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*Candidus,  
Marius Victorinus' fictitious friend,  
and his doctrine of the "Logos"*

ABSTRACT

This article elaborates the term *Logos* in two fictitious letters of Candidus, which Marius Victorinus wrote to present Arian points of view concerning the Trinitarian debate in the middle of the 4<sup>th</sup> century. The article investigates these two short letters and their historical and theological sources to demonstrate Marius Victorinus' knowledge and understanding of the Arian controversy and the mystery of the Triune God. Although he wrote these letters himself, this research seems to be a particularly important in the interpretation of Marius Victorinus' theological views and arguments presented in his writings against the Arians, in which he undertakes the most difficult questions concerning the unbegotten and simultaneously begetting God.

KEYWORDS

Marius Victorinus, Logos, Arian controversy after A.D. 357

## I. INTRODUCTION

In the beginning of his theological treatises Marius Victorinus<sup>1</sup> placed the letter which he had received from a certain Candidus who was Arian (*Candidi arriani ad Marium Victorinum rhetorem de generatione divina = Cand. I*). He answered in *Ad Candidum arrianum* and received from him the second letter (*Candidi arriani ad Marium Victorinum virum clarissimum = Cand. II*). Both of them are fictitious<sup>2</sup> and were written by Marius Victorinus ca. 358/359. After this Marius Victorinus wrote four books *Adversus Arium*. In this article we will try to present Candidus concept of the *Logos* based on his two short letters already mentioned. Our research should demonstrate how Marius Victorinus understood the Arian controversy when he was trying to solve theological problems after 357.

In our research we will use the Latin critical text of Paul Henry and Pierre Hadot edited in *Corpus scriptorum ecclesiasticorum latinorum (=CSEL)*, vol. 83, part I, Opera theologica (Vienna 1971) and of Franco Gori, vol. 83, part II, Opera exegetica (Vienna 1986). We use the English translation by Sister Mary T. Clark in *The Fathers of the Church*, vol. 69 (=FC) (Washington 1981)<sup>3</sup>.

## II. HISTORY OF RESEARCH

The Greek term *logos* has a very wide base and has two main meanings: word and reasoning. In antiquity the word *logos* gained many different

<sup>1</sup> Biography and bibliography, writings and editions of Marius Victorinus – cf. A. Baron, *Mariusz Wiktoryn – człowiek i jego dzieło. Wprowadzenie do dzieł egzegetycznych*, in: *Źródła Myśli Teologicznej (= ŻMT)* 13 (1999) pp. 5–82; P. Hadot, *Marius Victorinus. Recherches sur sa vie et ses oeuvres*, Paris 1971.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. P. Nautin, *Candidus l'Arien*, in *L'Homme devant Dieu, Mélanges offerts au H. de Lubac*, t. 1, Paris 1964, pp. 309–317.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. P. Hadot – P. Henry, *Marius Victorinus, Traités théologiques sur la Trinité, texte établi par Paul Henry, introduction, traduction et notes par Pierre Hadot*, Paris 1960 (*ŒCh* 68–69); P. Hadot – U. Brenke, *Christlicher Platonismus. Die theologischen Schriften des Marius Victorinus. Übersetzt von Pierre Hadot und Ursula Brenke. Eingeleitet und erläutert von Pierre Hadot*, Zürich et Stuttgart (Artemis Verlag) 1967. Polish translation: A. Baron, in: *ŻMT* 13 (1999) pp. 85–302. Writings and editions, biography and bibliography of Marius Victorinus – cf. *ŻMT* 13 (1999) pp. 5–82; P. Hadot, *Marius Victorinus. Recherches sur sa vie et ses oeuvres*, Paris 1971.

meanings. It was used in common daily language as well in philosophy (Heraclitus, Plato, Aristotle, Philo)<sup>4</sup>. We find it in the Bible (in the Old and New Testament)<sup>5</sup>, but in Christian theology it became a crucial term because of the Johannine prologue (Jn 1: 1–14 and also 1 Jn 1: 1–2; Apc 19: 11–16)<sup>6</sup>. Therefore, it is not surprising that the use of the term *logos* as a name for Jesus Christ in John's Gospel has produced enormous confusion because of its rich meaning. When Jesus Christ the Son of God was named the *Logos*, it was necessary to specify in which meaning the Son of God is the *Logos*.

The basic information about the understanding of the *logos* in antiquity is available in the handbook of Patristics written by Henryk Pietras<sup>7</sup> and in the monography by Krzysztof Narecki<sup>8</sup>. Marian Hillar's newest book *From Logos to Trinity. The Evolution of Religious Beliefs from Pythagoras to Tertullian*, (Cambridge University Press 2012) gives an excellent introduction to the understanding of the intellectual, philosophical and theological Christian doctrine of the *logos* before Tertullian.

A short history of the doctrine of the *Logos* from the 2<sup>nd</sup> century to Clement of Alexandria is presented by M.J. Edwards in his article *Clement of Alexandria and his doctrine of the Logos*<sup>9</sup>. He especially analyses the "two-stage" theory of the *Logos* (*logos prophorikos* and *logos endiathetos*). He mentions how Ignatius of Antioch, Athenagoras, Theophilus of Antioch, Hippolytus of Rome, Irenaeus, Origen and Valentinians understood the *Logos*. He asserts that the Valentinians deny the

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<sup>4</sup> Heraclitus was the first to use *logos* as a philosophical term – cf. for example E. Kurtz, *Interpretation zu den Logos-Fragmenten Heraklits*, Spudasmata 17, Hildesheim-New York 1971; according to Plato *logos* represents the universal Man – cf. *Gorgias* 523A; *Phaedo* 99E; *Phaedrus* 245E. 264C; *Timaeus* 70A; *Respublica* 440D; Aristotle – *Ethica Nic*, *logos endiathetos omachea* 1138 b20, *Analytica posteriora* 76 b27 with *logos orthos* and *alogon*; according to the Stoics *logos* is the soul of the world – *logoi spermatikoi* and *prophorikos*; Philo – *De vita Mosis* II, 127 and see for example B. Lee Mack, *Logos und Sophia*, Göttingen 1973; M. Heinze, *Die Lehre vom Logos in der griechischen Philosophie*, Oldenburg 1872 and Aalen 1961 and *New Jerome Biblical Commentary* 67: 126 for further bibliography.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. for example *New Jerome Biblical Commentary* 77: 40–46.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. for example *New Jerome Biblical Commentary* 61: 5. 17. 21. 25; 83: 19. 21. 33.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. H. Pietras SJ, *Początki teologii Kościoła*, Kraków 2007, 167–190 with short Polish bibliography on the p.177 and 190. Cf. also *Encyklopedia katolicka* 10 (Lublin 2004) coll. 1309–1321.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. Krzysztof Narecki, *Logos we wczesnej myśli greckiej*, Lublin 1999.

<sup>9</sup> *Vigiliae Christianae* 54 (2000) pp. 159–177.

identity of God's eternal *Logos* with the incarnate Jesus and writes that Clement of Alexandria "posited an eternal generation of the *logos* as a *hypostasis* distinct from God the Father"<sup>10</sup>.

in E. Benz's work from 1932<sup>11</sup> we already find general indications about the notion of λόγος in Marius Victorinus. According to him the main view in Marius Victorinus' Christology can be formulated in the following way: the begetting of the *Logos* is the begetting of the Son of God. He mentions the *Logos* as the principle of all the existents, as the principle of life, and as the principle of all that is intelligible.

Anton Ziegenaus elaborates on the notion of λόγος in Marius Victorinus from many different points of view<sup>12</sup>. Even though he only considers theological treatises on the Trinity, his work is extremely useful because Marius Victorinus uses in these writings hundreds of times the word λόγος and in his comments on the letters of St. Paul we find only a few<sup>13</sup>. Marius Victorinus explains *logos* not only occasionally, but we find quite long passages in which he tries to do it, among them for instance in *Ad Cand.* 17–20. 26–27; *AA IA.* 3–6. 21–27. 31. 34–35. 38–39. 44–47; *AA IB.* 48. 51. 54–58. 60–64; *AA II.* 1–2; *AA III.* 1–4, 5. 10–13; *AA IV.* 18, 60–21, 25. 31–33; *De hom.* 2. 3, 27–4, 2; *Hymn (passim)*. In his exegetical works Marius Victorinus uses the word *logos* only twice in *Comm. in Eph.*<sup>14</sup> and 16 times in *Comm. in Phil.*<sup>15</sup>

<sup>10</sup> *Vigiliae Christianae* 54 (2000) p. 177.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. E. Benz, *Marius Victorinus und die Entwicklung der abenländischen Willensmetaphysik*, in: *Forschungen zur Kirchen- und Geistesgeschichte* 1, Stuttgart 1932, pp. 53. 76–77.

<sup>12</sup> A. Ziegenaus, *Die Trinitarische Ausprägung der göttlichen Seinsfülle nach Marius Victorinus*, Max Hueber Verlag 1972. The history of the word of *logos* and its philosophical signification (cf. pp. 190–197); in Plotinus and in arianisme (cf. pp. 197–201); in Athanasius and in Nicaea from 325 (cf. pp. 202–204) and in Marius Victorinus (cf. pp. 204–219). Ch. Kannengiesser, *compte rendu* A. Ziegenaus, *Die Trinitarische Ausprägung*, in *RHE* 73, 1978, p. 668 criticising the shortness of explanation of the technical terms used by Marius Victorinus, observed that the *logos* is better elaborated. He ends: «la parenté saisissante des doctrines sur le Logos divin chez Athanase et Victorinus, bien que mentionnée à maintes reprises dans ces chapitres, resterait à étudier» (p. 669).

<sup>13</sup> Cf. A. Baron, *Mariusz Wiktoryn – człowiek i jego dzieło. Wprowadzenie do dzieł egzegetycznych*, Kraków 1999, *ŻMT* 13, pp. 16–19.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. *Comm. in Eph.* 1, 1, 13; 1, 2, 19.

<sup>15</sup> 14 times λόγος: cf. *Comm. in Phil.* 2, 6, 65; 2, 9, 10–52 (12 volte); 3, 21, 53 and twice *logus*: cf. *Comm. in Phil.* 2, 9, 53–54.

According to A. Ziegenaus the meaning of *logos* is so rich that it is very difficult to express it in other languages using only one word of translation and this same thought is also present in Marius Victorinus' writings. Therefore only by researching the context and the synonyms of *logos* can one understand its full significance<sup>16</sup>. Ziegenaus enumerates the following words which describe the *logos* in the writings of Marius Victorinus: *actio, voluntas, motio, motus, vita, declaratio, apparentia, imago, species, forma* of the Father<sup>17</sup> and also the Greek word *Nous*<sup>18</sup>. It's significant that among these words it is not the Latin *verbum* with, which according to Ziegenaus, Marius Victorinus only occasionally expresses the Greek *logos*<sup>19</sup>.

In his writings Marius Victorinus frequently uses *logos* in Greek as well as different single words, which are the theological or philosophical key words, like *forma, homoousios, homoiousios, hypostasis, nous*, and so on. The using of Greek terms shows not only his interest of precision and accuracy, but his lack of Latin equivalents as well. Therefore it is not astonishing that Sister Mary T. Clark in her translation of Marius Victorinus theological writings uses the transliteration of these words and the English equivalents she places within parentheses, but she never gives an English equivalents for *logos*<sup>20</sup>.

The chronology of Marius Victorinus' treatises is well established and they were written in a relatively short period of time between 359–363. It was a very difficult moment in Church history. Sister Mary Clark writes: "Since the death of Constantine, and with the eastern Emperor Constantius as Arian, certain anti-Nicene forces united to depose Athanasius.... Although Pope Liberius refused to sign the

<sup>16</sup> A. Ziegenaus, *Die Trinitarische Ausprägung*, pp. 190–191 writes: „In 'Logos' sind dermaßen viele Bedeutungen hineinverflochten, daß es unmöglich scheint, alle Elemente herauszulösen. Sollte es aber gelungen sein, alle Nuancen aus dem Kontext zu erschließen. (...) 'Logos' ist schlechthin unübersetzbar“. Cf. also *ibid.*, p. 214.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. A. Ziegenaus, *Die Trinitarische Ausprägung*, p. 209, where he writes that the words "logos" and "forma" are synonyms in Marius Victorinus.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. A. Ziegenaus, *Die Trinitarische Ausprägung*, p. 216.

<sup>19</sup> A. Ziegenaus, *Die Trinitarische Ausprägung*, p. 214 writes: „Sehr selten erfolgt die Wiedergabe (he refers to *Logos*) mit 'verbum'. Im allgemeinen wird jedoch verbum gebraucht im Sinn von 'Wort Gottes' (das hier nicht hypostasiert zu verstehen ist)“. Ziegenaus uses *verbum* with: *actio, manifestatio, motus* (cf. *ibid.*, p. 215).

<sup>20</sup> Cf. M. Clark, «Introduction», in *FC* 69, p. 44.

condemnation, Athanasius had to take flight and Liberius was exiled. Felix, deacon of the Roman Church, was then consecrated bishop by three bishops, including the Arian Acacius of Caesarea [died ca. 365]. The Emperor was easily influenced by Ursacius and Valens<sup>21</sup>, who saw to it that the Emperor approved the formula, formed in the summer of 357 at Sirmium, which reinstated Arianism and rejected the words *homoousios* and *homoiousios*<sup>22</sup>. It's important that at Sirmium the bishops made a statement that no one was able to tell anything about the generation of the Son (*nec quisquam possit nativitatem Filii enarrare*<sup>23</sup>). The well known chronology of Marius Victorinus' writings gives the possibility to follow the progress and purposes in which he used the word *logos*. Therefore we will try to investigate the meaning of this word and the goal he wanted to attain in his writings, searching them chronologically. Only proceeding in such a way can our study show the progress of Marius Victorinus' understanding of *logos* as the biblical term expressing the mystery of Jesus Christ the Son of God.

### III. THE DOCTRINE OF THE LOGOS IN *CAND. I*

In the first of Candidus letters Marius Victorinus presents the theological opinions of someone who was an Neo-Arian and the term *logos* appears only twice at the end of it (*Cand. I*, 10, 2 and 11, 13). The general thesis of this letter, as its title tells, is that God is unbegotten (*Cand. I*, 1, 1 – 3, 25) and unbecetting (*Cand. I*, 3, 26 – 9, 18). Therefore Jesus Christ can not really be the begotten Son of God because God does not beget.

Candidus's reasoning is very clear and persuasive. According to him, God is unbegotten and unbecetting:

(*Cand. I*, 1, 4–10: *Omnis generatio... mutatio quaedam est. Inmutabile autem est omne divinum... Si igitur deus inversibile et inmutabile... neque genitum est neque generat aliquid, si igitur hoc sic se habet, ingenitus est deus*).

<sup>21</sup> Ursacius, bishop of Singidunum (now Belgrade), a leader with Valens, bishop of Mursa, of the western Arians.

<sup>22</sup> M. Clark, «Introduction», in *FC* 69, p. 19.

<sup>23</sup> Sirmium (357, *Symbolum Sirmiense II* (a. 357), in *Synodi et Collectiones Legum Kraków 2006– (= SCL) I*, 209 v. 2–3.

Every kind of begetting... is some sort of change. But whatever is divine... is unchangeable. ... If therefore God is unchanging and unchangeable... he is neither begotten nor begetting; if then this is so, God is unbegotten.

The truth that God is unbegetting results with necessity from this simple fact that He is unchangeable. It does not hinder from speaking about the begetting by God and, according to Candidus, it “occurs in these ways: by reflection (*iuxta effulgentiam*), by ray projection (*iuxta radii emissionem*), by a line from a point (*iuxta puncti fluentum*), by projection (*iuxta emissionem*), by image (*iuxta imaginem*), by impression (*iuxta characterem*), by progression (*iuxta progressum*), by superabundance (*iuxta superplenum*), by motion (*iuxta motum*), by act (*iuxta actionem*), by will (*iuxta voluntatem*), finally by so-called ‘type’ (*iuxta nominatum typum*)<sup>24</sup> or by any other method” (*Cand. I, 4, 2–7; FC 69, 50–51*).

Candidus analyzes these kinds of begetting and after each of his explanations he concludes that “there is no begetting by God” (cfr. *Cand. I, 5, 14. 24: nulla generatio a deo*; 6, 12; 7, 3. 14. 28; 8, 28: *nullum... a deo... natum sit*; 9, 18: *a deo igitur nulla generatio*), because “none of these occurs without change” (*Cand. I, 4, 7–8: Sine inversione enim nihil istorum talium est*). In practice Candidus has only one argument that God is unbegetting and He is absolutely unchangeable. Thus, Candidus seems to be trustworthy because orthodox theology also requires such a way of begetting which maintains: (1) the immutability and unchangingness of God; (2) the reality of begetting the Son, and (3) the same essence of the Father (as begetting) and of the Son (as begotten). In the middle of the 4<sup>th</sup> century, as we know, the theories of Marcellus of Ancyra (d. ca. 375) and Photinus of Sirmium tried to satisfy these requirements<sup>25</sup>. But to Candidus, as we saw, all kinds of arguments to prove that God is really begetting are fictitious.

<sup>24</sup> This way of begetting P. Hadot elaborates in his «*Typus*». *Stoïcisme et Monarchianisme au IV siècle d'après Candide l'Arien et Marius Victorinus*, in *Recherches de théologie ancienne et médiévale* (=RTAM) 18, Louvain 1951, pp. 177–187. He writes: “le vocabulaire ne peut se comprendre que dans un climat stoïcien... Le stoïcisme permet donc de comprendre la plupart des thèmes monarchiens du IV<sup>e</sup> siècle” (ibid. 182. 187).

<sup>25</sup> Cf. P. Hadot, «*Typus*». *Stoïcisme et Monarchianisme au IV siècle*, RTAM 18 (1951) p. 182.



Next, Candidus affirms that God can not be a substance, because every substance is an effect of Him (*Cand. I*, 8, 19–20: *Deus igitur non est substantia. Per deum enim substantia*), who is without substance (*Cand. I*, 8, 27: *Insubstantialis ergo deus*). The idea that God is not substance but is above it comes from Plato<sup>26</sup> and became the main thesis about God in all Neoplatonism from Plotinus<sup>27</sup> and Porphyry<sup>28</sup>. There is no doubt that Candidus uses the expression *insubstantialis* connecting it with the controversy about *homoousios*, because he continues: “But if God is without substance, nothing is consubstantial with God even if it either manifests or is born of God” (*Cand. I*, 8, 27–29: *Si autem insubstantialis, nullum ergo consubstantiale cum deo est, etiamsi a deo aut appareat aut natum sit*). Candidus statement is clear: there is no consubstantiality with God at all because He is without substance. Thus it would make no difference that somebody would use the name of the Son, or of the Logos, or of Jesus. Even if he is born of God, he is not consubstantial. According to the letter of Arius to Alexander, Mani taught that the begotten is a consubstantial part of the Father<sup>29</sup>.

Candidus draws such a conclusion from all the previous argumentation saying: “that the Son of God, who is the ‘Logos with God’ (Jn 1: 1), Jesus Christ, ‘through whom all things were made and without whom nothing was made’ (Jn 1: 3), is, not by God’s begetting but by God’s operation, the first and original effect of God” (*Cand. I*, 10, 2–5: *Quoniam dei filius, qui est λόγος apud deum, Iesus Christus, per quem effecta sunt omnia et sine quo nihil factum est, neque generatione a deo, est primum opus et principale dei*). And he continues: “But God gave him a name above all names’ (Phil 2: 9), calling him Son and only begotten, because he has made him alone by his own activity. He has made him from nothing, because the power of God leads the nonexistent to be. This also Jesus does, he ‘through whom all things were made’” (*Cand. I*, 10, 5–9: *Sed dedit ei nomen supra omnia nomina filium eum appellans et unigenitum, quod solum opera sua fecit. Effecit*

<sup>26</sup> Cf. Plato, *Respublica*, VI, 509b: ἐπέκεινα τῆς οὐσίας.

<sup>27</sup> Cf. Plotinus, *Enneads*, V, 4, 1 vv. 4–16: ἐπέκεινα λέγεται εἶναι οὐσίας.

<sup>28</sup> Cf. Porphyry, *Sentences*, 26, 6–13: τὸ ὑπὲρ τὸ ὄν μὴ ὄν. This expression was well known to Marius Victorinus, *Ad Candidum*, 4, 11–14 and 13, 11 to 14, 1. The history of the expression μὴ ὄν ὑπὲρ τὸ ὄν cf. P. Hadot, *Porphyre et Victorinus*, Paris 1968, pp. 147–178. First time in written sources used by Porphyry.

<sup>29</sup> Cf. Arius, *Lettera ad Alexandrum*, 3: H. G. Opitz, *Athanasius Werke*, Berlin-Leipzig 1934, *Urkunden zur Geschichte des arianischen Streites...*, p. 12 v. 11–12: οὐδ’ ὡς Μανιχαῖος μέρος ὁμοούσιον τοῦ πατρὸς τὸ γέννημα εἰσηγήσατο.



autem ex his quae non sunt, quoniam potentia dei quod non est adducit, ut sit. Hoc autem Iesus, *per quem facta sunt omnia*)<sup>30</sup>.

This conclusion is partially built on a biblical basis and partially on Candidus' philosophical opinions. The passage contains three biblical quotations (Jn 1: 1. 3 and Phil 2: 9)<sup>31</sup>. Also the expression *dei filius* (the Son of God) appears in the New Testament at least 29 times. Candidus identifies the Son of God with the *Logos* and with Jesus Christ. There is no doubt that the word *logos* used here comes from the Prologue of John's Gospel, because Candidus marks it by quotation *logos apud deum* (Jn 1: 1a). The Son of God is the same *Logos*, who was with God (cfr. Jn 1: 1a). However he does cite only these three words *logos apud deum* from Jn 1: 1a and he omits the next ones, that "the *Logos* was God" (Jn 1: 1b: *deus erat logos*). He passes immediately to Jn 1: 3, that "by Him all things were made and without him nothing was". 'By him' means naturally according to Candidus by *Logos*, by Jesus. The argumentation is built in a such way that allows him to conclude that the *Logos* is the first, original and only work made by God himself. All the rest, as Candidus already said using Jn 1: 3, was made by the *Logos*. To prove his opinion, Candidus uses once again the biblical quotation from Phil 2: 9, where it is said that God gave Christ the name above all names. This name is 'son' (*filius*) and 'only begotten' (*unigenitus*)<sup>32</sup>. If the name of the Son, as well as the name of the only begotten, was given to the *Logos* by God, it means that by nature the *Logos* is not God. One can think that Candidus purposely did not cite the words that *deus erat logos* (Jn 1: 1b), because it could be confusing to say that God calls somebody using the term god as a kind of nickname and not a reality. However Candidus affirms later that Jesus is "God by the power of God" (*Cand. I, 11, 10: dei virtute deum*) in the same sense that it is only the name.

Meanwhile, before such a statement, Candidus underlines the differences between Jesus and God, who is the only unbegotten and without substance. According to him, God has made Jesus absolutely perfect and Jesus is a creator of all things from nothing, like God, but not in the same way. The first difference is that Jesus has made things but not in the same

<sup>30</sup> This statement was condemned in Antioch in 341 – cf. *Quarta formula fidei* in SCL 1, p. 134 lignes 6–9 and later in Sirmium in 351 in *Anathematismi* 1 – cf. SCL 1, p. 202.

<sup>31</sup> The critical editions CSEL 83/1 and SCh 69 do not give information about Jn 1, 3.

<sup>32</sup> Cf. Jn 1: 18; 3: 16; 1 Jn 4: 9; Heb 11: 17.

way as God did. Why did Jesus do this in this way? Did he decide to do it himself or could he simply not do it in the same way as his Father<sup>33</sup>? Candidus uses the name of Jesus, but he does not think that this difference is between the Father as God and Jesus as human being. According to him there is a real difference between the Father and the Son. It's important to remember that Candidus identifies *Logos* with the Son of God, who became Jesus. So the same statement can be made about Jesus and the Son of God and the *Logos*. If Jesus as the Son of God (as *Logos*) cannot do the same thing as the Father does because he does not have the power to do it, then he is really unequal. Is this difference based on hypostasis or on nature? There is no doubt that Candidus exchanges the names of *Logos*, Son of God and Jesus. Thus, there is no problem with one *hypostasis* of Jesus, but the real question is whether the Son of God is considered different than the Father, as being a different *hypostasis* or as having a different nature.

On one side Candidus underlines the special and privileged status of Jesus, citing after this Jn 14: 10, that "Jesus is in the Father, and the Father is in him" and Jn 10: 30 that "both are one", but on the another side he continues using, in the end, the words of Jesus: "neither does he act by his own act nor by his own will, but he wills the same things as the Father, and he himself, although he has a will, nevertheless says: 'But not as I will but as you will' (cf. Mt 26, 39; Mc 14, 36)" (*Cand. I*, 10. 17–27: *Sed neque propria operatione operatur neque propria voluntate, sed eadem vult, quae pater, et ipse, etiamsi habet voluntatem, dicit tamen: sed non ut ego volo, sed ut tu*). In this sentence it is not clear, whether Candidus is speaking about the will of Jesus as human or the will of Jesus as the Son of God. The question was not about two natures in Jesus but about the nature of the *Logos* (the Son of God). This ambiguity gave opportunity to different interpretations of such an opinion. This is quite similar to the term *homoousios*, which in the middle of the 4<sup>th</sup> century could be accepted by Monarchianists as well as by Arians, because the real problem was not the word, but the meaning given to it. To cut all discussion about the *ousia* of God Candidus earlier has made a statement that God is without substance. Now, perhaps to persuade the reader, he uses the words of Jesus himself.

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<sup>33</sup> Cf. *Cand. I*, 10. 10–17: *Sed isto distat, quod deus fecit Iesum perfectum omnimodis, Iesus autem alia non eodem modo etsi perfecta fecit. [...] In quo autem non idem potest, ut alter accipitur. Non enim aliud omnimodis perfectum operari valet.*

Continuing, Candidus more clearly explains his understanding of Jesus, saying that he was unaware of a lot of things in the Father's will. Similarly he makes an allusion to the words of Jesus himself in Mc 13: 32 and Mt 24: 36<sup>34</sup>, where is said, about the eschatological time, that no one knows, not even the Son of God. This surprising inclusion of the Son was used in the 4<sup>th</sup> century by Arians, for example by Arius and Eunomius, who was a bishop of Cyzikus and his doctrine was Anomoean, as an opposing argument of Jesus divinity<sup>35</sup>. In the following Candidus enumerates more differences between God and Jesus: (1) Jesus can suffer: the Father can not suffer; (2) Jesus is sent: the Father sends; (3) Jesus became incarnate: the Father not; (4) Jesus died and rose from the dead: the Father did not.<sup>36</sup> And after this Candidus concludes: "what would be unsuitable for the Father is not unsuitable for his effect, because this effect is of the order of substance, which is receptive to opposed and even to contrary qualities" (*Cand. I*, 10, 23–27: *quae ista filio contigerunt, patri autem incongruum, operi autem eius non incongruum, cum sit opus in substantia, quae receptrix est diversarum qualitatem et magis contrariarum*). Here, it's obvious that Candidus is mixing the nature of the Son with the nature of Jesus as human. Even though the exegetical problem of Mc 13: 32 is very difficult, because Jesus said that not the "Son of Man" but even the "Son of God" does not know when the world is to come to an end.

Later Candidus supports his opinion that God made Jesus, using the words from the Acts of the Apostles (Acts 2: 36), from the Proverbs (Prv 8: 22) and from the Gospel according to John (Jn 1: 3–4). The first one (Acts 2: 36) and the second (Prv 8: 22) were used by Arians<sup>37</sup>.

Candidus quotes as we see he did before the same biblical expressions to prove his Christological opinions and it is necessary to emphasize that he presents biblical theology which, without doubts is strongly Arian. The real problem of orthodox theology was not to find the biblical verses to prove it but how to interpret the same biblical expressions

<sup>34</sup> *Cand. I*, 10, 20–21: Et multa in voluntate patris non scit sicuti iudicii diem.

<sup>35</sup> Cf. Hieronymus, *Commentariorum in Matheum*, IV, 24, 36 in CCL 77 or *ŽMT* 46, 175.

<sup>36</sup> Cf. *Cand. I*, 10, 21–23: Et iste passibilis est, ille impassibilis et ille qui misit, iste qui missus est et alia istius modi in eo quod induit carnem, in eo quod mortuus est, in eo quod resurrexit a mortuis.

<sup>37</sup> Cf. M. Simonetti, *Ario-Arianesimo* in DPAC 338.

used by all. Thus, the real problem was not purely theological but more a philosophical one.

In the end of his first letter Candidus once again underlines the exceptional status and the role of Jesus saying:

Nullus igitur velut insuave accipiat Iesum opus esse dei omnimodis perfectum, dei virtute deum, spiritum supra omnes spiritus, unigenitum operatione, potentia filium, substantia factum, non de substantia (*Cand. I, II, 9–11*).

Let no one then consider it difficult to accept that Jesus is the absolutely perfect effect of God, [God]<sup>38</sup> by the power of God, Spirit above all spirits, only begotten by action, Son by power, made a substance and not from substance.

It should be observed that we find similar thinking in the letter of Arius to Alexander, where he writes that the Son is the perfect effect of God, but not like one of the creatures and that the Son is begotten, but not like anyone begotten<sup>39</sup>.

And continuing he repeats the word *logos* once again, saying:

Etenim omnis et prima substantia Iesus, omnis actio, omnis λόγος, initium et finis; eorum enim, quae facta sunt, est initium et finis; omnium quae sunt, corporum aut incorporum, intellectibilium aut intellectualium, intellegendium aut intellectorum, sensibilibium aut sensuum, praecipuum aut praecausa et praestatio et effector, capacitas, plenitudo, *per quem effecta sunt omnia et sine quo nihil* (cf. Jn 1: 3), salvator noster, universorum emendatio, ut servus in nostram salutem, dominus autem in peccatorum et impiorum punitionem, gloria vero et corona atque sanctorum (*Cand. I, II, 12–22*).

“Truly Jesus is the universal and first substance, the universal *Logos*, the beginning and end; for all that has been made, he is the

<sup>38</sup> Sister Mary Clark omitted the word [God].

<sup>39</sup> Cf. Arius, *Lettera ad Alexandrum*, 2: H. G. Opitz, *Athanasius Werke*, Berlin-Leipzig 1934, *Urkunden zur Geschichte des arianischen Streites...*, p. 12 v. 9–10: κτῖσμα τοῦ θεοῦ τέλειον, ἀλλ’ οὐχ ὡς ἐν τῶν κτισμάτων, γέννημα, ἀλλ’ οὐχ ὡς ἐν τῶν γεγεννημένων.

beginning an end; of all the existents, corporeal or incorporeal, intelligible or intellectual, thinking or thought, sensible or sensing, he is the pre-principle or the pre-cause, the first fruits and the maker, the receptacle and the plenitude, 'he through whom all was made and without whom nothing was made' (Jn 1: 3), our Savior, reformation of all things, as a slave to save us but a Lord to punish sinners and the disobedient, truly the glory and crown of the just and holy".

Candidus uses all these words to remind Marius Victorinus in the end of his first letter that Jesus who is the *Logos* of God is not God, but that he is the principle of all kind of existents. Therefore he underlines that Jesus is the "universal logos". The *Logos* cannot be begotten, so he is not God, because God is unbegotten. Similarly by the words "the beginning and end" Candidus expresses that the *Logos* is not God, because he earlier wrote: "But that which is unbegotten is without beginning, without end. For there is an end only to what begins... For beginning and ending are change and alteration... but God is none of these things" (*Cand. I*, 3, 26–27. 29–31: *Quod autem ingenitum, sine ortu, sine fine... Inversio enim et inmutatio principium et finis est... Sed nihil horum deus*).

The word that Jesus is "the pre-principle or the pre-cause" for someone could be a declaration of Jesus' divinity. But even in this case Candidus wrote in the beginning of this letter that God is unbegotten if God is indeed the cause of all things and he asked: "To be God – what kind of cause or what is its cause? This: the very 'to be' God. Truly the first cause is cause of itself also, not so that it is cause as something other than itself, but the selfsame God is cause that he is. He is for himself his own dwelling and his own tenant without any appearance of duality. He himself is the single one. For he is solely 'to be'... The principle without principle. For it precedes, having no prior principle: that is why it is principle. This is God" (*Cand. I*, 3, 11–16. 22–24: *Quid vero? Esse deum qualis aut quae causa? Hoc ipsum deum esse. Etenim prima causa et sibi causa est, non quae sit altera alterius, sed hoc ipsum, quod ipsum est, ad id, ut sit, causa est. Ipse sibi locus, ipse habitator, ut non imaginatio veluti duorum fiat. Ipse est unum et solum. Est enim esse solum... Principium autem sine principio. Praeedit enim nullum principium ante se habens, propter quod est principium. Hoc autem est deus.*). Jesus is called by Candidus not only the principle, but even "pre-principle", but in a sense "through

whom all was made” (Jn 1: 3). It is sure that Candidus purposely uses here the biblical words to prove his opinion. The idea of God as self-caused can be traced to Aristotle<sup>40</sup>. In another words, God created all things through Jesus, through *Logos* who is called His Son, because God gave him this name (the Son), which is above all names (cf. *Cand. I*, 10, 5–6 and Phil 2, 9), “because he has made him alone by his own activity” (*Cand. I*, 10, 7) and he has made him from nothing, from nonbeing (*ex his quae non sunt*), repeated by Candidus twice about Jesus (cf. *Cand. I*, 10, 8. 10).

It’s necessary to elaborate on the most frequently mentioned terms because Candidus uses them as names of Jesus, the *Logos* and the Son of God. The Latin *praestatio* is not exactly “the first fruits” as Mary Clark translated it because the first fruits are rather *primitiae* in Latin. P. Hadot translated *praestatio* as “les prémices”, which can mean „beginnings” (“premises”) in English, but it also translates as „first fruits”. Candidus wanted to say that Jesus is “the furnisher” of all things, the guarantor and he added “the maker” (*effector*). Finally, before the biblical quotation from Jn 1: 3, Candidus says that Jesus is “the receptacle and the plenitude” (*capacitas et plenitudo*).

In the end of the first letter Candidus referred to the redemptive role of Jesus. Expression “as a slave” refers to Phil 2: 7 *forma servi* in contrast to *forma dei* from Phil 2, 6, important terms in Victorinus’ theology<sup>41</sup>.

#### IV. THE DOCTRINE OF THE LOGOS IN *CAND. II*

In his second letter (*Cand. II*), the word *logos* appears only once at the end. This letter has three parts: a short preface, *Letter of Arius to Eusebius of Nicomedia* and *Letter of Eusebius of Nicomedia to Paulinus of Tyre*. The first one was written around 318 and the second one around 320/321<sup>42</sup>. Both of them present strong Arian views from the very beginning of the Arian controversy before the synod of Alexandria in 323, which

<sup>40</sup> Cf. Aristotle, *Metaphysics* 7. 6 (1031a15) and later about the One as self-caused writes Plotinus, *Enneads*, 6. 8. 14 and 21. Cf. also P. Hadot, *La notion de Dieu «causa sui» chez Marius Victorinus*, Paris 1949.

<sup>41</sup> See *forma dei* (Phil 2, 6A) and *forma servi* (Phil 2, 7B) in A. Baron, *L’Inno cristologico Phil. 2, 5–11 nell’esegesi di Mario Vittorino. Studio analitico*, Roma 1994, 109–111 and 113–114.

<sup>42</sup> Cf. H.-G. Opitz, *Athanasius Werke*, III, Urkunde 1, p. 1–3 and Urkunde 8, p. 15–17.

excommunicated Arius. Marius Victorinus wrote his theological writings about forty years later, after the synods of Sirmium (357) and Ancyra (358).

In the end of the *Letter of Eusebius of Nicomedia to Paulinus of Tyre* we read:

Nihil est enim *de substantia* eius, cuncta autem voluntate eius facta, unumquidque, ut et effectum est. Et ille quidem deus, quaedam autem ad similitudinem eius per ipsum λόγῳ similia futura, quaedam autem iuxta participationem substantiae facta, omnia autem per ipsum a deo facta, omnia autem ex deo (*Cand. II, 2, 34–40*).

“For nothing is from his substance, but all has been made by his will, each thing being as it has been made. And he indeed is God, but certain things are destined to be similar through him to the *Logos*, but certain are made according to the participation of substance, but all are made by God through the *Logos*, and all is from God”.

The text is not easy. Mary Clark translates it following the French P. Hadot's translation. In the first letter Candidus used *generatio a deo iuxta...* and now he uses *a deo facta iuxta...* and he gives a new element *iuxta participationem*. Candidus cited before the passages from Is 1: 2; Dt 32: 18 and Jb 38: 28. By this he wants to prove that the word “begotten by God” in the Bible means created, established or made. So the Son of God is begotten in the same way, it means, he is created, even though God created everything through the *Logos*.

The Nicene Creed from 325 has already made an allusion to the *de substantia*: *Credimus... in unum dominum Iesum Christum filium dei, natum de patre unigenitum, hoc est de substantia patris* (We believe... in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, begotten from the Father, only-begotten, that is, from the substance of the Father). Yet Origen, nearly one hundred years before the Nicene Council, was against the *de substantia patris*, because according to him this formula can be understood in a material sense that God has begotten his Son from his substance thereby losing something from his own substance or dividing his own substance into two different substances<sup>43</sup>. Meanwhile the Nicene

<sup>43</sup> Cf. Origen, *Commentary on the Gospel according to John*, XX, 157–158 (in *ŹMT* 27, p. 422).



Creed used this formula without any specification in which sense has to be interpreted: material or spiritual.

## V. CONCLUSION

In Summary we can say:

1. The fictitious letters of Candidus present strong Arian views and they were written by Marius Victorinus to give the impression that his anti-Arian writings are the response to a real letter and the questions of his Arian friend.
2. Candidus' letters prove that Marius Victorinus knew well the Arian controversy in Rome in the middle of the 4<sup>th</sup> century. These letters present typical Arian opinions from the middle of the 4<sup>th</sup> century until the council at Sirmium in the year 357.
3. The term *logos* was important for Candidus' pro-Arian argumentation, because of Jn 1: 1-3.
4. Candidus did not mention any earlier philosophical theory of the *Logos* (neither the dualistic doctrine of two *logoi*, nor the theory of "two-stage" of the *Logos*).
5. According to Candidus God is unchangeable and therefore He is unbegotten and unbecoming. From this results that He is only God. This was a crucial problem in the Arian controversy from the very beginning until 340.
6. The *Logos* is begotten, changeable, and because of it he can not be God.
7. If God is unchangeable and unbecoming, the *Logos* can not be his real son. The *Logos* is the Son of God, but the name "son" is only the title given him by God.
8. According to Candidus, an Arian, the *Logos* is not one of the creatures, but he is an absolutely perfect effect of God and this view is taken from Arius' letter *Ad Alexandrum* written about 320.
9. Against *homoousios* Candidus affirms that God is without substance and it's obvious that we can not be consubstantial with anything substantial. The statement that God is without substance comes from Plato, but was typical in Neoplatonism of Plotinus and Porphyry in his famous statement that God is *to mē on* above *to on* (μη ὄν ὑπὲρ τὸ ὄν), it means the nonexistent above the existent.