

The cruel emperor’s prisons were full of the fathers of girls. If a father murmured and complained too bitterly when his daughter was taken away, he could not betray his anger or heave too frank a sigh without punishment.²¹

Drawing on the earlier example of Constantine, Theodosius’s speech argues that the triumph of an orthodox Christian emperor restores a natural order which has been disrupted by pagan usurpers. In this context, the sighing and murmuring of fathers indicates this wider disruption: children are taken from their rightful guardians. Reading the fathers’ sighs as part of a late antique culture of breath, however, should draw our attention to the particular ways that mastery works in this natural order. In late Roman familial law fathers exercised absolute rights of life and death over their children, at least theoretically.²² In this wider context it is clear that Prudentius’s primary concern in this passage is not the women’s welfare, but the property rights of their fathers. Abducting female members of the

family is an attack on the father's mastery over his children—an assault on his masculinity and status.²³ The proscription against sighing sits alongside references to smoke and clouds. The way that air moves in weather, pollution, and breath signals a breakdown in human relations and the proper cosmic order of Roman power.

When we think about breath in late antiquity, we translate words like *pneuma*, *aer*, or *spiritus* into English, but we should also think about the kind of ideas that cluster around respiration. In Donatus and Prudentius, the physical exhalation of air is the thing that determines the organisation of community. Donatus's account of speech as struck air opens his grammar; it is the beginning of rightly ordered speech and the induction into appropriate human relationships. For Prudentius the pollution of air betokens a wider disruption of the natural order: the arrival of a usurper or the praise of false gods. For both authors, the circulation of air in breath is formally related to social and political structures. When fathers' natural rights over their children are disrupted, this disorder manifests itself in failures of respiration and muttering speech. Breathing is always an embodied action and—by virtue of its embodiment—it indicates the structures of interrelationship in the human community.

THE HOLY SPIRIT AND BREATH

Donatus and Prudentius both wrote in the later fourth century CE. This was also an important period in the development of Christian accounts of the triune God. In 325 the Council of Nicaea had established a formula for describing the relationship of the Son to the Father, but disagreements about the Son's status and the nature of God continued to rumble on. These were not simply abstract arguments. Rather, they were debates over the parameters of the material world, the nature of human life, and the role this humanity played in the wider cosmos. From the 360s until the end of the fourth century a key focus of this theological wrangling was the nature and work of the Holy Spirit. While there was a common agreement that the Holy Spirit did the work of God—sanctifying the world and its creatures—it was also clear that the biblical traditions that described the Spirit and its work were ambiguous. This established the field within which Christians argued about the Spirit. As they did so, their language for describing God and his *pneuma/spiritus* ('breath') became increasingly precise. Particular areas of debate included the divinity of the Spirit itself, the role of the Spirit in the Trinity, and the Spirit's relationship

with human beings. In each of these cases there was engagement with the wider cultures of breath and breathing already identified above.

Sometime before 360 some Christian groups in Egypt began to argue that the Spirit was an angel and therefore a creature rather than fully divine. Those who rejected this argument responded by resuscitating the venerable idea that the Spirit was Creator. For example, *The Letter to Serapion* (360), written by Athanasius of Alexandria (296–373), describes the Spirit as uncreated.²⁴ This coequivalence of Creator and Spirit made it possible to argue that the Spirit was truly divine and that it sanctified (‘made holy’) other things. As Didymus of Alexandria put it, ‘the Holy Spirit, as all acknowledge, is the immutable sanctifier, the bestower of divine knowledge and all goods’.²⁵ Didymus took ancient arguments about God’s immutability and applied them to the Spirit: God is not diminished or changed when God acts or gives. Those who receive gifts from God do so not according to God’s capacity to give, but according to their own capacity to receive. So, when faced with arguments that the Spirit was of lesser status than the Father, Didymus drew on the ancient argument for divine immutability, applying it to the Spirit to show how the ongoing work of the Spirit in the world was the ongoing work of God. To argue that the Holy Breath drifted over the waters at Creation and now drifted across the bodies of humans resurrected an old theological position.²⁶ Its restoration in the 360s allowed fourth-century theologians to show with greater precision how the Holy Spirit might be considered to be God.

With the Spirit’s divinity more precisely described, theologians could also define the relationship between the Spirit and the world which it sanctified. To do this, they often drew on pre-existing ways of imagining relationality and community. For example, in Basil of Caesarea’s work *Against Eunomius*, God and Creation are distinguished and their relationship described:

Now it is said that there are two realities: the divinity and the created order, sovereignty and servitude, the power that sanctifies and the one who is sanctified, the one who has virtue by nature and the other that achieved virtue by free will.²⁷

Basil argues that the Spirit should be placed in the first, divine, class. The Holy Spirit is the thing that sanctifies. It does not receive its holiness from God, but rather is holy by its divine nature. Basil’s concern here is to show

how the divine reality of Father, Son, and Spirit is related to the visible and tangible reality around us. The relationship between the two realms is described as that of sovereignty and servitude. The term ‘sovereignty’ (*despoteia*) is often applied to the legal holding of property, as when a rich person owns a house. It is a political description of ownership. Servitude (*douleia*) here refers to the nature of a particular thing that has the property of being a slave. At the heart of this passage is Basil’s attempt to situate divine *pneuma* as part of the reality that is the Godhead. As he does so, however, political notions like property ownership intertwine with ontological claims about the difference between slave and master. Basil tries to show how the Spirit is distinct from this created world; to speak of the Spirit is to speak of the structure and pattern of their relationship. As he describes this relationship, he draws on a wider culturally recognised model of human community, one that understood relationality in terms of dominance and subjugation.

Another example of relationality in the developing theologies of the Holy Spirit occurs in the attempts of theologians to define the interrelationship of the three persons of the Trinity (Father, Son, and Spirit). At the start of the 360s, Eunomius, a bishop of Cyzicus in Asia Minor, had argued that the Spirit was of lesser status than the Father and the Son. In response, Didymus of Alexandria wrote *On the Holy Spirit*, arguing that the Spirit was of equal status with the Father and the Son, and positing a mutual indwelling of all the persons of the Trinity. In making this argument, he includes a long discussion of biblical texts concerning the Spirit, beginning with John’s Gospel. When Didymus comes to John 16:13 (‘[the Spirit of Truth] will not speak on his own, but will speak whatever he hears, and he will declare to you the things that are to come’) he deploys an image already familiar to us:

When human beings speak to one another about something, we first conceive what we want to say in our mind without speech. Then when we want to convey it into the mind of another, we set the tongue in motion as an instrument, and by striking it like a kind of plectrum on the strings of the teeth, we emit an articulate sound (*uocalem sonum emittimus*). So ... we control how we knock our tongue on the palate and the teeth and combine the struck air into various utterances (*et ictum aerem in diuersa temperamus eloquia*) in order to communicate to others what we have in mind.²⁸

Didymus refers to speech as consisting of *aer ictus*, the same description already deployed in the work of grammarians like Aelius Donatus.²⁹ Didymus's argument is that John 16 is not referring to physical speaking of the kind that humans use to communicate with each other. Rather, he says that the biblical text is deploying an analogy to describe the common will shared by the three persons of the Trinity. Humans speak and by this speaking reach accord. The 'speaking' of John 16 denotes the accord and equality between the three persons of the Trinity. Didymus does not think that the three persons communicate as humans do, nor does he position the Holy Spirit as the medium of communication within the Trinity. He does, however, integrate Trinitarian theology into an analogy of human speech and therefore positions the Spirit in the same late antique culture of breath evident in Donatus and Prudentius. When theologians imagined the interrelationship of the three persons of the Trinity, the notions of breath and the mechanics of speaking could provide useful and culturally legible tools to work with.

The development of Christian theology of the Holy Spirit has some important consequences for our models of late antique breath. In the work of Donatus and Prudentius, human breathing bore a formal relationship to the wider social and political structures of human communities. Manners of breathing differentiated humans, binding them into social and legal relations. As theology of the Holy Spirit developed in the fourth century, differences of holiness within the Christian community were explained through reference to the Spirit. For example, Basil's work on the Holy Spirit says:

[The Spirit] fills all things with his power, but only those who are worthy may share it. He distributes his energy in proportion to the faith of the recipient, not confining it to a single share. He is simple in being, his powers are manifold: they are wholly present everywhere and in everything.³⁰

This passage answers an apparent dilemma. The Holy Spirit sanctifies the world and is immutable and perfect. Despite this, our experience of human communities suggests that not all humans are equally holy.³¹ In response, Basil says that humans only engage with the Spirit as far as they are able. The better one is able to participate in the Spirit, the more God-like one becomes, a doctrine called theosis.³² Didymus introduced the idea that the breath of God, the *pneuma*, was limitless and

immutable. The following generation developed this to logical conclusions, arguing that this breath was everywhere but that not everybody was able to partake of it to the same extent. Those who could, were sanctified. This is a fundamentally spatial position, for the Spirit is extended through the cosmos. It is also a political position, giving a clear account of why there are differences between humans and how those differences should be valued.

From the 360s to the end of the fourth century, Christian theologians became more careful in their statements about the nature and work of the Holy Spirit. They patterned their descriptions on wider accounts of how relationships worked, emphasising the sovereignty of the divine and the subjugation of the world. This was, therefore, inherently a political discourse, for it understood the ontological structure of reality through the prism of contemporary human community. This is clearly visible in Didymus's accounts of the interrelationship of the persons of the Trinity, in which he deploys accounts of breath and speech taken from the classrooms of grammarians like Donatus. This grammatical education was always political in character, for it positioned breath and speech as the beginning of human community. Didymus uses the same terms to describe the 'community' of the Trinity. The readiness of Christian writers to draw on accounts of human community as they fashioned analogies for the divine life had important consequences for how they came to picture the social life of people. Differences between humans—someone's relative sanctity and their superior holiness—could be presented as evidence of their capacity to participate in the divine community of the Godhead. Neither Basil nor Didymus would accept that the divine *pneuma* is a material thing; it is not of this reality. Nevertheless, their accounts of the Holy Spirit implicate it in wider models of community and human difference, and in so doing, they place the Holy Spirit within the wider cultural politics of breath in late antiquity.

CONCLUSION

By the end of late antiquity, *pneuma* and *spiritus* referred to the Holy Spirit, carefully distinguished from the material and immaterial reality of creation. As the articles by Long and Horky in this volume demonstrate so well, accounts of divine breath were already extant in Hellenistic philosophy and it might be argued that these accounts, combined with

the ambiguities of the biblical text, provide sufficient cause for the development of Christian theologies of the Holy Spirit. Similarly, the accounts of breath and language outlined by the grammarians are indebted to a Stoic tradition that distinguished rational from irrational speech. Based on these facts we might say that the late antique culture of breath laid out here is simply a particular manifestation of a wider ancient physics of air.

It would be wrong to assert that Hellenistic accounts of divine *pneuma* did not play a role in the development of Holy Spirit theology, but something else is going on here as well. As C. Michael Chin observes, late antique grammars are cultural products.³³ Just so for late antique Christian theology. Cultural products are determined by the material conditions of their production: models of property ownership and the protection of these by legal, social, and political structures. Few people in late antiquity knew or understood Hellenistic philosophy, but everyone breathed. The sources laid out above are explicit about the materiality of breath as it moves through and around bodies. In these accounts, human respiration is an index of social relations, whether in the city of Rome or, by analogy, in the Godhead. The cultures of breath in late antiquity shaped the language and theology of the Holy Spirit as it developed through the latter half of the fourth century.

While not a sufficient cause, then, late antique cultures of breath determined the forms taken by theology of the Holy Spirit. The consequences of this would seem to be far-reaching. The political and social differentiation of humans carried great ontological and soteriological significance. Breath, and one's capacity to breathe, was placed in the same register as one's capacity to engage in divine life and be sanctified. Human respiration was intertwined with the imaginative structures of Christianity and, consequently, notions of good, evil, blame, election, salvation, freedom, servitude, and damnation could be interwoven with the character and deportment of one's breathing body. Understanding how late antique people thought about respiration and the movement of *aer* around bodies requires working simultaneously in a cosmic and in a political register.

NOTES

1. For Servius, see Anne Uhl, *Servius als Sprachlehrer: zur Sprachrichtigkeit in der exegetischen Praxis des spätantiken Grammatikerunterrichts* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1988). My translation.

2. Servius, *Servii Grammatici qui feruntur in Vergilii carmina commentarii*, ed. by Georg Thilo, vol. 3, fasc. 1 (Leipzig: Teubner, 1887), 145–46. He is commenting on *Georgics*, bk 1, ll. 50–51.
3. Virgil, *Eclogues. Georgics. Aeneid: Book 1–6*. trans. by H. R. Fairclough (1916), rev. by G. P. Goold (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999), 98–135. For a commentary, see R. A. B. Mynors, *Virgil, Georgics* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1990). For an introduction to the poem and secondary literature, including the debate about whether it is pessimistic: William Batstone, ‘Virgilian diaxis: value and meaning in the *Georgics*’, in *The Cambridge Companion to Virgil*, ed. by C. Martindale (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 193–215.
4. Ika Willis, *Now and Rome: Lucan and Vergil as Theorists of Politics and Space* (London: Continuum, 2010), 21–22.
5. Carl Schmitt, *The Nomos of the Earth in the International Law of the Jus Publicum Europaeum* (New York: Telos Press, 2006), 172.
6. Gregory Smith, ‘Physics and Metaphysics’, in *The Oxford Handbook of Late Antiquity*, ed. by Scott Fitzgerald Johnson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 531–33.
7. David O. Ross, *Virgil’s Elements: Physics and Poetry in the Georgics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987), 38–43.
8. Jason König and Tim Whitmarsh, ‘Ordering Knowledge’, in *Ordering Knowledge in the Roman Empire*, ed. by Jason König and Tim Whitmarsh (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 29.
9. C. M. Chin, *Grammar and Christianity in the Late Roman World* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007), 18.
10. Raffaella Cribiore, *Gymnastics of the Mind: Greek Education in Hellenistic and Roman Egypt* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), 129 and 187.
11. Chin, *Grammar and Christianity*, 21–24.
12. Louis Holtz, *Donat et la tradition de l’enseignement grammatical: étude sur l’Ars Donati et sa diffusion (IVe-IXe siècle) et édition critique* (Paris: Centre national de la recherche scientifique, 1981), 603. The translation of this passage, with changes: Shane Butler, *The Ancient Phonograph* (New York: Zone, 2015), 112–13.
13. For a near contemporary of Donatus, see Marius Victorinus, *Ars Grammatica*, ed. by Italo Mariotti (Firenze: Felice Le Monnier, 1967): ‘*Vox est aer ictus auditu percipibilis ...*’ (Sound is struck air that can be heard ...).
14. Pierre Hadot, *Philosophy as a Way of Life: Spiritual Exercises from Socrates to Foucault* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1995), 130–36.
15. Peter Brown, *Power and Persuasion in Late Antiquity* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1992), 50–51.
16. Geoffrey S. Nathan, *The Family in Late Antiquity: The Rise of Christianity and the Endurance of Tradition* (London: Routledge, 2000), 33–34.

17. Breath's importance as a site from which to observe and critique juridical and epistemic violence is clear in some recent studies on aesthetics and ethics. See, *e.g.*, Ashon T. Crawley, *Blackpentecostal Breath: The Aesthetics of Possibility* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2016), 32–86; Christina Sharpe, *In the Wake: On Blackness and Being* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2016), 108–11.
18. Dated to between 394 and 395 by Jill Harries, 'Prudentius and Theodosius', *Latomus* 43 (1984), 79.
19. Black smoke: Prudentius, *Reply to Symmachus*, bk 1, l. 414. The demons flitting through clouds: *Reply to Symmachus*, bk 1, ll. 419–24. Critical edn: *Aurelii Prudentii Clementis Carmina*, ed. by Maurice P. Cunningham (Turnhout: Brepols, 1966). Eng. trans.: *Prudentius*, trans. by H. J. Thomson, 2 vols (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1949–53).
20. Prudentius, *Reply to Symmachus*, bk 1, ll. 425–29.
21. Prudentius, *Reply to Symmachus*, bk 1, ll. 477–80.
22. Richard P. Saller, *Patriarchy, Property and Death in the Roman Family* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 115.
23. Kate Cooper, *The Virgin and the Bride: Idealized Womanhood in Late Antiquity* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1996), 12–13.
24. Lewis Ayres, 'Innovation and Ressourcement in Pro-Nicene Pneumatology', *Augustinian Studies* 38 (2008), 187–205, at 194.
25. Lewis Ayres, 'The Holy Spirit as the "Undiminished Giver": Didymus the Blind's *De Spiritu Sancto* and the Development of Nicene Pneumatology', in *The Holy Spirit in the Fathers of the Church: The Proceedings of the Seventh International Patristic Conference, Maynooth, 2008*, ed. by Vincent D. Twomey and Janet Rutherford (Dublin: Four Courts, 2010), 58.
26. For example, see Clement of Alexandria, *Exhortation to the Greeks*, ch. 1, para. 5. Edn and trans.: Clement of Alexandria, *Clement of Alexandria*, trans. by G. W. Butterworth (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1919), 11–13. See also Miguel Herrero de Jáuregui, *Orphism and Christianity in Late Antiquity* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2010), 292.
27. Basil of Caesarea, *Against Eunomius*, bk 3, § 2. Edn: Basil of Caesarea, *Contre Eunome*, ed. and trans. by B. Sesboüé, G. M. de Durand, and L. Doutreleau, 2 vols (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1982–83). Eng. trans.: St. Basil of Caesarea, *Against Eunomius*, trans. by Mark DelCogliano and Andrew Radde-Gallwitz (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2011).
28. Athanasius the Great and Didymus the Blind, *Works on the Spirit: Athanasius's Letters to Serapion on the Holy Spirit and Didymus's On the Holy Spirit*, trans. by Mark DelCogliano, Andrew Radde-Gallwitz, and Lewis Ayres (Yonkers, NY: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2011), 191–92. Critical edn and French trans.: Didymus the Blind, *Traité du Saint-Esprit*, ed. and trans. by Louis Doutreleau (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1992).

29. Didymus wrote in Greek but the text is extant in a Latin translation by Jerome of Stridon, who was a pupil of Aelius Donatus.
30. Ayres, 'The Holy Spirit as the "Undiminished Giver"', 67. Basil, *De spiritu sancto* 9.22. Edn and French trans.: Basil of Caesarea, *Sur le Saint-Esprit*, ed. and trans. by Benoît Pruche (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1968).
31. A comparable and near contemporary position might be found in the work of Jovinian (*ca.* 390) whose positions on baptism and the differences within the Christian community were informed by his account of the actions of the Spirit. See David Hunter, *Marriage, Celibacy, and Heresy in Ancient Christianity: The Jovinianist Controversy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 35–39.
32. Ayres, 'The Holy Spirit as the "Undiminished Giver"', 69.
33. Chin, *Grammar and Christianity*, 5–6.

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