

THE TERMS
PHYSIS AND HYPOSTASIS
in the
EARLY CHURCH

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Today, after many centuries, the dialogue starts again between the two families of the Orthodox Churches concerning the Christological terms that caused a split in the Universal Church for fifteen centuries. This paper is prepared to be presented to both theological communities to help the Churches concerned in understanding each other; and in preparing a statement (or a term) of the Christological thought that can satisfy the two parties.

TOWARDS UNITY

1 - Prof. Meyendorff states that today the political circumstances have changed and differ from those of the fifth and six centuries: Alexandria and Antioch do not follow Constantinople or Rome, and the non-Chalcedonians do not consider the Chalcedonians 'Melechites' (the people of the King or the Emperor) who exile their real and popular leaders of the Church. I can admit that our churches (the non-Chalcedonians) sincerely feel more close to the Chalcedonian Orthodox Churches than to any other Church.

2 - The unofficial consultations between the two families revealed the mutual understanding of the Christological theology in spite of the difference in the theological terms used.

3 - The recent deep studies of the Alexandrian and Antiochene Schools and their theological thoughts revealed the real causes of the differences between the two families instead of accusing each other of heresy.

May our Lord who asks the Father: "That they all may be one, as Thou, Father art in me," (John 17:21) grant us all the spirit of unity through the one faith and one hope by his Holy Spirit.

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THEOLOGICAL TERMS IN THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH

The apostles in preaching the Gospel witnessed to Jesus as the “Messiah” of whom the prophets foretold. They were not engaged in theological disputes but were concerned with men's salvation. Their Christological theology depended on soteriological thought. Jaroslav Pelikan² states that early Christians shared the conviction that salvation was the work of no being less than the Lord of heaven and earth. The oldest surviving sermon in the Early Church opened with the words: [Brethren, we ought so, to think of Jesus Christ as of God, as of the Judge of the living and the dead. And we ought not to belittle our salvation, for when we belittle Him, we expect also to receive little³.]

This attitude was very strong in the Alexandrians, even in their theological disputes. But in facing the philosophers and heretics they set down the theological terms in Greek- as the language of world culture- to explain the Christian faith. Here I would like to mention the following points:

1 - We use theological terms in human language, to understand and teach theology, but in fact they are incapable of explaining divine truths and their deep meanings. St. Gregory of Nyssa states: [Following the instructions of the Holy Scriptures, we have been taught that (the nature of God) is beyond names or human speech4]

2 - We do not deny the importance of theological terms, but we have to accept St Athanasius' words that `disputes merely about words must not be suffered to divide those who think alike'.⁵

3 - Sometimes some terms are misunderstood, like “hypostasis “. St. Gregory Nazianzus⁶ observed that the Western theologians avoided speaking of “three hypostaseis ()”. Dionysius of Rome was confused by his namesake Dionysius of Alexandria, because of his use of the term “ three hypostaseis “, believing that this means three gods, The latter sent an explanation to Rome, affirming his belief in one divine essence.

4- Sometimes we attach certain implications or connotations to a term so that when a person uses it we accuse him of conclusions arising from our own concepts. For example, the Nestorians and semi-Nestorians used to accuse St. Cyril as an

Apollinarian because of his use of the term “mia-phasis (one nature)” in spite of the complete difference of his theological system from that of Apollinarius.

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THE TERM “PHYSIS/ “IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

The word “ “ is derived from “ “, meaning “ to be “, “ to become⁷ “ to bring forth “ and “ to produce⁸ “. It has the original sense of “form” or “ nature”, but it also has the meaning of “budding”, “ growth” or “ development “, first in relation to plants ; then to animals and people/9.

A.P.J. Klim⁰ says [the Greek word “ “, though varying in meaning, always shows a tendency to define the essence of somebody or something He states that the Syriac word “ Keian” which is derived from the verb “Kun” (means “to be” or “to exist”) is exactly equivalent to the word

In the New Testament the term `Physis' is used in various senses¹¹:

1 The **nature**: i.e., the natural powers or constitution of a person or a thing. It means a condition acquired or inherited [“by nature Children of wrath,” Eph. 2:31].

2 - The sum of characteristics of a species, person, or creature, [as in Jas.3:7:” For every kind (nature or beasts),” or Divine [2 Pet 1:4].

3 - Origin or birth [Gal 2:15; Rom 2:27].

4 - The forces, regular law or order of nature [Rom. 1:26;11:21,24; Gal 4:8].

5 - The inborn sense of propriety or morality [I Cor 11:14; Rom 2:14]

THE TERM” PHYSIS/ “ IN THE EARLY CHURCH

Before Nestorius put forward his idea/ belief of Jesus Christ as being two persons and who had

“ two natures “ there was no room for discussing the term “phasis “ and declaring expressions of the unity of Godhood and manhood. In fact the early Fathers were involved in confirming

that Jesus Christ who is the Son of God was truly Incarnate, and had a real body. They had to reject the gnostic heresies, and to confirm that He who lived among us is truly the Son of God to reject Arianism. Heretics often denied the Manhood of Jesus or His Godhead, whereas Nestorius denied neither of them but divided them.

Many scholars state that besides the political factor, the split that occurred in the Church in the fifth century was a natural result of the controversy between the Alexandrian and Antiochene theology.

Now, I would like to present a brief account of the concept of-” physis” based on the writings of the Early Church and the main lines of thought of the Alexandrian and Antiochene Christology.

Before discussing this problem I would like to quote the brief account that G.W.Bromiley gives concerning the word “physis” in his book “ Early Christian Writings”.

1 – *Apostolic Fathers*: In Barnabas 10:7 “ physis “ has the sense of “gender “, while Ignatius *Ephesians* 1:1 refers to the true “nature “ of Christians (cf. also *Tralbian*s 1:1).

2 – *Apologists*: In Justin *Apology* 10:7, “*physis*” is “human nature” The power to distinguish good and evil is proper to our “nature” in *Apology*, Appendix 7:6. Also in Justin’s *DiaLogue* 45:3-4, he equates the law with what is good “by nature”, and in *Apology*, Appendix 2:4 Justin says that a dissolute life is “ against nature “. Paganism is absurd in its mythology, for there can be no single *physis* of the gods if they are in conflict (Aristides *Apology* 13: 5-6).

3 – *Apocrypha Acts*: Some of these works use *physis* frequently in such senses as the “ natural world “, “ nature “, “true essence”, (e.g. of humanity or individuals).

4 – *Gnosticism*: The Valentinians divide souls into those that are good and those that are evil

“ by nature “. Pneumatics belong to the “ divine nature “, the “ nature “ of the devil is not of the truth. The terms *kata* and *para physin* also play a role ¹²].

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1 - St. Melito of Sardis (died c. 190)

The Chalcedonians find in some sentences of the early fathers the roots of their belief in “ en duo phesesi “(in two-natures), like St. Melito's saying: [Buried as a man, He rose from the dead as God, being by nature God and man (.....¹³⁾]

We wish to make the following remarks on this text:

(a)The word “.....” had no philosophical sense in the second century. It simply meant “ real “ or “true”, like “ alethos”¹⁴. St. Melito here would confirm Christ's manhood side by side with His Godhead as a reality against the Gnostics' belief.

(b)- St. Melito was not discussing the “ nature “ of Christ by saying [being by nature God and man], for even the Alexandrians who maintained the “ one incarnate nature of the Word of God “, like St.. Athanasius, Cyril, Dioscorus etc, who used the expression “God and man” but usually confirmed the unity by adding the phrase: “the very Same” or “one incarnate nature of the Word of God”, for He was not two persons.

The Chalcedonians and non-Chalcedonians agree in confirming the dynamic presence of Christ's perfect manhood and perfect Godhead.

The difference is in asserting the real unity: “the one incarnate nature of the Word”.

St. Athanasius used the term “ mia-physis “(one nature) and defended the role of Christ's manhood in his famous book “The Incarnation of the Word”.At the same time he devoted all his life defending His divinity against the Arians.

The non-Chalcedonians affirm that Jesus Christ the Logos Incarnate, is “out of two natures¹⁵ “; real Godhead and real manhood are thus to be seen in the One Christ.

2 - Origen

Origen, is the first one who gave the Greek Christology the scientific terms (physis, hypostasis, ousia, homousios, theonthropos). He wanted to use the designation “ “, (God- man), to affirm the humanity of Jesus as opposed to the teachings of the Gnostics ¹⁶

Origen, who used this term (God- man) affirms the unity of Christ's nature. He states that “Christ” though He can be designed by a name which connotes His divinity, human attributes can be predicted of Him and vice versa. He says, [The Son of God, through whom all things were created, is named “ Jesus Christ “, and” the Son of man “. For the Son of God also is said to have died- in reference, namely to that nature which could admit of death; and He is called the Son of man, who is announced as about to come in the glory of God the Father, with the holy angels. And for this reason, throughout the whole Scripture, not only is the divine nature spoken of in human words, but human nature is adorned by appellations of divine dignity] 16.

It is to be noted that Origen (and Evagrius his disciple) who believed in the pre-existence of the soul of man declared that, in Christ, the Logos dwelt in the soul that pre-exists the body¹⁷. But the Alexandrians elsewhere outlined the features of the “ Incarnate Logos “ so powerfully that the idea of the “incarnation of souls”was excluded¹⁸

3 - St. Athanasius and the” Mia-phasis”:

Sellers¹⁹ states that the majority of the bishops who attended the Council of Chalcedon believed that the traditional church formula received by St. Athanasius was:” one incarnate nature of the Word of God “. St. Cyril himself who devoted all his life to defend the orthodox faith against Nestorius used it as an Athanasian formula. Some modern scholars tried to attribute it to Apollinarius the friend of St. Athanasius. I think it is too difficult to believe that St. Cyril in the fourth century and the majority of the bishops of Chalcedon could not discover that it was not Apollinarian. On the contrary, we can say that Apollinarius quoted it from his friend and misinterpreted it using his own theological system-20

WHY IS THE FORMULA “MIA – PHYSIS” CORRELATED TO ST. ATHANASIUS?

St. Severus of Antioch in his works, “ Philalethes “ and” Liber Contra Impium Grammaticum “ quoted the Church Fathers, from St. Ignatius of Antioch and St. Irenaeus of Lyons, to St. Cyril of Alexandria, to maintain the traditional formula “ mia-phasis”. In doing so, he was opposing the Chalcedonians’ formula “in two natures”. Nevertheless, usually the formula” mia-phasis “ is correlated to St. Athanasius and St. Cyril. Why?

St. Cyril repeatedly maintained the formula “mia-physis tou Theou Logou Sesarkomene (“one nature of the Incarnate Word of God “), explaining it in detail, confirming the hypostatic union between the Godhead and manhood as a natural and real union, to defend the faith against Nestorianism. He depended on St. Athanasius who asserted this real unity as a fundamental element in his arguments against Arianism²¹

1 - In his refutation of Arianism, he presented an integral and dynamic system of theology. Arianism was based on “rationalism”, while Athanasius faced it with a theological system based not on “rationalism” but on the holy Scripture, tradition of the Church, asceticism and soteriology. His theology is concentrated in his famous statement which he repeated again and again: [He was made man that we might be gods²²]. He explained it, confirming three kinds of unity²³:

(a) The Unity of the Father and the Son: The Saviour is the Only-begotten Son of God, one with Him in the ousia (divine essence), able to regenerate our nature, for He is the Creator.

(b) The Son of God became man in a real unity without dualism. He took our flesh as His own flesh in the incarnation.

(c) He grants us adoption by the Father not as an external gift, but through our deification (our unity with the Saviour or His indwelling in our hearts).

These three kinds of unity are truly unique, but are different from each other. For the first is a unity between two Hypostasies in One Divine essence; the second is a unity between two natures in One Hypostasis without mixing, altering or absorbing one into the other; they form one unseparable nature. The third is called “deification”, but does not mean participation in the Divine essence (ousia); it means unity of the believer with His God by the Divine grace, which is unequal to the incarnation of the Son of God.

As we see here, he starts with the unity of the the Father with the Son, then the unity of the Godhead and manhood of the Saviour, at last our unity with Him. It is clear that St. Athanasius maintained the unity of the Person of Christ to conclude with our unity with Him.

In his refutation of Arianism he asserts His unity for our salvation, [For as He, having come in our body, was conformed to our condition, so we, receiving Him, partake of the immortality

that is from Hini²⁴] Again in his letter to Adelphius against the Arians, he confirms the unity of the Word with His own flesh to realize our salvation as he says: [they who divide the Word from the Flesh do not hold that one redemption from sin has taken place, or one destruction of death was realized (by the Word made flesh)²⁵ .]

2 - St. Athanasius, whose theology depended on the soteriological Christology and not on “rationalism”, found no problem concerning the agony of Christ. Through rationalism the Ebionites and Docetes concluded different results. The former stated that since Christ suffered then He is not God, while the latter stated that since Christ is God then His suffering was not real but merely an illusion.

St. Athanasius- in his soteriological view- sees that Christ's suffering was not shameful to Him, but a glory. We accept Him as the Crucified Lord of glory. The “mia physis” asserts the attribution of suffering to the Incarnate God!

He says: [Wherefore the Word, as I said, being Himself incapable of death, assumed a mortal body, that He might offer it as His own, in place of all, and suffering for the sake of all, through His union with it, “might bring to nought Him that had the power of death, that is, the devil, and might deliver them who, all their lifetime, were enslaved by the fear of death,” Heb. 2:14 f]

4 - Other Church Fathers

Before discussing the very roots of the disputes concerning the “nature “ of Christ in the fourth and the fifth centuries, I would like to present a brief account of some of the concepts of the Church Fathers bearing on this matter.

St. Ephram the Syrian (373 A.D.), in his hymns²⁶, defined the “one nature “ formula to affirm the One Person of Christ. He believed in his complete manhood.²⁷

Aloys Grillmeier says : [At the same time he speaks of “two natures” in Christ, the Godhead and the manhood.²⁸]. Here I would mention that not only St. Ephram but all those who believe in “mia-physis “ in the orthodox concept maintain the Godhead and the manhood but refuse the formula “ in two natures “ to confirm the unity of the Person of Christ.

M.A. Orphanos, in his book” Creation and Salvation “according to St.Basil of Caesarea²⁹ , states that St. Basil is not

clear on “ the two natures of Christ “, but he seems to be closer to the Antiochian tradition [in two natures] just because he refers to Christ's humanity or human nature and Christ's divinity, this does not mean “in two natures” for the Alexandrian tradition also maintains the Lord's humanity and divinity.

St. Gregory the Nazianzium (329-389A.D.) offers a comparison between the unity of the Three hypostaseis in the same Godhead (*ovu*) and the unity of the two natures in one nature of Christ. He states: [And if I am to speak concisely, the Savior is made of elements (.....) which are distinct from one another, for the invisible is not the same with the visible, not the timeless with that which is subject to time, yet He is not two persons (). God forbid! For both natures are one by the combination: the deity being made man, and the manhood deified or however one should express it. And I say different elements because it is the reverse of what is the case in the Trinity; for there we acknowledge different Persons so as not to confound the hypostaseis: but not different elements, for the Three are One and the Same in the Godhead³⁰].

Hesychius of Jerusalem (died after 450A.D.), followed St. Cyril of Alexandria, without adopting his technical vocabulary. His shortest Christological formula is the “ Incarnate Logos “ 31

Mark the Hermit:According to J. Quasten (Patrology. vol 3, p 508) Photius finds Mark the Hermit (died after 430 A.D)[guilty of no small error] because of his speech on one nature (out of two) while many scholars confirm that he does not betray any leaning towards error.

THE ALEXANDRIAN & ANTIOCHENE CHRISTOLOGICAL THOUGHTS

Many scholars attribute the problem of the Christological formula concerning the nature of Christ to the controversy between the Alexandrian and the Antiochene theology. While the Alexandrian School adopted the formula of a”hypostatic union” or “ natural union “ of the Godhead and manhood to assert the oneness of Jesus Christ; the Antiochian School accepted the “indwelling theolgy “, that is the Godhead dwelt in manhood, as if Jesus Christ were two persons in one. The Antiochenes wanted to assert that no confusion had occurred between the Godhead and manhood and to avoid attributing human weakness to His divinity. The starting point of the Alexandrian School was John 1:14” And

the Word became flesh “, while that of the Antiochenes was Colossians 2:9 “ For in Him dwelleth the fullness of the Godhead bodily”.

Before discussing the differences between the two Schools I wish to refer to the following remarks:

1 - Usually scholars speak of the controversy between the two schools, ignoring that they agreed on many points. Every School had its own views, yet they were not isolated from each other.

2 - The problem issued not from the two Schools but from those who misinterpreted these Schools' concepts like Apollinarius, Eutyches, Diodore, Nestorius, Theodore of Mospuestia and Ibas of Edessa. It is noteworthy that Apollinarius of Laodicea and Eutyches of Constantinople, who accepted the Alexandrian formula were not Alexandrians, nor did they adopt the Alexandrian system of theology.

3 - Imperial and church politics played their role in this controversy to create a huge gap between the leaders of these schools, which ended by the serious split that occurred within the Church since the fifth century.

THE ALEXANDRIAN HYPOSTATIC UNION

St. Cyril, in his struggle against Nestorius explained the “hypostatic union as a “ personal union”, “ natural union “ and “ real unification “. The Son of God united our nature to Himself and made it His own, that in Him is effected a real unification () of Godhead and manhood. In other words this theory does not ignore the differences of natures, but it insisted on the oneness of Christ by declaring His one incarnate nature of two, without confusion of natures or separation It conserves at least two ideas 32:

1-The Logos, an eternal hypostasis, united to Himself manhood, which did not have its existence before the incarnation and is not separate from the Godhead. It became individuated, thereby receiving its hypostatic status in union with the Logos. Manhood was not an independent hypostasis over and against the Logos, it is hypostatic in the union.

2 - The union of the natures was inward and real. For hypostasis is the entire “ ousia “ which has come into concrete existence, while “prosopon “signifies the external aspect of the

object or person, whereby one hypostasis of a class is distinguished from another

St. Cyril rejected the Antiochene theory of “ indwelling “, that is the Godhead of Christ dwelt in His manhood, or the theory of “conjunction” or “close participation” as insufficient to reveal the real unification but permits the division of natures of Christ as Nestorius taught.

St. Cyril explained the Alexandrian theory in these words:

[For we do not affirm that the nature of the Word underwent a change and became flesh, or that it was transformed into a whole or perfect man consisting of soul and body; but we say that the Word, having, in an ineffable and inconceivable manner, personally united to Himself flesh instinct with a living soul, became man and was called the son of Man; yet not of mere will or favor, nor again by the simple taking to Himself of a person, (i.e. of a human person to His divine person); and that while the natures which were brought together into this true unity were diverse, there was of both one Christ and one Son, not as though the diversity of the natures were done away with this union, but rather that the Godhead and Manhood completed for us the one Lord and Christ and Son by their inutterable and unspeakable concurrence and unity³³].

[Even when He became man by taking upon Him flesh and blood, still continuing what He was God in nature and truth. Neither do we say that the flesh was converted into the divine nature, nor surely that the ineffable nature of God the Word was debased and changed into the nature of flesh, for it is unchangeable and unalterable, ever continuing altogether the same according to the Scripture³⁴].

[If any one in the one Christ divides the subsistences()after the union,. connecting them only by a conjunction of dignity or authority or rule and not rather by a union of natures (), be he anathema³⁵].

[If any one distributes to two Persons or Subsistences () the expressions used both in the Gospels and in the Epistles, or used of Christ by the Saints, or by Him of Himself, attributing some to a man, conceived of separately, apart from the Word, which is of God, and attributing others, as befitting God, exclusively to the Word which is of God the Father, be he anathema

To one Person, therefore, must be attributed all the expressions used in the Gospels, the one incarnate nature of the Word³⁶.

THE ALEXANDRIAN" MIA~PHYSIS"

As I have said, Sellers³⁷ states that the majority of the bishops who attended the Council of Chalcedon believed that the traditional church formula received by St. Athanasius was the "one incarnate nature of the Word of God ". Surely this belief was not rootless, but it was the church formula which the Nestorians tried to deform by giving it Apollinarian and Eutychian interpretations; attributing it to Apollinarius. Until today, some scholars confuse between this formula in its orthodox concept and the Apollinarian and Eutychian misuse, which was really far removed from the Alexandrian systematic theology.

What do we mean by the 'mia~physis" or "the one incarnate nature "?

I shall quote brief statements of the non-Chalcedonian leaders, especially stated in the fifth and sixth centuries to give a clear and accurate interpretation of the " mia-physis " formula. [Here I will be quoting the English translation of Severus and Philoxenus from V.C. Samuel.]

1 - We mean by " mia "one, but not" single one "or" simple one"as some scholars believe 38. St Dioscorus declared in the Council of Chalcedon that he accepted the one nature " out of two natures ". Not only do we believe in the presence of the perfect Godhead and the perfect manhood of Christ but in a dynamic presence without confusion or separation.

We are not " monophysites " as the Chalcedonian churches called us recently, for this inaccurate term draws us closely to Eutychianism which we deny³⁹.

St Severus quoted the Cyrillian terms that explain the " mia physis" not as a " single nature " but as a composite one, giving " man " as an example. He says [It is not merely with reference to those that are simple by nature that the word "one " is employed, but it is also with reference to those that have come into being in composition, for which man is a good example.⁴⁰].

St. Severus states: [The natures and the hypostaseis of which He is composed are perceived irreducibly and unchangeably in the union. But it is not possible to recognize a prosopon for each of them, because they did not come into being dividedly either in specific concretion or in duality. For He is one hypostasis from both, and one prosopon conjointly, and one nature of God the Word incarnate⁴¹.]

2 - St. Cyril insisted on “ the one nature” of Christ to assert His oneness. He accepted the human nature not as another being joined to Him, but to be really His own. Meyendorff states : [He (Cyril) maintained that the relationship between the divine and the human in Christ does not consist of a simple cooperation, or even interpenetration, but of a union; the incarnate Word is one, and there could be no duplication of the personality of the one redeemer God and man (incarnate God)⁴² I

St. Cyril used the term “ one nature of God the Logos Incarnate “ as a tool to defend the Church faith against Nestorianism.

3 - According to the Nestorians “ one nature” of Christ meant only one of two probabilities: the natures had been absorbed or a confusion between the divine and human natures happened to produce one confused nature. They could not accept that “ one " in the “incarnate Logos” means real union without absorption of manhood or confusion. St. Cyril gives some examples to explain this unity. We are created of soul and body, and these are different natures and with their union we become a man with one human nature. The soul and the flesh together become one nature and one man, without any confusion or absorption⁴³.

St. Cyril confirms repeatedly that the “ one incarnate nature does not mean a confusion of natures, but it means that all the words and deeds of Jesus Christ are attributed to the One Incarnate God, and represent a “single operation” without confusion.

For example, St. Cyril insisted that in Christ's miracles, as the raising from the dead of Jairus's daughter or of the widow's son at Nain, both the divine and the human were involved; the hand of Christ touched the person to demonstrate the “ single operation “ of Logos and flesh. For if Christ had performed His miracles by virtue of an “ indwelling “ of the divine Logos, He would have been no different from the prophets, who did the same. Therefore it is meet to say that the “Source of life was hungry”, that the “All Powerful grew tired 44”

J. Pelikan says,[Reviewing the life of Jesus, his temptation.and hunger, his suffering and death.Cyril insisted that all these had to be attributed to the one incarnate Logos who used his flesh as an instrument for His miracles and for His sufferings. The prayers and supplications with loud cries and tears of Christ in his temptation were ascribed to “ the natural and true Son.possessing the glories of deity”,who had humbled Himself to save those who were tempted The voice from the cloud identified the one incarnate Logos, divine and human, as my “ beloved Son”.And so through all the various concrete scenes of the life of Jesus, the theology of the hypostatic union found substantiation for its insistence upon the one Lord Jesus Christ as its subject 45].

+The flesh did not abandon its nature as flesh, although it became the flesh of God

St.Severus of Antioch⁴⁶

+We believe that the Word became flesh. The Word was not changed into the flesh; neither was the flesh changed into the Word.

Philoxenos of Mabogh⁴⁷

+The flesh remained flesh even after the God-befitting resurrection and ascension. It shines in glory that becomes Him whose it is. As the body of God it is divine, but has not been changed into the

“ousia “ of Godhead.

St. Severus of Antioch⁴⁸

4 Jesus Christ is, at once, **consubstantial with God the Father and con-substantial with us men:**

+I am fully aware that He was born of the Father as God, and the same was born of Mary as man

St. Dioscorus⁴⁹

+ He who is consubstantial with the Father, the Same became consubstantial with us through the incarnation

Philoxenos⁵⁰

+ The Only Son of God became consubstantial with us by being united “hypostatically “ to one flesh animated with a rational soul. By reason of this, the entire human “ousia “

and the whole race became united in love to the divine nature, from which it had formerly been estranged. Hence, as it is written, we, being made worthy of the original harmony, have become partakers of the divine nature. By participation we have received divine gifts and immortality, which had been lost to us on account of the trespass of Adam.

St. Severus of Antioch⁵¹

5 He is at once God and man (Incarnate God):

The Alexandrians used the expression “God and Man” to confirm “His Godhead and manhood”, but often added “One Hypostasis”, “one nature” or “at the same time”

+Men saw Him walking on the earth, and they saw Him as God, the Creator of the heavenly hosts

St.

Dioscorus⁵²

+To walk on earth and to move from place to place is indeed human. But to enable those who are lame and cannot use their feet to walk is God-befitting. However, it is the same God the Word incarnate whoworks in both.

St. Severus of Antloch⁵³

6 - St. Severus states that in the incarnation “ the divine nature of the Word was not changed into what it was not “,but He remained what He was. Since the Word became flesh, the selfsame is both perfect God and perfect man. The Word who is invisible became visible. That what He is and that which He became are not two, because He is one.⁵⁴

+God the Word who, without a beginning and in eternity, had been born from the Father without passion and without a body, became Incarnate

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7 -He became truly man

The Word of God assumed true manhood consisting of everything human in the truest sense, with the single exception of sin. So He was conceived and was born as a babe and grew as a child; he was subject to all the laws of nature and he endured suffering. Mocked, humiliated and tortured, He died and rose again.⁵⁶

St. Severus asserts that the conception was from a virgin without male co-operation, a real conception, real development of the babe in the mother's womb. He wrote a letter to Antonino of Aleppo in which he emphasized that "the Virgin" gave birth feeling, and that" the birth was not in phantasy"

He who willed to come truly in everything that pertains to us and identify Himself with us, His brethren, in all things except sin, was most certainly born in the flesh by a manifest and real birth, causing her who bore (Him) to feel (the reality of birth), though she was free from all pain and suffering.

Severus of Antioch

St Severus affirms that the manhood had its self-consciousness and creaturely freedom without any reduction, but because the manhood was inseparably united with the Godhead, in actual fact, these faculties were never misused to disobey God.⁵⁷

+Had He not become man to begin with, there would be no possibility for Him to die, for God is Spirit and He does not undergo death

Philoxenos of Mabbogh⁵⁸

[It should be remembered here that for Philoxenos death was the central purpose of the incarnation. Therefore if the manhood was not real and dynamic, Jesus Christ would not have fulfilled the mission of His earthly life. This admission cannot come from monophysitism⁵⁹]

❖ In the flesh He really suffered passion for us. Like us,

He was fatigued of travelling- it was not an illusion. Like us, He slept. He felt the pain of the wounds, inflicted on Him by Pilate..... We also confess that He had the rational soul which endured for us suffering like this. He endured the reality of the passions of the soul, namely sorrow, anguish and grief.

Timothy Aeiurus⁶¹

8 –The manhood of Jesus was perfect:

+For it is written that the Word became flesh, which means perfect man.

Philoxenos

61

+... neither do we say that God the Word was changed over to a man, made up of body and soul. We confess, on the contrary, that while remaining what He was, He united to Himself hypostatically flesh possessing a rational soul.

Severus of Antloch⁶²

+The complete man was redeemed in God. Since the whole of Adam had come under the curse and been depraved,. the whole of him was taken by God and renewed. The Lord who became incarnate gave His body unto death for the sake of everybody. Moreover, He gave His soul for the salvation of all souls. In this way the whole of our nature was recreated in Him into a new man.

Philoxenos⁶³

It is clear that through the incarnation, the Word of God became truly a perfect man and a human individual: in Him all men are represented individually and the entire human race collectively.

9 - The Manhood of Christ was not formed before the Incarnation

St. Severus of Antioch in refuting the formula : “ two natures after the union “, repeatedly argues with those who maintain that the human child was formed in the womb by himself first and God the Word was assumed later. He quoted the following passage from Diodore of Tarsus:

[While the flesh of Mary and before it was assumed, it was of the earth and was not different in any way from any other flesh. Like Levi who received tithes while he was

still in the loins and received honour when he was born, the Lord also, when he was in the womb of the Virgin, was of her ousia and he did not have the honour of Sonship. But when he was formed and became the temple of God the Word and received the Only-begotten, He was bestowed with the honour of the name and subsequently received also from Him glory 64]. Severus states that this passage was opposed by Cyril in the following words: [You are giving expression to unlearned words which are very unhealthy. That holy body was indeed from Mary. But from the first beginning of its formation, that is its existence in the womb, it was holy as the body of Christ, and nobody sees a single moment in which it was not his. All the same, as you say, it was common (flesh) like any other flesh⁶⁵].

+ The “two natures after the union “ signifies that for those who maintain it the man by himself was formed in the womb first and he was later indwelt by the Word. This indwelling they describe by means of the word “ union “. Accordingly, they predicate two natures of the Emmanuel and employ the expression “ two natures after the union “.

Severus of Antioch⁶⁶

The mia-physis prevents us from believing that the manhood of Christ was formed in the womb before the incarnation, then accepted the Godhead dwelling in Him. For this reason Philoxenos insisted on refusing the “two natures”. This does not mean that he refuses to accept the manhood of our Lord as a particular⁶⁷

Timothy Aelurus of Alexandria states that Christ's manhood does not exist by itself in separation from the Godhead. He says [If then, He who is born of the Virgin is named Jesus, He is the same by whom all things came into being. One is the nature, because, one is the person, who cannot be separated into two; for, in the incarnation, the nature of the body does not exist by itself and the nature of the Godhead separately 68].

10 St. Severus affirms that the manhood of Christ had all the limitations of our manhood with the only exception that it was sinless. Therefore He could be subject to the limitations of a finite existence: hunger, thirst and be physical fatigue. He could be rejected by His people and be handed over to the political authority of His day as a criminal; and suffer torture, pain and death. Everyone of these experiences was most intensely real, not phantasmal or illusory; in fact their reality was indispensable for

our salvation which He came to accomplish 69

REMARKS ON THE ALEXANDRIAN “MIA – PHYSIS”

I - Some scholars, in criticizing the formula : “ mia-physis ... “ state that the main base for the Alexandrian theological system was ascetical. Egyptian church leaders practised severe asceticism, renouncing their own body with the aim of “ deification “ or “ divinization “. The core of the Alexandrian theology could be revealed through St. Athanasius' statement that the Word of God became man (enethropesen) so that we might be made gods (theopiethomen). They ignored actual life on earth to participate in divine life. In other words, they abolished the boundaries between God and man, concentrating on what is divine even in their daily life. This attitude had its effect on theology in the following ways:

a - The Alexandrians adopted the “ mia-physis “ and the “ hypostatic union ' between the Godhead and manhood of Christ to attribute all the actions and words of Christ to His divinity, ignoring what is human in Him.

b - They accepted Christ as “ God-flesh “ and not as “ God-man “, denying the role of the human soul of Jesus Christ

Now, I would like to give an explanatory reply to this remark:

a - Truly, the early Alexandrian theologians and clergymen were ascetics and asceticism still has its strong effect in our theology, not by despising our own bodies nor by denying our Lord's manhood, but in insisting on the soterological aspect. The early Coptic ascetics were involved not in theoretical discussions but in enjoying the redeeming deeds of the HolyTrinity, i.e., in enjoying the sanctification of the souls, minds, bodies, gifts etc ... through communion with the Father in His Son through His Holy Spirit. The Alexandrian theology was in fact soteriological, as it appeared in the writings of St. Athanasius in his defence against the Arians.

Sellers states: [The teaching of Athanasius and the later representatives of the School of Alexandria comes before us as a striking example of the dependence of Christological on soteriological thought.

Consequently if we are to appreciate their doctrine of the Person of Jesus Christ, we must first briefly consider their doctrine of his Work as Saviour⁷⁰.]

b - Asceticism was not the only base for our theology, but it was just one factor which was not separated from others, like: studying the scriptures and philosophy, practising traditional worship, preaching etc ... All these factors represented one integral “ life in Christ “.

c - The Early Egyptian asceticism was biblical; it did not hate the body with its senses and capacities, nor denied human free-will, nor despised earthly life with its properties. We hear St. Jerome stating that hand-work was obligatory in the Egyptian monasteries not for the satisfaction of these institutions but for realizing spiritual growth-71. St. Clement of Alexandria wrote a book to the rich of Alexandria declaring that riches are not evil in themselves.

It is clear that the early ascetic writings recorded what was supernatural which may be understood to mean that the early ascetics despised their bodies ...

It is noteworthy that even the hermits considered extreme ascetic practices evil, in the same degree as luxury....

d - Concerning the “ deification as a main base of our theology, that gave way to the” one divine nature “of Christ as Rowan Greer and others believe⁷², I would explain that we do not believe in one divine nature of Christ, but one united nature out of two. Moreover “ deification according to the Alexandrian theology means the return of man to his origin as an image of God, by participation in the divine nature. It is not a restoration of man's soul, but of his whole human nature, i.e., of his soul, mind, body, will etc

For example, Pseudo-Macarius the Great states: “ If **human nature** had remained alone in its nakedness and had not profited by a mingling and a communion with the supra-celestial nature, it would have resulted in nothing good. 73..

“Deification “ does not mean destroying human freedom to enjoy God's will as Greer suggests, but on the contrary it means its sanctification. St. Cyril writes: [Man, from the origin of creation, received control over his desires and could freely follow the inclinations of his choice, for the Deity, whose image he is, is free.

74].

In other words, we can summarize our Alexandrian theology in the following statement: [We are in need of communion with God to cure our whole human nature from the illness of corruption and to return to our original state as an image of God. The Word of God realized this salvation by taking our human nature]. St. Cyril of Alexandria writes:

[Adam was created for incorruptibility and life, in paradise, he had a holy life; his intellect was wholly and always devoted to the contemplation of God, his body was in security and calm ...

As in Adam, man's nature contracted the illness of corruption through disobedience, because through disobedience passions entered man's nature, in the same way in Christ it recovered health, for it became obedient to the God and Father, and committed no sin (1 Pet 2:22; Is.53:9) 75].

2 - Scholars add another factor that had its own effect on the Alexandrians, i.e., their very close connection with the educated Greeks⁷⁶. This is in contrast to the Antiochenes who were in very close connection with Judaism⁷⁷. These different circumstances had their effect not only in interpreting the holy scriptures, for while the Alexandrians adopted the allegorical method, the others adopted the literal method. And this also had its effect on their Christological thought. For while the Antiochenes were in-terested in the ethical terms and in confirming the “human nature” and its sharp distinction from the deity, the Alexandrians used the ontological terms to win over their neighbors on behalf of the kingdom of God. If the philosophers sought enjoyment of “the life of gods and all godlike and blessed men” through knowledge (gnosis), and the contemplation of the Divine; the Alexandrians declared that this had to be realized not through man's efforts, but through the condescension of God Himself who by His own loving act assumed the human form to “regenerate our nature”(deify it) as He would bring salvation to the world⁷⁸.

3 The Antiochenes never accepted St. Cyril's expression “God died” on the Cross. This would have meant for them not a union of the natures but a confusion of the one within the other, human nature transformed into the divine and that the divine was subjected to the temporality of the human.

In the sixth century, those who defended the formula “One

of the Trinity was crucified” were called “ Theopaschites “ (those who hold that God suffered). Their orthodoxy was upheld by the Emperor Justinian and Leontius of Byzantium. The formula was rejected by the Patriarch of Constantinople and with some hesitation by Hormisdas of Rome⁸⁰

Meyendorff states that the Antiochenes rejected the “theopaschism” of Cyril, for it was for them the surest sign of monophysitism and implied in Christ the absence of a genuine human nature, for only a man, never God, can die.⁸¹

Meyendorff elaborates a good deal on this problem, saying:

[As we have seen, the text of this hymn (Trisagion) in the form proposed by the (Monophysite) patriarch of Antioch, Peter the Fuller (“ Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, *crucified for us*, have mercy on us “) was not formally heretical, since it was addressed to Christ, not to the Trinity

The problem was undeniably the same one that had been debated during the years preceding Ephesus and concerned the term *Theot6kos*, could the Word really “be born of the Virgin”, or was it only the man Jesus who was “Son of Mary”? Consequently, Cyril of Alexandria, asserting against Nestorius the full theological validity of the term *Theot6kos*, was also led to declare, in his twelfth anathematism, that “the Word had suffered in the flesh”. Conversely the Acoemetae monks, who were the main adherents of Chalcedon in Constantinople, not only objected to the theopaschite formulas but interpreted the *Theot6kos* as a pious periphrasis, that is, in a sense that Nestorius himself had accepted

Not only does St. Paul himself speak of the “princes of this world” who “crucified the Lord of Glory”, 1 Cor 2: 8; but theopaschite expressions can be found in pre-Nicene theology as well/⁸², and

St. Gregory Nazianzen already makes it the essential element of his doctrine of salvation: “We needed a God made' *flesh and put to death (edeethemen Theou sarkoumenou kai nekroumenou)*⁸³ in order

that we could live again”;and there is no problem for him about using such terms as “ blood of God”(halma Theou) and “crucified God” (*Theos stauroumenos*)⁸⁴. Does not the Nicene Constantinopolitan Creed itself explicitly proclaim the faith of the Church in “ the *Son of God* ... incarnate of the Holy Ghost and the Virgin Mary, *crucified* for us under Pontius Pilate”? St Cyril's major preoccupation in his struggle against Nestorius consisted

precisely in preserving the faith of Nicaea, which seemed to him to be endangered as one ceased to say that Mary was “ Mother of God “ or that the Word “suffered in the flesh”^{85]}

MIA-PHYSIS IN THE NEW-TESTAMENT⁸⁶

H.H. Pope Shenouda III, in his book on “ The Nature of Christ “ explains the “One Nature” of Christ in the New Testament in detail. In the following section, I will try to give a brief account of this point.

A - Mia-physis and the birth of Christ

Let us ask ourselves Who was born by the Virgin Mary ? Was He mere God? mere man? God and man? or Incarnate God? It is impossible to say that He was mere God, for she brought forth a child, who was witnessed by all attendants. He was not mere man, otherwise we fall into the Nestorian heresy. Why is it mentioned in the Scriptures : “ The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee : therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called “**the Son of God**” Luke 1:35 ? What is the meaning of calling her Son “**Emmanuel**”, which being interpreted, is “**God with us**”, Matt. 1:23 ? What is the meaning of the prophet Isiah's words: “For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace “, Is. 9:6 ? Therefore, He was not just a man but He was the Son of God, Emmanuel and the mighty God!

The Virgin did not conceive a man and a God, otherwise she would have had two sons. But she had One only: the Incarnate God. We worship Him, as the Incarnate God, without separating His divinity from His humanity. When St. Mary visited Elisabeth; this old saint, said “Whence is this to me that the Mother of my Lord should come to me ?” Luke 1:43. Even before bringing forth the Child, while she was pregnant, she was called “ mother of the **Lord**”.

Jesus Christ spoke to the Jews and said: “Before Abraham was, I Am”, John:8:58. He did not say: “ My Godhead existed even before Abraham”, but said: “I Am”, as an argument of the unity of His nature

Finally, the famous teaching of the Evangelist John that “ the Logos became flesh”, John 1:14, signifies the divine mystery of the unity of Christ's Person and nature.

B- Using the term “ Son of Man “ expresses His manhood while He was speaking about properties of His divinity, although neither of the two natures was changed. He asserts His unity in these words:

* “ And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the **Son of Man**, which is in heaven”, John:3:13. Who is the Son of Man that descended from heaven ?! Surely the Godhead, who attributes this to Himself as “ the Son of man “ as a sign of the unity of His nature

* In the same way He says that “ the Son of man “ is the Lord of the Sabbath (Matt. 12:8), the Forgiver of sins (Matt. 9:6), the Judge (Matt. 16:27, Matt. 25:31-34, John 5:22) etc

Besides this we find that some properties of His manhood are attributed to Him as the Lord without saying” the manhood of Christ “as St. Paul says: “ For had they known it, they would not have crucified the **Lord of glory**”, I Cor. 2:8. He did not say “ the body was crucified “ but “ the Lord of glory “.

St. Gregory of Nyssa states, [On account of the union achieved between the flesh which is taken and Godhead which takes, names are communicated and given to each mutually in such a way that the divinity is spoken of in human terms and the humanity in divine terms. Thus Paul calls the Crucified One the Lord of glory (1 Cor. 2:8); and He who is adored by the whole creation, above, below and upon the earth, is called Jesus⁸⁷].

Mia-physis and Our Salvation

The “ mia-physis “ or the “ one nature of Christ “ is very necessary and essential for our salvation. Some modern theologians ask:How can the limited body of Christ forgive unlimited sins committed against God ? Is the body of Christ unlimited ? or was the Godhead of Christ crucified ? We find the answer in our belief of the “ mia-physis “. For the Lord is crucified (I Cor. 2:8) even if His divinity did not suffer, but His manhood, and the sacrifice of the Cross is attributed to the Incarnate Son of God; and this has the power to forgive the unlimited sins committed against God

Although the divinity of Jesus Christ could not be made to suffer, yet all the events of our salvation through the Cross were attributed to the Son of God Himself, and not to His body as if it were separated from His Godhead.

Examples:

* “ For God so loved the world that He gave His Only-Begotten Son ...”, John 3:16.

* “ ... to feed the church of God, which He hath purchased with His own blood,” Acts 20:28.

* “ He that spared not His own Son, but delivered him up for us all ... “, Rom. 8:32

* “ He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins “, 1 John 4:10.

* “ In whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins, who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature “, Col. 1:14, 15

(See also Acts 3:14, 15; Heb. 2:10; Rev. 1: 17 , 18 etc.)

THE ANTIOCHENE~” DIOPHYSES “(TWO NATURES)

To understand the Antiochene formula: “ two natures after the union”, we must know its position in the “ one nature-two natures”dispute:

1 - The Arians could not accept the Godhead of Christ because it made of Him two persons: God and man

2 - St. Athanasius confirmed the unity of Godhead and manhood repeating the church's belief in the “Flesh “ of Jesus Christ as His own flesh and not a strange element (of Christ). Thus Jesus Christ is one Person and not two, had one nature without rejecting the dynamic presence of His Godhead and manhood.

3 Apollinarius of Loadicea used the Alexandrian formula “ one nature “ in his own theological system. In his eagerness to defend the Church's faith against Arianism, he believed that the Logos was united only with the corporeality of man and replaced

the soul that was united to the body received from the Virgin Mary. In other words to realize the hypostatic union he believed that the manhood of Christ is incomplete (body without soul).

4 - The Antiochene leaders treated the “ hypostatic union “ of Cyril with suspicion as if it were Apollinarian. They adopted the theory of the indwelling “ of the Logos in the manhood, to assert Christ's man hood and to confirm Him as a real and perfect man. Nestorius declared this theory when he refused to call St. Mary “Theotokos” and rejected the Alexandrian statement : “ the Son of God died “. In fact the Antiochenes desired to assert three facts about the incarnation:

a - The manhood of Christ was real and perfect

b - There was no confusion between the natures of Christ

c - The Godhead is impassible/ immortal , God did not suffer, nor did He die

But at the same time they speak of Christ as two persons, two sons [Son of God and Son of Man]. Here I quote some statements of Nestorius

[Let us confess the God in man, let us adore the man who is to be worshipped together with God because of the divine conjunction with God the Creator⁸⁸].

[Who is it that walked on the water ? It was the feet that walked, and the concrete body through the power that dwelt in him. That is a miracle. For if God walks on the water, that is not amazing 89]

[Am I, then, the only one who calls Christ “ double “? Does he not designate himself both as a temple that can be destroyed and as a God that raises up ?90].

[The temple created by the Holy Spirit is one and the God who hallows the temple is another91].

R.P.C. Hanson states: [Antiochene theology... preferred in Christology a separation of the natures of Christ verging towards Nestorianism/92]. Frances Young says: [The principal representatives of Antiochene theology were Theodore of Tarsus, the teacher of John Chrysostom; Theodore of Mopsuestia and Theodoret of Cyrrhus, the friend and defender of Nestorius. The

reputation of all three has suffered through association with Nestorianism, but there has been a reassessment in modern times, not least of the theology of Nestorius himself^{93]}

Sellers who defends the Antiochene Christology saying that they speak of a “ complete union “, and insist that it is one which is altogether indivisible⁹⁴ states⁹⁵ that they refer to the Godhead and manhood not only as “ natures and “ ousiai”(essences) but also as hypostases (substantiae) and that there is no hypostasis without its prosopon, [both the Godhead and the manhood in Christ are seen each with its prosopon, -each that is, as possessing its “ appearance “, its ' individuality “ and its person]

Jaroslav Pelikan spoke of Theodore of Mopsuestia, the great representative of the Antiochene school/96, saying: [Theodore was quoted as teaching that “ the deity was separated from him who suffered according to the experience of death, for it was not possible for it (the deity) to undergo the experience of death./97 But he also asserted that “He (the Son of God) was not separated from him (the assumed man) in his crucifixion, nor did He leave him at death, but He remained with him until He helped him to loose the pains of death/98 99]

It is clear in asserting that there was no division even on the death of Jesus Christ, he spoke of Jesus Christ not only "in two natures” but as two persons or two beings joined to each other. This idea is clear when he explains the meaning of” the Son of his love “ (Col. 1:13) as he states that it is “ the Man “ who is thus called by St. Paul, not He who is Son by nature 100

REMARKS ON THE ANTIOCHENE CHRISTOLOGY

I The Antiochenes adopted the theory of “ indwelling “ not just to oppose the Alexandrian theology of the hypostatic union but it was a product of many factors:

a Through their close connection with Judaism, the Antiochenes were interested in the Old Testament, especially in its **literal interpretation**. This had its effect on their theology as Meyendorff says: [The rigorist critical approach of men like Diodore of Tarsus, Theodore of Mopsuestia, and Theodoret led them to study the Gospel text literally in order to describe the history of our salvation rather than to explain it. Since they maintained a literal interpretation of the Old Testament, the

Antiochenes tended- in their exegesis of the Gospels and Epistles- to take into consideration, chiefly, the historical Jesus; the aim and the end of the history of Israel, in the full reality of his human nature/101]. In other words, their interest in the literal interpretation of the holy scriptures incited them to assert the reality of the historical Jesus in his “ human nature “ independent of the Divine Logos who dwelt in him (according to their expression).

b - Sellers states : [We must notice that, fundamental to the thought of the Antiochenes, is **the doctrine of the essential difference between God the Creator and man the Creature** When they refer to the divine and human **ousiai** (essences), they seem to set God in his eternity and man in his transience as complete opposites... All that exists can be divided into what is uncreated and what is created ... This thought,as should be understood, lies at the very heart of the teaching of the Antiochenes, and is the ultimate ground of their insistence on the “ two natures “ in Jesus Christ, and the necessity of “dividing “ and separating them /102]. He also says: [they may be called anthropologists, but their anthropology is intimately associated with their ethical and soteriological ideas /103].

Rowan A. Greer deals with this idea in more detail in his book “Theodore of Mopsuestia”¹⁰⁴ [Theodore everywhere emphasizes man's creatureliess. Man, including his soul, is “ genetos “, while only Cod Himself is agenetos ... Not only is man related to God (in this intimate way) by virtue of creation, but also by means of the redemption effected in Christ. Christ is **the man**, and as such is the perfect expression of the image of God/105].

c - Sellers states: [These teachers are supremely interested in man **the moral being**, and in particular concentrated on his power of self-determination/106]. They adopted the formula: “ two natures after the union “ to assert the perfect manhood especially the human freedom, or his human will

Greer also deals with this idea in more detail. He says that Theodore adopted: [the notion of man as a creature with a free, rational and mutable soul. Salvation was still thought of in terms of immortality and immutability, but this destiny was only possible provided man exercised his freedom of choice ... The natural (hypostatic) union, first of all, meant a loss of human freedom. The divinity, according to Nestorius' rendering of Cyril's views, acted as a “ Deus ex machina” in Christ. There was no experience of

freedom in the life of our Lord, God manipulated it all ... If the union were described as natural, then it has nothing to do with Christ's human will and freedom. Nestorius claims that the tendency of this Alexandrian way of thought is to deny the humanity of our Lord. Like Apollinarus, Cyril runs the risk of denying autonomy or reality to the will and soul of Christ, and substituting for the exercise of these human faculties the automatic role of the divinity. Nestorius firmly states that the divine nature and the human nature in Christ are separate and autonomous¹⁰⁷.J

I have already discussed the hypostatic union of Alexandrian thought explaining that it is not Apollinarian and does not deny the real and perfect manhood.

d - Concerning the oneness of Christ, the Antiochenes refused the hypostatic union and adopted the prosopic (prosopon) union, which I will discuss when commenting on the Tome of Leo.

2 - Fr. Florovsky separates the Nestorian dyophysies and the Chalcedonian one by distinguishing between:

a- Symmetrical dyopphesis, as a Nestorian duality of (nature), a complete parallelism of two natures, which leads into duality of subjects, which may be united only in the unity of function.

b- Asymmetrical dyopphysis : There is but one hypostasis as the object of all attributions, although the distinction of divine and human natures is carefully safeguarded. Humanity is included in the Divine hypostasis and exists, as it were, within this one hypostasis. There is no symmetry: two natures but one hypostasis.

Now that we have an idea of the Alexandrian formula “ one nature of the Incarnate Word of God” and the Antiochene “ two natures after the union”, I wish to discuss the formula of Leo of Rome: “in two natures”.

COULD THE TOME OF LEO REALIZE A RECONCILIATION?

Some scholars describe the “ Tome of Leo “, which was the basic document of the Chalcedonian Council, as if it were a reconciliation between the Alexandrians and the Antiochenes in their Christological thought. In their point of view, while it declares the: “ in two natures” in Christ to exclude the notion of

confusion as the Antiochenes insisted to do, it repeats that Jesus Christ is “ One and the same Son”, to assert the Alexandrian thought of the “ oneness of Jesus Christ “, or the unity of His Person. Before discussing this point of view, I shall quote some statements and comments written by western scholars, or eastern Chalcedonian theologians on the Tome of Leo or on the Christological thought of the West until the fifth century.

Sellers states: (As is well known, unlike their brethren in the East, the Westerns have no real interest in speculation. Rather, they are Jurists and administrators, who, trained in Roman law and rhetoric, are primarily concerned with the matter of ecclesiastical organization, and all that it involves. Moreover, brought up under the influence of the idea of the **Roman imperium**, they think of God rather in terms of sovereignty than in those of being/108).

Under the title: “ The West and Leo “, Kelly says: [So far, Tertullian excepted, the West had made little or no contribution to Christological theory ... 109,1

The Greek Prof. Rev. Florovsky says [The Tome of Leo, if taken alone by itself, could have created the impression of an excessive opposition of two natures. It persistently attributes particular acts of Christ to different natures; without any adequate emphasis on the unity of Christ's Person, even though the intention of the Pope himself was sound and orthodox. However the interpretations of the Tome by the Roman Catholic historians and theologians in modern times quite often transfer a certain quasi Nestorian bias, to which attention has been called recently by some Roman Catholic writers themselves 110].

Meyendorff says: [Leo's Latin terminology did not, however, satisfy the East/111]

In fact, the Tome was accepted by the Antiochenes, and even by Nestorius himself, as Meyendorff states: [It is known that Nestorius, who was still alive in 451, gave his approval to the Tome of Leo/112], while the Alexandrians rejected it, in spite of its agreement in some points of view with the Alexandrian Christological thought.

Points of Agreement

The Tome of Leo concentrates on refuting the heresy of the old monk Eutyches, who was hesitating in his theological

statements when he was accused of denying the real manhood of Christ¹²³ . Leo's refutation of Eutychianism emphasizes some mutual points of view with the Alexandrian and Antiochian theological traditions, which Rev. Samuel summarizes in three points/ 114:

1-Christ's manhood was real

2 - Through the birth, life, and dispensation of Jesus Christ, God the Word Himself entered the mundane plane of existence and worked out the salvation of the human race

3 -The Godhead and manhood of Jesus Christ continued in Him without change in His one person

The clash between the Alexandrians and the Antiochenes was the result of the claims each made. The Alexandrians affirmed the unity of Christ's Person to defend the faith against Nestorianism, while the Antiochenes affirmed the difference of the two natures against Eutychianism or the confusion of natures and the absorption of Christ's manhood. The Tome expounded the Antiochene theology ignoring the Alexandrian one as we will see below.....

Points of Disagreement

1-In the Council of Chalcedon when the Tome of Leo was read some bishops objected to three passages in it which were understood as revealing Nestorian attitudes. Even modern critics have taken the view that Leo is introducing the idea of a dual personality in Jesus Christ through teaching that He performed what is divine in His divine form and what is human in His human form. He is no longer one but "divided against himself"¹¹⁵ .

Leo sees each nature "doing what belongs to it in communion with the other". Thus, each nature is seen in its "individuality " and its "person " so as to perform what is proper to it in communion with the other 116

The three passages of the Tome which the bishops objected to are:

a- [In order to pay the debt of our condition, the inviolable nature has been united to the passible, so that the appropriate remedy of our ills, one and the same " mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" might from one element be capable of

dying and the other incapable¹¹⁷ 1

Timothy of Alexandria in the fifth century commented that it is the eternal Logos of the Father who was incarnate of the Virgin, and that is the Same, who was incarnate who “ died in the flesh for the life of the world “. He points out “ natures and persons and properties “ were not mentioned by the Fathers at Nicea, who, not dividing the one Christ, confessed that both things divine and things human in the economy were those of the one Person. St. Cyril says: (The Lord Himself saved us, not by an alien death, or by a mediation of an ordinary man but by His very own blood/118).

b-[For each “ **form** “ does the acts which belong to it in communition with the other; the Logos, that is performing what belongs to the Logos, and the flesh carrying out what belongs to the flesh; the one of these shines out in the miracles, the other succumbs to injuries/119]. This passage seemed a blatant example of Leo’s `Nestorianizing’ tendencies. Afterwards Philoxenus asserts that Leo `numbers’ the hypostaseis in Christ, and through his `two forms’ teaches two Sons and two Persons. Severus also says that Leo’s doctrine is simply that of a `a relative communion of the forms’.

c [Although in the Lord Jesus Christ is one Person of God and man, yet that whereby contumely attached to both is another; for from what belongs to us He has that manhood which is inferior to the Father, while from the Father He has equal Godhead with the Father/120].

The Chalcedonians believe that Leo in these three disputed passages was not dividing the one Christ, but was in line with Cyril himself in recognizing the difference of his natures. This might have been accepted if he had confirmed the hypostatic union of natures and had not rejected the formula “ one nature of the Incarnate Word of God”.

2 -Leo, in his Tome, speaks of “one person”... does this not suffice to confirm the unity of the Person of our Lord ?

This term " one Person " in itself could not satisfy the Alexandrian theologians for many reasons:

a -The Greek terms “prosopon” and “hypostasis” were employed by the Eastern theologians in the fifth century to correspond to the “persona” of the Latins. What did Leo mean by

“one Person”? According to Meyendorff: [Leo's Latin terminology did not, however, satisfy the East ¹³¹ .] and to Kelly [Antiochenes could recognize their own theology in Leo's vigorous affirmation of the duality in Christ, and of the reality and independence of the two natures. Some of his sentences, indeed ... were to prove stones of stumbling to Alexandrian Christologists 122.]

b -Nestorius himself usually repeats the statement [There are two natures but one person/123]. He believes in the union of prosopon. He states : [The natures subsist in their prosopons and in their natures, and in the prosopon of the union/124]. In other words, the Tome of Leo, like the Antiochene theology, affirmed a union of the natures in the realm of prosopon, while the Alexandrians had made “ union “ clear by their formulas: “ out of two “ and “ one nature of the Incarnate Logos of God”, and by adopting the hypostatic union.

c - While Leo declares the “ one Person “ he insists also that: [each nature performs what is proper to itself in communion with the other; the Word, for instance, performing what is proper to the Word, and the flesh carrying out what is proper to the flesh], and that the unity of person is [to be understood as existing in both natures]. It is clear that , according to the Tome, the words and deeds are expressed by the natures. The term “ nature “ being taken in the sense of “ hypostasis “, while according to St. Cyril all the deeds and words had been expressed by the one hypostasis 125

d - Leo in his tome states that the natures or substances “ came together in one Person “ through concurrence and not through “ oneness “. He used the phrase” one and same Son “ but the Tome's spirit separates and personalizes what is divine and what is human in Christ. The hypostatic union is dissolved and its place taken by a mere conjunction of the Logos and a man. Elsewhere he declared his rejection to the hypostatic union, calling those who adopt the formula “ one nature of the Incarnate Logos of God” heretics who followed Apollinarius, and deceivers for they are Eutychians who covered themselves with this formula¹²⁶ .

e- The term one person (prosopon) is insufficient for according to Meyendorff¹²⁷, this term which was common to both the divine and the human natures of Christ could in the vocabulary of Theodore's time be interpreted to mean a mere mask.

COULD THE CHALCEDONIAN DEFINITION

REALIZE THE RECONCILIATION?

To defend the Chalcedonian definition of faith some scholars give the following arguments to prove that it realized the reconciliation between the two schools of Alexandria and Antioch

First : While it rejects the Eutychian confusion of natures it repeatedly asserts that Jesus Christ is one and the same Son, and that He is one Person “made known in two natures “128.It proclaims [(Both natures) concurring into one person (prosopon) and one hypostasis - not parted into two Persons (prosopa), but one and the same Son and Only-begotten, the divine Logos, the Lord Jesus Christ].

We present the following remarks on this argument:

1-We have already discussed the “ one Person “ mentioned in the Tome of Leo, as insufficient to declare the true union of the Godhead and the manhood of Christ

2 Truly the “ definitio “ of Chalcedon admits the phrase “ one hypostasis”, but this admission does not mean the council's approval on the “ hypostatic union “. It was admitted perhaps to avoid the objection of the bishops to the definitio, for the majority believed in the “ one nature of the Incarnate Word of God “. Even in using this phrase the bishops were opposing the definitio. Meyendorff states:

[the Chalcedonian definition was rejected by a large number of Eastern Christians. On the one hand, they were opposed to it because it was forbidden in 331A.D. to draw up new confessions of faith and also because of the touchy conservation which the Egyptians held on to the formulas that symbolized the triumph of their great Archbishop Cyril over Nestorius /129].

The Antiochene side took “ hypostasis “ in the sense of “ prosopon as indeed Theodoret declared in his letter to John of Agae. The latter raised objections to Chalcedon's adoption of the “one hypostasis”.Theodoret wrote to him : [Therefore, those who referred to two natures (affirmed) unconfused union. It is also clear that they did not take “ one hypostasis” neither in the sense of ousia nor in the sense of nature, but of prosopon]. [Therefore, the one hypostasis “ was affirmed by the holy synod, as I said, not taking the word “ hypostasis “ in the sense of nature, but in that of prosopon “. This is clear from the definition; for “ prosopon “ and “hypostasis “ are allied terms /130].

John the Grammarian also states: [A hypostasis which has been formed, is to be understood as proson/131].

Second : Sellers states that although the formula : “ in two natures” was in fact forced on the Council by the commissioners through the influence of papal legates, who had learned to speak of” unus in utroque”, and were determined that the wording of the Definitio should be brought more into harmony with that of the Tome of Leo, the use of the traditional formula “ out of two natures “ was not excluded by Chalcedon, but that the “ in “ was inserted lest the “ out of” should be given a false mean-ing/132

He also states that the Council did not reject the Alexandrian formulas in their sound meaning but rejected their misinterpretations/133..

Here we remark that Sellers, the defender of the Council of Chalcedon, witnesses that the Alexandrian formula " out of " was the phrase with which the Easterns had long been familiar/134, and the other formula was accepted under the pressure of the commissioners through the influence of the Roman legates.

The Chalcedonian definition of faith rejected the “ one incarnate nature”. It points out [The Synod anathematizes those who first idly talk of the natures of the Lord as being two “ before the union”, and then conceive but one “ after the union “].

Third: Sellers in defending the Chalcedonian definition declares that the Tome of Leo (and consequently the Chalcedonian definition) used the “communicatio idiomatum” which illustrated the insistence of the doctrine of the unity of Christ's Person//135

Truly the “communicatio idiomatum” (communion of idioms) which states that the flesh of Christ shares in the names and properties of the Word and vice versa, is one of the principal characters of the Alexandrian Christology, but it is not sufficient to confirm the hypostatic union.

The great leaders of the non Chalcedonian party in the fifth and sixth centuries, i.e., Timothy of Alexandria (457A.D.-477A.D.) Philoxenus of Mabbugh (523 A.D.) and Severus of Antioch (512 –538A.D.) affirmed that the chief error of Chalcedon lay in the omission of the three traditional anti Nestorian formulas; i.e., " out of two”, “one incarnate nature”, and “the hypostatic union ".Moreover, using the formula “in two natures” inspires the Nestorian dualism. Timothy of Alexandria says: [There is no

nature (substantio) which has not (its) hypostasis, and there is no hypostasis which exists without its prosopon; if then there are two natures, there are of necessity two prosopa; but if there are two prosopa, there are also two Christs, as these new teachers preach¹³⁶]. Philoxenus employs the same argument [There is no nature without a person, neither is a person without a nature. For if there are two natures there must be also two Persons and two Sons¹³⁷].

Philoxenus refused the formula “ in two natures “, because it means that the manhood had been formed in the Virgin's womb by itself and then being assumed by God the Son. In this position, Philoxenus argues there are two natures and two persons, namely God the Son and the man Jesus.

They criticized the Council Chalcedon, not for its condemning Eutychianism or Apollinarianism by confirming that the manhood of Christ was real and perfect, but because it did not affirm the unity of our Lord Jesus Christ adequately, accusing it of Nestorian dualism. Meyendorff gives an account of their role in the Christological controversy: [During the second half of the fifth and the first half of the sixth century, the great (Monophysite) theologians, Timothy Aelurus, Philoxenus of Mabbugh, and more especially Severus of Antioch, clearly dominated the scene; and the Chalcedonian party had practically no noteworthy theologian to oppose them/138]. Sellers states: [In the first place, it should be understood that the (Monophysite) theologians were not heretics, nor were they regarded as such by leading Chalcedonians /139].

+ + +

OTHER THEOLOGICAL TERMS

After discussing the term “Physis ” in the Holy Scriptures and in the Early Church; especially in the Alexandrian and Antiochene Schools; we must have an idea of some other terms, especially “Substantia”, “Prosopon”, “Ousia”, and “ Hypostasis”, which are related to the term “ Physis”, to help us in giving a Christological statement, that can satisfy the two Orthodox families.

+ + +

1-”Substantia” or “Substance”

This is a Latin word which means first of all the “ true existence “ and consequently the character and the properties that gives the being -person or a thing - its existence.

Sometimes it is understood as a “nature of the being ”, but in fact there is another Latin word “Nature” which gives this meaning. Substantia gives the character its existence while natura signifies a set of characteristics of the thing which can be mutual with others.

In Western Latin thought, the word “ substantia “ was confused with the “ousia”, and “ m”. The two Greek words were translated as “ substantia” in the acts of St. Irenaeus. This confusion caused misunderstanding to Dionysius of Rome who accused his namesake Dionysius of Alexandria that he believed in three gods because of his belief in three hypostaseis, for he understood the three hypostaseis as three divine substances. Dionysius of Alexandria explained his belief in one divine essence (ousia).

Tertullian describes God as [una substantia tres Personae in uno statu = one substance, three Persons in one status]. He understands the substantia as a light, a fire, an invisible matter which while being a unity is differentiated within itself. The Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit are the One total reality of God. The Son proceeds from this one substantia as it is the Father and thereby receives His own reality without separation. The divine substantia is essentially one, the Son is, as it were, an effluence of this one substantia¹⁴⁰

[With regard to Him (the Logos), we are taught that He is derived from God and begotten by derivation so that He is Son of God and called God because of the unity of substance/141].

2 –” Prosopon” or “ Persona”

The Latin word “ Persona “ (or the Greek word “ “does not mean “ Person “ in English, but it means:

a - Mask: It is derived from the Etruscan word “pherusa” and in turn to bring this into connection with the cult and rites of the goddess Persephone. The name of the goddess was used to describe the “ mask “,/142, because masks were used in the festival of the goddess. At first it was used to signify the mask which the actor wore to take the role of another person, afterwards it was used to refer to a stage disguise or a person. But in the Greek word, unlike the Latin, the notion of “impersonation “ is much more prominent than the notion of “ autonomous personality”/143.

b - Face /144: “ Prosopon” often means “ face “ in the Old and New Testaments (Gen. 17:3; Mt. 6:16-17; Acts. 16:5; Rev. 4:7). A wider sense is “personal appearance” (Gen. 40:7), “from” “,figure”. With “Kata” “personal presence” is denoted.

c- Person /145:A further meaning is the person either socially or grammatically or, at a later time, legally. It denotes the whole person in 2 Sam. 17:11; 2Cor. 1:11.

d - Front side : it denotes “ the front” often with prepositions (Acts. 3:19; 5:4-5; 2 Cor. 8:24; 2:10; 5:12; Mk 1:2).

Early Church Usage

1 - Apostolic Fathers/146 . No peculiarities occur in these authors. We find the normal meanings “ face “, “ front “, and “ person “..

2 - Christology and Trinitarian Teaching . The word “ prosopon” becomes a crucial one in debates about the person of Christ and the Trinity. The legal sense is not yet important in the early stages, and the term receives its content from the discussions. The fathers realize that the term is an inadequate one, so that what it is meant to express must fix its meaning.

For example, in the early church it was used to signify the face, i.e., the person's; face or his presence through his work, character and condition. Tertullian and other Western church writers used it to describe “ individuality “. He described Christ as the “ Visible” face (Personal) of the Invisible Father/148.

When Sabillius used the term “ prosopon” in the sense of a mask, and the three prosopa are three forms and nothing more, the fathers of the Church replaced it by “ hypostaseis “149,

3 - Ousia

Early Alexandrian theologians made a clear distinction between “ousia” and “hypostasis “. The first term signifies what is common, “being” or a dynamic reality, while the other signifies what is particular. It was an Alexandrian formula [= one ousia, three hypostases/150], which the Cappadocian Fathers 161 clarified as the Church Trinitarian and Christological formula.

It is noteworthy that Pope Alexander of Alexandria used the term “three hypostases” five times in his defence against the Arians; while his successor Pope Athanasius avoided this expression for a while, for the West - especially Rome /151 - used “hypostasis in the sense of” ousia “. The Arians used this concept to confirm that the Son, as a hypostasis, has his own ousia and is not one with the Father in “ousia “153. In 362 A.D., St. Athanasius clarified the term hypostasis and its distinction from the “ousia” “, and that our belief in three hypostases does not mean “ three ousias”. Anyhow, it was always the way of Athanasius to concentrate on points of substantial importance and to avoid terminological side-issues 154

4 - Hypostasis : “ “

The term “hypostasis “ is derived from two words “hypo” means “under” and “stasis “ means “statis” means “a standing”. Thus the literal meaning of this term is “ a standing under “, or that which stands or is set, under a foundation.

It is used in the Holy Scriptures in the following two meanings 155:

a - Assurance : or confidence. The quality of confidence which leads one to stand under, endure or undertake anything (2 Cor. 9:4; 11:7; Heb. 3:14).

b - Substance : **Twice** in Hebrew it signifies “substance”: 1 3 11 1 In Heb. 1:3 of Christ as “the very image of God'substance”, here the word has the meaning of the real nature of that to which reference is made in contrast to the outward manifestation. It speaks of the Divine essence of God existing and expressed in the revelation of His Son, “Transcendent reality” is perhaps closest to what is meant.

As we have seen, the Church Fathers preferred to use the term “three hypostaseis “ instead of “prosopons”, for Sabillius used the last term in the sense of mere masks or forms not more.

The hypostasis may be simple or composite, as in the case of man. He is one hypostasis but “composite “, for he consists of body and soul

Prof. Meyendorff states: [the term “hypostasis “ especially in Alexaandria and Antioch, and in spite of the very precise use the great Cappadocians had made it in applying it to the Trinitarian mystery, appeared as a synonym of nature (physis)/156]. St Cyril

used the term “ physis “ as a synonym for “hypostasis “, as he says :[We affirm that the Word the Nature that gives life to all, Who is His only Son, was begotten indescribably from the ousia of the Father/157].

Even Leo of Rome in his “ Tome “, although he speaks of Jesus Christ as “one prosopon”, he speaks of His two natures as if they were two prosopons or two hypostases; so that the modern critics see that Christ, according to the Tome of Leo and the Chalcedonian definition of faith, is no longer one but “ divided against himself”/158.

FOR THE UNITY OF THE ORTHODOX CHURCH

It is clear that the two families of the Orthodox Church are not only extremely close to each other but they also agree on the following points:

1 - We all condemn and anathematize Nestorianism, Apollinarianism and Eutychianism.

2 - The unity of the Godhead and manhood of Christ had been realized from the moment of His conception, without separation or division and also without confusion or changing.

3 - The manhood of Christ was real, perfect and had a dynamic presence.

4 - Jesus Christ is one Person (Prosopon) and one hypostasis in real oneness and not mere conjunction of natures; He is the Incarnate Logos of God.

5 - We all accept the “ communicato idiomatum”, i.e. the communication of idioms, attributing all the deeds and words of Christ to the one hypostasis, the Incarnate Son of God.

Finally, concerning the “Physis” of Christ, the non-Chalcedonians are not monophysites, for they believe in one nature “ of two “. “ one united nature”, a “ composite nature” or “ one incarnate nature,” and not a “single nature”.

- 66- *Ibid* 138.
67- V.C. Samuel p 190, no 9.
68- *Ibid* 231.
69- *Ibid* p 229-230.
70- Sellers, p 132.
71- Ep. 125 to Rusticus.
72- Rowan Greer: *Theodore of Mopsuestia*, 1961, p 41.
73- Hom. 32:6 PG 34:737 B.
74- Hom. *quod Deus et auctor malarum* 6 PG 31:344B
75- In Rom. PG 74:789 AB.
76- Sellers, p132f.
77- *Ibid* 158 f.
78- *Ibid*13378
79- Theodoret : Ep 83 to Dioscorus of Alexandria.
80- Cross : *Dict. of the Christian Church*, p 1363-4.
81- *Christ in the Eastern Christian Thought*, p 6.
82- *Ign. ad Rom* 6:3.
83 -Hom 45:28 PG 36:661 C.
84- Hom 45:19, 22, 28. PG 36:649 C, 653 a, 661 d.
85- *Christ in the Eastern ...*, p 51-2.
86- *Christology according to the non-Chalcedonian Churches*, 1986. p 13-15.
87- *Ad Theoph. (Alex.) adv. Apollinarius*. PG 45:1278 A.
88- *Nulla deterior [Loofs]: Nestoriana; Die Frag. des Nest., Halle 1905*, p 249.
89- *Capitala (Chapters); Loofs* p 218-9.
90- *Sermons on Theotokos 1; Loofs* p 259 (*Pelikan*, p 252).
91- *Frag.* 256; *Loofs* 331.
92- *A Dict. of Christian Theology*, SCM 1976, p II.
93- *The Westminster Dict. of Christian Theology*, 1983, p 28.
94- Sellers, p 171. 95 - *Ibid* 176.
96- Meyendorff : *Christ in the Eastern ...*, p 18.
97- *Theod. Fr. ed. Swete* 2, p 325; *See Hom. Cat* 8:9; *studi e testi* 145, 199.
98- *Theod. Hom. Cat.* 5:6.
99 - J. Pelikan, p 246.
100-In Ep. ad Colos. 1:13, ed. Swete i, p 260
101- *Christ in ...*, p 5.
102 -Sellers, p
162-4.
103- *Ibid* 164.
104.-R.A.Greer, ch. 1,2.
105 *Ibid*, p 17, 19.
106. Sellers, p 164.
107 - Greer, p 25, 38.
108 Sellers, p 182.
109- *The Early Christian Doctrines*, 1978, p 334.
110- G.O.T.R., vol 10, 2, p 32.
111-*Christ in the Eastern Thought*,p13
112- *Ibid*, p 20;
Methodios Fouyas, Archbishop of Theateira and Great Britan : Theological and Historical Studies, vol8, Athens 1985,p 12,13
113- *Our Book: The Coptic Orthodox Church as a church of Erudition & Theology*, 1986, p 117f.
114- *Samuel* p 171 f.
115- H.R. Mackintosh and J.M. Creed –*The Person of Christ*, p 214, 294, 296
116- Sellers, p 253.
117 – *Tome of Leo* 3.
118- *Chr. un.; Source Christ. t.* 97. p 472
119- *Tome* 4.
120 -*Tome* 4
121- *Christ in the Eastern thought.* p 13.
122. -Kelly, p 338.
123- *Loofs* p 171, 176, 196, 224, 281 (*Tixeront : History of Dogma*, vol 3, p 23)
124 *Heracl.*, 194.
125 - *Samuel*, p 172-3.
126- Ep. 124:2 to the monks of Palestine; Ep88:1 to Paschasinus (24 June 451)
127- *Christ in ...*, p 6
128 - Sellers, p 212 f.
129 –*Christ in ...*, p 15, 16.
130-Severus: *Philalethes; Samuel*,p198,199
131 -*Contra Gramm.* 1,179, 199.
132 –Sellers,p217

- 133 - *Ibid*
 134 - *Ibid* 217
 135 - *Sellers* p 240
 136 - *Retutation of the Synod of Chalcedon and the Tome of Leo, (ed Nan, p 2211 f)*
 137 *Against Nest. 12, ed Budge xlii.* 138 - *Christ in the Eastern Thought, p 24.*
 139- *Sellers, p 269. 140 - Prax 9:2.*
 141-*Apology 21:11*
 142- *Aloys Grillmene: Christ io the Christian tradition, p 215.*
 143- *Quasten Patrology, vol 3, p 229.*
 144- *Bromiley (Kittel Theological Diet ...) p 950-2.*
 145 - *Ibid.*
 146 - *Ibid, 952.*
 147- *Ibid, 952.*
 148 - *Aloys Grillmerie, p 125.*
 149- *Basil : Ep 210; Greg. Naz. Oratione39:11.*
 150 *Origen : In Ioan 2:1(1, 75; c. Celsus 8:12, Athanas. contra Apoll. 2:13; De incarn. etc. Arians 10; Devirginitate 1; Dionysus Alex. (quoted hy Basil : De Spittit. Sanc. 72).*
 151- *St. Basil : Ep. 213, 38:3.*
 152 -[*Dionysius of Rome (ap. Ath. decret. 26) refers to those who divided the monarchy into three powers and “ separate hypostaseis “and three godheads, dividing the holy mond into three hypostaseis alien from one another and altogether disjuncts] G.L. Prestige God in Patristic Thought. S.P.C.K. 1975. p 184*
 153- *G L. Prestige God in Patristic Thought p 180.*
 154- *Ibid.*
 155-*See vine, p 87,227, 860, 1111: Bromiley (Kitell p 1239*
 156*Meyendorff : Christ in the Eastern -.., p 8.*
 157- *Ep. to the Princess (Samuel, p 221).*
 158 - *H.R. Mackintosh : The Person of Jesus Christ, p 214.294, 296*

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**Meeting of the Joint Sub-Committee of
Joint-Commission of the Theological Dialogue between
the Orthodox Church and the Oriental Orthodox non-
Chalcedonian
Churches (Corinth, 23rd to 26th September 1987)**

We, a group of theologians forming and representing the joint Sub-Committee of the Joint-Commission of the theological Dialogue between the **Orthodox Church** and the **Oriental Orthodox non-Chalcedonian Churches**, met at Corinth, in Greece, from 23rd to 26th September 1987 in order to discuss problems of terminology as decided by the first Plenary Session (Chambesy, 10-15 December 1985).

Although not all official members of the Joint Sub-Committee were able to participate in this meeting for different reasons, the group however could accomplish its mandate in preparing a common text for the future work.

We discussed the main problems of Christological terminology and were convinced that though some terms are used in different nuances or senses both sides express the same Orthodox Theology. We focused our dialogue on the terms:

Physis, ousia, hypostasis, prosopon, and attested that they have not been used with conformity in different traditions and by different theologians of the same tradition. Following St. Cyril who in his key-phrase sometimes used “mia physis (tou Theou Logou sesarkomeni”) and sometimes “mia hypostasis”, the non-Chalcedonians pay special attention to the formule “mia physis”, and at the same time they confess the “mia hypostasis” of Jesus Christ, whereas the Chalcedonians stress specially the term “hypostasis” to express the unity of both the divine and human natures in Christ. Yet we all confirmed our agreement that the unique and wonderful union of the two natures of Christ is a **hypostatic**, natural and real unity.

We affirmed that the term “**Theotokos**” used for the Virgin Mary, is a basic element of faith in our common tradition. In this connection and for the solution of the terminological problems of Christology, the confession of St. Cyril of Alexandria, our common Father could be helpful:

“Almost the whole our struggle is concentrated in order to assure that Holy Virgin is “**Theotokos**”, (Fp. 39, PG 77, 177).

“Therefore it is sufficient for the confession of our true and

irreproachable faith to say and to confess that the Holy Virgin is “**Theotokos**”.. (Hom. 15, PG 77, 1093)

We were convinced therefore, in confessing Jesus Christ the only-begotten Son of God the Father, truly born through the Holy and Virgin Mary, our Churches have avoided and rejected the heretical teachings of both Nestorius and Eutyches. Both lines of terminological development produced the same true faith through different terms, because both condemned Nestorianism and Eutychianism. The common denominator of these two interpretations was the common doctrine of the two real births of the Logos. The Logos, the Only-begotten of the Father before the ages, became man through his second birth in time from the Virgin Mary. Both interpretations accepted the two real births of the Logos, whereas Nestorianism denied his second birth - “for that which is born of flesh is flesh”. Every theologian who accepted the two real births of the Logos, was to be considered orthodox, regardless of every terminological differentiation.

We concluded our discussions expressing our faith that the hypostatic union of the two natures of Christ was necessary for the salvation of man kind. Only the Incarnate Logos, as perfect God and at the same time perfect man, could redeem men and peoples from sin and condemnation.

The four attributes of the wonderful union of the natures belong also to the common tradition of the Chalcedonian and non-Chalcedonian Christology, since both sides speak of it as “without confusion, without change, without division, without separation”. Both affirm the dynamic permanence of the Godhead and the Manhood with all their natural properties and faculties, in the one Christ. Those who speak in terms of “two”, don't thereby divide or separate. Those who speak in terms of “one”, don't thereby commingle or confuse. The “without division, without separation” of those who say “two”. and the “without change, without confusion” of those who say “one”, need to be specially underlined, in order that we may understand and accept each other.

Heart-felt thanks were expressed to His Eminence Panteleimon, Metropolitan of Corinth and President of the Commission of Interorthodox Relations, for his friendly and generous hospitality as well as for the services and facilities offered for our meeting here in Corinth

We hope that the faithful of our Churches will pray with us for the continuation and success of our dialogue.

+Elias+Bishoy

Metropolitan of Beirut Bishop of Damietta

+Chrysostomos +Dr Mesrob K Krikorian

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