

SYRIAC DIALOGUE

THIRD NON-OFFICIAL CONSULTATION ON DIALOGUE WITHIN THE SYRIAC TRADITION

**Edited on behalf
of the Foundation
PRO ORIENTE by
Alfred Stirnemann/Gerhard Wilflinger**

Vienna 1998

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PRO ORIENTE Publications in English

The Oriental Orthodox - Roman Catholic Ecumenical Dialogue

* First Ecumenical Consultation between Theologians of the Oriental Orthodox Churches and the Roman Catholic Church, Papers and Minutes. Supplementary Issue Number 1 of the Periodical "Wort und Wahrheit" (Verlag Herder, Vienna 1972) 190 p.

* Second Ecumenical Consultation between Theologians of the Oriental Orthodox Churches and the Roman Catholic Church, Papers and Minutes. Supplementary Issue Number 2 of the Periodical "Wort und Wahrheit" (Verlag Herder, Vienna 1974) 208 p.

* Third Ecumenical Consultation between Theologians of the Oriental Orthodox Churches and the Roman Catholic Church, Papers and Minutes. Supplementary Issue Number 3 of the Periodical "Wort und Wahrheit" (Verlag Herder, Vienna 1976) 240 p.

* Fourth Ecumenical Consultation between Theologians of the Oriental Orthodox Churches and the Roman Catholic Church, Papers and Minutes. Supplementary Issue Number 4 of the Periodical "Wort und Wahrheit" (Verlag Herder, Vienna 1978) 256 p.

* Fifth Ecumenical Consultation between Theologians of the Oriental Orthodox Churches and the Roman Catholic Church, Papers and Minutes. Supplementary Issue Number 5 of the Periodical "Wort und Wahrheit" (Verlag Herder, Vienna 1989) 208 p.

* Selection of the Papers and Minutes of the Four Vienna Consultations between Theologians of the Oriental Orthodox Churches and the Roman Catholic Church. Edited by Ökumenische Stiftung PRO ORIENTE in Vienna (1988) 286 p.

* Five Vienna Consultations between Theologians of the Oriental Orthodox Churches and the Roman Catholic Church 1971 - 1988. Selected Papers in One Volume. Published and edited by the Ecumenical Foundation PRO ORIENTE - Vienna (1993) 370 p.

The PRO ORIENTE Dialogue within the Churches of Syriac Tradition

* Syriac Dialogue No 1, First Non-Official Consultation on Dialogue within the Syriac Tradition, PRO ORIENTE, Vienna 1994, 240 p. Available in English, French and Arabic.

* Syriac Dialogue No 2, Second Non-Official Consultation on Dialogue within the Syriac Tradition, PRO ORIENTE, Vienna 1996, 228 p. Available in English and French, planned in Arabic.

* Syriac Dialogue No 3, Third Non-Official Consultation on Dialogue within the Syriac Tradition, PRO ORIENTE, Vienna 1998, 164p. Available in English and French, planned in Arabic.

The Oriental Orthodox - Roman Catholic Ecumenical Dialogue

PRO ORIENTE Booklet Series

* Booklet Number 1, Communiqués and Joint Documents; PRO ORIENTE, Vienna 1990, 136 p. Available in English, German, Arabic and Malayalam, planned in Armenian and Amharic.

* Booklet Number 2, Summaries of the Papers; PRO ORIENTE, Vienna 1991, 74 p. Available in English, German and Arabic; planned in other languages.

* Booklet Number 3, Middle East Regional Symposium, Deir Amba Bishoy, October 1991; PRO ORIENTE, Vienna 1993, 168 p. Available in English, planned in other languages.

* Booklet Number 4, On Primacy, First Study Seminar, June 1991; PRO ORIENTE, Vienna 1993, 92 p. Available in English.

* Booklet Number 5, On Councils and Conciliarity, Second Study Seminar, June 1992; PRO ORIENTE, Vienna 1993. Available in English.

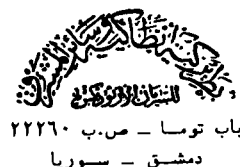
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Booklet Number 7, On Ecclesiology, Third Study Seminar, July 1994; PRO ORIENTE, Vienna 1995. Available in English.

* Booklet Number 8, Lebanon Regional Symposium, Kaslik, September 1994, PRO ORIENTE, Vienna 1998. Planned in the above mentioned languages.

* Booklet Number 9, On Authority and Jurisdiction, Fourth Study Seminar, July 1996; PRO ORIENTE, Vienna 1998. Planned in the above mentioned languages.

* Booklet Number 10, Regional Symposium Kröffelbach, Germany, August 1997, PRO ORIENTE, Vienna 1998. Planned in the above mentioned languages.



PREAMBLE

Ecumenism today plays a great role in the life of our Churches and it is one of the essential elements to fulfill the will of our Lord: St. John 17:21. Towards this goal, several international, regional and local meetings were held and ecumenical activities continued. In these forums, our Syrian Orthodox Church of Antioch has proposed on various occasions that the Syrian Churches- Orthodox and Catholics- also should come forward and through dialogues, explore the possibility to work together at least for the renaissance of their common Syriac heritage.

PRO ORIENTE has taken up the challenge to bring these Syrian Churches together in order to go back to the grass roots of the differences created through the ages among these Churches of the same family and to solve it by way of creative dialogues and consultations. We deeply appreciate the commendable efforts of the PRO ORIENTE, which we hope will reconcile these Churches in this era of Ecumenism. It is indeed happy to note that the booklet No.3 is in connection with the consultations among the Churches which follow the Syriac tradition.

My relationship with PRO ORIENTE started when I was the Metropolitan of Baghdad. Subsequently, I had the honor to represent my Church in the consultations between the Roman Catholic Church and the Oriental Orthodox Churches. The outcome of those consultations was fruitful and prolific. Later on, the PRO ORIENTE honored me as its PROTECTOR. Now, our brother in Christ His Grace Mor Gregorios Yohanna Ibrahim, Metropolitan of Aleppo is our representative at the PRO ORIENTE and he is actively participating in all the consultations and dialogues on behalf of our Church.

We pray that God the Almighty may bestow His blessings up on the works of the PRO ORIENTE to bring down the walls of differences among the Christian Churches and unite them as one in Christ.

With Apostolic Blessings and Best wishes.



Ignatius Zakka I Iwas
Patriarch of Antioch and All the East
Supreme head of the Universal Syrian
Orthodox Church

FOREWORD BY THE EDITORS

Hereby we present the lectures and discussions of our third Dialogue within the Syriac Tradition. This meeting was concerned with three subjects: The person and teaching of Theodore of Mopsuestia and the Three Chapters Controversy, the person and teachings of Nestorius of Constantinople and his condemnation by the Council of Ephesus and the problem of Anathemata and their lifting. Each subject was treated by a lecturer of the three religious families which were represented, the Assyrians, the Syrian Orthodox and the Catholics.

H.H. Mar Denkhā IV and H.E. Archbishop Francis E. George of Chicago OMI (now Cardinal) have personally taken part, inaugurated the meeting and assisted at its final ceremonies.

From July 6th to 10th 1997 fifty-two theologians and experts took part in the consultation held at the site of the Seminary of the Archdiocese of Chicago at the University of St. Mary of the Lake, Mundelein, Illinois. Its importance was underlined by the presence of delegations from both Assyrian patriarchates, of the Chaldean Church, of the Catholic Malabar Church of India, of the Syrian Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch and of the Autocephalous Syrian Malankara Church of India, as well as from the Syrian Catholic Patriarchate, the Maronite Patriarchate and of the Malankara Catholic Church of India. Moreover we had observers from the Pontifical Council for promoting Christian Unity, Rome, the Coptic Orthodox Patriarchate of Alexandria, the Mar Thoma Church of India and the Archdiocese of Chicago.

The decisions on program, the subjects chosen, the lecturers and the participants were the fruit of the work of the PRO ORIENTE Syriac Commission, founded at Kaslik, Lebanon 1994 and which held its seventh working session the days before and after the Chicago Consultation. We are indebted to the three chairpersons Mar Gregorius of Aleppo from the Syrian Orthodox Patriarchate, the patriarchal vicar of the Maronite Patriarchate, Bishop Boulos Matar, now Archbishop of Beyrouth, and Mar Bawai Soro, Secretary General of the CIRED from the Church of the East for their efficient work.

The results have found expression in two unanimously carried resolutions of the United Consultation: its Joint Communiqué and an Appeal for the Common Date of Easter.

The atmosphere of this meeting was in the tradition of the two previous consultations held in Vienna 1994 and 1996 characterized by cordiality, trust and confidence, which also allowed to touch controversial issues such as Nestorius and the Three Chapters' Controversy. The results have shown, that this initiative of PRO ORIENTE in order to organize an intense study meeting and dialogue process has proved useful as it was able to give a profound analysis of the unity and the diversity within the Syriac tradition. We are grateful to Dr. Theresia Hainthaler for having made a study on the scholarly achievement of this Chicago meeting describing the discussions and its results.

Our gratitude goes to Prof. Sebastian Brook from Oxford University for having made a concise description of the main lines of the Second Syriac Consultation as he had done in the previous minutes for the First Syriac Consultation. Some texts have been added, because of their interest for the ongoing Syriac Dialogue, such as the 75th Ecume-

nical Symposium of PRO ORIENTE, giving a description of the development of this Dialogue by Fr. Frans Bouwen PB from Jerusalem. Moreover we added the text of the Joint Synodal Decree of the Assyrian and the Chaldean Churches signed by Mar Denkha IV and Mar Raphael I. and their synods, and the document of the National Conference of Bishops of the USA on guidelines for the reception of communion.

May we express our thanks to the lecturers and the participants of the conference, its minutes' secretaries Fr. Gerhard Habison and Fr. John Meno, to Secretary General Franz Gschwandtner and the staff of PRO ORIENTE; to the Archdiocese of Chicago and its Archbishop, his clergy and staff for their hospitality, and last but not least to the heads of Churches, especially to H.H. Mar Denkha IV. and H.H. Mar Addai II. and particularly to the Protector of PRO ORIENTE H.H. Mar Zakka I, Iwas, Syrian Orthodox Patriarch of Antioch for conveying us a preamble to this publication.

Theresia Hainthaler

SCHOLARLY ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE THIRD SYRIAC CONSULTATION (A PLEA FOR THE LIFTING OF ANATHEMATATA)

One of the most burdensome hindrances for full ecclesial communion is the existence of anathemas against persons held in high esteem by the other church, or anathemas against doctrines which are imputed to the partner in the dialogue. In the Syriac Dialogue with the Assyrian Church of the East there are two doctors of the early church who were condemned by ecumenical councils: Theodore of Mopsuestia and Nestorius of Constantinople, the latter condemned in Ephesus (431) and the former in Constantinople II (553). But also in liturgical texts or in the books of church history the churches involved in the Syriac Dialogue often have offensive formulations regarding saints of the other church. Some examples were given during the consultation. How can such hindrances for the ecumenical dialogue be eliminated? Is it possible at all?

As already established by a former ecumenical consultation (between Eastern Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox) of Addis Ababa 1971,¹ in order to lift anathemas it is necessary to look into the history and to study the persons and their respective teachings.² Did they really teach what they were accused of? What was their intention?

Therefore the first two days were devoted to Theodore and Nestorius. What was their real teaching, what were the circumstances of their condemnation?

Research, especially in this century and indeed in the last decades, has made clear that the concept of the two ages of Theodore, one before Christ, one after him, is essentially christocentric and the result of an intensive study of the Bible (Antiochene exegesis). Theodore presents a dynamic authentic Christian doctrine. His christology got its special characteristics from his struggle against Arianism and Apollinarism and his struggle for Nicea. His thinking is shaped in terms of duality - because of his essential soteriological perspective and the emphasis on the new age in Christ - but there is no dualism. He is a representative of the christology before Ephesus. He was held in high esteem during his life-time and died in peace with the church in 428. Therefore, it seems to be misleading and even not fair to judge him according to the theological terminology and thought of the sixth century.

An analysis of the sources available today, regarding the works of Theodore and the acts of the council, reveals the non-theological factors of his condemnation in Constantinople II. For the Western church Theodore became suspect because of his acquaintance with persons accused of Pelagianism. But in the meantime, more of his catechetical work has been discovered and the reputation of Theodore in the Catholic Church has grown (citations from his works can be found also in texts of Vatican II).

On the part of the Assyrian Church, it was expressed that the Assyrians would feel free to lift anathemas against such persons who are against Theodore.

¹ *Geek Orthodox Theological Review* 16 (1971) 210-259

² *Ibid.*, p.212, no. 7: "The lifting of anathemas should be prepared for by careful study of the teaching of these men, the accusations leveled against them, the circumstances under which they were anathematized, and the true intention of their teaching. Such study should be sympathetic and motivated by the desire to understand and therefore to overlook minor errors."

While Theodore is the interpreter par excellence for the Church of the East because of his exegesis - indeed, he is one of the most prolific writers of the early church - the like cannot be said of Nestorius. It is true, the christology of the Church of the East is clearly diphysite, but the christology of the Western Church too is a diphysite one. The epithet "nestorian", given to the Church of the East, often is understood as referring to the heresy of two persons which in reality was not advocated by Nestorius. In the violent controversies of the fifth and sixth centuries, the invective "nestorian" was soon given by the anti-Chalcedonians to all diphysites. In return, the chalcedonians called their opponents at the end of the sixth century "monophysites", with the Eutychian heresy in mind. Today, both terms are unmistakably rejected by the respective churches, especially in the sense of indicating to the respective heresies.

Nestorius, of Greek culture not Syriac, never a hierarch of the Persian Church, much less its founder, was condemned in Ephesus by the Synod under the presidency of Cyril of Alexandria, his accuser. In recent years, some studies have been completed on the circumstances at the council, showing the problems of the procedure in the synod. Important discoveries of his works during the present century have made it possible to evaluate his theology better, though our knowledge still remains fragmentary. According to scholarly opinion, he did not hold the heresy of which he was accused. On the other hand, it has to be underlined, that the doctrine of two persons is and remains a heresy condemned by all churches.

Doubtless, a fresh look on Theodore and Nestorius is not only a desideratum applying to the anti-Chalcedonian churches, but also one affecting the presentation of this issue in the handbooks of the churches in the West. Naturally, it takes some time for the reception of the results of scholarly work.

The third theme concerned the lifting of anathemas. What was the meaning of anathema in Holy Scripture? When one looks at the testimonies of the OT and the NT it turns out, that originally anathema meant to surrender a person in question to the wrath of God. Only later, did the term also obtain the meaning of exclusion from the community.

At Nicea, the first ecumenical council (325), accepted by all churches of the Syriac dialogue, the word anathema was used to condemn a heresy. As a result all the churches, the Syrian Orthodox, the Assyrians, the Catholics, use this term in their canonical records.

If persons are anathematized then the intention is to lead to conversion (medicinal aspect). The question could arise and this question was raised in the sixth century regarding Theodore - why condemn a dead person? In this case the aim is more to condemn the teaching ascribed to such a person. The following questions have to be raised: What was his teaching in reality at that time? What is the position of the partner in the dialogue today? The methodology of dealing with the lifting of anathemas was studied in depth in the Roman Catholic - Protestant dialogue.

At the end of the Third Consultation a very clear vote from all participants was expressed that anathemas should be lifted. This was declared a priority. But what about the concrete procedure of lifting anathemas?

Already in ecumenical dialogues in former times it was expressed that there are different ways: It is possible gradually to drop anathemas in a quiet way or to do this in a

formal declaration or ceremony.³ An example for the latter would be the lifting of the ban of 1054: both partners declared at the same time (in Rome and Istanbul) the removal of the anathema from the memory and the midst of the church.

Other points would be the revision of liturgical books and re-writing the books of church history. But these should go hand in hand with a process of educating the faithful. For all involved it is a process of learning and understanding the doctrine of the partner in the dialogue and of overcoming the prejudices. More sensibility for the brothers and sisters of the other churches is required.

The special significance of such a consultation can be seen in the possibility of making known and of discussing the results of scholarly work in an ecumenical setting with representatives of the respective churches. These churches can bring in their own views. As a whole such an encounter is enriching for the church authorities as well as for the scholars present.

Most remarkable was the openness for one another and the real desire to remove the burdens of history. The Assyrian Church impressed with their generous advance concession: Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV said in the opening session that the Holy Synod had decided to remove the condemnations against such figures as Cyril of Alexandria or Severus of Antioch from their liturgical books. Further he announced that only some weeks later he and the Chaldean Patriarch would sign a bilateral program for promoting the full ecclesial union of the two churches.

Of course, this big step would not have been possible without the Christological Declaration of November 11th, 1994 between Pope John Paul II and Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV. This declaration is the theological basis for the whole co-operation, as is explicitly expressed in the "Joint Synodal Decree for Promoting Unity" of August 15th, 1997.

During the days of the consultation, Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV could announce yet a further step, this time with the Syrian Orthodox Church: the two patriarchs decided to start an official dialogue between their churches.

It was a special privilege for this consultation, to take place for the first time in the USA and in a region where there are parishes of the respective churches. Therefore it was possible for the participants to meet parishes of the churches involved in the Syriac Dialogue. These encouraging events also were a contribution to the better understanding of each other. It is very important that the results of ecumenical efforts and research are made known to the faithful of each church.

Without doubt this Third Consultation of the Syriac Dialogue, which dealt with these fundamental questions and thereby followed the recommendations of the Second Consultation (February 1996), was an encouraging ecumenical experience for the participants. May the experience of openness for one another lead the churches involved in this dialogue to take further concrete steps.

³ Ibid., p.211

PROGRAMME

Saturday, 5th July 1997: Arrival of the participants of the Syriac Commission

Sunday, 6th July 1997: Liturgies in different parishes

Monday, 7th July 1997:

- 9.00 First Working session of the Seventh Syriac Commission
- 15.00 Syriac Consultation meeting between the local Churches and PRO ORIENTE
- 17.15 Presentation of the work of PRO ORIENTE

Tuesday, 8th July 1997: Third Syriac Consultation

- 9.00 Opening Ceremony: chaired by the president of PRO ORIENTE Alfred Stirnemann
Address by president Alfred Stirnemann
Address by Catholicos-Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV
Address by Archbishop Francis E. George
- 10.30 Papers and discussions: chaired by Archbishop Mar Gregorios of Aleppo Mar Bawai Soro / Adelbert Davids.
The person and teaching of Theodore of Mopsuestia and the relationship between him, his teaching and the Church of the East with a special reference to the Three Chapters Controversy
- 12.30 Lunch
- 15.30 Discussion of the papers of the morning chaired by Metropolitan Mar Aprem
- 19.30 Dinner at the invitation of the Church of the East

Wednesday, 9th July 1997:

- 9.00 Papers and Discussions: chaired by Mar Joseph Powathil of Changanachery Mar Gregorios / Mar Bawai Soro / Elie Khalifé.
The person and teaching of Nestorius of Constantinople with a special reference to his condemnation at the Council of Ephesus
- 12.30 Lunch
- 15.30 Discussion: chaired by Father Frans Bouwen
- 18.00 Vespers and Dinner at the invitation of the Syrian Orthodox Church

Thursday, 10th July 1997:

- 9.00 Papers and Discussions: chaired by Mar Bawai Soro Mar Cyril Aphrem Karim / Corbishop Michael Birnie / Theresia Hainthaler.
Studies on anathemata and their lifting in relationship to the question of ecclesial communion and heresy
- 12.30 Lunch
- 15.30 Discussion: chaired by Archbishop Boulos Matar
- 18.00 Vespers and Dinner at the invitation of the Chaldean Church

Friday 11th July 1997:

- 9.00 First Draft of the Joint Communiqué
- 11.00 Discussion: chaired by president Alfred Stirnemann
- 12.30 Lunch
- 15.30 Second Reading of the Joint Communiqué
- 18.00 Ecumenical vespers at the Maronite Church, followed by a formal Dinner

Saturday, 12th July 1997: Second working session of the Seventh Syriac Commission

Sunday, 13th July 1997: Ecumenical liturgy

Monday, 14th July 1997: Day of Departure

PARTICIPANTS

Assyrian

1. Assyrian New Calendarian

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Syrian Orthodox

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Catholic

7. Syrian Catholic

Mgr. **Jules Mikhael Al-Jamil**, Beirut/ LEBANON
Mar **Ephrem** Joseph Yonane, New York, USA
Rev. Fr. Thomas **Azizo**, Michigan

8. Maronite

Mons. **Boulos Youssef Matar**, Bkerké/LIBAN
Rev. Fr. **Elie Khalifé Hashem**, Kaslik, Liban
Fr. Seely **Bejjani** Rect. of the Maronite Seminary of Washington
Bishop Joseph **Khoury**, Maronite Bishop of Canada

9. Malankara Catholic

Prof. Dr. **Geevarghese Chediath**, Trivandrum/INDIA
Rev. Fr. Gregory **Naduviledam**, Kerala /India
Rev. George **Madathiparampil**, Miami/Florida

10. PRO ORIENTE

President **Alfred Stirnemann**, Vienna, AUSTRIA
Fr. **Frans Bouwen**, Jerusalem
Prof. DDr. **Peter Hofrichter**, Salzburg/AUSTRIA

Others

11. Experts

Prof. *Adalbert Davids*, Netherland
Dr. *Theresia Hainthaler*, Germany
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Rev. *Dr. Dragas*
Prof. Joseph P. *Amar*, University of Notre Dame, India

12. Observers

Rev. Thomas *Baima* (ecumenical office of the Archdiocese of Chicago)
Sr. Joan *Mc Guire* (Archdiocese of Chicago)
The Rev. Leo D. *Lefebure* (Univ. of St. Mary of the Lake)
Rev. Lawrence *Hennessey* (Univ. of St. Mary of the Lake)
Rev. John *Mc. Donnell* (Univ. of St. Mary of the Lake)
Sister Sera *Butler* (Univ. St. Mary of the Lake)
Brother David *Corroll*, Catholic Near East Welfare Ass., New York
Amba *Bishoy*, Coptic Orthodox Metropolitan of Damiette and Kafr el-Scheich
Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity: Father *Ronald Roberson*
Joseph Mar *Irenaeus*, Trivandrum, Kerala (Mar Thoma Church)

13. Students/Seminarists

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Fr. Afrem *Athanil* Assyrian
Diacon David *Ronal* Assyrian

14. Secretary of the minutes

Gerhard *Habison*
Rev. Fr. John Peter *Meno*, Teaneck, New Jersey

15. Secretaries of PRO ORIENTE

Mag. Ingrid Fleischhacker
Dr. Hannelore Tambornino





Inauguration of the Consultation. - From left: Mar Bawai Soro, Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV, Alfred Stinemann, Archbishop George of Chicago, Mar Gregorios of Aleppo



Archbishop George of Chicago addressing the guests at dinner



Archbishop Mar Boulos Matar of Beyrouth addressing the guests at dinner



The inaugural session with H.H. Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV and Metropolitan Amba Bishoy

◀ Participants of the 3rd Consultation in the church of the University of St. Mary of the Lake, Mundelein, Illinois.



Prayer at the dinner hosted by the Syrian Orthodox Community



Participants at an ceremonial dinner hosted by the Maronite Church

ADDRESS

Your Holiness,
Your Excellency, Archbishop of Chicago,
Your Graces and Reverend Fathers,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

we are today celebrating the inauguration of the Third Consultation within the Churches of the Syriac tradition. We have three topics on our agenda. This is: the personality and theology of Theodorus of Mopsuestia, the personality and theology of Nestorius, and the anathema-problem of ecclesial communion and heresy. We have three speakers for each of the topics, one from the pre-Ephesinian side, one from the non-Chalcedonian Orthodoxy and one from the Catholic side. This meeting is an un-official one as the two previous were and we have found out that this is a technique in ecumenism which gives very good fruits. We have more freedom, we have less problems with official recognition of delegations and other things like this. The Church authorities under whose guidance we perform these non-official consultations have then all the possibilities of acquainting of that what was achieved and saying this was good and that was less good. And so we think that we can progress - as we progressed in our dialogue in five Vienna consultations with the non-Chalcedonian Christians - also here with the pre-Ephesinian Christians.

We had the first meeting in Vienna in 1994. The results reached, the minutes and the discussions have been published in English, French and Arabic. We had a second consultation - again in Vienna - in 1996, so far published in English and French. The first one dealt with the Christology and what was achieved in Christology so far and the history of the Church of the East. The second consultation had as contents the comments of the most important declaration between the Pope John Paul II and Mar Dinkha IV, the subject „Does Ephesus divide?“, „The Three Chapters Controversy“ and „East Syriac Liturgy“.

Now in our Third Consultation we have new subjects as above mentioned about Theodorus of Mopsuestia, Nestorius and the Anathema-problem. The idea, the contents, how it was done, who is to be invited, to what aim it should come is a result of collaboration of the Vienna based ecumenical foundation PRO ORIENTE, an institution of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Vienna, and the ten Churches of the Syriac tradition who are active in this dialogue. We have found a special name for this collaboration which is called the „Syriac Commission of PRO ORIENTE“, where most important bishops of these ten Churches are assembled and we regularly meet twice a year. Yesterday we had here in Mundelein the 7th meeting of our commission. It contains three chairmen. These are Mar Bawai Soro from the Assyrian Church, Bishop Boulos Matar from the Catholic Church and Mar Gregorius from the Syrian Orthodox Church. On behalf of PRO ORIENTE and its Syriac Commission I would like to welcome all of you and thank you for being here in such a large number and having already had the introduction yesterday into our work and into our intention. On behalf of the Archdiocese of Chicago Sr. Joan Mc Guire welcomed us and explained the work here and the same did Rev.

Andersen on behalf of the Illinois Bishops' Conference. He explained us the ecumenical situation in this state.

My first special greeting goes to H.H. Mar Dinkha IV, Catholicos and Patriarch of the Church of the East, who is among us and who is residing at Morton Grove near Chicago. We still remember how we came in contact with his church and his personality. The first contact was made at a special jubilee, the celebration of the thousand years of the Baptism of the Kievan Rus' in Moscow in 1988. Several years later, in February 1994, I had the privilege of coming with Archbishop Mar Gregorius of Aleppo to Teheran to the residence of His Holiness where we asked for the blessings of the project of organizing a special dialogue not only between the Catholic Church and the Assyrian Christians, but comprising also the Oriental Orthodox Churches of the Syriac tradition, the Churches of the Syriac diaspora and the Catholic Churches of the Syriac tradition. This has proved to be a very fruitful composition to have all these churches involved, because they all have certain common elements in history, theology, liturgy and the problems they are faced with today are partly the same.

We are thanking His Holiness for the motivating words and encouraging deeds. He has written the preface on the results of the first consultation. He has been encouraging us in every possible way and especially by signing the common declaration with the Roman Pontiff two years ago.

My thanks and gratitude go to the Archdiocese of Chicago. When we started to organize this meeting we were happy to find this place on the advice of our friends. Then Archbishop Bernardin of Chicago welcomed us and gave us his benediction. So we planned the Third Consultation in this country where almost half of the members of the Church of the East have found a new homeland. So we have to fulfil this mandate and came here to Mundelein. We would like to thank the late Archbishop Cardinal Bernardin for that. May I ask you to raise and stay in silence and prayer.

We were visiting the tomb of Cardinal Meyer in this garden. I hope we will also have the time to pray at the tomb of Cardinal Bernardin. It is now my privilege of thanking his successor Archbishop George who is new in this office and who has with pleasure and joy taken over the mandate of hosting us here and will speak to us and inaugurating this meeting today.

We feel a sense of gratitude for the administration and the staff of this house. May I convey to the Archbishop and all the members of the Archdiocese of Chicago the best wishes and benedictions of the chairman of the board of PRO ORIENTE, which is the actual Archbishop of Vienna, Christoph Schönborn who is a university colleague of Archbishop George. Archbishop Schönborn inaugurated in February 1996 the Second Syriac Consultation. He wishes all of you the best success and will pray to reach similar good results as on occasion of the first two meetings.

I have also to convey the best wishes of the Archbishop emeritus of Vienna, Hans Hermann Cardinal Groer, who inaugurated the first Syriac Consultation three years ago. Also the best wishes of his predecessor, Franciscus Cardinal König, who was the founder of PRO ORIENTE and is still helping us, taking part in congresses, making big trips and walkings, though he is 92 years old.

In 1964 Cardinal König has founded PRO ORIENTE as an idea how to respond from the side of a local church - the Church of Vienna - to the problems of the Second Vatican Council and to the intentions of Pope John XXIII. Since the foundation PRO

ORIENTE has grown, published many books, organized meetings and invited several Orthodox Patriarchs to Vienna. We are on the road of the future towards the unity of the Christians.

Let me greet all the speakers who have come here, all the participants of the ten Churches: from the East Syriac tradition the two Assyrian jurisdictions, the Malabar Church of India, the Mar Thoma Church and the Chaldean Catholic Church; from the West Syriac tradition the Church of the Patriarchate of Antioch, the Malankara Orthodox Church and the Malankara Catholic Church of India, the Maronite Church and the Syrian Catholic Church. A large number of experts from different backgrounds: Oriental Orthodox, Catholic, Anglican, Protestant etc. have come. We are happy that they will present their scholarly experiences in the coming discussions. They are important for these discussions, for the Church delegates could not prepare all the problems and subjects alone.

We have also a large number of observers: one from the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity in Rome, Father Ronald Roberson; Metropolitan Amba Bishoy from the Coptic Orthodox Church is not yet arrived, he will show us the special interest which has his Patriarch Pope Shenouda III in our work; from the Archdiocese Chicago the main ecumenists who want to know what is going on and how that could be implemented into their work. This meeting of almost 70 persons is one of the biggest congresses we organized so far. I wish that it brings good fruit in our general effort for the Christian unity.

May I now ask His Excellency, Archbishop George of Chicago, to speak to us.

ADDRESS

Your Excellency the Most Reverend Francis E. George, Archbishop of Chicago,
Your Excellencies and Graces, Alfred Stirnemann, President of PRO ORIENTE,
my brothers and sisters in Christ.

As the Catholicos-Patriarch of the Holy Apostolic Catholic Assyrian Church of the East, I, together with His Excellency Archbishop Francis E. George would like to warmly welcome all of you, ladies and gentlemen, as members of the PRO ORIENTE Foundation, as well as representatives from the various churches of the State of Illinois, particularly from the windy city of Chicago. The apostle St. Paul reminds us in Romans 12,4 that "... as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office, we, being many are one body in Christ.."

Therefore, I am hopeful today that though many of you here gathered are from diverse churches and nations, nevertheless, you will realize the bond that binds us all as many members in the one body of Christ. For all of us as members of the mystical body, which is the Church, are united to the one head who is Jesus Christ, our Lord, King and Savior. It is He who leads the path of all His true followers who are united inseparably to Him.

I believe that it is for this purpose that thirty years ago, the PRO ORIENTE Foundation took its first step in providing contact between us. Because we lost all form of communication, we were estranged from each other which ultimately proved to be the cause of the weakness of the Church of Christ, particularly in the Middle East.

Since the fifth century, division resulting in hatred and animosity took between the Churches in the East and West. Therefore, where there is hatred and anger peace and love are not to be found, according to the apostle St. James, „For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work, James 3,16.

We see that teachers and fathers of times past exhibited and expressed their anger and for the other in liturgical prayers and texts; they used words of anathemata though surely we believe that Our Lord Jesus Christ as the head of the Church will not be pleased with us if we curse and hate one another.

Therefore, We decreed along with the venerable prelates of our Holy Synod which took place in Chicago from 23 June to 2 July of this year, that every clause containing anathemata be removed from the Divine Office and other liturgical texts, for we were created to bless with our mouth and not to curse.

As the apostle Peter reminds us, „For so is the will of God, that with well doing you may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men ... honor all men, love the brotherhood ...," I Peter 2,15-17. I remember that when former President Reagan stood before the Berlin Wall which separated that nation into East and West, he put the proposition forward that if Mr. Gorbachov truly desires peace he should tear down the Wall; which he did after a short interval.

It is therefore time, Our brethren, that the walls which have separated us brothers and sisters come down that we may communicate one with the other and dialogue in pursuit of the greater advancement of peace and Christian charity between us as members of the one body.

As Our Lord Jesus says, „if you keep my commandments, you will endure in my love; this is my commandment that you love one another even as I have loved you. You are my friends if you keep all that I have commanded you.“ Jn 15,10

When His Holiness Pope John Paul II and I met at the Vatican in 1984, we agreed to remove the wall which separated us for nearly 1500 years. We both agreed in perfect Christian love to fulfill the commandment of Christ and to be true friends of the head of the Church who is Christ. For a period of 10 years of dialogue, we realized that the 1500 year period of antagonism caused us to be distant from each other and estranged. When we opened the door for dialogue, in that 10 year interval, we were able to tear down the wall between two sister apostolic churches as true brethren in Christ.

As many of you know, on November 1994 Pope John Paul II and I signed the Common Christological Declaration at the Vatican. Since both our Churches were founded in the first Christian century by the apostles of Our Lord Jesus Christ, one in the West and the other in the East, as two sisters they are born from one Holy Baptism and established on one foundation of the Apostolic Tradition and Sacred Scripture.

For three years now we have established a mixed dialogue commission and have not grown tired in advancing towards a more complete unity, by God's grace. No doubt, each church shall preserve her authority, liturgies, canons and free-governance.

By the guidance of the Holy Spirit, we have now opened another door for dialogue with our brethren in the Chaldean Catholic Church. A Joint Synodical Statement has been ratified by both of our Holy Synods in May and June of this year. I shall sign this joint statement together with Patriarch Mar Raphael of the Chaldean Catholic Church on 15. August.

We have not ceased, nor will we cease to dialogue with the Eastern Churches in the Middle East, particularly with our brethren the Syrian Orthodox, Coptic Orthodox and the Eastern Orthodox Churches, for we truly see how important it is and obligatory, that we Christians of the East open all doors to dialogue between each other in perfect Christian charity. Let us forget the past and purify our hearts and memories of all anger and animosity and strive for peace and a true unity for we are all members of the one Body of Christ, believing in Jesus Christ the Son of the living God.

As the twenty-first century approaches, let us be reminded of the words of Jesus our Lord who said, „Peace I give you, my peace I leave you“ Jn 14,17. It is incumbent upon us, therefore, that we Christians of East and West present this offering to the one head of the body who is Jesus Christ, who taught us to give peace from one to another. May the peace of Our Lord Jesus Christ rest in the hearts of the sons and daughters of His holy Church in both the East and the West. Indeed Our Lord is good, who gave us heavenly peace and love and sanctified us with the peace of His Resurrection. Let us, therefore, forgive the debts and transgressions of each other from the depths of the heart for unto such a peace have we been called.

In conclusion, I should like to thank each and every one of you for this service rendered for the Body of Christ. I would ask that you do not cease to advance the way for peace, and may God make your labors fruitful for the sake of the unity of His holy Church.

Given this 8th day of July, in the year of Our Lord 1997 at the Patriarchate of the Church of the East, Morton Grove, Illinois.

† Khanania Mar Dinkha IV

Catholicos Patriarch of the Holy Apostolic Catholic Assyrian Church of the East

ADDRESS TO THE ASSEMBLY

Your Holiness, Your Excellencies, my brother bishops, President Stirnemann, Reverend Fathers and fellow doctors of theology: May the Grace, mercy and peace of God our Father and our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.¹

Let me begin this address by offering you greetings in my own name and that of the whole Archdiocese of Chicago. We are proud to welcome you to the University of Saint Mary of the Lake. Over the past few years, the university has come to know the Assyrian Church of the East quite well. We are honored that Your Holiness would choose to send some of your clergy and seminaries to our institution for further theological formation. In fact, I would hazard the guess that His Grace, Mar Aprem Khamis has been here to the university more times than have I.

Allow me then to pay particular attention to the notion of welcome. The Archdiocese of Chicago is deeply honored that this consultation would come here for its deliberations. We are proud of our history as one of the most ethnically and culturally diverse local churches in the United States. Within the territory of the archdiocese there are congregations of seven different Eastern churches. Recently, I have been told that Chicago has also become the home of the Catholicos Patriarch of the East and the new administrative center of the Assyrian Church. Your Holiness, as your new neighbor, I hope we will have the opportunity to get to know each other well. I know that you began such a conversation with my predecessor of blessed memory, Joseph Cardinal Bernardin. I would like to pick up that conversation where you and Cardinal Bernardin left off. I am told it is my turn to welcome you and to host you for dinner, which I will be glad to do. I am grateful also for the warm welcome you extended to Cardinal Cassidy during his short visit here by inviting him to dinner at your home.

This Syriac Consultation is one of the projects of the PRO ORIENTE foundation. PRO ORIENTE is well known in the Catholic Church. Under its aegis, churches of a common tradition welcome one another again. One of the fruits of your unofficial consultations was savored by the entire world when Pope John Paul II and Mar Dinkha IV signed the *Common Christological Declaration*. This document takes us across a historic threshold. It shows that many of the most fundamental and difficult dogmatic problems which have separated Christians over the centuries can be overcome by the grace of God working in our minds and in our hearts and recognized in welcoming each other across the centuries. With the declaration, the way is clear for the Assyrian Church and the Chaldean Church to find the way to develop organically into a united Church of the East.

I believe this has been possible because of the unique method employed by PRO ORIENTE. The foundation's emphasis on a common tradition that unites several churches situates the heart of the dialogue where it rightly belongs: on the truths of our faith. The truths of faith carried by a great Tradition - Syriac, Byzantine, Latin - become incarnate in particular churches' theological schools, sacramental liturgy, spirituality and canon law. In this process of developing a tradition, which remains ever normative because it unites us to the Apostles, the later cultures of various peoples are baptized and

placed at the service of the Gospel first preached by the Apostles themselves. Each culture then becomes a *locus theologicus*, a vessel of Christ's truth.

Through your method, based on the study of a great tradition, you bring together all those churches who are receivers of the faith through the Syriac tradition. You acknowledge the indispensable role which Syriac theology has played in your history. Christian unity will not come about through merely negotiated agreements between churches as if they were nation-states engaged in diplomacy. Authentic unity can only come from mutual conversion to the truth of the Gospel and the discovery that this truth is commonly held and believed, a discovery that shapes an attitude which welcomes both the Gospel and each other. By together returning to the source of your faith, the tradition which links you to apostolic times, you have found the path for all of us to tread.

As you begin your deliberations today, I would like to offer a perspective for your consideration. I realize that your work this week will focus on the dogmatic issues which came to the fore in the fifth century. I regret that I will not be able to take part in your deliberations because of prior commitments which I cannot change now. I would have looked forward especially to the discussion of Theodore of Mopsuestia, because I believe his personal history as well as his doctrine can be instructive for our times. But the goal of this work is to restore to Christ's church the full communion which Christ himself desires. I would like then to say a few words about the larger ecumenical goal of full communion between East and West.

The ancient, undivided church built its communion on a tripod. That tripod, which was a firm support to unity, consisted of the Holy Scriptures, the *regula fidei*, and the sacramental structure of the church.² That tripod supported many forms or expressions of the faith, such as the Latin or Syriac or Byzantine tradition.

This notion of unity at the foundation and diversity in the expression of the faith is essential to any model of church unity for the future. Unity between West and East does not imply uniformity. The model of the one undivided church in the early centuries should be our guide today as well. But the living and creative memory of that one undivided church has faded with the sorry history of our sinful divisions. A commitment to the search for the unity desired by Christ, therefore, must reach beyond a re-reading of the doctrinal tradition and the theologies that support it to a recalling of the historical events that led to division and that, in part, continues to shape our respective cultures. If culture is a *locus theologicus*, it also must be subject to a critique in the light of faith, so that the will of the Lord of history is not thwarted by misplaced loyalties and by confusing a people's historical development with the history of salvation itself.

PRO ORIENTE is a witness to the rich diversity among the churches during the first centuries of Christianity. Each particular church used the culture of the people evangelized as the vessel to carry the Gospel. Some of the churches followed the Semitic tradition of Christianity. Others entered the cultures of Asia Minor, North Africa and the Roman Empire. There was great diversity then, and there will be great - perhaps greater - diversity in the future united church. The unity of a restored church will be one of reconciled diversity. This is not to say there will not also be great change, for the desire for unity calls each of us, individually as believers and collectively as churches, to a deep conversion of heart, a conversion to an attitude of welcoming each other across the centuries.

¹ The Roman Missal. Order of Mass

² Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger. Address to the Waldensian Community in Rome. In: *Eastern Churches Journal*, Winter 1993/94 (January 29th, 1993), Vol. 1, No 1, p.131

But there will be a great deal of familiarity as well, since diversity can cover all aspects of ecclesial life above the threefold foundation of Scripture, the rule of faith and the sacramental structure of the Church. Diversity will characterize liturgy, spirituality, theology and canon law. These ecclesial developments will most probably, for the most part, retain their present forms. Cardinal Ratzinger expressed an appreciation for this familiar diversity when he wrote:

First their (the Eastern) way of guaranteeing unity and stability in the common faith is different from ours in the western Catholic Church. They do not have a Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. But in the Orthodox Church liturgy and monasticism are two very strong factors guaranteeing firmness and coherence in the faith. History shows that these are adequate, secure means in this historical and ecclesial context to fundamental unity.³

Said simply, within a future reunited universal church quite diverse means can be employed by the different churches for maintaining the truths of the threefold foundation, so long as these means are effective. Future ecumenical dialogue will have to explore what institutional or structural forms are needed to achieve this goal.

Another issue for all the churches to consider is the developing notion of the threefold structure of the church. This is something that PRO ORIENTE is particularly capable of doing. We are in agreement that the particular church, the Eucharistic assembly gathered around the bishop, substantially enjoys the essential gifts given by Jesus Christ to the apostles. But there are two other expressions of ecclesiality: the regional and the universal. The East has focused much more on the cultural, national and regional expressions of the Church, while the West has placed its emphasis on the universal. The church is, of course, universal in its intentionality before it is particular in its expression. The local or particular and the universal are of divine origin; but the regional expressions of the Church, some of which are linked to the evangelizing mission of the apostles themselves, provide the necessary diversity and creative forms that allow the Gospel to find full expression in different cultures. And this difference allows us each to offer the other our respective gifts.

The East offers the gift of diversity. Your model of national and regional jurisdictions allows the Gospel to find a more integral expression in the language and culture of the nations you have evangelized. The West can benefit from this insight as we engage in a new evangelization on the threshold of the third millennium. And we in the West can offer you, I believe, the gift of the universality, made clearly visible in the ministry of Peter's successors. Because of our history, we have had to deepen and develop our understanding of how the Church stands above nation and culture, often offering an evangelical critique of both.

PRO ORIENTE's method of dialogue from within an entire tradition rather than merely between churches offers us a way to rediscover the connection between the regional and the universal. If we can more deeply understand the relationship between the Syriac tradition and the foundational deposit of faith, we can better understand how our churches in their regional expressions need to relate to the universal dimension of an undivided Church.

Finally, we know that we will not bring about the unification of the Church through our efforts. We keep ever before us the fact that we will succeed only through cooperation with the Holy Spirit. It is Christ's Church, not ours, and the Holy Spirit

³ Ibid. p.135

points always to Him. It is Christ's will for unity to which we must conform ourselves. I will end, therefore, with an act of spiritual ecumenism, a prayer from the Roman Missal for the universal communion of particular churches:

God our Father, in all the churches scattered throughout the world you show forth the one, holy, catholic and apostolic church. Through the gospel and eucharist bring your people together in the Holy Spirit and guide us in your love. Make us a sign of your love for all people, and help us to show forth the living presence of Christ in the world, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.⁴

⁴ The Roman Missal. For the church (For the Local Church)

THE PERSON AND TEACHINGS OF THEODORE OF MOPSUESTIA AND THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN HIM, HIS TEACHINGS AND THE CHURCH OF THE EAST WITH A SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE THREE CHAPTERS CONTROVERSY

1. Introduction

The condemnation of the person and writings of Theodore of Mopsuestia¹ at the Second Council of Constantinople (553) was a bold but failed attempt by the Emperor Justinian to achieve at last the Eusebian/Constantinian ideal of ecclesial unity throughout the Byzantine Empire through a comprehensive *homologia*. Not only did the condemnation of the Three Chapters fail to appease the Alexandrian partisans, but it brought about widespread disruption and open schism in the western parts of the Empire, as well as the humiliation of a Pope. It was met with scorn, derision, and defiant rejection in the Persian Church, which, after Nicaea and Constantinople I, no longer felt itself obliged to adopt uncritically decisions made by the Imperial Church in the West.

The Antiochean theologians who were condemned had all contributed to the ongoing theological developments of the fourth and fifth centuries. Theodore particularly, in his struggle to affirm the full humanity of Christ against Apollinarian defects in teaching, was a major figure in the Antiochean effort, which had „made advances in the

¹ „... the Antiochean School of Christian thought (of which Theodore of Mopsuestia was the most celebrated representative) stressed the literal interpretation of the Bible and the completeness of Christ's humanity, in opposition to the School of Alexandria which emphasized the allegorical interpretation of the Bible and stressed Christ's divinity. In the 4th - 6th century, the School of Antioch produced several significant theologians, including Diodore of Tarsus (d.c.390), Theodore of Mopsuestia (c.350-428/29), St. John Chrysostom (c.347-407), and Theodoret of Cyrhus (c.393-466). From the second century on, Church Fathers such as Justin, Clement of Alexandria, and Origen used an impressive knowledge of pagan literature to debate with pagan philosophers who attacked Christianity on equal terms. After the triumph of Christianity in 313 under Constantine the Great, the pagan Libanius of Antioch, the most celebrated rhetor of the time and author of the surviving hypotheses of the orations of Demosthenes, taught Theodore of Mopsuestia, St. John Chrysostom, and probably also St. Basil and Gregory of Nazianzus. Theodore, the bishop of Mopsuestia and leader of the school of knowledge of history and language to illuminate passages of Scripture. On the other hand, the Alexandrian School had long been a school of classical study that practiced the allegorical interpretation of the Homeric epics and the Greek myths. This method of exegesis was taken over by Philo and from him by Christian scholars of Alexandria in the second and third centuries. Clement of Alexandria (c. 150-215) and Origen (c.185-254) did not completely rule out the literal sense of Scripture but claimed that the most meaningful aspects of divine revelation could be extracted only by allegorization. Clement stated that the Fourth Gospel was a „spiritual gospel“ because it unfolds the deeper truth concealed in the matter-of-fact narratives of the other three. Origen treated literal statements as „earthen vessels“ preserving divine treasure; their literal sense is the body as compared with the moral sense (the soul) and the spiritual sense (the spirit). The true exegete, he claimed, pursues the threefold sense and recognizes the spiritual (allegorical) as the highest. Later, the Antiochene fathers, represented especially by Theodore of Mopsuestia and John Chrysostom, developed an exegesis that took more account of literal meaning and historical context. However, the allegorizers could claim that their method was more relevant and interesting to ordinary Christians.“ Taken from: Encyclopaedia Britannica Online, Entry: Theodore of Mopsuestia, 1997

direction of a more profound understanding of the unity in Christ.“² Though playing a large part in advancing that understanding. Theodore's contribution was to be ignored and distorted after later developments and refinements in theological language. Judged by mid-sixth century standards in which his teaching was distorted and suppressed in the polemical atmosphere³ and he was made a pawn in a political maneuver, his reputation was sacrificed in the West and his life's work submitted to the flames.

Since the Church of the East refused to recognize the condemnation of Theodore, and in fact accorded him the highest stature among the doctors of the Church, she has preserved through time his patrimony in Syriac translation. Unfortunately, in the last five hundred years most of this has been lost through invasions, upheavals, and, most recently, the First World War. With what has survived scholars are still able to build a picture of Theodore's Christology and evaluate it more disinterestedly than the partisans at Constantinople II.

2. The Teachings of Theodore

The reader of Theodore is always confronted with the task of understanding and assimilating Theodore's thought through concepts and terminology that were relevant to Theodore's own cultural and philosophical backgrounds. The most significant factor to take into account in such an effort is that Theodore lived in an ambience charged with „monophysite“⁴ teachings and other „heretical“ tendencies that emphasized the divine aspect of Christ's person, while at the same time denying the fullness of his humanity. On the one hand, Theodore's concern was to argue against these teachings and, consequently, he laid great stress on the fact that the humanity of Jesus was a true and perfect humanity, bestowed with all the human faculties and operations, including a rational human soul. On the other hand, and in order to balance this approach, he taught that the second Person of the Trinity, God the Word, or the Only Begotten of God the Father, was to be distinguished from that which was „begotten of Mary“, born of the seed of David, yet, at the same time, by virtue of the very close and intimate union existing between the natures, the two distinct and radically different natures which were begotten did not constitute two sons but only one son.⁵

For Theodore the humanity of Christ serves a double purpose. In the Nicæan Creed, he interprets the Fathers there as viewing the human nature as a medium of revelation through which men could understand God's love and the purpose of His economy in history. Through condescension and the humbling of himself, God the Word assumed the form of a servant, for us men and for our salvation. In Theodore's words:

It is with justice that they first used the sentence „for us children of men and for our salvation.“ Because they were on the point of speaking about the Economy of His humanity, they were bound to show the purpose of it, as they could not do this with the words which dealt with the divinity of the Only Begotten and in which they spoke to us how he was eternally from His Father. Since they took pains to teach us concerning His humanity, it is with justice that before everything they set forth the reason for which Divine nature

² Alois Grillmeier SJ, in collaboration with Th. Hainthaler. Christ in Christian Tradition, Kentucky 1995, Vol. 2, Part 2, p.429

³ Ibidem

⁴ By monophysite here the strict sense of the word is actually meant, i.e., Apollinarianism.

⁵ See also Theodore of Mopsuestia. Commentary on the Nicene Creed, ed. Alphonse Mingana, Cambridge 1932, Prefatory Note, p.16/17

humbled itself to the extent of taking upon itself the form of a servant for us⁶ and of its caring for our salvation.⁷

The other purpose of the Incarnation is catechetical. God chose to put on⁸ a human nature to teach us about himself, but also to demonstrate, through his humanity, the prototype of the new life which he came to bestow upon all.

(In the Nicæan Creed) our blessed Fathers after their teaching about the Father came to the words written in the Sacred Books concerning the Son, and taught us both about the divinity of the Son and the form of man which He assumed for our salvation.⁹ They thought not to keep silent on the human nature which He put on because it is through it that we receive the knowledge of the Divine nature of the Only Begotten.¹⁰

It is with justice, therefore, that in this also He became our model¹¹ (or Head). He was baptized so that He might give a symbol to our own baptism. In (His Baptism) He was freed from all the obligations of the law. He performed also all the Economy of the Gospel: He chose disciples to Himself, established the teaching of a new law and a new doctrine, promulgated ways of acting congruous to His teaching and different from the teaching of the (old) law, and taught that the ways of acting of us who believe should be in harmony with His new teaching.¹²

Typically, Christian doctrine develops in the context of dialectic theology. The situation Theodore found himself in, and in which he engaged in dialogue with his opponents and friends, exemplifies this, in that he contended with a number of different theological positions which he viewed as harmful or wrong-headed. On the one hand, against the Marcionites, the Manicheans, the followers of Valentinus and the rest of the „heretics“ who asserted that the Lord did not assume a human nature that has a body and a soul, but that he was a phantasm that struck the eyes of men like the form of the visions,¹³ Theodore defends the humanity of Christ by insisting upon the reality of his earthly life:

And Paul also said; „He was in the likeness of men, and was found in fashion as a man.“¹⁴ The (sentence) „He was in the likeness of men“ does not mean any other thing than that He became a man.¹⁵

He fulfilled thoroughly the law of nature for us, because He was going to reform our nature, and He further observed the law of Moses so that He might pay our debt to the Lawgiver; and he was baptized so that He might give an emblem to the grace of our ba-

⁶ Phil. 2,7

⁷ Theodore. Chapter V, 51/52

⁸ A preferred Theodorian terminology meaning to assume.

⁹ Cf. Rom. 8,3; Phil. 2,7

¹⁰ Theodore. Chapter V, 50/1

¹¹ Mingana may be misleading here in his choice of words. Christ is the head or „first“ or „first-fruits“ of our Salvation. He is the first in all, including in the experience of Baptism. He is not just modeling Baptism for us, as though to set an example for us to follow, but in his Baptism his humanity receives immortality and immutability, just as we do in ours (proleptically of course, in both cases). His humanity experienced what our humanity experiences in Baptism. This is an invariable interpretation of the Church of the East Christology.

¹² Ibidem: VI, 69/70

¹³ An example of these visions is the Old Testament story of three men visiting Abraham. None of the three had a corporeal nature but only appeared and acted like men. According to Theodore, these „heretical“ groups claimed that so too the Lord did not assume any body but he only appeared to walk, talk, eat, wash and drink. (Theodore. Chapter V, 54/5)

¹⁴ Phil. 2,7/8

¹⁵ Theodore. Chapter V, 54

ptism; and he showed effectively in Himself the Economy of the Gospel to all men. After all these He went to crucifixion and death so that He might destroy the last enemy, which is death, and make manifest the new and immortal life.¹⁶

On the other hand, against the Arians and the Eunomians who maintained that he (God the Word), in the Incarnation, assumed a body but not a soul, and that the nature of the Godhead took the place of the soul, Theodore replies within the context of the economy of salvation in the following manner:

... God ... indeed wished to put on and raise the fallen man who is composed of a body and of an immortal and rational soul, so that „as by one man sin entered the world, and death by sin, so also the free gift and the grace of God by the righteousness of one man might abound unto many.“¹⁷ As death was by man so also the resurrection from the dead (will be) by man, because „as we all die in Adam, even so in Christ shall all be made alive,“¹⁸ as the blessed Paul testifies. Therefore, it was necessary that He should assume not only the body but also the immortal and rational soul: and not only the death of the body had to cease but also that of the soul, which is sin.¹⁹

It was, therefore, necessary that sin should have first been abolished, as after its abolition there would be no entry for death. It is indeed clear that the strength of the sin²⁰ has its origin in the will of the soul ... It was, therefore, necessary that Christ should assume not only the body but also the soul.²¹

A crucial word in the Creed important for Theodore's Christology is the verb „to become“, in the phrase „*He was incarnate and became a man.*“ For Theodore, „becoming“ a man meant that the Word of God assumed a concrete human nature. Otherwise to take the concept of „becoming“ in its extreme literal sense may imply a sense of change in the essence of the divine nature. In the act of assumption, which God the Word effected through His condescension,²² God's Only Begotten Son united to Himself a perfect and true human nature (manhood) in everything that belongs to a human nature, but without sin. The perfectness of the assumed humanity guarantees, for Theodore as for the Nicæan Fathers, the redemption of all humanity as represented in the rest of us starting from Adam and onward. Through the humanity of Christ the grace of God is communicated to our life in Christ.

Because of all this our blessed Fathers warned us and said: *He was incarnate and became a man*, so that we should believe that the one who was assumed and in whom God the Word dwelt was a complete man, perfect in everything that belongs to human nature, and composed of a mortal body and a rational soul, because it is for man and for his salvation that He came down from heaven. (The Fathers) rightly said that He assumed a man who resembles those from whom He was assumed, because the man whom He assumed resembles Adam who introduced sin into the world, so that He might abolish sin by one who was of the same nature. Indeed, He put on a man resembling Adam who after having sinned received the punishment of death, so that He might eradicate sin from us and abolish death by similar means.²³

¹⁶ Ibidem: VI, 63

¹⁷ Rom. 5,12/15/17

¹⁸ I Cor. 15,22

¹⁹ Theodore, Chapter V, 56

²⁰ Cf. I Cor. 15,56

²¹ Theodore, Chapter V, 56/7

²² Phil. 2,6/7

²³ Theodore, Chapter V, 59

At the moment of coming, the Virgin Mary was the vehicle in and through whom God the Word chose to unite Himself to a particular human nature, which is taken from her by the power of the Holy Spirit. However, Theodore emphasizes that through this divine act the resultant „becoming“ should not be understood as if God the Word, the Only begotten Son of the Father, was born of her in the sense that his divinity originated at that time, or that He owed His existence to her. Theodore prefers to distinguish the two natures even during the becoming, but necessarily refers to them both as *one* by virtue of the one prosopon of the Son of God and due to the ineffable union between Godhead and manhood.

It is obvious that they do not teach that the Divine nature of the Only Begotten was born of a woman, as if it had its beginning in her, because they did not say that the one who was born of His Father before all the worlds and who is eternally from Him and with Him had His beginning from Mary, but they followed the Sacred Books which speak differently of natures while referring (them) to one prosopon on account of the close union that took place between them, so that (it) might not be believed that they were separating the perfect union between the one (nature which) was assumed and the one (nature which) assumed.²⁴

Elsewhere Theodore also states the following concerning the birth of Christ from the Virgin Mary.

In saying that He was made of a woman He showed that He entered into the world from a woman according to the Law of the children of men, and the fact that „He was under the law to redeem them that were under the law that we might receive the adoption of sons,“²⁵ happened so that He might pay our debt to the Lawgiver and procure life for us.²⁶

To further his distinction between the two natures Theodore cites from Saint Paul the following text to explain his understanding.

Here also he (St Paul) clearly made a distinction between the natures and between (that which) is in the form of God and (that which) is in the form of servant, between (that which) assumed and (that which) was assumed, and (Paul showed) also that (that which) assumed became in the fashion of a man in (that which) was assumed.²⁷

But at the same time he tells us that when speaking about the distinction of the two natures we must simultaneously and immediately assert the truth of the union. The following texts illustrate his point.

If this union were destroyed the one (which) was assumed would not be seen more than a mere man like ourselves.²⁸

He thus hid himself at the time in which He was in the world and conducted himself with the children of men in such a way that all those who beheld Him in a human way and did not understand anything more, believed Him to be a mere man.²⁹

Indeed, those who historically have not perceived the reality of Christ's united divinity and humanity have judged him according to his outward *schema* alone. It was as a mere man who claimed divinity that men sought to put him to death. Conversely,

²⁴ Ibidem: VI, 63/4

²⁵ Cf. Gal. 4,4/5

²⁶ Ibidem: VI, 67/8

²⁷ Ibidem: VI, 65

²⁸ Catechetical Homilies 6,3, cited by Johannes Quasten. Patrology. Maryland 1983. Vol. 3, p.416

²⁹ Theodore, Chapter VI, 65

others, acknowledging his divine nature, have sought to deny his real human nature and to withhold from it the glory due to it by virtue of the union.

But for Theodore, while it was necessary to assert the significance of the union, it was also necessary to recognize the ultimate and final Subject of the Divine in Christ.

Here (in the case of Christ) if each of them (i.e., each nature) was Son and Lord by nature it would be possible for us to say two Sons and two Lords, according to the number of the persons, but one being Son and Lord by nature and the other being neither Son nor Lord by nature, we believe that the latter received these (attributes) through (its) close union with the Only Begotten God the Word, and so we hold that there is one Son only; and we understand that the one who is truly Son and Lord is the one who possesses these (attributes) by nature, and we add in our thought the temple in which He dwells and in which He will always and inseparably remain on account of the inseparable union which He has with (it, i.e., the temple) and because of which we believe that He³⁰ is both Son and Lord.³¹

Inasmuch as when we say „Father, Son and Holy Spirit,“ we name the Godhead in which we ought to be imitated to religion and be baptized, so also when we say „Son“ we refer to the Divine nature of the Only Begotten while rightly including also in our thought the man³² who was assumed on our behalf and in whom God the Word was made known and preached and is now in Him, while the Father and the Holy Spirit are not remote from Him, because Trinity is not separable, consisting as it does of one, incorporeal and uncircumscribed nature.³³

Elsewhere it seems that in Theodore's mind the one prosopon in Christ is the same as the Divine Person. This one prosopon, or one subject, we can address now as God and now as man.³⁴ However, according to modern critics of Theodore's Christology,³⁵ Theodore faced the problem of what in modern theology is called the „*theandric composite*.“³⁶ In this context, they maintain, Theodore could not attribute and would not ascribe the resultant „person“ of the union to the Word of God. But, at the same time other theologians³⁷ more sympathetic and understanding of his thought show the inaccuracy of this criticism by citing passages in which Theodore himself, in advance, excludes such a viewpoint. There are two passages in which we can see how explicitly Theodore states that what is applicable to the human nature is ascribed to the divine, and what is due to the one nature is also due to the other.

While all these things are clearly and obviously said by the Apostle Paul³⁸ of human nature he referred them successively to Divine nature so that his sentence might be strengthened and be acceptable to hearers. Indeed, since it is above human nature that it should be worshipped by all, it is with justice that all this has been said as of one, so that the belief in a close union between the natures might be strengthened, because he clearly showed that

³⁰ It is difficult to connect this pronoun with its proper antecedent subject, he (the Word) or temple. The thrust of his argument would lead one to believe that, because of the union, we may believe the temple also to be, in the union, „both Son and Lord.“

³¹ Ibidem: VIII, 90/1

³² I.e., the complete and unimpaired human nature.

³³ Ibidem: VIII, 92

³⁴ L. McKenzie. Annotation on the Christology of Theodore of Mopsuestia. In: Theological Studies 19 (1958) 364

³⁵ Francis A. Sullivan. The Christology of Theodore of Mopsuestia. In: Analecta Greg. Rome 1949, p.288. In his conclusion, Sullivan maintains that „Theodore of Mopsuestia, despite his orthodox intentions, was indeed what he has so long been called: the „Father of Nestorianism“.

³⁶ By „*Theandric Composite*“ is meant that the union of natures results in that which is not the same as the Word of God, but in a new reality, called the Person of Christ.

³⁷ McKenzie, p.364-66

³⁸ In reference to the Philippians 2,8-11

the one (which) was assumed did not receive all this great honor except from the Divine nature which assumed (it) and dwelt in (it).³⁹

The one who assumed is the Divine nature that does everything for us, and the other is the human nature which was assumed on behalf of all of us by the One who is the cause of everything, and is united to it in an ineffable union which will never be separated. The Sacred Books also teach us this union, not only when they impart to us the knowledge of each nature but also when they affirm that what is due to the one is also due to the other, so that we should understand the wonderfulness and the sublimity of the union that took place.⁴⁰

As a result of the union of the two natures, Theodore confesses the necessity of exchanging predicates between the two natures in Christ.⁴¹ The whole need for the „*communicatio idiomatum*“ is, in Theodore's words, „so that the belief in a close union between the natures might be strengthened.“ An example is presented in his exegesis on Phil. 2, 8-11 in the commentary on the Creed. Theodore maintains that it is not true to say that the gift of adoration - „every knee shall bow and every tongue confess“ - will be granted to the divine nature, for this (adoration) already belongs to it; however, adoration will be granted to the „form of a servant“ by virtue of the union. Yet, though this is „Clearly and obviously said of human nature (Paul) referred (it) ... to Divine nature.“⁴² In other words, though the natures are two, what is technically specific to one is referred to the other, and there is but a single *subject* of adoration in Christ.⁴³

Though up to this point it might appear that all the communication of idioms is in a single direction, namely, from divinity to humanity, yet in known works of Theodore there are also some other texts that show another direction of attribution. In the following text on the Resurrection, Theodore states:

If Christ our Lord had immediately after His rising from the dead, raised also all men who had previously died, and had bestowed upon them new life fully and immediately, we should have been in no need of doing anything; as, however, He actually performed only on Himself the renewal which is to come and through which He rose from the dead and His body became immortal ...⁴⁴

In this text, Theodore ascribes to the subject, Jesus Christ, the experience of rising from the dead and receiving immortality and immutability, and to the same he ascribes the ability to raise others and to give them perfection as well. It is plain that it is not natural to the divine to undergo, nor to the human to give, resurrection, or change from mortality to immortality or from mutability to immutability. Yet the subject of both receiving and giving is the one „Christ our Lord“. The critical question concerning Theodore's Christological orthodoxy is who is the subject of the title „Christ our Lord“ who divinely bestows and humanly receives. Is this one and only subject in Jesus Christ the same as the Word of God, the Only Begotten Son of the Father? The following Theodorian texts, commenting on the phrases of the Nicæan Creed, „who for us children of

³⁹ Theodore, Chapter VI, 66

⁴⁰ Catechetical Homilies, 8,1 (see footnote 28) p.415-6 and see also Theodore, Chapter VIII, 87

⁴¹ Theodore states „that He is not God alone and not man alone; but He is truly in the two by nature, both God and man.“ (Raymond Tonneau. Les homilies catechetiques de Théodore de Mopsueste. Vatican City 1949, p.187, cited by McKenzie, p.368). - „He is not God alone nor man alone, but He is truly both by nature, that is to say God and man.“ Theodore, VIII, 82

⁴² Theodore, VI, 66

⁴³ McKenzie, p.366

⁴⁴ Theodore, VI, 70

men and for our salvation came down from heaven,“ and „he shall come again to judge the living and the dead,“ address this legitimate concern.

He (the blessed David)⁴⁵ called the condescension of God the „coming down“ of God in the sense that He who was so much above all condescended to deliver them from their tribulations. It is in this sense that God the Word, the only Son of God, is said to have come down for our salvation⁴⁶ ... He condescended to come down to such a humility as to take upon Him(self) the form of a servant⁴⁷ and be in it so that through it He might grant us the delight of His abundant gift.⁴⁸

„This same Jesus which is taken up from you into heaven shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven.“⁴⁹ This was to demonstrate to (the disciples) that it would be the very man who was seen by them, and was with them, and was now being separated from them, who would be coming and be seen by all men. To this man the word *again* is not fitting. Indeed, it is not He (the man) who came but it is the Godhead that came down from heaven, not that it moved from place to place, but by its condescension and its Providence for us which it (fulfilled)⁵⁰ in the man who was assumed on our behalf. The word *again* will refer in the next world to the man whom (the Godhead) assumed on our behalf. The man who was assumed on our behalf went now first⁵¹ into heaven and will come again first from heaven, but because they (our blessed Fathers) were referring in their words to the Divine nature they counted His coming twice, first when He came down through that man,⁵² and secondly when He will come *again* through the same man who had been assumed, because of the ineffable union that that man had with God.⁵³

Jesus' human nature which Theodore calls „man“ is that through which God the Word manifests Himself in both revelations - the Incarnation and the parousia. For him, it is God the Word who came down, who suffered and rose through his humanity - through that which Theodore calls „man“ - and most clearly who will come again to judge the world. For Theodore, as for the Fathers in Nicæa, the word „*again*“ indicates that the Word, appearing in his own manhood, is the subject of the parousia. The word „*again*“ eliminates the possibility for the human nature (that which Theodore calls „man“) to be the subject in Jesus Christ. It is rather the united vehicle of the second appearance, as it was of the first. The Word's „man“ ascended for the first time into heaven, therefore his coming from heaven will be for the first time as well. The logic runs into thus: the man whom the Word assumed did not „*come down*“ from heaven, but the divine nature did. But the man whom the Word assumed will „*come again*“ from heaven because he is the Word's united man. Here (and in its context) we see clearly Theodore's view of the Word as the subject/agent of our redemption, and his assumed human nature as his united instrument of manifestation and redemption.

⁴⁵ Ps. 18,9

⁴⁶ Theodore, Chapter V, 52

⁴⁷ Phil. 2,7

⁴⁸ Theodore, Chapter V, 53

⁴⁹ Acts 1,11

⁵⁰ Lit., „did“ or „worked“, Mingana's text has „manifested“ here.

⁵¹ I.e., for the first time.

⁵² I.e., at his incarnation.

⁵³ Theodore, Chapter VII, 81

3. Theodore, the Church of the East and the Three Chapters

Theodore's relationship to the Church of the East is due, originally, to the use of his biblical commentaries as standards of exegesis at the School of Nisibis. These works and others were translated into Syriac and continued to be normative at the School of Nisibis established in the late fifth century. The theologians and scholars of the Persian Church were prepared for their work by being thoroughly introduced to the methods and analyses of Theodore. When the edict of Justinian condemning Theodore was issued in 543, it was met by the Persian bishops with utter disdain. In a synod in 544, presided over by the Catholicos, Mar Aba I, the bishops affirmed their loyalty to, and appreciation of „The Interpreter of the Scriptures“⁵⁴ and made his work the official standard of orthodox teaching. This affirmation was later strengthened by the issuing of anathemata against any who reviled the man or his works.⁵⁵ Theodore's concern that the full human nature of Christ be affirmed and accounted for, and that the immutability and impassibility of the divine nature be likewise confessed, has been the same concern that the Church of the East has had in its conflicts with „miaphysite“ partisans in the Oriental churches. With all these things in view it should not be surprising, then, that the Church of the East unapologetically defends Theodore and has historically employed his language and methodology in explaining the mystery of the Incarnation.

Modern research and re-evaluation of Theodore of Mopsuestia and his teaching has helped to illuminate the strengths and weaknesses of his methodology and terminology. The advances in Christological thought which he contributed to are still seen by many as a stage in the development of a satisfactory Christology, but it is felt that they fall short of a full accounting of the ontological unity which later theologians strove to illuminate. As a way-station on the road to the ultimate destination which Chalcedon represents to orthodox scholars, Theodore's work wins from such people either guarded acclaim or qualified disapproval. The bishops of the Church of the East have noted carefully the (usually) unprejudiced manner in which these researches have been carried out, and have given sympathetic attention to the critical findings of the scholarly community. At the same time, the Holy Synod is still committed to the defense of Theodore and wholly appreciative of his role in advancing an appreciation of the full humanity of Christ. That defense is given today, however, in the conviction of his orthodoxy rather than in partisan animosity toward his detractors. We no longer fear that those who reject Theodore do so with the intention of denying Christ's full humanity, or in order to impute possibility or change to the nature of his divinity. We believe that Theodore's work will stand on its own, while leaving the ultimate judgment of Theodore's person to him to whom it belongs.

Theodore's theological thought ought to be judged for what it says and appears to intend, and should not be forced beyond its plain words to suggest or mean something he does not intend. His is a Christology relevant to his own time and cultural-intellectual milieu. One should not expect from all the people who belonged to his time and level of dogmatic development to have been more articulate in the sense of the specific language that the Church strove to develop later on.⁵⁶ Theodore's writings preceded the writings of Cyril of Alexandria and the formulations at the Councils of Ephesus and

Chalcedon. Though his articulation may be perceived by some as lacking precision of conception as compared to the Christological formulations which were later advanced by Cyril and adopted by Ephesus, it would not be historically responsible to ascribe to Theodore errors of which he was not guilty nor to refuse him his proper place in the fourth and fifth century history of the development of Christian theological thought. The terminological clarification of the Person of Christ and the relationship of *physis*, *hypostasis* and *prosopon*, which was brought about by the Council of Chalcedon, was something that transpired after the death of Theodore. It would, therefore, be unjust to read Theodore in a manner in which some attempt to see his failure in adhering to formulas which were as yet undeveloped.⁵⁷

4. A Conclusion

Whether or not the theology of Chalcedon should be the standard through which one can judge the Christology of Theodore, the terminological harmony that the Council of Chalcedon sought to achieve in order to restore the Christological balance upset by the Council of Ephesus should prompt the Church today to re-read Theodore. After all, Theodore's condemnation at the Fifth Ecumenical Council was a return to the Cyrillian exclusiveness of Ephesus pressured by the Emperor to forge a diplomatic solution in an attempt to reconcile with the non-Chalcedonians.⁵⁸ The mere fact that this imperial condemnation was made to be received by force against the will of Pope Vigilius - causing some parts of the Latin Church to cut off communion due to Theodore's condemnation - is a ground for the reconsideration of his condemnation. For if the same standards of the canons of 553 applied to Theodore were to be forced upon the language of Saint Paul or many other early Church fathers, the Church would suffer a grievous loss of its patrimony, and its very foundation might well be called into question. According to the tenets by which the person and writings of Theodore were condemned Saint Paul should have said „the Logos“ instead of „Jesus Christ“, and „became man“ instead of „became in the likeness a man.“ In these terms respectively, Saint Paul predicates the act of assumption of humanity to Jesus Christ and not to the Logos.⁵⁹ No matter how misunderstood Theodore may be, he has to be granted the possibility of an orthodox interpretation of the meaning - when stating that the divinity assumed a perfect and complete humanity - that the divinity also assumed the totality of human experience, including the suffering of humanity, in the same way that humanity, through its assumption by the Son of God, participates in the divine.⁶⁰

The Holy Synod of the Church of the East, without prejudice to the memory of the blessed Theodore, is prepared to remove the anathemata which in the past were issued against those who do not accept Theodore. In doing so, the bishops desire to remove a barrier to renewal in the Church and rapprochement with our brother Christians. Theodore was a model of virtuous decorum, but those opposed and those favoring him have sullied the memory of a life well-lived with harsh and bitter invective against one another. In so doing both sides have been party to the rending of the Body of Christ, wea-

⁵⁷ Quasten, p.527

⁵⁸ John Romanides. Highlights in the Debate over Theodore of Mopsuestia's Christology and Some Suggestions for a Fresh Approach. In: The Greek Orthodox Theological Review. Vol. 5, 2 (1959/60) 147

⁵⁹ McKenzie, p.359

⁶⁰ Ibidem, p.358

⁵⁴ Synodicon Orientale, J.-B. Chabot. Paris 1902, p.550

⁵⁵ Ibidem, pp.138, 176-78, 210-11

⁵⁶ McKenzie, p.370/1

kening the witness which we are all charged to make to a world in which we are supposed to be a savor of life and a light of truth.⁶¹ Both for the sake of the memory of Theodore, as well as in the hope of removing the scandal of division in the Body of Christ, we make this gesture with the prayer that it will be received in the same spirit in which it is made. It is our hope and prayer that Christ's petition to his Father for unity in his body, the Church, will inspire all of us, and those who come after us, to seek out one another in love and understanding, and that the personal invective and loveless conflict that have marked our relationship in the past will be left in the past as we look toward a future where Christ's prayer is realized at last.

Adelbert Davids

THE PERSON AND TEACHINGS OF THEODORE OF MOPSUESTIA AND THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN HIM, HIS TEACHINGS AND THE CHURCH OF THE EAST WITH A SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE THREE CHAPTERS CONTROVERSY

1. Theodore of Mopsuestia

The condemnation of Theodore of Mopsuestia, one of the greatest theologians of the Early Church and one of the most prolific authors of Antiquity, at the Second Council of Constantinople in 553 is a very sad episode in ecclesiastical history. Who was he, who in 553 was already dead since 125 years and what were the reasons for the sentence against him?

Theodore fell in disgrace at a council in the eastern part of the Roman Empire. A complicating factor in his case was the western suspicion of his „Pelagianism“. Pelagianism being the main obsession of the Latin West since Augustine's attacks on Pelagius. That westerners were not eager to try to understand Theodore's theology mainly because of his „Pelagianism“, is clear from the judgment of Otto Bardenhewer, who states in his *History of Early Ecclesiastical Literature* about Theodore:

„The most prominent disciples of Diodore (of Tarsus), Theodore of Mopsuestia and Chrysostom, have gone very distinctive ways. Diodore had sown wheat mixed with tares; with Chrysostom the wheat has fallen on particularly fruitful soil, with Theodore the tares ... Theodore, monk, priest, bishop, was obsessed by subjectivism and criticism which almost equalled rationalism; he had no feeling of spiritual belief („ohne Innigkeit der Glaubensüberzeugung“), no profound inward conviction („ohne Tiefe des Gemüts“). At the same time he had a vivacious and fiery temperament, was quick but unsteady in his decisions as in his assertions and often moving from one extreme to the other and back. He was one of those restless spirits who relied on their own judgement without hesitation and who had a certain pleasure to shift the frontiers of the Fathers.“¹

In fact, Bardenhewer accuses Theodore of Nestorianism and even more of Pelagianism.² One should remember that Theodore received in 418 Julian of Eclanum at his home; this Julian had refused to subscribe the condemnation of the Pelagius and had therefore to fly from the West.

Most of Theodore's contemporaries do not know anything about a bad character of Theodore. On the contrary, they - Theodoret, Socrates, Sozomenus - recall only praiseworthy things about this leading figure of the Church in the Antiochian region. He was born about the year 350 in Antioch. After having studied together with John Chrysostom at the school of the famous pagan teacher Libanius, he devoted himself to the spiritual life, again together with John, at the *asketerion* of Diodore and Carterius at Antioch. Having left that community in order to pursue a worldly career and to get married, he was called back by John and dedicated himself exclusively to the study of the Bible and the teaching of the Church. He always remained in close contact with his teacher Diodore, also after Diodore had become bishop of Tarsus in 378. In 392 he was ordained bishop of Mopsuestia in Cilicia. There he remained until his death in 428. Later authors added details, favorable or unfavorable, according to their own christological views.³ A particular, interesting detail is Theodore's visit to Constantinople in 394. At that occasion he took part in a delegation to the emperor Theodosius I. Among others, also Theophilus of Alexandria, Cyril of Alexandria's uncle and predecessor, was a member of the group. This same Theophilus had Theodore's friend John Chrysostom, who was archbishop of Constantinople since 397, deposed at the Synod of the Oak in 403.⁴ Theodore was profoundly shocked by the event.⁵ Theodore died in peace with the Church in 428. Never there had been any discussion about his orthodoxy or his life style. He had led an exemplary ascetic life. This is known from later „Nestorian“ sources. For instance Dadišo of Bet Qatraye (7th century) tells about Theodore:

„It is said about the blessed Interpreter Theodore that he never rode on horse-back when visiting the brethren; but he always went on foot, with his brother, although he was old and sick.“⁶

Theodore's brother Polychronius is known as bishop of Apamea.

Theodore was a prolific writer.⁷ He wrote commentaries on almost the whole Old and New Testament. In the original Greek only his *Commentary on the Twelve Minor Prophets* has been preserved. Thanks to Julian of Eclanum's translation substantial parts of Theodore's *Commentary on the Psalms* are known in Latin. Theodore's *Commentary on the Gospel of John* has been preserved in a Syriac translation. Substantial parts of his *Commentary on St. Paul* are known in Latin and Greek fragments. Of Theodore's numerous dogmatic treatises only his *Dispute against the Macedonians* survives (in Syriac). As Theodore would be condemned after his death because of his christology, it is

² Ibidem, p.322: Theodore represents fundamentally the ideas of Pelagius.

³ R. Eevreesse. Essai sur Théodore de Mopsueste. Città del Vaticano 1948, p.1

⁴ H.R. Drobner. Lehrbuch der Patrologie. Freiburg 1994, p.276. Cyril of Alexandria had accompanied his uncle at that occasion.

⁵ John Chrysostom, Epistulae 112, In: Patrologia Graeca 52, 688

⁶ Ms. Vat. Syr. 496, f 265b as quoted by H. Scheinhardt. Zitate aus drei verlorenen Schriften des Theodor von Mopsuestia. In: Paul de Lagarde und die syrische Kirchengeschichte, ed. Göttingen 1968, pp.185-98, esp.189

⁷ There are two „Nestorian“ catalogues of his works: the Chronicle of Seert (13th century) and Abdišo (died in 1318), see J.M. Lera. Théodore de Mopsueste. In: Dict. De spirit. 15, col.385-400, here col.387

⁶¹ Mt. 5,13-16

¹ O. Bardenhewer. Geschichte der altkirchlichen Literatur, III. Freiburg/Br. 1923, p.312

most unfortunate that a Syriac manuscript with his book *On the Incarnation*, which was found in the beginning of this century by Addai Scher at Seert in Kurdistan, has been lost during World War I.⁸ Luckily enough Theodore's *Catechetical Homilies* are still there in Syriac to help us to understand his explanation of the faith to catechumens. Fragments of his other works have been used and (mis)interpreted by his friends and by his enemies. Many of them have been mutilated and distorted. But also many new fragments have been found since the end of the last century.⁹

2. Theodore's Teaching

As an starting-point may be stated:

1. that in his commentaries on the Bible Theodore lays down the principles of the so-called typological exegesis of the School of Antioch;
2. that in his dogmatic works, which are almost exclusively directed against Arianism in its Anomoean form and against the christology of Apollinaris of Laodicea, he is the defender of the orthodox faith of Nicaea;
3. and that in his homilies he gives a broad survey on the inner meaning of Christian life in general and on the meaning of the Church in particular.

Christology occurs sufficiently. But not the Christology as being in discussion just before and after the Council of Ephesus in 431, when Theodore was already among the dead, but the Christology as being in discussion since the start of the Christological debate in 428. Theodore was soon depicted as the father of Nestorianism.

A first rule of interpretation implies a focussing on genuine texts of the author himself. Further: is there any vision of the theologian, any concept from which he derives such a vision? And finally: which literary means are used in order to display the vision? Such a vision should play a central role in the appreciation of a theologian. A vision of Theodore has not been recognized as such during the Christological controversies and throughout the following centuries.

The result of Theodore's intensive reading of the Bible is his concept of the two Eras (*katastaseis*). This has been noted by modern authors like Robert Devreesse and R. A. Norris,¹⁰ and is more developed by I. Onatibia and J.M. Lera.¹¹ From his study of the Two Testaments of the Bible and, of course, his preoccupation with the Jews and the „Hellenes“ around him, Theodore came to the conclusion that there are two Eras: one from Creation until Christ and a second one from Christ until the final Resurrection. The first Era is a prefiguration (*typos*) of the second Era. Creation with its summit in Adam¹² is the start of the first Era; with Christ starts the second Era, which will be consummated in the final general resurrection. Christ takes upon him the participation in the first Era in order to lead mankind into the second Era through His resurrection:

⁸ See on the manuscript and on the situation at Seert: Scheinhard. Zitate, pp.186-88

⁹ Ample information on the fragments in M. Geerard. *Clavis Patrum Graecorum* II. Turnhout 1974, nrs.3827-3864

¹⁰ Devreesse. *Essai*. pp.89f.; R.A. Norris. *Manhood and Christ. A Study in the Christology of Theodore of Mopsuestia*. Oxford 1963, pp.160ff.

¹¹ I. Onatibia. *La vida cristiana, tipo de las realidades celestes*. In: *Scriptorium Victorienne* I (1954), pp.100-133; J.M. Lera, ... y se hizo hombre. In: *Teologia Deusto* 9 (Bilbao 1977)

¹² N. el-Khoury. *Der Mensch als Gleichnis Gottes. Eine Untersuchung zur Anthropologie des Theodor von Mopsuestia*. In: *Oriens Christianus* 74 (1990) 62-71

„(the believers in Christ) are going to become completely different and to acquire a great variety of virtues by the gift of the divine grace which they are going to receive. They are going to become, in fact, immortal instead of mortal, incorruptible instead of corruptible; impassible instead of passible; immutable instead of changing; instead of slaves, free men; instead of enemies, friends; from strangers (they will become) sons and will no more be thought of as Adam's but as Christ's.“¹³

The Old Testament belongs to the first Era and contains the prefiguration (*typos*) of the new Era. Christ is the link between the first and the second Era. Through our baptism we take part in the resurrection of Christ; our life on earth is a prefiguration of the eternal life after the final general resurrection. Through the sacraments - baptism, eucharist - we live the eternal life already now, that means sacramental, but not less really. The sacraments make us participate in the eternal life. Theodore's theology is not merely symbolical or imaginary - it is a dynamic expression of genuine Christian aspirations.

Christ as the perfect man plays a central role in this vision - Christ as complete man. Theodore constantly refuses the „solution“ of Apollinaris of Laodicea, which was condemned at the council of Constantinople in 381. Apollinaris is said to hold that the divine Logos took the place of the soul of Christ. For Theodore Christ is perfect God and perfect man.¹⁴ „He garbed himself in a man similar to Adam, who, after having, had received a sentence of death, so that by a similar (being) sin might be rooted out of us and death abolished.“¹⁵ And:

„The Lord was more troubled, and struggled harder, with reference to the passions of the soul than with reference to those of the body. He mastered the pleasures by a more powerful rational process, while the Deity manifestly mediated and assisted him towards righteousness. So it is that the Lord is perceived to open war against these (passions of the soul) especially. Undeceived by the lust for riches and unttempted by the desire for fame, he conceded nothing to the flesh. It was not for him to be overcome by such as these. However, if he had not possessed a soul, but (rather) it is the Deity which was victorious - none of the things accomplished would have been to our profit. (For what likeness is there between Deity and the human soul with respect to perfection of activity?) And the Lord's struggles would appear not to be of profit for us, but to have taken place for the sake of (empty) show. And if it is impossible to say this, it is certain that those things were done for our sakes, and (that) he instituted a greater battle against the passions of the soul, a lesser against those of the flesh.“¹⁶

The two natures of Christ, divinity and humanity, form one *prosopon*.¹⁷ The authentic Theodore speaks always of one *prosopon*, never of two *prosopa* in Christ.¹⁸ There are in Christ two natures in one *prosopon*, as is clear from the famous fragment preserved by Leontius of Byzantium:

„Through the union the two natures which have been brought together make up one *prosopon* according to the union. Just as the Lord said of a man and his wife that 'they are

¹³ Hom. Cat. I,4, Tonneau, p.5; trans. Norris. *Manhood*, p.168

¹⁴ A. Grillmeier. *Jesus der Christus im Glauben der Kirche* I. Freiburg 1979, pp.614-34

¹⁵ Hom. Cat. V, 14, Tonneau, p.119; trans. Norris. *Manhood*, p.206

¹⁶ *De incarnatione*, fragm., Swete II, p.311; trans. Norris. *Manhood*, p.206

¹⁷ See esp. Devreesse. *Essai*, pp.114-6; G.H.M. Posthumus Meyjes. *De christologie van Theodorus van Mopsuestia*. In: *Vox Theologica* 24 (1953/54) 153-164; 25 (1954/55) 9-23; Grillmeier. *Jesus* I, pp.626-32

¹⁸ M. Richard. *La tradition des fragments du traité Peri tes enanthropeseos de Théodore de Mopsueste*. In: *Le Muséon* 56 (1943) 55-75; Grillmeier. *Jesus* I, p.626

no longer two, but one flesh' so let us reasonably say, in accordance with the principle of the union, 'So they are no longer two prosopa, but one', the natures being of course distinguished. For just as in the former case it does not harm for the one flesh to be called by the number two, since it is evident in what sense they are called one; so also in the latter case the union of the prosopon does not militate against the difference of the natures. For when we distinguish the natures, we say that the nature of God the Word is complete, and that (his) prosopon is complete (for it is not correct to speak of an hypostasis without its prosopon); and (we say) also that the nature of the man is complete, and likewise (his) prosopon. But when we look to the conjunction, then we say one prosopon."¹⁹

Alois Grillmeier stresses the fact that *prosopon/parsopa* of the Antiochian pre-Chalcedonian theology should not be translated by „person“. Instead, it has to be understood in its original meaning of „Antlitz“ (Gesicht). 'Prosopon' is 'the form in which a nature or hypostasis appears or is visible.' Every nature and every *hypostasis* has its own *prosopon*. It expresses the reality of nature with its powers and particularities."²⁰

Another fragment (from Theodore's 18th book against Eunomius), published by Luise Abramowski, speaks also about the relation between *prosopon* and *hypostasis*:

„*Prosopon* (*parsopa*) is used in a twofold way; for either it signifies the *hypostasis* (*qnoma*) and that which each one of us is or it is conferred upon honour, greatness and worship; for example: 'Paul' and 'Peter' signify the *hypostasis* and the *prosopon* of each one of them, but the *prosopon* of our Lord Christ means honour, greatness and worship. For because God the Word was revealed in manhood, he was causing the glory of his *hypostasis* to cleave to the visible one; and for this reason 'prosopon of Christ' declares it (sc. The *prosopon*) to be (a *prosopon*) of honour, not of the *ousia* (*ousia*) of the two natures (*kyane*) (...) What purple garments or royal apparel are for the king is for God the Word the beginning which was taken from us without separation, alienation or distance in worship. Therefore, as it is not by nature that a king has purple robes, so also neither is it by nature that God the Word has flesh. For anyone who affirms God the Word to have flesh by nature (predicates that) he has something foreign to the divine substance (*ithutha*) by undergoing an alteration by the addition of a nature. But if he has not flesh by nature, how does Apollinarius say that the same one is in part consubstantial with the father in his godhead, and that the same is (in part) consubstantial with us in the flesh, so that he may make him composite? For he who is thus divided into natures becomes and is found (to be) something composite, by nature."²¹

It should be clear from the earlier consultations of the Syriac Dialogue that *qnoma* should not be translated. But, to remain in the Greek terminology: for Theodore *prosopon* can be identical with *hypostasis*, meaning the concrete, individual nature of a particular substance, either of a person (Peter, Paul) or of the Logos as second person of the Holy Trinity."²²

¹⁹ Swete II, p.299; trans. Norris. Manhood, p.228/9. In the *prosopon* of union divinity and humanity existed together in Christ.

²⁰ „*Prosopon* ist die 'Form, in der eine Natur oder Hypostase erscheint oder sich gibt.' Jede Natur und jede Hypostase hat ihr eigenes *Prosopon*. Es drückt die Wirklichkeit der Natur mit ihren Kräften und Eigentümlichkeiten aus.“ Cf. Grillmeier. Jesus I, p.626

²¹ L. Abramowski & A.E. Goodman (edd.). A Nestorian Collection of Christological Texts. II. Cambridge 1972, pp.107/8. See also L. Abramowski. Zur Theologie Theodors von Mopsuestia. In: Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte 72 (1961) 263-293, esp. Pp.263/4

²² So A. Grillmeier. Jesus I, p.628. Grillmeier continues: „Mit andern Worten: *prosopon* ist hier die Offenbarung, der Ausdruck der Natur, letztlich einer Wesenheit (*ousia*), die aber eine bestimmte Hypostase

Theodore searched for an adequate linguistic presentation of his anti-Apollinarian christology. His use of Scripture (Phil. 2,6f. and Theodore's terminology of Logos/Assumer - men/assumed; Jn 1,14 and Theodore's inhabitation of the Logos in human nature), the conjunction of the two natures and the different images, such as the unity of soul and body, the union between man and woman, the union of Christ with His Church, the analogy of the king and his robes - all this to illustrate the unity of Christ - may seem superficial and not in the least to Theodore himself. It is simply that he had not the adequate vocabulary to express the mysterious and ineffable unity of Christ."²³

The spiritual realities described by Theodore are all centered in Christ's „economy“. His theology, closely linked with and directed against erroneous interpretations of the second half of the fourth century, is a real defense of orthodoxy. Quite often he uses symbolical language and analogies. But that does not mean that what he tries to explain typologically is less real. To speak of a „Christological dualism“ of Theodore²⁴ goes too far, especially if one pays attention to Theodore's constant anxiety to give expression to the tension of the relation duality-unity. What has been called often the Antiochian „Trennungstheologie“ should be reconsidered in the light of Theodore's anthropology and cosmology. His cosmology is in comparison to the views of his age a „naive archaic“ one: he sees the cosmos as static and consisting of two levels; the firmament separates the lower part from the upper part (the visible world from heavens). There is no place for an Aristotelian immanent motion of the stars and the planets."²⁵ Theodore made use of this explanation in order to remain in line with his teacher Diodore of Tarsus who had most strongly defended human free will against pagan predetermination and fatalism. His cosmology is also to be understood in connection with his doctrine of the two Eras. A thinking in terms of „duality“ is certainly obviously present, but to speak of „dualism“ is quite misleading. Theodore's dynamic theology tends towards the final goal of men: eternal, incorruptible life with Christ. Nothing is wrong with this „duality“.

3. Theodore condemned at the Council of Constantinople in 553

Before the council of Constantinople of 553 Justinian had already issued three decrees against the Three Chapters.²⁶ It is generally accepted that Theodore Askidas, bishop of Caesarea in Cappadocia since 536, was the person who pushed Justinian to condemn the Three Chapters. He is also the man who was to voice the sentence of the coun-

ist, weil sie eine konkrete, individuelle Natur ist. Wenn wir vom *prosopon* Christi sprechen, so bedeutet dies nicht, daß hinter diesem *prosopon* eine neue zusammengesetzte 'Christus-Natur' ist, wie Apollinarius annimmt. Vielmehr ist dieses *prosopon* Christi zu deuten im Licht der einzigartigen Beziehung zur angenommenen Natur, in welche die göttliche Hypostase des Logos eintritt. Dieses Annehmen ist nicht die Vereinigung der Naturen des Logos bzw. des Fleisches, um eine neue Natur zu formen, sondern die Gleichheit in Ehre, Größe, Anbetung, welche nun in gleicher Weise von Christi menschlicher Natur und der Hypostase des Logos geteilt werden.“

²³ Theodore was accused of Adoptionism, against which he defends himself. He attacks Paul of Samosata as „an angel of Satan“ for asserting that Christ was a „mere man“ (*psilos anthropos*), see Swete II, p.318

²⁴ Norris. Manhood, p.190

²⁵ This view is not known from Theodore's writings, but it is present in Cosmas Indikopleustes' *Christian Topography*, which sets forth Theodore's cosmology. See A. Ziegenaus. Die Genesis des Nestorianismus. In: Münchner Theologische Zeitschrift 23 (1972) 335-53, here pp.348/9

²⁶ Grillmeier. Jesus II/2, pp.441-49: a first edict in 543/545; a letter to Illyrian (?) bishops; and a second edict of 551 (*De recta fide*)

cil in 553. Theodore Askidas must have composed also the files for the reunion of the bishops at Constantinople in 553, which were produced extensively at the meetings of the council.

The emperor Justinian saw himself in the line of the Christian emperors Constantine and Theodosius I. and as the guardian of orthodoxy in the whole Roman Empire, which he wanted to restore. In his eyes only orthodoxy could guarantee the „harmony“ (*symphonia*) on earth and between heaven and earth. His view on cooperation with the Church is set forth in the preamble of the *Sixth Novella* of 535:

„There are two greatest gifts which God, in his love for man, has granted from On-high: the priesthood and the imperial dignity. The first serves divine things, while the latter directs and administers human affairs; both however, proceed from the same origin and adorn the life of mankind. Hence, nothing should be such a source of care to the emperors as the dignity of the priests, since it is for their (imperial) welfare that they constantly implore God. For if the priesthood is in every way free from blame and possesses access to God, and if the emperors administer equitably and judiciously the state entrusted to their care, general harmony (*symphonia*) will result and whatever is beneficial will be bestowed upon the human race.“²⁷

And in 545 - the year that pope Vigilius was arrested in Rome in order to make for Constantinople - Justinian issued his *Novella 131*, in which he declared that the canons of the four councils of Nicaea, Constantinople, Ephesus, and Chalcedon should be considered as imperial laws and that their definitions concerning the faith should be accepted as „sacred writings“.²⁸

In Justinian's letter to the Fathers of the council of 553, which was read at the opening session, Justinian reminds the patriarchs and the bishops of the constant care of the orthodox emperors to amputate the heresies and to guarantee peace in the Church. That is why the councils had been convoked: at Nicaea by Constantine against Arius, at Constantinople by Theodosius I against Macedonius and Apollinaris, at Ephesus (*prior Ephesina sancta synodus*) by Theodosius II against Nestorius. The letter sets the tune for the final condemnation of Theodore by the council.²⁹ Justinian's reasoning runs as follows. Since partisans of Nestorius and followers of Eutyches continued to sow divisions and schisms,³⁰ he [Justinian] has ordered that Chalcedon is in agreement with the three earlier councils. But nevertheless the followers of Nestorius have carried on their campaigns against the *concordia et pax* among the churches. As they could not anymore appeal to the authority of Nestorius, they started to spread their impiety by pushing forward Theodore of Mopsuestia, the teacher of Nestorius (*doctor Nestorii*) "whose blasphemies are much worse than those of Nestorius and who among innumerable other blasphemies against Christ our Lord has maintained that the God-Logos is different from

Christ (*alium dicit deum verbum et alium Christum*)".³¹ The Nestorians propagated also the impious works written by Theodoret against the orthodox faith, against the holy first council of Ephesus and against Cyril and his Twelve Chapters. And besides that, they praised that criminal letter which was said to be written by Ibas to Mari in Persia. By making use of this letter, in which not only the impious doctrine but also the persons of Theodore and Nestorius are praised, they try to secure them³² from condemnation saying that the letter has been accepted by Chalcedon. Their aim is to deny that the God-Logos became man (*non praedicetur deus verbum homo factus est*) and to deny that the Virgin Mary be called Theotokos, which is the doctrine of Theodore and Nestorius.

Justinian continues by declaring that in an earlier stage³³ the bishops had given their approval of the condemnation of the Three Chapters. But as some of them had continued their defense of the Chapters, he feels obliged after the condemnation (*post condemnationem a vobis factam*) to call the bishops to the capital. Among the opponents is pope Vigilius, who was at Constantinople since the beginning of the year 547 and who had first condemned the Three Chapters in his *Judicatum* in 548 and since then again several times. He had refused to be present at the council. He had also waved aside other possible solutions of talking about the question of the Three Chapters. The only possibility for Justinian now is, in his view: "that (at the council) all condemn those Chapters as impious or that, if somebody thinks that they are orthodox (*recta*), he clearly may say so".³⁴

Again, Justinian stresses that he is merely following the four preceding councils and the teaching of the Fathers and doctors of the Church³⁵ and all the fathers and bishops (*sacerdotes*) who preach in the Holy Church of God the doctrine of the four councils and of the holy Fathers.

The purpose and even the program of the Council is clearly brought forward: "As the heretics want by all means to defend Theodore and Nestorius and their impious doctrine ... and maintain that the letter which is supposed to be written by Ibas to Mari in Persia, has been accepted by the holy council of Chalcedon, we exhort (*hortamur*) you":

- To evaluate (*considerare*) the writings of Theodore and "his Jewish symbol of the faith", which was read at Ephesus and at Chalcedon and condemned by both councils and take measures against those men who agreed or still agree with it.

- To evaluate what the holy Fathers have written about Theodore, what Justinian's predecessors have decreed and what is to be found in the Ecclesiastical Histories about him.

³¹ ACO IV, I, p. 10, 27 ff: This was also put forward by Justinian in his letter to the Illyrian bishops after 543/544 and in his edict *De recta fide* of 551.

³² ACO IV, I, p. 10, 34 f.: *per hanc etenim impiam epistolam non solum impietatem, sed etiam ipsas personas Theodori et Nestorii, quas maxime laudat et vindicat eadem impia epistola, festinaverunt a condemnatione liberare dicentes eam susceptam esse a sancta Chalcedonensi synodo.* This also in Justinian's letter against the Three Chapters. Ibas had spoken about the condemnation of Theodore by Cyril (see ACO IV, I, p. 39, 25f.).

³³ Justinian refers to his letter after the edict of 543-544. For the remains of the text of the edict see M. Amelotti & L. Mgliardi Zingale (edd.), *Scritti teologici ed ecclesiastici di Giustiniano*, Legum Iustiniani imperatoris vocabularium, Subsidia, III (Milan, 1977), pp. 129-135.

³⁴ ACO IV, I, p. 12, 32 ff.: *mandavimus ... ut tamquam impia ista capitula de omnibus condemnentur vel, si quis putaverit recta ea esse, evidenter suam voluntatem manifestet.*

³⁵ ACO IV, I, p. 13, 6 ff: Mentioned are: Athanasius, Hilarius, Basil the Great, Gregory the Theologian, Gregory of Nyssa, Ambrose, Theophilus of Alexandria, John Chrysostom, Cyril of Alexandria, Augustine, Proclus of Constantinople (in the text here, and again in the profession of faith in the third session, ACO IV, I, p. 37, 25: "Proculus"!), Leo the Great.

²⁷ J. Meyendorff, Justinian, the Empire and the Church. In: *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 22 (1969) 43-60, esp. 48

²⁸ Ibidem, p. 47

²⁹ ACO IV/I, pp. 8-14

³⁰ ACO IV, I, p. 10, 10 f. (about the disturbances among the churches): *nec enim praesumebat aliquis de civitate ad civitatem veniens communicare nec clericus ex alia civitate ad aliam civitatem veniens in ecclesia procedere.* This resembles a passage in the letter of Ibas to Mari: *nec enim audebat aliquis de civitate in civitatem et a provincia in provinciam ire*, ACO IV, I, p. 139, 1 S f.; Syriac in J. Flemming (ed.), *Akten der ephesinischen Synode vom Jahre 449*. Syrisch (Berlin, 1917), p. 50, 12 f.

c. To take knowledge of the fact that in Mopsuestia Theodore's name has been removed from the diptychs.

d. To refute the arguments of those who say that it is not allowed to condemn heretics after their death. The holy Fathers have not only condemned heretics during their lifetime, but also after their death, "as having died in their impiety"; they also rehabilitated those who had been condemned unjustly, as has been the case with John Chrysostom [deposed in 403, rehabilitated in 412, in Alexandria only by 417] and Flavian of Constantinople [deposed at Ephesus in 449, rehabilitated at Chalcedon].

e. To investigate the impious works of Theodoret against orthodoxy (*recta fides*), against the first council of Ephesus, against Cyril and his Twelve Chapters, and in defense of Theodore and Nestorius.³⁶

f. To examine the impious letter said to be written by Ibas to Mari in Persia, in which the author denies that the God-Logos was made man and in which he denies that the Holy Virgin may be called Theotokos. This letter condemns the first council of Ephesus as having condemned Nestorius without any inquiry and investigation. The letter calls holy Cyril, the doctor of the Church, a heretic and calls his Twelve Chapters impious formulations, whereas Theodore and Nestorius are praised. Some people maintain erroneously that the letter has been approved by Chalcedon. The text of the letter should be compared with the definition of the orthodox faith of the council of Chalcedon.

The program "proposed" by Justinian in his letter was carefully carried out in the subsequent sessions of the council. No place is given in the *acta* of the council for real discussions. Instead of proceedings, the *gesta* look more like a re-edition of the dossier which had already been prepared before the opening of the council; they contain almost exclusively texts which were read at the Council. The file, indeed, was ready and had been composed by Theodore Askidas and Justinian in their negotiations with pope Vigilius. At the council of 553, the only variable was the attitude and the reaction of Vigilius, who had earlier agreed with the condemnation of the Three Chapters, but who had declined to be present at the imperial Council and was preparing his reaction, now in favour of Theodore. His (first) *Constitutum* would only be ready by May 24.

The Council gathered in eight sessions:³⁷

- | | |
|---------------------------|--|
| Session I (May 5) | Opening and reading of Justinian's letter. |
| Session II (May 8) | About negotiations with pope Vigilius |
| Session III (May 9) | Profession of faith of the council (extract of Justinian's letter). |
| Session IV (May 12 or 13) | Concerning Theodore; reading of florilegium from his works. ³⁸ |
| Session V (May 17) | Concerning Theodore: Reading from texts of Church Fathers (especially Cyril), of imperial laws and from Ecclesiastical |

³⁶ ACO IV, I, p. 13, 36 ff.: *quae ... conscripsit [Theodoretus] pro Theodoro et Nestorio et blasphemis eorum [!] contra sanctae memoriae Cyrillum.*

³⁷ See for a survey F.-X. Murphy & P. Sherwood, *Constantinople II et Constantinople III, Histoire des Conciles Oecuméniques*, 3 (Paris, 1973), pp. 86-105.

³⁸ Devreesse, *Essai*, pp. 254 f. on these fragments: "N'oublions pas de retenir ... que ces fragments, là où nous avons pu les comparer avec le texte d'où ils étaient arrachés et avec leurs authentiques parallèles, nous les avons trouvés à chaque fois mutilés, tronqués, coupés de leur contexte ou détournés de leur sens, arrangés et remaniés, soumis à la même torture que les documents grâce à quoi Justinien, suivi par l'assemblée de mai 553, voulait démontrer que la tradition n'avait jamais cessé d'être anti-theodorienne."

History of Hesychius of Jerusalem. (The real proveniences of the texts are quite questionable.³⁹)

Concerning the question about condemnation of deceased.

Concerning the inquiry in Mopsuestia: Theodore has been removed from the diptychs in that church.

Concerning the case of Theodoret.

Concerning the letter of Ibas to Mari.

Concerning the reaction of pope Vigilius.⁴⁰

Closing of the council: condemnation of the Three Chapters.

As can be seen from the survey, the case of the Three Chapters was treated in three subsequent sessions which took place within one week (May 12 being a Monday). The final session had to be postponed because of the reaction of pope Vigilius: session VIII is a Monday and two weeks later than the Monday of session VI.

The final declaration, read at the closure of the council and prepared by a committee under the direction of Theodore Askidas, added nothing substantial to what Justinian in his earlier edicts and in his introductory letter had already declared and 'proposed'. The long final declaration contains a résumé of the programme of the council with the exception that about Vigilius is only said that he had refused to be present at the council; no word about his being cancelled from the diptychs at the end of the seventh session. Fourteen anathemas against the Three Chapters⁴¹ were added to the final sentence of the council. They are almost a literal reproduction of Justinian's edict of 551. In some of the anathemas (4, 5 and 6) Theodore's name is mentioned; anathema 12 is exclusively dedicated to Theodore (see Annex).

4. Theodore in Syria and in the Church of the East

Justinian's victory at the council of Constantinople in 553 is not the end of problems which had arisen with the council of Ephesus in 431. The status of Syriac theology was greatly involved. Especially two elements play an important role in the process of eliminating or accepting Theodore:

- the diffusion of his works in the Syriac language;
- the 'monophysite' reaction to the Council of Ephesus (and later to the council of Chalcedon).

³⁹ Devreesse, *Essai*, pp. 233-240 with as conclusion: "A part une pièce [concerning letter of Gregory Nazianz] pas un seul document dont on ne puisse dire ou soupçonner qu'il est faux, mutilé, ou d'origine incertaine, détourne de son sens ou provoque pour les besoins de la cause." (p.240)

⁴⁰ Vigilius' first *Constitutum* (against of the Three Chapters) was ready by May 14. Justinian's reaction, read at the end of the seventh session of the Council: *ipse [Vigilius] semet ipsum alienum catholicae ecclesiae fecit ... Separans ... semet ipsum a vestra communione ... alienum Christianis iudicavimus nomen ipsius sacris diptychis non recitari, ne eo modo inveniamur Nestorii et Theodori impietati communicantes ... Unitatem vero ad apostolicam sedem et nos servamus et certum est, quod et vos custodietis*, ACO IV, I, p. 202, 5 ff. See on Vigilius and the council: W. de Vries, *Das zweite Konzil von Konstantinopel (553) und Das Lehramt von Papst und Kirche*, *Orientalia Christiana Periodica*, 38 (1972), pp. 331-366.

⁴¹ See Grillmeier, *Jesus*, II, 2, pp. 467-475.

4.1. Theodore's Works in Syriac

Earlier instruction in Syriac theology had followed the works of Ephrem. But by the end of Theodore's life Theodore's works were being translated into the Syriac language by teachers of the School of Edessa in a process which may be called the 'Hellenisation' of Syriac theological education. Although works of other prominent Greek pagan and christian authors (such as Aristotle and Eusebius) were translated, the writings of Theodore became soon the primary source for education at the school. A prominent teacher of the school was Ibas; he was one of the propagators of Theodore's works in Syriac. In his letter to Mari of Persia, written after the peace of 433 between Cyril of Alexandria and John of Antioch and dealing with the desperate situation in the Church since the break out of the Christological controversy, Ibas complains about the behaviour of wicked people and especially about the 'monophysite' pressure by Rabbula, bishop of Edessa:

"One of them is the tyrant of our metropolis, who may also be known to you. Under the pretext of faith he takes revenge not only on people who are still alive, but also on persons who have expired in the Lord a long time ago, so for instance on the blessed Theodore, the preacher of the truth and the teacher (*malpana*) of the Church, who not only during his life has forced the heretics into his true faith, but who even after his death has left with his writings a spiritual weapon to the sons of the Church. He [Rabbula], who claims for himself all power in the Church, has dared to condemn publicly him who in his zeal for God not only had turned his town [Mopsuestia] from error to the truth, but also had educated even the most remote churches through his teaching."

Ibas mentions further that Rabbula, who formerly had been an admirer of Theodore and who had loved his works very much, had changed in his attitude towards Theodore and had started a trial on his writings.⁴²

In the later part of the fifth century the school of Edessa was closed under 'monophysite' repression. Its work was continued at the school of Nisibis, where the great Narsai became a leading figure. Narsai also found his inspiration mainly in Theodore's teaching. In his poetic *Homily on the three Fathers and doctors Diodore, Theodore and Nestorius* he is very angry about what happened at the Cyrilline council of Ephesus in 431, where Nestorius had been condemned without being present. He recalls Theodore's fight against the heretics and against error, and mentions his influence and success in many places and among many nations. He may rightly be called „doctor of the doctors".

"By the treasure of his writings all ... have been enriched, and by his commentaries they have acquired the faculty of interpretation. It is in his school [the school of Edessa] that I, too, learned to stammer, and, by frequenting him, I learned the practice of meditating Holy Writ. His meditation was for me like a guidance towards Scripture. He raised me up to the intelligence of the Writings of the Spirit. Because of his merits, I fight against his enemies and I shall show that they have denied his merits unjustly."⁴³

⁴² Letter of Ibas to Mari, Flemming, pp. 48-50. Ibas is dyophysite in his conviction: two natures, one power, one *parsopa*. - Andrew of Samosata says in his Letter to Alexander of Hierapolis that Rabbula had Theodore's books condemned and had ordered to burn them; ACO I, IV, p. 86.

⁴³ F. Martin (ed.), 'Homélie de Narsès sur les trois docteurs nestoriens', Journal asiatique, nouv. ser., 15 (1900), pp.475, 505 f. His conviction: the distinction of the natures and the unity of the *parsopa*.

In the beginning of the sixth century it is Abraham of Bet Rabban who made the Syriac translations of Theodore, which were normative in the education at the school of Nisibis, better accessible in a more comprehensible Syriac presentation.⁴⁴ But a crisis broke out with the reorientation of the exegesis in the school under Abraham's pupil Henana. Henana introduced the (allegorical) line of thought of Philo and of Origen and replaced the authority of Theodore by that of John Chrysostom.⁴⁵ But although Henana's aspirations caused great trouble in the Church of the East, his new programme was not of long duration. That is due to the influence of Babai the Great (609-628) who wrote a (lost) work in defense of Theodore.

4.2. Reactions to the Council of Ephesus

Several reports on the history of the Three Chapters have been presented at the 2nd consultation of the Syriac Dialogue (by Geevarghese Chediath, Corbishop M.J. Birnie, Mar Gregorios Saliba, Vincenzo Poggi). It is clear that Justinian was victorious in the case of the Three Chapters, but his victory was a bitter one.⁴⁶ The West disapproved and in the East the rivalry between 'monophysites' and 'dyophysites' had not been solved.

Since the early thirties of the fourth century Syria had become more and more a 'monophysite' stronghold. 'Dissenters' as Ibas and Theodoret had to anathematize Nestorius at Chalcedon. When Ibas, who had become the successor of Rabbula as bishop of Edessa, died in 457, the Theodorian dyophysites lost one of their most prominent defenders. The scene shifted more and more eastwards, firstly by the activities of the school of Nisibis, secondly by the influence of that school on the Church of the East across the border.

The Synod of Bet Lapat in 484 echoes the reaction in the Sasanian Empire:

"Because of the malicious rumours spread against him [Theodore] in different places, nobody of us should have any doubt about this holy man. During his life he was considered as the most famous and the first among the teachers of the faith; after his death all his commentaries and his treatises became precious and loved by all those who understand the profound meaning of Divine Scripture and who venerate the Orthodox faith ..."⁴⁷

The very high esteem of the Church of the East for Theodore is well attested in the period of restauration under catholicos Mar Aba (540-552). In his earlier years he had travelled through Palestine, Greece and Egypt. At a sermon in Alexandria he had made use of Theodore's exegesis.⁴⁸ There, at Alexandria, he had met Cosmas Indicopleustes. During his stay at Constantinople, Justinian would have insisted that he should anathematize Diodore, Theodore and Nestorius, but Mar Aba fled from the town.⁴⁹

⁴⁴ A. Vööbus, *History of the School of Nisibis* (Louvain 1965), p. 137.

⁴⁵ Vööbus, *History*, pp. 243 f., 317.

⁴⁶ "Giustiniano esce vincitore dall' affare del Tre Capitoli, ma è una misera vittoria." M. Amelotti & L. Migliardi Zingale, *Scritti teologici*, p. XXVI.

⁴⁷ J.B. Chabot (ed.), *Synodicon Orientale* (Paris, 1902), pp. 21 l, 475.

⁴⁸ *Vie de Mar Aba*, Bedjan, p. 218 and *Histoire nestorienne*, Scher, PO 7, p. 56; see A. Guillaumont, 'Justinien et l'Eglise de Perse', *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, 23/24 (1969/70), pp. 39-66, here p. 45.

⁴⁹ Guillaumont, 'Justinien', p. 45. There also more about the presence of 'Nestorians' at Constantinople.

Peace and war between Byzantium and Persia succeeded each other and Justinian hoped for allies at and beyond the border of his Empire. The 'Nestorians', once been brought back into the unity of the Church, could be of great help. So, Justinian invited the director of the school of Nisibis, Abraham of Bet Rabban, to come to Constantinople for a consultation about his faith. But Abraham, being too old to travel and too busy with teaching, excused himself and sent an answer to the Emperor and a profession of faith, in which he made clear that he would never cancel the names of Diodore, Theodore and Nestorius from the diptychs. A delegation was sent to Constantinople in order to discuss the doctrine of the two *qnome* of Christ, which would involve - in the eyes of the imperial 'orthodox' speakers - a duality of Holy Trinity.⁵⁰

It took some time before the Church of the East voiced a grievance against the condemnation of Theodore by the council of Constantinople of 553. The synods of 554 and of 576 do not contain any particular hints. But the synod of 585 has an apology of Theodore the Interpreter: "We decree by the Word of God ... that no one from any of the ecclesiastical ranks is allowed, secretly or openly, to revile this doctor of the Church, or to reject his holy writings, or to accept another commentary which is alien to the truth ... One who ventures hiddenly or openly, to stand against these things which we have said and written above, shall be anathematized and a stranger from all ecclesiastical congregations ..."⁵¹ This is, however, not a direct reference to the council of Constantinople, although in the apology of the synod mention is made of Theodore's commentary on Job, which had also been the case at the council in its fourth session.⁵² The synod reacted directly to the new method of Henana at the school of Nisibis (see above)⁵³ and to Henana's own commentary on Job. The defense of Theodore by the synod of 596 should be read in the same light: "We also cast out and anathematize all who reject the interpretations, commentaries and teachings of the approved teacher the blessed Mar Theodore, the Interpreter and attempt to bring in new and foreign commentaries full of humbug and blasphemy, rising up against the true and accurate teaching of the blessed one and all the true doctors, the teachers of the schools who have continued in his footsteps, confirmed his teaching and handed down the true and accurate faith of orthodoxy without corruption in this our eastern region."⁵⁴ The synod of 605 exalted again the teaching of Theodore by quoting from the synod of Barsauma at Beit Lapat in 484 (see above).

The final repression of Henana's diphysitism, which, with its denial of the two *qnome*, resembled the position of Justinian and of the council of Constantinople, came from Babai the Great who was in charge of the See of the Church of the East from 609 to 628.

⁵⁰ According to Guillaumont, 'Justinien', p. 51 the discussion took place in 562/563. For the text and the translation of the discussion see also Guillauminot. In the discussion there is no explicit reference to the condemnation of Theodore in 553.

⁵¹ Chabot, pp. 138, 400. See the translation in G. Chediath, 'The Three Chapters Controversy', *Syriac Dialogue II* (Vienna, 1996), pp. 113-125, here p. 114.

⁵² ACO IV, I, p. 66.

⁵³ See also Vööbus, History, p. 244f. It is also interesting that in the synodical apology of Theodore John Chrysostom's good relation with Theodore (John's letter to Theodore) is mentioned. The Church of the East did, of course, not reject John, but reacted against Enana's substitution of Theodore by John. - According to J. Labourt, *Le christianisme dans l'Empire perse sous la dynastie sassanide (229-632)* (Paris, 1904), p. 276 f. and Guillaumont, 'Justinien', p. 55 the confession of faith by Ishoyab which is attached to the text of the synod, has been drawn up with direct reference to anathemas 2 and 3 of the council of Constantinople in 553.

⁵⁴ Chabot, pp. 198, 459, trans. Chediath, Three Chapters, pp. 114f.

Babai strongly rejects the council of Constantinople. In his *Book of the Union* he states: "After these things, the worst burst out there, achieving every impiety; I mean that caused by Justinian the emperor, the Roman tyrant ... He dared to anathematize ... certain true sons of the Church, who many years before had died in happy, peaceful and Catholic orthodoxy ... as we demonstrated in a book which we wrote against his impiety and blasphemy. ... And we ought to say something about the long refutation which we wrote against the blasphemies contained in the writing of Justinian against the Orthodox so as to show the invincible truth in that venerable union made for our salvation ..."⁵⁵ The pro-Constantinopolitan thread in the Church of the East was over and Theodore remained without doubt the great Interpreter.

5. Conclusion

- a. Theodore's vision on Christian life is an adequate expression of the message of the Bible.
- b. Theodore's Christology is one of the legitimate expressions of orthodox belief.
- c. The condemnation of Theodore in 553 had been planned beforehand and programmed by the emperor Justinian. No real discussion was allowed at the council of Constantinople in 553.
- d. Even according to Justinian's own principle the ban on Theodore can be lifted.
- e. Theodore of Mopsuestia should be recognized as a true Father of the Church.

Annex

From: Council of Constantinople (553), Anathemas against the Three Chapters. Trans.: N.P. Tanner (ed.), *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, I (London-Washington D.C., 1990), pp. 119-129.

If anyone defends the heretical Theodore of Mopsuestia, who said that God the Word is one, while quite another is Christ, who was troubled by the passions of the soul and the desires of human flesh, was gradually separated from that which is inferior, and became better by his progress in good works, and could not be faulted in his way of life, and as a mere man was baptized in the name of the Father and the Son and the holy Spirit, and through this baptism received the grace of the holy Spirit and came to deserve sonship and to be adored, in the way that one adores a statue of the emperor, as if he were God the Word, and that he became after his resurrection immutable in his thoughts and entirely without sin. Furthermore this heretical Theodore claimed that the union of God the Word to Christ is rather like that which, according to the teaching of the Apostle, is between a man and his wife: *The two shall become one* (Eph. 5, 31).

Among innumerable other blasphemies he dared to allege that, when after his resurrection the Lord breathed on his disciples and said, *Receive the holy Spirit* (Jn 20, 22), he was not truly giving them the holy Spirit, but he breathed on them only as a sign. Similarly he claimed that Thomas' profession of faith made when, after his resurrection, he

⁵⁵ Trans. V. Poggi. The controversy of the Three Chapters. In: *Syriac Dialogue II*, pp. 142-150, esp. 147. Babai quotes anathemas 2 and 4 and refers to anathema 3 of the council of Constantinople in 553.

touched the hands and side of the Lord, namely *My Lord and my God* (Jn 20, 28), was not said about Christ, but that Thomas was in this way extolling God for raising up Christ and expressing his astonishment at the miracle of the resurrection. This Theodore makes a comparison which is even worse than this when, writing about the acts of the Apostles, he says that Christ was like Plato, Manichaens, Epicurus and Marcion, alleging that just as each of these men arrived at his own teaching and then had his disciples called after him, Platonists, Manichaeans, Epicureans and Marcionites, so Christ found his teaching and then had disciples who were called Christians.

If anyone offers a defense for this more heretical Theodore, and his heretical books in which he throws up the aforesaid blasphemies and many other additional blasphemies against our great God and savior Jesus Christ, and if anyone fails to anathematize him and his heretical books as well as all those who offer acceptance or defense to him, or who allege that his interpretation is correct, or who write on his behalf or on that of his heretical teachings, or who are or have been of the same way of thinking and persist until death in this error: let him be anathema.

Second working session: Tuesday afternoon

Chairman: *Metropolitan Mar Aprem of Trichur*

Discussions

Prof. Abramowski: I appreciate that Mar Bawai has based his paper on the catechetical homilies of Theodore. Since the first translation by Mingana translations into French and German (by Peter Bruns) have been printed and interest in these writings has risen. "De Incarnatione" is a work of Theodore's youth and one could say that it is not very constructed.

In the decisive chapters of "De Incarnatione" Theodore does indeed mention that no nature can be without hypostasis and prosopon. But he does not draw the explicit conclusion that there are two prosopa in Christ.

Regarding the unity of Christ he says there is one prosopon. This ambivalence led a few theologians like Nestorius, and in a different way Pseudo-Nestorius, to draw their own conclusions of two prosopa in Christ.

It seems that Theodore did not find a satisfactory description of the unity of Christ.

In Theodore's view the special prosopa of Christ is one of honor and adoration, a doxological and not an ontological explanation. Christ is Dominus, human nature is deified. He never forgot the Jesus of the gospel, as well as the Antiochians who never were abstract about Christ. We also must never be too abstract in our theological language.

Msgr. Beggiani: It seems that in faith everyone wants to say the same thing. Theodore expressed the complete humanity of Jesus Christ all right. Whether or not he was successful expressing the ontological union has to be debated. Theodore comes out with language which however is always limited. What is important: the language used must measure up to our faith.

Amba Bishoy: I got the following impressions about the writings of Theodore. In Hefele and other authors we can read: Theodore did not suppose a true union of the two natures in Christ. Is there a person of the logos and a person of the man? Theodore did not suppose a true union of the two natures in Christ. The Greek word *synhaptō* means: joined together, fixed together which means only an external connection, the logos dwells in the man as in a temple.

I see pronounced not one but two prosopa in Theodore's expression.

The Logos dwelled in Jesus in a particular way but Theodore expresses Mary as "Christbearer" not Godbearer. Amba Bishoy quotes Theodore again according to Hefele: "He was not yet the Son of God when he was still in the womb of the mother", and: "It is madness to say: mother of God".

The Council of Constantinople failed to appease Alexandria but at least in this century it was the basis for our accordance.

Dr. Abramowski: 1) The true nature of Christ is "temple", that we can read in the Bible. Jesus spoke of his body as a temple. 2) "Two natures and one flesh" is a point of comparison. If Theodore mentions in *De Incarnatione* as a Biblical proof that man and woman are one flesh, then the point of comparison is to show that two can be one. If Cyril explains that the use of the verb *synhaptō* is not satisfactory in expressing the Christological unity then he does not mention - with or without purpose - that *synapheia* has long had in spiritual terms the meaning of "asynchotos henosis" which is the central concept of the formula of Chalcedon.

Dr. Hainthaler: We always have to take into consideration the historical situation. Theodore was fighting against heresies like Arianism and Apollinarianism.

Dr. Chediath: *Synapheia* explains the oneness of the trinity in three persons, the most intimate Divine union.

Dr. Abramowski: It would be worth considering to stress the concept of the double homoousia as a basis for Christology. This formula was used for the first time by Athanasius the Great and it is an idea which all christological schools of that time have in common except for the extreme Eutyches.

Fr. Carter: I am impressed by the advance Theodore makes regarding the one prosopon in Christ. Differently Severian has two prosopa (meaning mask, manifestation) as a concrete expression of Divinity and humanity. Theodore goes well beyond the development of his predecessors and contemporaries.

Amba Bishoy: All the Fathers of the Orthodox churches have always accused the use of two prosopa in Jesus Christ and never spoke about two persons in Jesus Christ.

Dr. Hainthaler: It was not the point for Theodore to see two subjects. All quotations of Theodore have to be interpreted because his words were expressed against the heresy of Theopaschism, which is the idea that God suffered, and against the idea that a human being should be the source of Divinity, a Goddess. Therefore he made it in this way, this was the real meaning. We must see it in that context.

Msgr. Beggiani: We cannot read later philosophy back into that time and we cannot say that Theodore should have used other words which were developed later only. I am surprised to see that Amba Bishoy is dissecting Theodore's words in such a way. Theodore was not so naive as to say Christ was two separate persons, we cannot be so stupid to believe that.

Dr. Hainthaler is not so impressed with the concept of the "double ousia". Let us rather bring together the knowledge of our traditions!

Dr. Chediath: The Catechetical homilies give a good, representative picture and express the faith of the Church. To isolate words and take them out of their context is not correct.

Amba Bishoy mentions: regarding the term theotokos I was careful not to say that the logos has taken Divinity from Mary. Mar Bawai in his paper expressed it right.

Prof. Jammo: Many times our reading is really a matter of interpretation. We have to deal with one prosopa. Yes, the Church of the East in texts or liturgy speaks of two qnome but never of two prosopa. Theodore at his time was breaking ground but he did not have our level of theology. Dwelling in a temple is a very good word, it is Pauline theology. Regarding the terms "kyana, qnome and prosopon" Fr. Jammo states that he uses the wording and meaning which has already been printed in PRO ORIENTE'S edition on the Syrian dialogue.

Our approach to interpret these texts is that God assumed humanity in Jesus Christ. At that time however they were talking about the reality of the Jesus of the Bible and they wanted to analyze and see what would be inside that person: they see a full humanity and a full Divinity and God uses this humanity for his purpose. That's the new Adam. We need both complementary approaches: God as the savior who is using our humanity.

qnome: individuated nature

prosopa: the ultimate manifestation of that nature

Amba Bishoy: I am happy to hear that in Syriac Theodore may not be wrong. If we read it in Greek, all the Fathers at the Second Council of Constantinople refused it as a teaching of two persons. Nobody can claim that all these people were falsifying his language. Theodore's teaching was more dangerous than that of Nestorius, his disciple.

Fr. Griffith: The title of the paper: "the person and teaching of Theodore" shows that his person became an icon of opposition with hermeneutics of his own perspective. How did this come about? This is something we can investigate.

Fr. Sako: Theodore's homily aimed at helping the people to be good Christians. Therefore it does not contain Christological formulations or definitions.

Prof. Abramowski: Besides the special use of qnome in Trinitology and Christology we must not forget that of course the normal daily use of these words in the Syrian language continued. I remember the passage of the Synodicon Orientale that speaks of the qnome of the Catholicos.

On the other hand qnome had indeed been chosen to translate the Greek word hypostasis. I remember a passage of Catholicos Timotheus I, who died in 823, where he expressly equates qnome and hypostasis, writing the latter word in transliteration of the corresponding Greek letters.

In the Greek language it is wrong and erroneous to translate "two qnome" with "two persons" as it has happened in most recent times.

Mar Bawai thanks for all the comments which reflect interest even if they show us on both sides of the fence. I based my papers on the Catechetical Homilies. Here Theodore's speech is most clear. I had a great appreciation of his Christology while he as well remembered the historical context.

In the tradition of the Church of the East (Mar Abba the Great) the Fathers based their defence on the interpretation of the Nicene Creed. I realize that there is always more than one way to understand the Church Fathers. Metaphysics is only one way. I agree with Msgr. Beggiani that Theodore is not the best example for the ontological union.

Human language is always weak. Rather than being strict in dogmatical terms I have used doxology and Catechism. If we take only parts of his writings it would not be safe to assess Theodore well, we would read him out of context.

I tried to find out what the true teaching of Theodore is taking account of the cultural context and his situation fighting heresies. There was political influence involved as well as ecclesiastical politics.

Prof. Davids: Theodore Askidas wanted to divert Justinian's thoughts from issuing more condemnations against Origen. He wanted Justinian to condemn Theodore who was also called a pelagianist. Later authors called Theodore a rationalist and a subjectivist. Some of the authors that Amba Bishoy named do not quote accurately. Hardouin, Mansi and Hefele-Leclercq use council collections which contain falsified texts of Theodore. Regarding the texts upon which Theodore was convicted it must be said that these words do not express the real opinions of Theodore. But Justinian wanted Theodore condemned who had not even been mentioned at Ephesus.

NESTORIUS IN SYRIAN ORTHODOX TRADITION: A PLEA FOR REVISION IN THE LIGHT OF RECENT RESEARCH

1. Preface

Above all else, I entreat my audience to listen to me with patience and love. This is a sensitive subject.

The person and teachings of Nestorius, Patriarch of Constantinople, who was excommunicated at the Council of Ephesus, have never ceased to be the subject of controversy.

More than fifteen centuries have passed since a Council of the Church in the Roman Empire was held at Ephesus in AD 431. Even the first three Councils, which our Syrian Orthodox Church has traditionally accepted as representative of the Church as a whole, seemed to others to be regional meetings, the decisions of which might or might not be adopted by the synod of bishops living under Persian rule. The Persian Church adopted the resolutions of Nicaea (325) and Constantinople (381) only in 410, at the same time as it affirmed its right to govern itself, not to be governed from the Roman Empire. It never adopted the resolutions of Ephesus (431), which it regarded as invalid on procedural grounds alone. Under the influence of Barsauma of Nisibis, passionate antagonist of the Syrian Orthodox, the Persian Church accepted the teachings of Nestorius, in full knowledge that he had been anathematized in the Roman Empire.

We still live with the consequences of these events, which tore in two: the Syrian Orthodox Church of Antioch and the Holy Catholic and Apostolic Assyrian Church of the East. The believers of these two Churches were separated before the Council of Ephesus only by the border between two empires. The fact that the Persian Church did not accept the Council of Ephesus meant that it went its own way after the fifth century.

The Christians in the Persian Empire could be seen by their rulers as potentially disloyal, unless they dissociated themselves from the Christians in the Roman Empire. As putative traitors they might well suffer persecution in time of war; indeed, this happened more than once. Barsauma's policy of identifying his church with a man whose name was anathema in the West was successful. When the Persians conquered Mesopotamia in 609, they tried at first to impose a Nestorian bishop on the Church of Edessa. It was only when this failed that they supported the Syrian Orthodox bishop, instead, as the next most anti-Roman bishop they could find.

I say we still live with these ecclesiastical events because phrases formulated then are enshrined in our historical, theological, ascetical and liturgical books. These books, which are still in common use today, point an accusing finger at the person of Nestorius and at his teachings.

In our search for the unity of our churches, the Supreme Head of the Syrian Orthodox Church, His Holiness Mar Ignatius Zakka I Iwas, Patriarch of Antioch and of All the East, has delegated to me the task of conveying to you all his love and warm invocations for the success of this meeting. Our purpose is to begin to write a new history of our relationship in the spirit of Christian love. I deeply thank the foundation PRO ORIENTE for their invitation to the Syrian Churches to pursue this dialogue. Our own Church is particularly keen to strengthen relations with the Church of the East and with the other Syrian Churches and sees this dialogue as an important means to that end.

However, when reconciliation is desired, it is necessary first to be honest to the Apostolic Tradition of the undivided church. The condemnation of Nestorius and his followers became a test of loyalty in the Syrian Orthodox Church. Jacob of Serugh, who managed to stay above the dispute about Chalcedon, was forced by his fellow-churchmen to prove his loyalty by condemning Nestorius in no uncertain terms.

We have to look closely and critically at the image of Nestorius and his teachings in the books which the Syrian Orthodox tradition regards as authoritative. This is too great a task to finish in one session. All that I can do here is to review three categories of authority: history, liturgy and doctrine, taking a few books as representative of the whole tradition. I shall take Michael first, as representative of the Syrian Orthodox historiography; then the Shehimo, the Beth Gazzo and the Book of Ordination of the Clergy, as representative of the attitude enshrined in the Syrian Orthodox liturgy; then Philoxenos of Mabbugh, Severus of Antioch and Jacob of Serugh, as representative of the doctrine of the Syrian Orthodox Church. Both Philoxenos and Jacob were contemporaries of the Patriarch Severus, who reigned from 512 at Antioch and then, in exile, from 518 until 538. Severus was exiled for his opposition to the Council of Chalcedon (451). It is important to be aware that the crisis which resulted from that Council also affected Severus' attitude to the Church of the East, because its creed also spoke of two natures in the Incarnate Son. The same applies to Philoxenos of Mabbugh, who, like Severus, was outspoken in his opposition to Chalcedon. But Jacob of Serugh seems to have tried to preserve the unity of the Church by promoting the idea that the nature of the Incarnate Son cannot be captured in a logical formula.

At the end, I shall return to **Mar Gregorios Bar Hebraeus**, in order to consider his attitude towards the Church of the East, on the one hand, and his attitude towards Nestorius and his teacher, Theodore of Mopsuestia, on the other hand, in order to give a wider picture including different views of some of the theologians in the Syrian Orthodox Church, who was affected by closer relations with the Eastern Syriac theologians.

2. History

The best known authority for the Syrian Orthodox view of Church History is the Patriarch Michael, who composed his chronicle in the eleventh century, using earlier sources. His sources for Nestorius and his doctrine were the fifth-century church historian Socrates Scholastikos and the sixth-century historian Zacharias Rhetor, in Syriac translations of the original Greek texts. Michael's *Chronicle* consists of twenty-one books covering secular and ecclesiastical history from the creation of the world up to his own time, with a separate catch-all category for various isolated events, such as

earthquakes. Nestorius is first mentioned in Book VIII, chapter 3, which contains the following extracts from Socrates, *Church History*, Book VII, chapters 29, 31 and 32:

"Nestorius preached a sermon in Constantinople, in which he said to the emperor: 'Give me, O emperor, the earth cleansed of heretics, and I will give you heaven in return. You get rid of the heretics for me and I will get rid of the Persians for you.' The emperor and many besides did not find these things acceptable. Nestorius displayed an irascible temper and a high opinion of himself. He was unwilling to bide his time before saying these things, but, as they say, before he had even tasted the water of the City, he revealed himself as a virulent scourge of its people. [...]

There is a proverb which says, 'There is no shortage of wine for the man who loves wine.' So it was with Nestorius. He threatened to drive out others, but he himself was driven out. For the Emperor Theodosius commanded a universal council to be held in Ephesus. [...]

One day, Anastasius, a priest of Nestorius, took his place to preach and he had the effrontery to shout out openly, 'Let no one call Mary the Mother of God. Mary was a human being and it is impossible for God to be born from a human being.' When the people heard such blasphemies, they thought that Nestorius would immediately repudiate Anastasius. When they saw that he did not, they realized that Anastasius had spoken with the permission of Nestorius. Then the whole city was in an uproar; and for that reason it was necessary to hold a universal council. Nestorius had a natural talent for public speaking and that made him seem learned, but in actual fact he was not well educated. For the divinity is united with the humanity in Christ our Lord, so that the Lord Jesus is not two, but one. Nestorius did not call Christ a mere human being, as Photinus and Paul of Samosat had done, but in every place he confesses Him as *qnumoyo* [Greek: *enhypostatos*]. So for this reason the Emperor Theodosius commanded there to be a universal assembly."

In the following chapter, Michael draws on Zacharias (see p. 100 in the third volume of Land's edition of the Syriac translation, which is the only version surviving):

"In AG 742 [= AD 431], in the twenty-first year of his reign, the Emperor Theodosius summoned the First Synod of Ephesus, in which, as Zacharias Rhetor says, 193 bishops took part who are known by name, in addition to a large number of other fathers and teachers and firm believers in the Orthodox Faith. This resulted in the deposition of Nestorius and his exile to the Oasis."

Finally, in chapter 5, Michael quotes from Socrates, Book VII, chapters 25 and 39, as follows:

"When, at the command of the Emperor Theodosius, the bishops of both parties went up to the Royal City for an inquest, the easterners were defeated; those on the side of Cyril [of Alexandria] won the day and the [decision of the] synod was confirmed. Then, reluctantly, because the Emperor commanded it, or rather because of his awful threats, [the easterners] agreed to confess the same as the synod and to be united with Cyril and the two sides recognised each others' sees. But the peace which they made was no peace, because in their hearts their confession of faith was that of Nestorius. Those who fought for the doctrine of Nestorius and were enemies of the holy Cyril were Theodore of Cyrhus, Andrew of Samosat, Alexander of Mabbugh [and others of lesser importance]. [...]

Nestorius was deposed because he attributed two natures to Christ after the Union [of the divinity with the humanity], imagining that the Embryo which was conceived in the [womb of the] Virgin - and which he called 'Jesus' - came first and that Christ descended into him after his conception, as Paul and Diodoros and Theodoros (of Mopsuestia) had taught."

Gregorios Bar Hebraeus (died 1286) tells essentially the same story in his *History of the Patriarchs*. His account is a little fuller at times, so he did not just rely on Michael.

"It was at the time of John [patriarch of Antioch] that the belief of Nestorius appeared, for which reason the Council of Ephesus was held. According to the history of Zacharias Rhetor, 193 bishops attended it. What happened was that one day, Anastasius, one of Nestorius' priests, gave a sermon in the church. He announced clearly that no one should call Mary Mother of God; for the woman gave birth to a human being, not to God. When the people heard that, they thought that Nestorius should remove his clerical standing; but they discovered that it was the belief of Nestorius, too. When the news reached the ears of St Cyril, the Bishop of Alexandria, he wrote a letter to Nestorius to stop him but he did not stop. That is why Cyril of Alexandria wrote his Twelve Chapters, in which he showed how believing in Christ should be. Whoever does not believe in this faith will be anathematized. When Nestorius obdurately went on with his opinion, Cyril petitioned the Emperor Theodosius II to hold an Ecumenical Council. The Emperor complied with his request and summoned the bishops to Ephesus in June. Nestorius arrived before them all. Cyril arrived after Easter. John was late for the date appointed to start the council."

Theodore of Cyrhus, the leading proponent of the doctrine of Chalcedon, was also a protagonist of the doctrine of Nestorius. Bar Hebraeus went further and added that 'Nestorius arrived before them all'.

Evidently Nestorius made himself unpopular from his first arrival in the City by his boastfulness and his puritanism. This was before the priest Anastasius caused a furore by his sermon.

3. Liturgy

Under this heading I shall consider three liturgical texts: the Shehimo, or Syrian Orthodox Book of Common Prayer; the Beth Gazzo, or Store [of Chants]; and the Book of Ordination. These are only a few of the many liturgical books used in the Syrian Orthodox Church. We also have a large number of Anaphoras, or Eucharistic Prayers; four festal prayer-books: the Fenqitho [Greek: *pinakidion*] of Sundays through the year, the Fenqitho of the feasts of our Lord and of the Saints; and the Fenqitho of the Fasts and of Holy Week. We also have the Husoye (books of prayers of forgiveness) for Sundays, feasts, fasts and Holy Week. We also have the liturgies of baptism, marriage, extreme unction and burial. We have books for sacramental services, invocations for the use of priests and prayers for the use of monks. In all these liturgical books, there are clear statements on our subject.

The Shehimo, or Book of Common Prayer, is more important, for our concerns, than any other liturgical book, because it is used every day. The compiler of the Shehi-

mo was probably Jacob of Edessa (died 708 AD); the authors of the hymns it contains are Ephrem the Syrian (died 373), Isaac of Amida (died 418), Balai (died 450), Simon the Potter (died 514) and Jacob of Serugh (died 528). Jacob of Edessa himself must have had an ample share in writing it. There are many hymns in honour of Mary, the Mother of God. One may be quoted here at length to stand for all:

1. What shall I call you, O Daughter of David? I do not know.
How should I name you, Mary? I cannot tell.
Should I call you a virgin? A son sucks at your breast.
Should I call you a mother? Your maidenhead is intact.
Then I shall call you the Mother of God,
to put the disputatious scholar who probes into your birth to shame.
Alleluia! Anathema to the one who probes it!

2. Is my mouth capable of telling the story of your praises,
holy virgin Mary, Mother of God?
Virgin Mary, your story is too sublime for orators,
for you became mother to the Lord of all things created.
That chariot of the cherubim is no match for you,
holy virgin Mary, Mother of God.
At the entreaties of the virgin mother who gave birth to you,
cause the blows of the rod of wrath to leave your church untouched!

3. Let there be a good commemoration in the churches and monasteries in every corner
for the virgin Mary who was pure and holy in her virginity.
She pleased the King of Kings so much that He came down and dwelt in her womb.
Her commemoration is in heaven and on earth.
And may her prayer be a wall for us!
Grant us, Lord, to have a part in the commemoration of the woman who gave birth to you!

4. How shall I call you, Blessed Mary? Virgin? Mother of God? Corporeal cloud?
Sky from which the Sun of Righteousness shone?
Veil of the Divinity? (Moses acted out symbols of you.)
Fleshly chariot, which carried the One who supports both earth and heaven?
Young woman who became mother to our Lord by his will?

5. Glory to the Son of God, who willed to dawn from the womb of that virginal holy chariot!
She received Him through her ear. She carried him in her belly.
He came out of her womb, yet it is sealed and puts unbelievers to shame.
Glory to Him for the extent to which He was humbled!
Glory to Him for becoming human!
Glory to Him for saving his Church, which now sings glory to Him!

6. Blessed are you, Mary, who gave birth to the living Son of God.
Blessed are you, beautiful ship of the Merchant who came down and sailed in you.
Blessed are you, well built citadel, which received the Architect of the most high place.
You carried Him, yet your maidenhead was preserved.
You gave birth to Him, while remaining clean.
Blessed is the Lord who dawned from you.

7. Anathema to the one who does not believe that Mary gave birth to God!
The one who does not confess Him as God and Son of God will be denied by Him.
The Father gave birth to Him without a beginning; lately He dawned from Mary.

It is the same worshipful Child that was born of the Father and of Mary.
Anathema to the one who probes into Him!

8. The Church used to argue from three symbols against the unbelievers:
the tree, the rock and the fish, all of which produced unaccustomed fruit.
The tree gave birth to a lamb.
The rock produced a stream of water.
The fish provided a coin.
These show how contemptible is the one who doubts the Child of the Chariot.

9. The rod of Aaron the Levite blossomed without temporal irrigation.
The Virgin Mary gave birth to Christ without having intercourse with a man.
The dry wood sprouted at God's command and produced a fruit.
And the Virgin conceived of the Holy Spirit.
She gave birth to a miracle.
Anathema to the one who probes into it!

10. The Church answered and said, 'I am built on that rock of the house of Simon, head of the disciples, and I am not afraid.
The waves and the tempests strike me, but do not move me.
The cursed Nestorius attacked me and it was his undoing.

11. Anathema to the impudent Nestorius and to Leo of Rome, that evil man,
and to the Synod of Chalcedon and, with them, to Paul of Samosat!
Anathema to Ibas of Edessa, with Bardesanes and Acacius, that evil man,
and Julian the Phantasiast and Barsauma of Nisibis!
Anathema to Arius and Eunomius and Eutyches, together with the wicked Marcion, and everyone who subscribes to their despicable faiths!

12. By the prayer of the Mother who gave birth to You and of all your saints, I exalt You.
My Lord King, Only-Begotten Son and Word of the heavenly Father, who are immortal.
He accepted and came in his Goodness for the life and salvation of the human race.
He became corporeal from the holy and glorious clean virgin, the Mother of God, Mary.
Without change Christ, our God, became a human being and was crucified for us.
By his death He trod our death underfoot and killed it.
And He is one of the Holy Trinity.
And He is worshipped equally with his Father and his Holy Spirit.
Have mercy on us all!

In addition to the Shehimo, the Beth Gazzo, or Store [of melodies] is a very influential text. It contains a large number of isolated stanzas which are learned by heart with a range of different melodies. It is by this method that the oral tradition of ecclesiastical chant is passed on to the younger generation. When singing the Shehimo or a Fenqitho the cantors identify first the stanza in the Beth Gazzo which corresponds to the metre of the hymn they are singing, then select the correct melody to sing it to. It is because the younger generation get this book by heart that I call it influential. The Beth Gazzo contains a list of heretics, of whom Nestorius is the first; and each of them is given an unattractive name:

"Anathematized are Nestorius the impudent; Leo of Rome, the sinful; the Council of Chalcedon; and Paul of Samosata. Anathematized are Ibas of Edessa, Bardaisan, Acacius the sinful, Julian the Fantasiast and Barsauma of Nisibis. Anathematized are Arius, Eunomius, Eutyches and everyone who follows his despicable faith."

I come, lastly, to ordination. The anathematization of Nestorius is treated, in the books of ordination, almost as if it were an Article of the Faith. The bishop starts any ordination service with a sermon that includes a summary of orthodox beliefs, especially the doctrine of the divine Incarnation. He warns the ordained not to fall into heresy. After directing those about to be ordained to affirm everything the Syrian Orthodox Church affirms and to reject everything which that Church rejects, he has to recite a list of those anathematized and cast out of the Church, starting with Simon Magus and including 'Nestorius and his disciples and all who follow or assert their point of view concerning the divine Incarnation'. This sermon, which usually precedes the ordination of deacons, priests and bishops, has been shortened of late, but has not been omitted from the Book of Ordination. Every bishop of the Syrian Orthodox Church, in declaring his acceptance of this rank, has to affirm the teachings of the Apostolic, Holy and Catholic Church, to reject everything which that Church rejects and to declare his approval of the anathematization of all heretics and innovators, among whom is Nestorius, the Patriarch of Constantinople.

4. Doctrine

We do not have time to review the thought of each of the Syrian Fathers on the teaching of Nestorius. I will mention here only three ecclesiastical teachers who are well known for their opposition to Nestorius and his teaching. The first is Philoxenos of Mabbugh (died 523) who was exiled by the Chalcedonians to Gangra, where he was imprisoned above a kitchen and died a confessor, by suffocation in the smoke from the kitchen fire. The second is Severus of Antioch (died 538). He also lived in exile and died far away from his see in Antioch. The third is Jacob of Serugh, known simply as the Teacher. He was famous for his love of peace and for his unwillingness to take part in arguments. I shall speak briefly on the first two, then review the opinion of the last.

Philoxenos of Mabbugh strove to bring back the Holy Church back to unity and mutual communion. He was a zealous supporter of the Emperor Zeno's Decree for Unity (the *Henotikon* of Zeno). At the same time he contested the doctrines of Chalcedon and of Nestorius. For this he was denounced to the Emperor Zeno, who ordered him to present a written presentation of his faith. This he did and the resulting document has been preserved. The title is: 'The Incarnation and the Humanisation of God the Word.' In this document Philoxenos says:

"I believe that the Person of the Word is one and that He Himself is human, too. That means that God became human; not that He dwelt in a human being, nor that He built Himself a temple in which He settled. For we are his temples, and He lives in us by his Spirit. It was not that He created for Himself a human being in the Virgin, before He settled in her, then took on the human being as another person. He was not united with a human person, but with our very nature by his Incarnation from the Virgin. I do not hold the Virgin to be a human being united with God, nor a person connected to another person. But I know, with the eye of faith, that a spiritual Person became human without transformation. Also, Mary did not give birth to a twofold baby - as Nestorius said - but to the One Incarnate Son, who is neither semi-God nor semi-human, but totally divine, being from the Father, and totally human, having been born from the Virgin. I believe in the event of the Union of the two Natures, the divine and the human. I refuse to divide the two natures so supernaturally united into two natures or persons or parts that belong to this one or to that one. I do not see two, since He became one, nor do I understand the One to be known as two. That is be-

cause there was not a human being with a quantifiable existence, which God subsequently made use of. If we say so, we would not admit that the human nature of Christ is the human nature of God. If we believe that the body is his (Jesus') because he became human, therefore the human nature is for the person of God and not another person's. So every body of ours is not God; although we have become the children of the Father and brothers of Christ. In this way, it is not conceivable for him (Nestorius) to imagine alone what belongs to that human nature - either it is considered a person or a nature - for it did not first become a human nature that was known as certain person then God took it for himself. [...]

I excommunicate Nestorius, that hypocrite, and his teachings, because he distinguishes between two natures and two persons in the one Christ and attributes his miracles to his divinity and his suffering to his humanity, denying publicly the divine Economy of the Word in the flesh. I excommunicate in addition to him Eutyches, that innovator, and his opinions, because he denies that God underwent genuine Incarnation through the Virgin and considers the Mystery of his Incarnation imaginary. While at the same time I anathematize this teaching, I accept the holy books and behave according to the traditions of the Fathers from whom I received the true apostolic Faith, by which I am made worthy of life, freedom and adoption with all the baptized."

As for Severus of Antioch (reigned 512-538, the last twenty years from his place of exile), he also spent all his life defending the doctrines of the Orthodox Church. All of his writings hold fast to the pronouncements of that great teacher of Orthodoxy, St Cyril of Alexandria. In the Divine Liturgy, we start the service with the invocation of Saint Severus. These are his words:

"By the prayers of your Mother, who brought You forth, and of all your saints: I will exalt You, O King, my Lord, the Only-Begotten Son, the Word of the heavenly Father, who are immortal in your nature; who by your grace came down, for the life and salvation of all humanity, and became incarnate of the holy and glorious pure Virgin, the Mother of God, Mary; who became Man, being God without change, and was crucified for us. O Christ, our Lord, who trampled by your death on our death and destroyed it, who are one of the Holy Trinity and are worshipped and glorified in the unity of your Father and your living Holy Spirit." (*Anaphora*, 1967, p.20)

Severus was known as one of the great defenders of the doctrine of the Orthodox church and one of the most stubborn antagonists of the ideas and teachings of Nestorius. That is why, on his annual feast day, the Church sings the hymn from which the following verse is extracted:

"13. O Egypt, O Egypt, rise up and welcome Severus who is escaping his country, and open your gates to him and sweep your streets that he may enter you and cast out from you the teachings of Nestorius the Impudent."

Severus considered Cyril of Alexandria to be a pillar of the truth. Following Cyril, he explained the doctrine of the Mystery of the Incarnation as follows:

"The basis is Christ. Believing in him is that, by his incarnation of the Virgin Saint and of the Holy Spirit, he took a human nature that is equal to us in essence with a rational soul without transformation of the divine nature into the human nature nor of the human nature into the divine nature without merging. He is One in two natures. Yes. He is Christ and One God. He has one *prosopon*, one person and one incarnate nature."

During this sermon, after he had refuted the beliefs of Eutyches, Nestorius, Theodoret, Diodoros and the Council of Chalcedon, he said:

"The virgin is Mother of God, for God dwelt in her womb for nine months, then she gave birth to Him in the flesh. So, neither the divine nature was in her womb before the existence of the human nature in it, nor the human nature was before the existence of the divine nature."

Now I come to Mar Jacob of Serugh (died 528). In most of his writings this peaceful man avoided entering into useless argument. But when people cast doubt on his Orthodoxy, he responded vehemently. His messages to the monks of the monastery of Mar Bassus are the most important source for his opinion of Orthodox doctrine and of Nestorius and his teachings. Some brothers from that monastery, wishing to test him, had asked him whether he would anathematize Diodoros of Tarsus and Theodore of Mopuestia. This is his reply:

"Those are two men who have become the cause of doubts for the teaching of the true Faith. Forty-five years ago, when I was resident in the city of Edessa for the purpose of reading the Holy Scripture, the books of the sinful Theodore were being translated from Greek into Syriac. I was a boy in need of study, when I found one of Theodore's books. I found it full of schismatic thoughts and of all kinds of subjects far removed from reality. He declares in his books two Christs instead of one. Without being influenced by others, but by the grace of God which sustains the universe by his all-embracing mercy, I was alarmed at that schismatic and doubtful teaching. To me it seemed like a pit full of snakes. I immediately said, spontaneously and without being asked by anyone to do so: 'This man, together with his teachings, is excommunicated.' When, after a period of time, I came across the sayings of Diodoros and Theodoret again, I found that both of them had drunk from that bitter poison, together with the excommunicated Nestorius."

Thus, after he explains his belief in the divine Incarnation, he announces his faith with simple words as follows:

So I say now again, as I have said in the past, that the following are anathematized: Nestorius, Eutyches and everyone who agrees with their sinful teachings; everyone who does not confess that God the Word, the Only-Begotten of God, entered through the ear of the Virgin and settled in her holy womb and was incarnate of the Virgin. And because of his Incarnation, which was without sin, He is recognised in the Holy Books as Son of David and Son of Abraham. He is the Only-Begotten. He alone knew two births, one incorporeal birth from the Father, which has no beginning, and one carnal birth from Mary. For it is written that 'He appeared in flesh', 'He' being God. God sent his Son to the world and became human of a woman."

The monks of Mar Bassus considered these 'lifeless and weak lines'; so Jacob was obliged to go into greater detail in his subsequent letters to the monastery, naming Cyril as the commander-in-chief of the camp of the Faith and Nestorius as guilty and despised, especially when he argues against the Twelve Chapters of Cyril:

"Nestorius and his followers are ecumenically anathematized. Saint Cyril's blessed thought shines out like a light. He is truly apostolic and holds to the truth."

In order to satisfy the monks of Mar Bassus, Mar Jacob of Serugh uses expressions that are rarely found in his other writings. He is such a gentle person, as we know him through his poetry. Here he says that whoever is impudent enough to pen answers to the Twelve Chapters would like, if that were possible, to rebuild the ruins of Nestorius the

Feeble and would try, if he were able, to obstruct the truth of the ecumenical Church of the Apostles. Such a person 'is anathematized by the Church, which sweeps up and throws out Nestorius and his teachings like filthy manure'. Even more vehemently, he adds, 'Not only are such answers anathematized, but so is everyone who does not accept the Chapters in love, even those who dispute them.'

In the same letter he anathematizes Nestorius and his teachings and whoever shares his opinion, either before him or after him. In his opinion, Nestorius 'became an interpreter and adviser to heretics who are full of controversies, starting from Simon Magus in the time of the apostles, and including Paul of Samosata, Theodore and Theodoret'. In another message to the same monastery Jacob accuses the Council of Chalcedon of attempting to raise Nestorius to the rank of the shepherds. In his opinion Marcianus, the Emperor who convened that Council, was evil. He was a friend and follower of the teaching of Nestorius. 'He was ready to bring Nestorius, the wolf who had been chased away, in amongst the flock once more. If he had been able, he would have given him power over the rational flock which was saved by God's own blood.'

Near the end of this letter, he declares: 'At all times and with the whole Church, I anathematize Nestorius, his teachings and his followers.' Then he goes on to affirm his faith in the Mystery of the divine Incarnation: 'Jesus Christ is God like his Father and human like us, complete in his divinity and complete in his humanity.'

It is not only in his correspondence with the monks of Mar Bassus that Jacob condemns Nestorius. In his letter to the Monastery of Mar Isaac Gebula he describes Nestorius' teaching as follows:

"Christ who appeared in the world is not the eternal Son. God is someone else, who is unseen and untouched. The human being to whom the Virgin Mary gave birth and who is seen and held and known as a person is another. He is called 'Son of God' because of his union with that equal Son. They are by considering the two persons one God. [...]

When Nestorius said, 'Let the Virgin not be called Mother of God, but Mother of Christ', he revealed that he did not know Christ as 'God from God' and he did not believe that God the Father has an Only-Begotten Son, for his words describe two persons, one from the Father and the other from the Virgin. One is seen and one is unseen. One was crucified, but the other came nowhere near the Cross. [...] It is clear that Nestorius considers there to be two natures in Christ after the Union, each with a person and properties of his own. [...] His followers say that the properties of the two natures must be kept united in one person. That implies that each one of the two natures has its own properties. The divine Nature cannot be seen, cannot be conceived in a womb, cannot settle in a woman, cannot be born like a human being, cannot be wrapped with clothes, cannot grow up over time, cannot suck milk, cannot inhabit a dead body. It is invisible and far from any incidental happening in the life of the perceived Christ. [...] But if the properties of his human nature are kept separate, he could not have been conceived without marriage; the Magi would not have travelled with their gifts, led by the light of the star to worship his human nature; the water could not have been changed into wine; human nature does not walk on the waves of the sea and or call upon a dead man whose flesh is already decaying and bring him out of the crack of death. If the properties are kept separate, then God must have his own properties and humanity must have its own."

According to Mar Jacob of Serugh, the Faith of the Church should be as follows:

"God the Father has one Only-begotten Son, who is invisible; yet He became visible in the flesh. The rich became poor in order to enrich the poor by his poverty. The Word became human without any change by his Incarnation from the Virgin. The Son of God was united with human flesh and became human without any change by his Incarnation from

the Virgin. The Son of God was united with human flesh and became human by his second birth, when He was born of a young woman who had ever experienced marriage. Anyone who does not confess this is a stranger to the acknowledgement of the Trinity, the sure foundation of the Faith which exposed, despised, destroyed and removed paganism and all misleading teachings from the whole earth."

5. Conclusion

There are many other sources which might have been examined here. On the historical front, I have done no more than to quote Michael, who quotes Socrates and Zacharias selectively. A full historical investigation would include the Acts of the Second Council of Ephesus (449), which have been preserved in Syriac and have been too little studied for the light they throw on the bishops' attitudes towards Nestorius. I only gave a glimpse of the relevant material in the liturgical books. As for doctrinal polemicists, I gave brief consideration to Philoxenos, Severus and Jacob of Serugh, all of the late fifth and early sixth centuries. I might have gone on to discuss Moses bar Kifo (died 903) and his book of *Discussions and Controversies*; and Dionysius Jacob ibn al-Salibi, Bishop of Amida (died 1171), who wrote a book with a similar title, in which there are eighty chapters against the Chalcedonian Greeks and thirty-eight chapters against the Nestorians. And this is not all. But we do not have the time for an exhaustive survey. All the same, I cannot omit to mention at least Al-Arfadi and Bar Hebraeus.

Al-Arfadi, according to Gérard Troupeau, who discovered him, was a Syrian Orthodox scholar, perhaps of the ninth century. Here is an extract from his writings; in which he describes the important error in the Nestorian teaching:

"Then I also found in what they claim that the great thing for their controversy and separation - after their accordance in what I've explained and described - is on the unity of the divine nature of Christ with his human nature. Nestorianism said that the unity of Christ was of will, action and volition and that the word of God is complete in its person and nature. Also, the human nature, which is united to him, is completely human in its person and nature. As the divine nature is above transformation, no change would occur to it, and we found that the apparent human nature is not transmutable or changeable, therefore, the Christ must be of two persons and two natures united by action and will."

Concerning the expression 'Mother of God', al-Arfadi gives his opinion as follows:

"As for the Nestorians' refusal to say that Mary is the Mother of God, it is not a denial of the divine nature of Christ, nor is it a denial of the settling of the divine nature in the womb of our Lady Mary, from the announcement by Gabriel onwards. I mean the divine nature of the Word of God. And there is no difference between the divine nature and the human nature and no separation. They say that Mary gave birth to Christ, who is God of the whole world, but they refuse to say 'Mary, Mother of God', for they believe that 'God on high' is a name that includes the three Persons: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. But Christ is a name associated only with the Son, not with the Father or the Holy Spirit. They said: If we say "Mother of Christ, the God of the whole world," we specify: only the Son, without denying that He is God."

On the subject of the one nature and two natures, the best source is the book *Mno-rath Qudshe* (conventionally translated as *The Candelabra of the Sanctuary*), by Bar Hebraeus. In chapter four of this book he demonstrates the faith of the Church in the doctrine of the divine Incarnation. It is worth mentioning that Bar Hebraeus refrains

from attacking Nestorius directly, since he studied in his youth at the feet of one of the Nestorian scholars, named Jacob. When he mentions Narsai, he calls him 'the most erudite of the Nestorians, Mar Narsai'. When he comes to talk about the Virgin Mary as the Mother of God, he gives only scriptural references and intellectual argument. The argument runs as follows: Since all Christians believe that Christ is God and also confess that 'He was born of the Virgin, suffered and was crucified', they should, logically, conclude that it was God, born of a woman, who suffered and was crucified; and if they do not doubt the saying: 'God was born of the Virgin and suffered and was crucified', what need have they to wonder whether Mary is the Mother of God? He gives a great deal of evidence from the Holy Bible relying on, in particular, the letters of the apostle Paul, and he quotes from the holy Fathers, including Dionysius, Gregorius, Athanasius and Ephrem the Syrian; but he does not mention Nestorius by name. He contents himself with refuting the saying that was attributed to him, that the Virgin Mary should not be called the Mother of God. Although he was at pains to prove this point about the Virgin Mary, the erudite Bar Hebraeus practised from his youth the principles of ecumenism, before modern ecumenism was dreamt of.

Bar Hebraeus had the advantage of living at a time and in a place where there was a cultural exchange between the West-Syrians and the East-Syrians. No doubt the same could be said of al-Arfadi, but his dates are not known exactly. They certainly both had the benefit of having conducted a civilised dialogue with members of the Church of the East. Al-Arfadi learned through such dialogue that to deny that Mary is the Mother of God is not necessarily to deny that Christ is God. Bar Hebraeus sought to persuade his partners in dialogue by logical argument, starting from the text of the Creed, which all Christians accept, that there is no good reason to refuse to call Mary the Mother of God. He did not resort to invective and anathematize all those who disagreed with him. He judiciously avoided referring to Nestorius altogether.

Mar Bawai Soro

THE PERSON AND TEACHINGS OF NESTORIUS OF CONSTANTINOPLE¹ WITH A SPECIAL REFERENCE TO HIS CONDEMNATION AT THE COUNCIL OF EPHESUS

1. Introduction

No person can or will ever be able to sufficiently describe in human language the mystery of the Incarnation of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Nestorius and Cyril both strove to do so by using two different and often opposing starting points and theological

¹ The researched material of this paper has been mainly oriented towards the formulation of a theological statement on behalf of the Assyrian Church of the East in defense of Nestorius. I shall refer to certain "friendly" sources and expose their arguments without engaging in the exposition of the argument of the opposition to Nestorius. By doing so, one can only hope that this paper would present one possible statement toward a dialogue and further the understanding between the Assyrian Church of the East and both the Oriental and Eastern Orthodox Churches. I suggest the reader consult the bibliography provided by A. Grillmeier which lists references examining and/or in support of each side of the Nestorian controversy: A. Grillmeier SJ, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, vol. 1, tr. John Bowden, John Knox Press: Atlanta. 1974, 559-568.

systems. Their failure to arrive at a mutual agreement on language describing the mystery of God the Word becoming man caused the whole Church of Christ to enter one of the most deplorable chapters in Christianity's history. Yet historical research demonstrates that differences in theological persuasions were not the only reasons for their conflict, but personal, political and cultural factors significantly determined the fate of Cyril and Nestorius' relationship.

The researched material of this paper has been mainly oriented towards the formulation of a theological statement on behalf of the Assyrian Church of the East in defense of Nestorius. I shall refer to certain "friendly" sources and expose their arguments without engaging in the exposition of the argument of the opposition to Nestorius. By doing so, one can only hope that this paper would present one possible statement toward a dialogue and further the understanding between the Assyrian Church of the East and both the Oriental and Eastern Orthodox Churches. I suggest the reader consult the bibliography provided by A. Grillmeier which lists references examining and/or in support of each side of the Nestorian controversy: Aloys Grillmeier SJ, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, vol. 1, tr. John Bowden, John Knox Press: Atlanta. 1974, 559-568.

2. Nestorius the Patriarch: Insights into his Ecclesiastical History

Nestorius was born in Germanicia, a small town at the foot of Mount Taurus, in the Euphrates district of the patriarchate of Antioch in Syria. He received his education near Antioch, in the neighboring monastery of Euprepus, probably under Theodore of Mopsuestia.¹ He became celebrated - first as a monk and later as a presbyter - for his asceticism, his orthodoxy and his eloquence. After the death of Patriarch Sisinnius (December 427), Theodosius II appointed Nestorius to the vacant see of Constantinople.² From Antioch to Constantinople, he brought with him an entourage of friends who later became his advisors and confidants. It is said that on his way to Constantinople, he stopped in Mopsuestia to pay tribute to bishop Theodore, who in turn asked him to be careful and moderate, and to pay respect to the opinions of others.³ Immediately after his arrival a troubling reality began to become evident: the Church in Constantinople had a different tradition of doctrine and liturgical practice than that of Antioch, and the little experience in ecclesiastical politics Nestorius had acquired in Antioch did not suffice. Moreover, Nestorius lacked any realization of the fact that in order to successfully manage the affairs of his new see he would have to *gradually* undertake the theological, moral and liturgical reforms he wished to achieve. Thus, after his arrival this naiveté began to set him at odds with some of the most prominent and influential people in Constantinople, including his first backer and most important ally, emperor Theodosius II.

In the following paragraphs of this section, we shall explore J.A. McGuckin's recent essay,⁴ along with other sources which investigate the non-theological factors which

brought upon Nestorius his tragic downfall. McGuckin's hypothesis is succinct but startling: "*long before the Council of Ephesus had ever opened, the fate of Nestorius had largely been sealed and predetermined.*"⁵ With this thesis, McGuckin breaks off from a long-standing tradition advanced both by theologians and historians specializing in the Nestorian Controversy:⁶ that is, that the real causes for the condemnation of Nestorius were due to his heretical teachings more than anything else. Can such a *peculiar* assertion be possibly plausible? Let's examine a few historical details and try to find the answer ourselves.

In Constantinople, there were a number of political factions which, to a great extent, had shaped the political affairs in the empire. The most prominent individual was obviously the Roman Emperor himself, Theodosius II, a man of weak personal character and politically incompetent. The second important person was the emperor's sister, Pulcheria, who, in contrast, was a bright, capable and very pious woman. For years she had been entrusted with guardianship over her weak-minded brother and effectively ran the affairs of the imperial palace.⁷ But after her brother Theodosius grew up, she effectively lost control of the empire's affairs and increasingly felt perplexed by her imperial surroundings. By appointing an outsider as the bishop of his capital the emperor was in effect freeing himself from the influence of both his dominant sister and the agile political aides of the imperial court.⁸ By distancing his powerful sister, Theodosius was not only weakening her but also the hold of her powerful monastic friends over the affairs of the Church in Constantinople. In time Nestorius' close alignment with the emperor would prove to be the single most destructive factor in his ecclesiastical career.⁹ The aristocracy of the capital, aware of Pulcheria's power and connections, were not prepared to become involved in the inevitable conflict, nor were they willing to be seen to cross her in any manner.

In the sermon at his consecration (April 428), Nestorius exhorted the emperor with the famous words "*Purge, O Caesar, your Kingdom of heretics, and I in return will give you the Kingdom of Heaven. Stand by me in putting down the heretics and I will stand by you in putting down the barbarian Persians.*"¹⁰ With these words, he enthusiastically inaugurated a new age of reforms and doctrinal purity within Byzantium.¹¹ The fulfillment of such a task was critical for the whole empire, for Nestorius was convinced that

with Augusta Pucheria and the monastic party of the capital had eliminated his chances for the elevation to the prestigious post of the Church. See John A. McGuckin, "Nestorius and the Political Factions of Fifth-Century Byzantium: Factors in His Personal Downfall," *Bulletin of John Ryland Library*, vol. 78, no. 3 (autumn 1996) 7-21. I shall later explain in more details the effect of the tension that already had existed between Theodosius II, his sister, the monastic and religious groups in the empire hoping to evince the reader of the effect that the non-theological factors had on the condemnation of Nestorius. I am grateful for Prof. Chip Coakley, the editor of this special issue of the Bulletin, for providing me with an advanced copy of the article.

⁵ Ibid, 21

⁶ Friedrich Loofs, *Nestorius and His Place in the History of the Christian Doctrine*, (University Press : Cambridge, England, 1914), 64-65.

⁷ Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church; ed. F. L. Cross and E. A. Livingstone (Oxford University Press, London, 1974) entry of "Pulcheria, St."

⁸ Quasten, 514

⁹ McGuckin, 8

¹⁰ Ibid., 9.

¹¹ The Arians were not the only group that was targeted by the Nestorian Reforms. Sources indicate that Macedonians, Novatians and Quartodecimans were attacked on the charge of heresy and schism. Jews were also included, but the Pelagians, who were forced to leave the Latin West, were the only ones spared. See Quasten, 514.

¹ Johannes Quasten, *Patrology* vol. 3 (Maryland: Christian Classics, 1983), 514.

² Ibid.

³ B. J. Kidd, *A History of the Church to A.D. 461*, 3 vols (Oxford: Clarendon, 1922) as cited by Samuel Hugh Moffett, *A History of Christianity in Asia*, vol. 1 (Harper Collins, 1991) 173.

⁴ The appointment of Nestorius - as an unknown outsider - was a calm and deliberate plan Theodosius II was able to carry out, at last. After, Sisinnius, the emperor's previous appointment to the Archbishopric See of Constantinople died after two years in office, turmoil and competition for the See between the ecclesiastical factions of the capital was renewed. The newly elected Archbishop John of Antioch, an old friend of Nestorius, recommended Nestorius' name to Theodosius; Nestorius' nomination was as an alternative that would make the emperor distance himself from the influence of his elder sister and other powerful parties of Constantinople. The person vis-à-vis whom Nestorius was chosen was Proclus whose close alliance

by defending the orthodox faith, military security could be assured. "If God was displeased with the orthodoxy of the capital," writes McGuckin to illustrate the sense of the people in the empire, "he might even allow his kingdom to fall into the hand of punishing infidels."¹² The first targets of Nestorius' reforms were to be his old theological foes, the Arians who denied the fully divine and fully human natures of Christ. But before Nestorius was able to deal with them, they, by a daring strategic maneuver with political consequences, anticipated the action the empire would take under the influence of Nestorius, and set fire to their own meeting-house in Constantinople. This incident took a specific toll on the reputation of the newly consecrated archbishop, due to the fact that there were near Constantinople hosts of Gothic troops whose doctrinal orientation was also Arian. Members of the aristocracy became alarmed, and were dismayed at Nestorius and at his annoying reforms. They arguably felt that if the Gothic Arian troops joined with the Arian citizens of the capital disastrous consequences might follow. For these aristocrats, this incident became the first nail in the coffin of Nestorius' ecclesiastical career. However, despite this unrest, Nestorius was incapable of recognizing the serious situation his actions had produced, and remained determined to advance his anti-heretic agenda - a determination which further alarmed the aristocrats of the court, the leaders of the military and most of all the elder sister of the emperor, Pulcheria.

Nestorius' zeal for implementing his policies propelled him into another conflict with the citizens of the city. This time it started when he took action against the immorality of Constantinople's theatrical entertainers, whose offenses were said to include public nudity and the promotion of prostitution, particularly among the poorer masses of the city. Though Nestorius was successful in sending away the "nude dancers and their organizers"¹³ beyond the city limits, it produced wailing and lamenting, and the public's resentment against the archbishop was greatly intensified. This resentment was abetted by the fearful judgment of the imperial court's aristocrats upon Nestorius' de-stabilizing action, which was deemed to affect negatively the internal security of the capital. They detested this or any of his other moves against the theatrical entertainers and their supporters.¹⁴ To his own detriment, Nestorius, as a zealous reformer, did not halt his actions but closed down many of the "strip clubs" which catered to upper-class Constantinopolitans, and there too he expelled the dancers beyond the city limits, causing public anger against him to grow dramatically.¹⁵

Another of Nestorius' reforms was his attempt to regularize monastic life in the empire's Archiepiscopal See. He wanted to disconnect the close relationship the monks maintained with the day-to-day affairs of the capital and with members of the nobility. For a long time the monks had developed a strong bond with the ruling class in Constantinople, and some had even become secretaries and scribes for the peerage. Pulcheria was among their strongest supporters and sustained many of their monastic communities, and as a result, she was depicted as the monk's patroness and their strongest protector.¹⁶ In an attempt to bring the monks under his canonical jurisdiction and to decrease their involvement in the political affairs of the empire, Nestorius (writes Barhadbeshabba) "forbade the monks to go out unless they had a chaperone who could account for their good behavior." The reasons set forth by this Church of the East historian to jus-

tify Nestorius' action with the monks, include charges that Nestorius "saw the monks wandering imprudently in public places ... falling into taverns, drinking indiscriminately with others, even talking to women, causing scandal in the city and reproach to those who were genuine monks."¹⁷ After this prohibition, and in order to prevent the monks from being in need of practical necessities, he "made arrangement for their food and necessary supplies."¹⁸ But this episcopal gesture was perceived to be adding insult to injury; the emperor's sister was belittled, the aristocracy was outraged, and the monks of Constantinople were humiliated. Instead of achieving the sought after monastic reforms, Nestorius' imprudence and misjudgment transformed all these powerful groups into adversaries in opposition to every exercise of his ministry in their capital.¹⁹

Nestorius' reforms in the Byzantine capital included some unprecedented restriction on women's involvement in liturgical and ceremonial affairs of the church. The noble women, says Barhadbeshabba, "would organize a service in church, and would sin during vigil meals by being promiscuous with men. It seemed prudent to Nestorius to forbid them their vigils ... [consequently, his action] nearly exposed him to stoning by these women (and those who enjoyed their company)."²⁰ McGuckin intervenes at this point to suggest that the key issue that prompted Nestorius to issue the ban was not promiscuity, as Barhadbeshabba states, but liturgical privileges, as well as the significant social rights these highly placed women enjoyed in the Byzantine society. By taking this action, Nestorius was again alienating a group of very important citizens, the aristocratic women - Pulcheria and her two younger sisters, Arcadia and Marina, included.²¹ To make matters worse, Nestorius approved a plan to distribute alms to these noble women as a compensation for the lost income - they might have gained for the poor. At last a sinewy alliance had formed between very angry aristocratic women and the affected populace ("the future mob of Constantinople"), producing an outcry for the ouster of their uncompromising patriarch.

As if Nestorius' initiatives and deeds did not aggravate Pulcheria enough (even if indirectly), when he employed his ecclesiastical powers against her favorite monastic friends, opposed the charitable services rendered by her aristocratic friends and women who dedicated themselves liturgically to the poor of the capital, and incautiously acted against the Arians of the capital, he further decided to confront Pulcheria herself with even more critical issues touching her own dignity as the elder sister of the emperor. Pulcheria, due to her imperial and special ecclesial status (as a dedicated virgin to the empire), had donated her costly robe as a covering for the Cathedral's main altar, and possessed a special right of receiving the Holy Sacrament alongside her brother Theodosius. Nestorius was offended by her exalted status, and consequently, during a church service, he publicly refused to administer to Pulcheria the sacrament at the same time her brother the emperor was communed, and in addition ordered that her cope be removed from the Cathedral's main altar.²² By both of these acts, Nestorius confirmed in Pulcheria, a future empress of the West, a determination that he was not on her side, and therefore his ecclesiastical future had ended, as far as she was concerned; and from this

¹² McGuckin, 10

¹³ See McGuckin, 13, citing a work by a Church of the East historian, Barhadbeshabba, "History of the Fathers."

¹⁴ McGuckin, 13.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ McGuckin, 14.

¹⁷ Barhadbeshabba, cited by McGuckin, 15.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid., 16.

²⁰ Barhadbeshabba cited by McGuckin, 17.

²¹ McGuckin, 17.

²² Ibid., 19.

inauspicious set of circumstances the way was cleared for the final nail to eventually be driven into the coffin of Nestorius' ecclesiastical career.²³

Soon after these events had transpired between Nestorius and the political factions in the capital - in a matter of months - Anastasius, one of Nestorius' confidants and his presbyter, preached an infamous oration (November 428) in which he said "*Let no one call Mary the mother of God, for Mary was a human being; and that God should be born of a human being is impossible.*"²⁴ By asserting such a statement, Anastasius was perceived to be imposing the Antiochian Christology on the Church of Constantinople which, for the monastic community of that city, was an unfamiliar teaching. Nestorius did not reprimand his friend nor correct him during his Christmas lectures on the Nativity (December 428). And so this incident caused a great uproar among the monastic communities and a scandal to the public, in particular to the partisans of the Marian cultus then beginning to form in Constantinople and elsewhere. The faith of these people, whose devotion to the blessed Virgin was emotional (her veneration was highly popular), had prompted them to bestow upon the mother of Jesus the religious epithet *Theotokos*, "Mother of God." Further, Anastasius' pronouncement about Mary was perceived as a direct denial of the divinity of Christ. So consequently, violence erupted in Constantinople, ultimately bringing the enemies of Nestorius down upon him like wolves. Nestorius was later accused of being the actual source of the offensive teaching and had to be judged and silenced by force.²⁵ As matters in Constantinople became ripe for further seditious maneuvers - with each side of the conflict preparing for a struggle - Cyril of Alexandria, a determined disputant in the conflict between the Alexandrian and Antiochene schools of theology,²⁶ intervened on behalf of the "Marian" side and that of the monks of Constantinople against Nestorius. Later events of this controversy became so involved that the conflict which broke out as a result of Anastasius' sermon soon grew to encompass, in addition to Cyril, the Alexandrian clergy, Pope Coelestine I. and the Roman Synod, the imperial court, and other episcopal supporters of one side or the other.²⁷ The choice of whom to support which the local people, clergy, monks and the aristocracy of Constantinople had to make was very clear. They saw in this a golden opportunity to procure the downfall of Nestorius, who had by now become their much despised bishop. "Suddenly," writes Samuel Hugh Moffet, "*an ironic twist of fate fell upon Nestorius; [he who was] the heresy hunter found himself accused of heresy.*"²⁸

3. Nestorius the Theologian: Context & Thought

In his book "*The Bazaar of Heracleides of Damascus*,"²⁹ Nestorius makes a number of theological statements which largely define his thought and testify to his faith in

²³ Ibid., 19-20.

²⁴ Moffet, 173.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ At Alexandria a mystic and allegorical tendency prevailed, at Antioch the practical and historical, and these tendencies showed themselves in different methods of study, exegesis, presentation of doctrine and everyday piety.

²⁷ Letters of the archdeacon Epiphanius to the patriarch Maximianus (Migne, Pat. Gr. lxxxiv. 826).

²⁸ Moffet, 173.

²⁹ Nestorius, *The Bazaar of Heracleides*, ed. G. R. Driver and Leonard Hodgson (Clarendon Press: Oxford, 1925). Along with Sipioni and Chestnut, I consider the LH to be an authentic work of Nestorius. Much of the argument in the *The Bazaar of Heracleides* is in the form of a dialogue between (1) Nestorius and an imaginary opponent Superianus, (2) Nestorius and Cyril. The book reveals a strong personality and helps us to know the man and his teaching.

the risen Lord. While standing his theological ground, Nestorius makes *six* denials and *two* affirmations.³⁰

(i) That the union of divinity and of humanity in Christ is voluntary;³¹ however, this union is neither moral nor spiritual, namely, the result of joining two separate persons together.³²

(ii) The unity of Christ *is not* a "natural composition" in which two distinct elements are combined by the will of an external creator.³³

(iii) The Incarnation *does not* involve any change in the Godhead nor any suffering on part of God the Word, whose divine nature is impassable.³⁴

(iv) The Incarnation of the Son of God *was not* effected by a change of Godhead into manhood nor manhood into Godhead, nor by forming a third thing from these two *ousiai*; the divine and human *ousiai* are entirely and absolutely different from one another and they must remain so in the union if there is to remain perfect God and perfect man in the Incarnate Christ;³⁵ and so, if either *ousia* is mixed or mingled with the other, Christ would neither be God nor man, but some new kind of being.³⁶ (v) The Incarnation of the divine and human *ousiai* in one Christ *does not* result in any duality of sons/Christs.³⁷

(vi) God *was not* in Christ in the same way he was in the saints and prophets;³⁸ and that Christ *was not* the Son of God "as a consequence of moral progress" or by degrees, namely, by adoption as a consequence of proving his merits.³⁹

(vii) That the principle of this union *is* to be found in the combined *prosopa* of divinity and of humanity, namely, in the revealed *prosopeon* of Christ incarnate, namely, the Person of the Union.⁴⁰

(viii) The Incarnation *is real*; both natures in Christ are *true* and *complete*; neither is his humanity 'imaginary' nor his divinity 'unsubstantial'.⁴¹

3.1. Context

Unlike his ecclesio-political dilemma, this doctrinal framework, and the spiritual interest which Nestorius took with him from Antioch to Constantinople, can be more easily appreciated and defended. They are characteristic of his own cultural, theological and philosophical upbringing. In this regard, his expression and terminology reflect to a great extent the distinctive nuances peculiar to his Antiochian school of thought. This theological framework was developed in the context of direct opposition to the teachings of Apollinarius by Diodore of Tarsus and brought later to a fuller expression by a pupil of Diodore, Theodore of Mopsuestia.⁴² Nevertheless, like his liturgical and moral re-

³⁰ Ibid., xxxii.

³¹ Ibid., 38, 179, 181-182.

³² Ibid., 60f., 314.

³³ Ibid., 9, 84-86, 179, 303f.

³⁴ Ibid., 39-41, 179, 181, 184.

³⁵ Ibid., 14, 80, 182.

³⁶ Ibid., 14, 18, 22, 26-27, 80, 182, 320.

³⁷ Ibid., 47-50, 146, 160, 189-190, 209-210, 227, 314, 317.

³⁸ Ibid., 52.

³⁹ Milton Anastos, "Nestorius Was Orthodox," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, 16 (Washington, DC 1962) 134. See also *Bazaar*, 57, 59f., 252f., 314.

⁴⁰ *Bazaar*, 23, 89, 218, 245f., 260-261.

⁴¹ Ibid., 15, 80, 182, 208.

⁴² Rowan A. Greer, "The Image of God and the Prosopic Union in Nestorius," ed. R. A. Norris in: *Lux In Lumine: Essays to Honor W. Norman Pittenger*, (Seabury Press: NY) 46.

forms, Nestorius' theological agenda encountered severe opposition. The reasons, according to Nestorius, were the presence of complex forms of Arianism and Apollinarianism⁴³ which, at that time, flourished in Constantinople.⁴⁴

The main features of the Antiochian theology are controlled by three factors. The first is certainly biblical. Nestorius was thoroughly imbued with the Pauline idea⁴⁵ of Christ being the "second Adam", holding that Christian moral life obliged every baptized person to strive, in cooperation with grace, to imitate the very real life pattern revealed and fulfilled in the also very real humanity of Christ, who, in his humanity, renewed in fallen man the "likeness of God" which the first Adam had lost through sin.⁴⁶ Reflecting on the Apostle Paul, Nestorius believed that since through Adam sin and death appeared in the world, so too, in Christ, the "Second Adam," sin and death were overcome and life secured for all.⁴⁷ The life Christ modeled in his humanity, therefore, was the example *par excellence* for all faithful who are initiated into a new life in their Lord through their baptism.⁴⁸ Indeed, it was very important for Nestorius to contrast the life and behavior of Christ to that of Adam so that a believer might discern and choose, through his/her freedom, the condign path to righteousness.⁴⁹ The second⁵⁰ controlling factor of Antiochian theology was its refusal to attribute the human characteristics of Christ to his divine nature. This preference was mainly due to an understanding of the radical difference in the essence of God's nature and the rest of creation. In this way, the insistence upon God's immutability and impassability allowed no such possibilities as birth, suffering or death to be ascribed to the Word of God. Both the divine and human natures of Christ were preserved completely and perfectly in order that the pattern of life revealed in Christ's humanity could be a real model of human conduct for those aspiring to salvation. This allowed for no possibility of compromising any person's capacity and freedom to respond to God's grace. Human will had to be a constituent part of Jesus' humanity, they asserted, if we were to give a full account of Christ's human nature. The third⁵¹ vital element of Antiochian theology was its negative reaction to the teaching of the Apollinarians. The more the followers of Apollinarius denied the full humanity of Christ, the more emphasis the Antiochians laid upon it, and the stronger advocates they became of the two natures Christology.

It is obvious that what the Arians and Apollinarians taught did not at all resonate with Nestorius' biblical exegesis and theological conviction. Their method of envisaging the Incarnation was to be found in the then still popular Logos-Sarx framework advocated by their different communities in the empire. For Nestorius, just as with Basil of Caesarea,⁵² such a dogma evinced a false teaching that the Lord took merely the *schema*⁵³ of a servant rather than himself becoming a servant.⁵⁴ The Arian Christ was understood to be a created celestial being - not like the Father in nature, in that he en-

dured sufferings in his own nature - namely, the Word of God who changed in his own nature.⁵⁵ The Apollinarian Christ was conceived in strong "Logos-Sarx" terms - the Word of God joined to himself a human body and soul in such a way that he (the Logos) became the operating principle (the spirit) in the nature of the new and united being (Jesus Christ).⁵⁶ Nestorius' attacks over against both groups were not so much based on his commitment to a certain hypothesis or the result of abstract reflection on his part as they were in the practical area of pastoral concern. He attacked these groups because their views were rapidly taking a strong hold on the faithful in Constantinople.⁵⁷ This was unacceptable to Nestorius, because the consequence of such teaching undermined the reality and objectivity of the Son of God's humanity in the Incarnation, and this had profound implications for Christian piety. In a single-minded quest against the Arians and Apollinarians, he devoted all of his strength and resources to articulate, defend and ultimately vindicate the true principles which demand the reality of Christ's human nature, through which, Nestorius believed, a Christian was able to discern in Christ all the marks of authentic human experience.⁵⁸ When Nestorius' soteriological convictions and pastoral motives are understood his statements and action become comprehensible.

This is the context in which the newly appointed patriarch of Constantinople found himself seeking to prevent the spread of heresy in his diocese. He saw in his capacity as a bishop also a need to act as defender of the true biblical and apostolic faith - indeed, he did not see himself as someone who, as his enemies extensively and cleverly claimed, was seeking to impose on Constantinople an Antiochian theology as opposed to Alexandrian theology. His theological objective was to serve the purpose of defying the heretics who taught and advocated the view of confused or incomplete natures existing in Christ - the impassible Logos acquiring passible flesh (or incomplete manhood) through the Incarnation.⁵⁹ Such was the monophysite⁶⁰ tendency among those whom Nestorius fought against; they denied the true and perfect humanity in Christ and consequently his consubstantiality with us. For them, the Incarnation could only be effected from a substantial unity between the Logos and incomplete human nature resulting in a new composite nature. This was objectionable to Nestorius, as to all the Antiochians. It seemed to them that the Apollinarians were denying a true humanity and the possibility of its moral development.⁶¹

3.2. Thought

But how did the teaching of Nestorius differ, or develop, when his quarrel against the Arians and the Apollinarians took a peculiar turning with the intervention of Cyril the Patriarch of Alexandria? First, it has to be stated that, in spite of notable differences of terminology stemming from the different historical developments in Antioch and Alexandria, the essence of Nestorius' and Cyril's theologies was in fact the same.⁶² But the form in which they expressed that essence, their method of biblical interpretation

⁴³ Nestorius almost always named the two groups side by side. See Loofs, 67

⁴⁴ Moffett, 172-174.

⁴⁵ Romans 5:12f.

⁴⁶ Luigi I. Scipioni "Nestorio e il concilio di Efeso," (Universita Cattolica del Sacro Cuore: Milano, 1974) 425

⁴⁷ Bazaar, 212-214.

⁴⁸ Scipioni, 426.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Greer, Image, 46-47

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Cited in Scipioni, 426.

⁵³ I.e., the outward form, or clothing of a man/servant alone rather than the full man/servant. Bazaar, 15, 22.

⁵⁴ Scipioni, 426.

⁵⁵ Bazaar, 97, 176.

⁵⁶ Grillmeier, Aloys, S.J., *Christ in Christian Tradition*, tr. John Bowden, (John Knox Press, Atlanta,), pp. 242-245, 329-333.

⁵⁷ Scipioni, 428.

⁵⁸ Ibid., 426.

⁵⁹ Ibid., 427.

⁶⁰ By monophysite here the strict sense of the word is actually meant, i. e., Apollinarianism.

⁶¹ Loofs, 66.

⁶² Loofs, 69.

and their starting points in dealing with the mystery of Incarnation were rather different.⁶³ Non-theological factors rather than doctrinal had by far the larger part in preventing them from achieving successful communication in order to resolve a conflict of terminology, exegeses and soteriology. Yet, just as in his fight against the Arians and the Apollinarians, so too, in his debate with Cyril, Nestorius expressed his inherited Antiochian theology, developing its implications and taking it at times to what appeared to many as dyophysite extremes.⁶⁴

Underlying this difference in form was difference in understanding - or rather in misunderstanding. The misunderstanding between Nestorius and Cyril was mainly due to the fact that Nestorius believed that Cyril did not conceive Christ's human nature as an authentic operative principle, because for him [Cyril] the only principle operating in the union was necessarily the Logos.⁶⁵ In contrast, such a concept of the union was totally unacceptable for Nestorius because in it the Logos appeared to be susceptible of earthly birth, suffering and dying, and therefore, the divine nature would be altered in itself.⁶⁶ Nestorius then, like any other fourth and fifth century Antiochian Christologist, was confronted with the problem of the existence of the human and the divine as two concrete and real natures in the unity of Christ - a problem that was to be encountered on the ontological level. As indicated above, Nestorius states that the union in Christ is not between two independent subjects, or persons, but it is between the two natures, divine and human, in the one *prosopon* of Jesus Christ. The human Jesus receives his *prosopon* - not as an individual separate self, but at the moment of his conception as God-man; there is distinction between the natures but most significantly for Nestorius there is no separation between the two natures; they are inseparably united in the *prosopon* of union of Jesus Christ. How and why? There are two points that need to be made in order to answer this question.

(i) Nestorius understood the "man" assumed in Jesus Christ as nothing more or less than the complete human nature of Christ;⁶⁷

(ii) when Nestorius talks about the giving and taking of the *prosopa* of the two natures, the dynamic is so mutual and perfectly reciprocal the result of this reciprocity is the absolute unity, making one the two *prosopa* of divinity and humanity in the Person of Jesus Christ.⁶⁸ This is not one and another because there is only one Son, one Lord, one Jesus Christ united in one *prosopon* of both natures. But Cyril could not see what Nestorius was teaching, for the reason indicated above, and remained firm in his exposition of the problem and accused Nestorius of suggesting "two sons" - preventing him from fully grasping the meaning of Nestorius, or his soteriology, with its attendant pastoral concerns.⁶⁹

His fundamental ambition is clearly to maintain the distinct continuance of the two natures of Christ when united through the Incarnation into the one Person of Jesus

Christ.⁷⁰ In other words, his objective is to defend the complete and genuine existence of Christ's full humanity in the union against any suggestion that it is incomplete. There is no doubt that according to his definition⁷¹ and the precise understanding of the then popular metaphysical terms, Nestorius, as an Antiochian, denied any possibility that a "nature"⁷² or an "ousia"⁷³ can exist without a "hypostasis"⁷⁴ or a "*prosopon*".⁷⁵ This statement as his starting point is directly in opposition to Cyril's doctrine of the "Hypostatic Union." The way that he expresses his position is to state that in the union the "*prosopon*" of God and the "*prosopon*" of man are joined in one "*prosopon*" of the union.⁷⁶ In this union, the oneness of the two "*prosopa*" is so absolute and perfect it can be said that the manhood (which is the taken) becomes the *prosopon* of the Godhead and the Godhead (the taker) becomes the *prosopon* of the manhood.⁷⁷ The *Prosopon* of the

⁷⁰ Bazaar, 89

⁷¹ Nestorius followed terminology used by the Nicæan Fathers who equated hypostasis, ousia and nature as synonyms. (See footnote # 97) Yet, he sometimes in a few passages (Bazaar, 16-17) makes a slight shift in usage of hypostasis. The new meaning is generally narrowed down from its general meaning (of ousia) to identify a new and particular "mode of existence" of the divine or the human natures in Christ. For more in-depth examination, see J. F. Bethune-Baker, *Nestorius and His Teachings*, (University Press: Cambridge, 1908) 50. Based on his metaphysical understanding of ousia and nature, it was literally impossible for Nestorius to "combine" the divinity and the humanity of Christ on the level of nature (ousia). Both natures were necessarily mutually exclusive in ways that neither of them could be the basis for unity with the other. (Anastos, 126; Bazaar, 294, 26-27) For Nestorius if the two natures in Christ were to exchange with one another, namely, that is for divinity to admit flesh and soul into its ousia, and similarly for the humanity to receive the Word of God into its ousia, each nature would inevitably cease to be what it is. Milton Anastos sums up Nestorius' understanding in these words: "Uncreated God the Word, who is eternal, cannot be transformed into that which is created (body), nor can the human body of Christ be changed into the ousia of God the Word." (Anastos, 127) Nestorius is puzzled with Cyril's terminology because neither Cyril nor Nestorius follow the other's same metaphysical definition and understanding for concepts they extensively employed in their Christological debate. As an Antiochian, Nestorius did not deny the unity/oneness of Jesus Christ. His theological reflection distinctively illustrates a different metaphysical view and a systematic approach to theology particular to his own Antiochian region and culture; using such a system, he followed concepts and patterns that were different from those Cyril knew and taught. Yet, Nestorius' metaphysical hypotheses could be summed up by noting that everything independently existing, including the Logos, has a substance (essence or ousia) of its own as an indispensable underlying factor from which it derives its existence. The way in which Nestorius sought appropriately to express the union of natures in Christ was by emphasizing one or both of the following: (i) the affirmation of the numerical oneness of Christ; (2) the rejection [denial] of a duality of sons in Christ. (Bethune-Baker, 412.) The two natures in Christ come together, not on the level of nature or ousia but through the only possible medium of union - the vehicle of the *prosopon*. For, it is the *prosopon* that is capable of presenting intact and perfectly integral the properties, faculties, operations and characteristics of each nature in Christ. (Anastos, 126; Bazaar, 53, 158-159) By making the following statement "... if he [God] had not come in human nature but had become flesh in his own ousia, he would not at all have become incarnate, in that he would have become incarnate for them in his own ousia and not in the nature of man" Nestorius rejects the assertion that God the Word took merely the schema of humanity in his act of the Incarnation. (Bazaar, 22) He attempts to illustrate that the Incarnation preserves and protects the integrity of both natures. Since the two ousias in Christ are mutually exclusive (Bazaar, 26-27), when united neither divinity nor humanity could be the basis of the union. Therefore, they must come into unity through another medium, i. e., the united *prosopon*, which becomes the basis and the final subject of Incarnation in Christ Jesus.

⁷² Nature is present in every object; it is that which sums up the totality of qualities, features, attributes and peculiarities both positive and negative which characterize the object. (Anastos, 125-6).

⁷³ Ousia is invisible reality reflecting the object in itself-apart from being perceived. Each ousia has a distinctive nature; further, there is no nature without ousia and no ousia without nature. (Anastos, 125-6).

⁷⁴ Hypostasis is that which reveals and makes the ousia and nature fully present and effective and without which the ousia and the nature cannot be recognized. (Anastos, 125-6).

⁷⁵ *Prosopon* is the outward expression of an essence or a nature, Cf. Greer, Image, 47.

⁷⁶ Bazaar, 70, 72, 156-158, 163.

⁷⁷ Ibid., 23, 81, 163-164, 182, 207, 218-219, 260-261.

⁶³ Rowan A. Greer, "The Use of Scripture in the Nestorian Controversy" *Scottish Journal of Theology*, vol. 20 No. 4 (1967) 416-419.

⁶⁴ Andre de Halleux, *Nestorius: History and Doctrine*, tr. into English by Annette Hedman, in *Syriac Dialogue 1*, eds. Alfred Stirnemann and Gerhard Wilflinger (Pro Oriente Foundation: Vienna, 1994), 213.

⁶⁵ Scipioni, 428. To justify the above cited assertion, Scipioni explains that Cyril did not understand salvation according to the Pauline concept of "*per hominem*," instead he dwells on the more hellenistic concept of deification of man by means of an effective permeation by God.

⁶⁶ Bazaar, 391, 92-94; also see Loofs, 67-70.

⁶⁷ Ibid., 237, 304.

⁶⁸ Ibid., 166-167.

⁶⁹ Scipioni, 428.

Union is the manifestation of Christ, united in his two distinct, but never separate or separable, hypostases as well as his two distinct, but also never separate, natures and essences.⁷⁸ But Nestorius' efforts to give due weight to Christ's human reality was perceived by Cyril as an obvious "two sons' heresy."⁷⁹

As an Antiochian, Nestorius resorted to the Bible to make his theology intelligible. The most significant mark of Nestorius thought is his dogma of the "*prosopic union*." It is characteristic of his complete work, *the Bazaar*, and conveys a message of a faith that is based on his understanding of the Sacred Scripture and Church Fathers. Nestorius attempts through the usage of his doctrine to show that the effective ends of the union of the two natures in Christ were dependent both upon God's action (His grace) and upon the co-operative free will of Jesus' humanity.⁸⁰ The principle passage in which he explains and justifies the usage of the "*prosopic union*" as the vehicle for the union of the two natures in Christ is the passage from Paul's letter to the Philippians:

Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being made in human likeness. And being found in human form, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death - even death on a cross. Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. [Phil. 2,5 -11]

It is apparent that the "form of God" and the "form of a slave" mean respectively the *Prosopon* of God and the *prosopon* of man. God (the taker) took the likeness, or the *schema* and *prosopon*, not the *ousia* or nature of the servant, in order that he might participate in the likeness of the servant;⁸¹ and similarly, in order that it (the taken humanity) might participate in the likeness of the God, it receives the form of God, and so, out of the two *prosopa* there is now only one *prosopon* from the two natures.⁸² By an act of humility (Kenosis) the form of God becomes the *prosopon* of the servant; and similarly, by an act of exaltation, the form of the servant becomes the *prosopon* of God. This becoming (taking and being taken) occurs without any change or confusion of the nature or the *ousia* of either the divinity or the humanity.⁸³

Nestorius ventures to additionally use biblical texts so that he is more able to elaborate his doctrine of the *prosopic union*. In order to further elaborate the above cited Philippians' text, he uses the following creation account of Genesis 1, 26-27:

Then God said, "Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the wild animals of the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth." So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. [Gen. 1, 26-27]

In the Bazaar Nestorius uses the word "*prosopon*" as a synonym for the term "image." By using these two biblical texts, he tries to argue that this coming together and this becoming of the two *prosopa* - the taker and the taken - in the "*prosopon* of the

union" is understood in terms of creation, revelation and redemption.⁸⁴ The re-creation of human nature in perfection - through the second Adam - can be depicted as the "image of God." The intention of God in creating Adam in his image did not mature to reciprocity in the first man due to his fall; but in Christ, the second Adam, the total fulfillment of human nature was realized in its holiness, freedom and obedience because the image of God is given to Christ's humanity, from the moment of its conception, in its every iota of perfection. In Nestorius' words the justification for this argument is as follows:

[In that he⁸⁵ has received the title to be "holy"] not as the rest of mankind by virtue of obedience in faith and in works but from [the moment of] coming into being by the creation of the Creator, he has received his *prosopon* as something created, in such wise as not originally to be man but at the same time Man-God by the Incarnation of God who in him is what God was in the first man.⁸⁶ He indeed was the Maker of all, the law-giver, without king, the glory, the honor and the power; he was also the second man with qualities complete and whole, so that God was his *prosopon* while he was in God.⁸⁷

The Incarnation took place for the purpose of revelation. God had to reveal himself in terms and conditions that we, his creation, would be able to comprehend and encounter. The image of God is considered to be the divine *prosopon*; writes Nestorius:

As God appeared and spoke unto Adam in schema, and as it was none other, so will God be [seen] of all men in the natural schema which has been created, that is, that of the flesh, appearing and speaking in his own image and the image in the Archetype. So that, on the one hand, God appeared in the image, since he is not visible, on the other hand, the image is conceived as representing him who appeared not. For it is not [the fact] that the image is his being, but that on the other hand the very image and *prosopon* [are] the humanity of the divinity and the divinity of the humanity.⁸⁸

The union in Christ, for Nestorius, is the perfect revelation of God. Through the united *prosopon* of Christ a full and complete revelation is made of the image of God. For man, the complete knowledge of God is made possible. In the words of Nestorius:

And it was congruous with the dispensation which is for our sake that both of them⁸⁹ should be taken into the *prosopon* [of the union]; for, because God created the first man in his own image and in his likeness and the *prosopa* of God the Maker - of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, - were not revealed to us, so that we might also know the Creator and obtain completely the teaching of the Divine knowledge and receive in completeness a complete idea of the image of God, he has renewed all creation in Christ and has made known and shown unto us what the Maker is: he who from the beginning was the Word with the Father was also God the Maker of all.⁹⁰

In what has preceded, the union between Christ's divinity and humanity is advanced by Nestorius in terms that are biblical (Old and New Testaments), catechetical (prophetic and moral), revelatory (God's revelation in Christ), communal (between God and man), and finally through manifestations that are concrete and which stem from a human

⁷⁸ Greer, Image, 47

⁷⁹ Bazaar, 47-50, 224-226

⁸⁰ Greer, Image, 56, Bazaar, 59, 66.

⁸¹ Bazaar, 166, also see Greer, 48-50.

⁸² Ibid., 167, also see Greer, 48-50.

⁸³ Greer, Image, 49

⁸⁴ Greer, Image, 50

⁸⁵ I.e., the manhood of Christ.

⁸⁶ I.e., Adam.

⁸⁷ Bazaar, 60

⁸⁸ Ibid., 60

⁸⁹ I.e., both natures.

⁹⁰ Ibid., 58-59

experience providing moral and spiritual knowledge and understanding so that mankind may achieve its destiny of communion with God.⁹¹

In Nestorius' *prosopic union*, the role of Christ's humanity is to fulfill functionally that which the first Adam was endowed to fulfill but failed at. Through Christ's perfect obedience to the will of the Father, all of creation is endowed with a new relationship with God. But Christ's victory in aligning his will with that of his Father is due to his real struggle with sin, which alienates from God, and his victory over it.⁹² In doing so, he has become the prototype of our salvation, and has, through his life, ministry and passion, shown us the Way towards Life and Truth, drawing us to himself and making us fellow-heirs of his kingdom and sons of God. Nestorius puts it in these words:

For until the time of his victory he was striving to make firm in God the image which had been given unto him. But because he established his own image in all temptations perfectly and without failing and without falling short in anything, he comported himself on our behalf, being zealous to rescue us captives from the violence of the tyrant and to draw us towards him and to make all of us the sons of his own kingdom, the associates and the heirs and the sons of God.⁹³

Christ's divinity did not undermine the role of his humanity in his task of setting a perfect example for the rest of humanity. Christ's divinity did not prevent his manhood from facing, in freedom, temptation and the possibility of sin. Nestorius presents his thinking this way:

Because in fact he took this [likeness] in order to abolish the guilt of the first man and in order to give his nature the former image which he had lost through his guilt, rightly he took that which had proven itself guilty and had been made captive and had been subjected to servitude, with all the bonds of scorn and contempt.⁹⁴

Nestorius, without any incertitude, recognized redemption in Incarnation. The nature that had fallen in disobedience was now chosen in Jesus Christ to be made God's own - the inheritor of his image, the dwelling place of his Son. He was tempted and suffered death, but to the very last he did not cease to stand in obedience for the sake of the mission for which he had come. In this way, Nestorius' Christ is the savior of the world and the prototype of all humanity. He is not just a savior of the world, but an exemplar in every objective and human way. He sets a perfect example for every one to strive to emulate in his/her relationship with a perfectly loving God. Rowan Greer, in his analysis of the significance of Nestorius' *prosopic union*, states the following: "*Adam completed the image of the devil by his disobedience; Christ completed the image of God, intended by God for Adam, by his obedience.*"⁹⁵ As with the other Antiochian theologians, the realness of the union as depicted in Nestorius' thought does not depend on a substantial (*hypostatic*) union between God and man. It is more of a dynamic relationship that ultimately fulfills what was meant in God's plan in creating human nature.

Nestorius never intended to deny the legitimacy of the "*communicatio idiomatum*." A proper text to illustrate his understanding of this doctrine is the following:

For he who refers to the one *prosopon* of God the Word the [properties] of God the Word and those of the humanity and gives not in return the *prosopon* of God the Word to the

humanity steals away the union of the orthodox and likens it to that of the heretics. For you have learned from the orthodox in the testimonies that they have written, that they give in compensation the [properties] of the humanity to the divinity and those of the divinity to the humanity, and that this is said of the one and that of the other, as concerning natures whole and united, united indeed without confusion and making use of the *prosopa* of one another.⁹⁶

On the one hand, note how Nestorius' way of expressing the exchange of predicates between God the Word and the human nature in Christ is through their *prosopa* - "*the divinity makes use of the prosopon of the humanity and the humanity of that of the divinity.*" This is a vocabulary particular to him through which he performs at his best in expressing his thought. It is a terminology aimed at the same point that which the doctrine of the *hypostatic union* attempts to achieve. A question then can be asked: What if Nestorius did intend to mean by the usage of the term "*prosopon*" what was altogether equal to what Cyril meant by the term "*hypostasis*"?⁹⁷ This language that Nestorius utilizes to articulate his doctrine of the "*prosopon of the union*" allows him to express the sought after unity of the two natures in Christ. Through the "*prosopon of the union*" Christ's divinity makes use of the *prosopon* of his humanity, and the humanity of that of the divinity. In Nestorius' words each *prosopon* becomes the "*eikon and prosopon*" of the other nature in such a wise that in the final analysis there is only one coalesced *prosopon* of Jesus Christ, both God and man.⁹⁸

⁹⁶ Bazaar, 241

⁹⁷ The Confession of Nicaea stated that the Son is one in being (*homoousios*) with the Father. This concept was challenged by the question: does *homoousios* mean (1) the same being with the Father; or, (2) of one being with the Father? Interpretation of meaning #1 could be misunderstood as tritheistic and #2 as modalistic. The answer that emerged stated that the Son possesses the essentially unique and indivisible divine being that is proper to the Father; a unity of being and not merely a sameness of being is in the Father and the Son. The Son is of the being of the hypostasis of the Father, being and hypostasis still had the same meaning at Nicaea - a doctrine that Nestorius continued to follow in context, meaning and terminology. The Nicæan Creed starts with the Father as the "summit of unity" in which the Son and the Spirit are comprehended. Divinity originates in the Father and streams forth in the Son and the Holy Spirit. The Semi-Arians who interpreted *homoousios* to be modalistic, wanted to change it to *homoiousios* (like the Father, but not identical with him). Athanasius, the champion of Nicaea offered a solution - there was a distinction between "three hypostases" and "one being." This meant that the two concepts of being and hypostasis - which were used as identical in Nicaea - now were differentiated. More conceptual evolution occurred in the process of time. For Basil, a Cappadocian Father, *ousia* was something general and not limited to a particular identity; for example, "man" was the common name for any human being. The term hypostasis meant the concrete individual embodiment of this common being; it came into being as a complex of *idiomata*, i.e., individualizing characteristics or constitutive elements of the concrete existence. In the Latin West, there arose difficulty with these distinctions due to translating the Greek hypostasis to the Latin *substantia*. On the one hand, to the Westerners it seemed that three hypostases meant three divine substances, thus, leading to tritheism or the doctrine of three Gods. On the other, Tertullian's distinction between nature and persona was difficult to be accepted in the East because persona was being translated to *prosopon*, which meant, "mask" or mere appearance, thus, leading to modalism. For this reason, Basil, issued a warning - which eventually would become the norm for future theological terminology - that the three persons in God exist as three hypostases. Once this statement was accepted by all parts of the Church in the Roman empire, practically every one who adhered to this statement was saying the same thing albeit using different terms in corresponding languages. The first official declaration of the Church was put forward in the fifth ecumenical Council in Constantinople (553). The Council took hypostasis and person as synonyms; it stated: "If any one does not confess that the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit are one nature or essence, one might and power, a Trinity one in being, one Godhead to be worshipped in three hypostases or persons, anathema sit." For further elaboration please see: Walter Kasper, *The God of Jesus Christ*, (Crossroad: NY, 1984) 257-260.

⁹⁸ Bazaar, 58, 240 f., 81, 174, 182, f., 191, 233.

⁹¹ Greer, Image, 47-52

⁹² Roberta C. Chesnut, "The Two Prosopa in Nestorius' Bazaar of Heracleides," *Theological Studies*, vol. 29 part 2 (October 1978) 399-402

⁹³ Bazaar, 67.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 62.

⁹⁵ Greer, Image, 54.

On the other hand, Nestorius preferred something other than the term "*Theotokos*." He tells us an account in this regard of a situation in which he was called upon to settle a question as the Patriarch of his Church.

Those on the one hand who called the blessed Mary the mother of God they called Manichaeans, but those who named the blessed Mary the mother of a man Photinians. ... But when they were questioned by me, the former denied not the humanity nor the latter the divinity, but they confessed them both alike, while they were distinct only in name: they of the party of Apollinarius accepted 'Mother of God' and they of the party of Photinus 'Mother of man'. But after I knew that they disputed not in the spirit of heretics, I said that neither the latter nor the former were heretics, [the former] because they knew not Apollinarius and his dogma, while similarly the latter [knew] the dogma neither of Photinus nor of Paul.⁹⁹ And I brought them back from this inquiry and from this dispute, saying that: If indistinguishably and without extrusion or denial of the divinity and of the humanity we accept what is said by them, we sin not; but if not, let us make use of that which is very plainly [affirmed], that is, of the Word of the Gospel: 'Christ was born',¹⁰⁰ and 'the book of the generation of Jesus Christ.'¹⁰¹ And by things such as these we confess that Christ is God and man, 'of them'¹⁰² was born in flesh Christ, who is God above all.¹⁰³ When you call her the Mother of Christ, [Christ] by union and inseparable, you speak of the one [nature] and of the other in the sonship. But make use of that against which there is no accusation in the Gospel and settle this dispute among you, making use of a word which is useful toward agreement.¹⁰⁴

The manner in which Nestorius conceives the union would be in such a fashion: The Word passed through Blessed Mary inasmuch as he did not receive a beginning by birth from her, as is the case with the body which was born of her. For this reason Nestorius would say that God the Word passed and not was born, because he did not receive a beginning from her. Nevertheless, in the union, the two natures being united are indeed one Christ. And He who was born of the Father as to the divinity, and from the Holy Virgin as to the humanity is one; for of the two natures there was a union. It is important in order to understand Nestorius' thinking to know that the notion of birth necessarily connotes to him the concept of generation - the coming into being, or the rising to existence, out of nothing. As a committed Antiochian, he cannot compromise the dignity of either nature in Christ. For this reason, he, in numerous places in the Bazaar, makes certain that he explains why he avoids the assertion that God the Word was born of the holy virgin, and, instead he maintains that:

He who is God the Word has surely passed through [the virgin] but was surely not born, because he derived not his origin¹⁰⁵ from her. But there both exists and is named one Christ, [Christ is the subject of the verbs here. The "both" does not refer to the natures. The clause in translation may read "But one Christ both exists and is named".] the two of them being united, he who was born of the Father in the divinity, [and] of the holy virgin in the humanity, for there was a union of the two natures.¹⁰⁶ ... God the Word existed in the body, in that which took the beginning of its coming into being from the blessed Mary, [yet] he

took not the beginning of his coming into being. *In the beginning was the Word*,¹⁰⁷ and God the Word exists eternally.¹⁰⁸

It is in the above context only that Nestorius would accept the *communicatio idiomatum* as expressed in the term *Theotokos*, and even then only with reservation. For the Antiochians, to adhere to such a term without first providing safeguards which affirm adequately the full and authentic humanity of the Lord and his real consubstantiality with every other human being would lead to a fundamentally monophysite conception of the union in Christ.¹⁰⁹ If the doctrine of the "*Hypostatic Union*" means that the blessed Virgin Mary is not the mother of the divine nature of Christ (i.e., that he did not receive a beginning from her), but only that the Divine Logos joined himself to the human nature of Jesus at the 'moment' of his conception, and that because of the intimate and inseparable union between the divine and human natures in Christ the holy Virgin is therefore called "*Theotokos*", then it has been shown that Nestorius already accepts this doctrine.¹¹⁰

4. Nestorius and the Council of Ephesus: Justice or Tragedy?

The subject matter of this section has already been dealt with in the Second PRO ORIENTE Conference held in Vienna, in February 1996.¹¹¹ However, below I will briefly deal with a few other points that may hopefully facilitate further understanding of Nestorius' thought in the contemporary ecumenical context.

In the Bazaar, Nestorius is throughout more concerned for the wrong done to the faith at Ephesus than to himself, saying that if he held the views attributed to him by Cyril he would be the first to condemn himself without mercy.¹¹² The following remarks summarize the relationship that existed between Nestorius and the Council of Ephesus:

1. The Council of Ephesus itself was a theater of troublesome quarrels and unworthy violence. The two parties of bishops - the Cyrillians and the Antiochians - blamed each other without being able to know who was the cause of the problem. The trial of Nestorius at Ephesus was conducted in an atmosphere of hostile schemes that are regrettable by today's standards and Christian ideals. Cyril took the initiative of opening the Council without the presence of the Roman delegates, or the Eastern bishops, or even the accused Nestorius himself. During the sessions of the Council, the accused and his friends never had a hearing. As Nestorius himself put it, "the Council was Cyril"; it simply registered the Alexandrian patriarch's views. He furthermore states that he was condemned untried for defending the faith that was vindicated by the Church, in 433 and 451.¹¹³ However, when John of Antioch and Cyril of Alexandria reconciled in 433, they thought it unnecessary to recall the scandals of Ephesus.¹¹⁴
2. It is in this manner that Nestorius and many others, including the Fathers of the Church of the East, think that the ecumenical Council of Ephesus began illegally, even

¹⁰⁷ Jn. 1:1.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., 193.

¹⁰⁹ Scipioni, 427.

¹¹⁰ Anastos, 122.

¹¹¹ This position paper which unofficially expresses the point of view of the Assyrian Church of the East has just been published by PRO ORIENTE in the Syriac Dialogue 2.

¹¹² de Halleux, 200.

¹¹³ Bazaar, 176, 374

¹¹⁴ de Halleux, 201.

⁹⁹ I.e., Paul of Samosata.

¹⁰⁰ Mt. 1:16.

¹⁰¹ Mt. 1:1.

¹⁰² I.e., the Jews.

¹⁰³ Rom. 9:5.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 99

¹⁰⁵ Note the relation for Nestorius between birth and origination (or generation).

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., 296.

opening its sessions against imperial orders. It seems that for Cyril, the main objective of the Council was to ratify the judgments of the Roman and Egyptian synods against Nestorius.¹¹⁵

3. Nestorius' response to the convocation of the Council - knowing that Cyril was "occupying" the place of the Bishop of Rome in addition to being both the accuser and the judge in the trial - was that he would be present only when all the bishops had convened in Ephesus. But after Nestorius refused to appear as a defendant, he was judged and condemned in a court that Cyril, his adversary, completely controlled, thus violating an elementary rule of proper legal procedure. In the trial the assembled bishops first verified the accusation of heresy, read the canonical norm of the orthodox faith, being the creed of Nicaea, then the orthodoxy established by the Roman and Egyptian synods, with numerous other letters. However, there were no explanations or synodical discussions of the accusations; the sentences of the Council simply condemned a heresy whose content is not specified. Interestingly, the issue of the *Theotokos* is not presented as a charge against Nestorius, even though it was the question that ignited this controversy. The sham tribunal presented two witnesses who reportedly could attest to some damaging and scandalous remarks that Nestorius had made, but there was no authoritative verification of their accusations, nor had the grounds of the accusation been submitted to the verification of an impartial court, which the absence of the accused made even more necessary.¹¹⁶

4. Nestorius was a victim of imperial, ecclesial and political maneuvering among the sees of Rome, Constantinople and Alexandria. While in ordinary circumstances Rome would have maintained the balance between the contrasted schools of thought - as it had traditionally done and as was the case, for example, with Leo and Flavian¹¹⁷ - it is not surprising that Coelestine resisted any saving interference due to his resentment of Nestorius' assistance to the Pelagian refugees, and also, possibly, his unease at the growing power of the see of Constantinople - the *Nova Roma* of the East.

Despite this unfortunate record of events which took place in Ephesus more than 1500 years ago, to a contemporary and committed ecumenical thinker, who seeks a historically grounded interpretation of church history and dogma, there still remains some ray of hope for rapprochement between the theological heirs of Nestorius and Cyril if with good grace and charity such rapprochement is sought. There are three suggestions that I would like to present in order to facilitate the discussion and approach to a settlement.

The *first* suggestion concerns making a distinction, on the one hand, between the terminology Cyril and Nestorius made use of in articulating their theologies, and the methods which they employed, and on the other hand, their faith in the Risen Lord. Cyril's faith is not in question, for he is a saint and a doctor of the catholic Church - for Churches of both the Ephesian and Chalcedonian traditions. But his terminology remains questionable for the sole surviving non-Ephesian tradition, that of the Church of the East, though today the same Church is engaged in a process of rethinking and reformulating her position about the relevance of past reactions to that terminology, and whether it can be accommodated within the traditional confessional forms of the Church of the East. If Cyril's strong unitary language is clearly seen to provide also for the impossibility of the divinity in Christ and the perfect integrity of his humanity, I believe the

Church of the East will be satisfied that Cyril's confession of Jesus Christ, though couched in different language, is the same as her own. To illustrate this precise point, below I have selected four texts from comparatively moderate epistles written by Cyril in which he spells out the essence of his faith in an answer to Succensus the bishop of Diocaesarea in Isauria.

For this reason and very wisely we say ... that the Word of God the Father incomprehensibly and in a manner which cannot be expressed united to himself a body animated by a rational soul and came forth a man from a woman, having become like unto us, not by a change of his nature but rather by the goodwill of the dispensation of his Incarnation.¹¹⁸

.... The word of God of the Father was made man and was made flesh and ... he has not fashioned that holy body from his divine nature but rather took it from the Virgin Mary. Since, how did he become man, if he has not possessed a body like ours?¹¹⁹

If we want to establish a link between the Christologies of Cyril and Nestorius the most important connection, for the Antiochians, would be found in language which asserts the integrity of Christ's humanity after the union and the unaltered integrity of his divinity. When Cyril describes Jesus' humanity as "*a body animated by a rational soul ... having become like unto us, not by a change of his [divine] nature*" he speaks directly to the overriding issues of concern to the Church of the East, a concern which has persisted down through the centuries. Nestorius saw the need to assert the permanent integrity of both natures of Christ in the union, and also to make a distinction between the properties of each. And Cyril does that exactly with the next two statements.

.... Sometimes he speaks as a man according to the dispensation and according to his humanity, and sometimes as God he makes statements by the authority of his divinity.¹²⁰

If Christ is perfect God and if he is known to be perfect man, and if he is consubstantial with the Father according to divinity, but according to humanity consubstantial with us, where is the consubstantiality with us, if the essence, that is our nature, no longer subsists?¹²¹

These four texts indicate a dogmatic synthesis similar to that which Cyril and John of Antioch brought into the Christological debate, ending the dispute between the two camps - however, under the condition of Nestorius' continued condemnation. In both places, in these four texts and in the 433 peace accord, it seems that Cyril acknowledges the propriety of the language and theological vision of the Antiochian tradition.¹²²

This brings us to our *second* suggestion. In essence the emphasis of each of these two theological concepts represents the fundamental difference between the two Christological approaches. As we have suggested, Nestorius' insistence was on the soteriological side, stressing the priestly and prophetic role of Christ's humanity in the Incarnation. He draws from Saint Paul's kenotic passage in the letter to the Philippians, and points out Christ's salvific role as the "*Second Adam*" which is set forth in the first letter to the Corinthians. His concern was that the complete and uncompromised humanity of Christ, as elder brother, high priest, and first fruits of our salvation, be acknowledged for its proper role as the vehicle through which the Word restored in humanity the image and likeness of God. Cyril's fundamental concern in his Christology was ontological: to pre-

¹¹⁸ St. Cyril of Alexandria Letters 1-50, in *Fathers of the Church* Letters 1-50 vol.76, trans. John McEnerney (CUA Press, Washington DC, 1987) 192

¹¹⁹ Ibid, 193

¹²⁰ Ibid, 192-193

¹²¹ Ibid, 201

¹²² A. di Bernardini & B. Studer, eds, *History of Theology: the Patristic Period*, (Michael Glazier, 1996) 433.

¹¹⁵ Ibid., 202-203.

¹¹⁶ Ibid., 202

¹¹⁷ Ibid., 203

serve the unconditional assertion of the substantial *unity* between the Logos/subject and the humanity in Christ. The emphasis in his soteriology is on the efficient cause of our salvation, the activity of the Logos/subject in the union. In Nestorius and Cyril together, therefore, the Christian tradition may be said to have become richer because it possesses two different emphases, corresponding to two different objectives, one stressing the soteriological importance of Christ's humanity in the union, and the other stressing the ontological oneness of the incarnate Word. Both are valid and both are indispensable if the Church wishes to begin to fathom the inexplicable mystery of God becoming man in Jesus Christ. It is unfortunate that Ephesus was not able to simultaneously recognize the insights of both men and in the end resolve their controversy, which inevitably became the whole Church's controversy, especially since Cyril's and Nestorius' theological language expressing the mystery of the Incarnation was to some extent still in formation.

The solution, understandably, came about gradually, through the 433 reconciliation between Cyril and John of Antioch - the price of the peace being Nestorius' own condemnation - but ultimately, through the Council of Chalcedon in 451. What the Chalcedonian definition, "*one person in two natures*," was able to achieve, due to the Church's developing theological terminology, was exactly to realize what Ephesus had failed at doing: synthesizing and bringing the two theological orientations to the closest proximity which could be achieved. Chalcedon's genius was in its capacity to reject the heretical teaching, wrongly attributed to Nestorius,¹²³ and maintain the concept of the union in more Cyrillian (ontological) terms via the "*hypostatic union*." To counter-balance the human impersonalism perceived in Cyril's view of the Incarnation and in his hypostatic union, the Fathers at Chalcedon adopted a word like "*prosopon*" in the conciliar definition to indicate the subject of the union of the divinity and of the humanity of our Lord - a term, meaning *prosopon*, that which Nestorius utilized as well. Further, the same definition also guarded the permanence of the two natures in Christ, with all their properties, without change or confusion - the very theological objectives that Nestorius so fervently strove for.

The evaluation of these events brings us to our *third* and final suggestion, which concerns the actuality of Nestorius' faith. As for him personally, Nestorius praised with elation the outcome of Chalcedon, particularly the change that the acceptance of the *Tomus* of Leo the Great brought about in the situation which had prevailed in the Church from the time of the Council of Ephesus (431) - particularly after the second synod of Ephesus in 449. Furthermore, Nestorius explicitly stated that his faith was exactly the same as the teachings of Leo and Flavian.¹²⁴ Nestorius is said to have been asked to write to Leo, seeking to inform him of the true state of affairs and concerning the change of faith that had taken place in the Church, but he replied: "... I wrote not,¹²⁵ not because I am a proud man and senseless, but so that I might not hinder from his running him [*i.e.*, Leo] who was running fairly because of the prejudice against my person."¹²⁶ Nevertheless, he asserts that "It is my doctrine which Leo and Flavian are teaching,"¹²⁷ and so

persuades his friends to, "Believe as his holy comrades in the faith Leo and Flavian [do]."¹²⁸

It is perfectly understandable why Nestorius would say the above. The ideas for which he and the Antiochene school strove were acknowledged, protected and advanced by the Council of Chalcedon (451) in the content and language of the doctrinal synthesis of the Church. Chalcedon teaches that the two natures in Christ, though inseparably and perfectly united, have wholly retained all their characteristics, each nature perfect in itself and never altered. The manhood of Christ was appreciated and safeguarded, as distinct from the Godhead, against any type of docetism. The union was perceived as an ineffable mystery. In contrast to the Cyrillian conception of the "*impersonal manhood of Christ*," the Fathers at Chalcedon, at least implicitly, attributed a human nature to the Lord that was taken to include all that is today called in contemporary language by "personality." Again, when the Sixth Ecumenical Council (680) affirmed against the Monothelites that there were in the Lord two wills and two *energeiai* - divine and human - it seems to have explicitly affirmed what is the equivalent the modern idea of "personality."¹²⁹ The mere fact that the Council of Chalcedon equated Cyril's hypostasis with Nestorius' *prosopon* says that the ideals which Nestorius strove for were, in the long run, reconsidered and given a place in the dogmatic formulation that became part of the faith of the Church for centuries. The faith of Nestorius gets another affirmation in the history records of the ancient Church historian Socrates. While Nestorius was most probably still alive, in the year 440, Socrates defended Nestorius' faith with impartiality, arguing that his teachings were grossly and cunningly misrepresented. After Socrates denies that Nestorius ever taught the heresy attributed to him (that of "two sons" or "two christs"), he unambiguously states: "*I read his writings and I will say the truth: he did not hold the same opinions as Paul of Samosata and Photinus nor did he at all regard the Lord as mere man, only he abhorred the term 'Theotokos' as a bugbear.*"¹³⁰

5. An Evaluation

Nestorius was an Antiochian and, indeed, he believed and thought as every Antiochian would. He used biblical interpretation that already was employed by his teachers, Theodore and Diodore. As an Antiochian, he was challenged politically, ecclesially and dogmatically. His challengers belonged to various theological tendencies which he had to face in a world that did not effectively exercise professional amenity nor sensitivity toward other people's different methods of understanding and terminological divergences, particularly in situations of disputes. The importance of such nuances of social sophistication and spiritual maturation would have been crucial in the discovery of the genuine theological thought of Nestorius, especially when we know that the work attributed to him, which we today have, was the product of, and due to, the fact that Nestorius was engaged in ecclesiastical polemics rather than in systematic theology.

The historical preface we have seen in section I of this paper suggests that embedded in ecclesiastical politics there is always a non-theological edge to every religious discord. In Nestorius' case, I suppose, even before any theological charges were brought against him, his lack of experience of worldly affairs, imprudent judgment and unwillingness to learn, tolerate or respect the sensibilities of the faithful of his diocese and the

¹²³ This could be summed up as the bringing the distinction between the two natures in Christ to its extreme of dividing the Lord into two separate persons or "two sons".

¹²⁴ Loofs, 22,25,56,59.

¹²⁵ But it may well be that Nestorius actually did somehow communicate his message—whether Leo was aware of it I am not sure—in the form of his important apology, the *Bazaar*.

¹²⁶ *Bazaar*, 378.

¹²⁷ Loofs, 25

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*

¹²⁹ *Bazaar*, 239, fn. #1.

¹³⁰ Loofs, 20

politics of the court in Constantinople, at least in matters that required time and tolerance,¹³¹ brought upon him the ill fate Cyril and other bishops of the empire had long wished for him and for his "school of thought." His ignorance of the part that Pulcheria, the sister of the emperor, played in crucial issues, such as stabilizing the dynasty of her family, caused him to pay a dear price after she found in the zeal of Cyril the promise that no one else could deliver. Therefore, in the light of McGuckin's hypothesis and due to convoluted historical events which evolved as a result of pure human interaction within the socio-political structure of fourth and fifth century Byzantium, it may be plausible to suggest the following: the events of AD 428 to 430 that culminated with the opening of the Council of Ephesus in AD 431 and the condemnation of Nestorius - in the manner that we have seen in section III - were driven by the politics engaged in by Pulcheria and the rest of the aristocracy, the monks, and the populace of the capital, who collectively were driven by abhorrence of their bishop. Taking advantage of the adverse relationship that historically had existed between Alexandria and Antioch, they were able to personalize it in the relation between Cyril and Nestorius. All the involved parties in Constantinople needed a man like Cyril as much as, in turn, he needed them, if not more. They found in Cyril's zeal for defending orthodoxy, along with his own political agenda¹³² and theological objectives,¹³³ a genuine opportunity for challenging Nestorius and absolutely getting rid of him.

Barhadbeshabba, the Church of the East historian, would concur with such a rationale. His verdict on the real causes of the controversy is very much along the same lines. His synopsis of the real causes behind the disagreement with Nestorius, namely, that "*the whole body of the monks fought against him*"¹³⁴ only confirms the historian's conviction that the real causes for his condemnation and exile were not as theologically oriented as Nestorius' enemies in Constantinople and elsewhere wished everyone to believe. McGuckin on his part thinks that Barhadbeshabba's conclusion is borne out by credible evidence, even though, the latter's glossing over the theological issues may suggest an attempt to narrow the real causes of the conflict as being merely the results of the agitated relationship between the monks of the capital and their bishop.¹³⁵

Even so, the popular anger that was directed against Nestorius could also be explained similarly. Before the opening of the Council of Ephesus, when both Alexandria and Rome had already condemned Nestorius' teachings and were demanding a recantation from him, Nestorius desperately needed Constantinople, his own patriarchal town, to be his secure home front. In his attempt to avoid discord among his own subjects, Theodosius, in the final analysis, abandoned Nestorius due to immense pressure emanating from popular demonstration of dislike for Nestorius and the masses' chanting slogans at the Capital demanding the deposition of their by now much hated bishop.¹³⁶ Thus, it became crystal clear to Nestorius that under heavy pressure, in this case from the masses of Constantinople, even the emperor, formerly his strongest friend, ally and defender, would abandon his cause.¹³⁷

But what about the mistakes and the shortcomings of Nestorius? Is it fair to suppose, at least to a certain extent, that these were determinant factors in his misfortune?

¹³¹ Ibid., 62.

¹³² See Moffett, 170-175.

¹³³ Ibid.

¹³⁴ Barhadbeshabba cited by McGuckin, 15.

¹³⁵ Ibid., 15.

¹³⁶ Ibid., 13.

¹³⁷ Ibid., 9.

Whatever the case might be, the most drastic blunder, as far as the Church of Rome was concerned, was his handling of the Pelagian refugees in Constantinople, and his consequent letter, perhaps displeasing, to the pope.¹³⁸ His action vis-à-vis Rome was a sample of the temperament by which he, through passion and a lack of caution, poisoned his relations with a host of individuals and groups in the Church, as we have seen earlier. Socrates attests to this by maintaining that Nestorius' error was never heresy as much as he, as a patriarch, lacked knowledge, or sometimes, demonstrated over-confidence and dogmatism in matters requiring prudent judgment and premeditated balance.¹³⁹

During the heat of the theological debate, Nestorius used a theological approach and technical language in which he failed to illustrate, in terms recognizable by his Alexandrian counterpart, how his vocabulary system accounts for a concrete and unambiguous union between the two distinct, yet not separated, natures which he confessed in Jesus Christ. The Incarnation is a mystery beyond any human description; there is always a need for a humble reticence in men who attempt to peer into the mystery of God. Nestorius' approach seemed, at times, to confine itself to purely logical categories; he also seemed too determined to explain himself in such a way as to preclude any contradictions, that precluded a theological statement only based on prayer and confession of the true faith. Though Nestorius' conception of the union of divinity with the humanity is perfectly brilliant and his theory to solve the Christological problem on the basis of "*oneness in duality*" is consistent, yet Cyril's methodology, which, as Nestorius points out over and over again in his Bazaar, is inconsistent, has been approved by the Church over Nestorius' precisely for the very fact that it is not - and perhaps could never have been - perfectly consistent. It seems that, unlike Nestorius, Cyril would not pursue the dialectic of the union to the end; and, furthermore, when his theological system cannot fully articulate the truth of the Incarnation, he reverts to inconsistency, invoking the inadequacy of humans to comprehend fully the mystery.¹⁴⁰ Nestorius took a risk when he chose to explain the mystery of the Incarnation in terms of the prosopic union. The combination of utilizing misunderstood terminology and offending people by political mistakes created a fatal situation that Nestorius could not manage to escape from. It allowed both his theological and non-theological adversaries to blame him with heresies and to bring other charges against him in matters concerning which he was confident of his blamelessness.

And so, conscious of the charge that he taught a 'two sons' Christology, Nestorius repeatedly and vehemently denied such accusations and instead maintained his faith in the incarnation by emphasizing unity. The following two quotes tell us about his faith and confession: "*I have confessed in one Christ two natures without confusion. By one nature on the one hand, that is [by that] of the divinity, he was born of God the Father; by the other, on the other hand, that is [by that] of the humanity, [he was born] of the holy virgin;*"¹⁴¹ and further, he asserts also that "*no one else than he who was in the bosom of his Father came and became flesh and dwelt among us; and he is in the bosom of his Father and with us, in that he is what the Father is, and he has expounded unto us what he is in the bosom of his Father.*"¹⁴² Considering such faith in the Incarnation and in the unity of the two natures in Jesus Christ, Nestorius was no heretic. His

¹³⁸ Loofs, 45.

¹³⁹ Ibid., 60-61.

¹⁴⁰ Bazaar, 420.

¹⁴¹ Ibid., 296.

¹⁴² Ibid., 50.

faith is orthodox as any of the Fathers contemporary to his time. His assertions promoting the unity of the Son are many and his denials of the possibility that there were two sons or subjects in Jesus, similarly, are numerous. Both emphases and rejections respectively should tell us a lot of his intention, faith and zeal for maintaining an orthodox teaching.

Nevertheless, criterion for orthodoxy should not be confined to certain terminological formulae, but should be a subject to confessing the Apostolic Kerygma, the true faith that is biblically based and that points to the transcendence of God's mystery in Jesus Christ, the Savior of the world. Nestorius was orthodox in that he confessed the oneness of Christ, yet his theological theses, and more so, his articulation of them, could not sufficiently express his faith, at least in terms that were acceptable to Cyril of Alexandria, and, in due course, to the ancient Christian Church in the Roman-Byzantine Empire.

For the contemporary ecumenical community, the question of Nestorius presents a challenge. But this challenge should be transformed by means of Christian charity into an opportunity to bring the differing parties together - an opportunity such as that which has already been seized by the Foundation PRO ORIENTE. The needs of evangelization in the world require the Christian community to work with values and principle that the Gospel teaches; and to be principled and impartial would mean to allow Nestorius be evaluated and judged in accordance to his own words and metaphysical thought, which is available to us today in his work, albeit this work was composed twenty years after Ephesus by a defensive Nestorius.¹⁴³ Nestorius and Cyril, if measured by the standards of Chalcedon and its creed, both have defects in their teachings and theological thought.¹⁴⁴ But both men were faithful to their own respective schools of thought. They, each on his own, truly intended never to say anything that is different from Athanasius and the early Church Fathers.¹⁴⁵

The Church of the East of today has remained faithful to the judgment of her early Fathers concerning the case of Nestorius. Although the place of Nestorius' thought and person in this Church is not comparable with the extent of honor and admiration accorded Theodore of Mopsuestia, yet there has always been a consistent refusal by the Fathers of this Church to abandon Nestorius' cause. This Church has always held that his theological concerns were valid and his contribution to protecting the integrity of Christ's humanity will always be admired and appreciated. These firm commitments have been maintained for hundreds of years in the Church of the East without any change or alteration, while at the same time this Church has suffered untold martyrdoms for the sake of her witness to the same God and Savior Nestorius and the rest of the Fathers loved and worshipped.

Within the context of the relationship between Nestorius and the Church of the East,¹⁴⁶ one is moved to contemplate the effects of the recent "Common Christological Declaration" signed by Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV and Pope John Paul II, in 1994, on the question of Nestorius. There is no mention of Nestorius in this declaration, but there is, however, the vindication and the acceptance of the term "*Christotokos*" by both the

Catholic Church and the Church of the East - obviously, when the meaning of the term is understood within the proper interpretation of the Apostolic faith. The suggested use of this term instead of "*Theotokos*" was what ignited the Nestorian controversy; did the rehabilitation of the term resolve the controversy? Pope John Paul II had this to say when welcoming Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV at the Vatican during the Pope's public audience with the Catholic faithful in Rome. "[The Patriarch] has come also to sign with the Catholic Church a 'Common Christological Declaration,' that will resolve the separation created by the Council of Ephesus in the year 431. This will settle and definitively put an end to more than fifteen centuries of misunderstandings that afflict our faith in Christ, true God and true Man, born to the Virgin Mary by the Holy Spirit."¹⁴⁷ How can this confession of faith be different from that of Leo, Nestorius and Cyril? This is a matter that one would leave to the guidance of the Holy Spirit and to the courageous leaders of the Church that have already instituted the process of restoring the essence of the Church that Jesus established in today's society and with today's mentality.

The Holy Synod of the Church of the East has unilaterally just decided to remove all references of a negative character concerning both Cyril and Severus from its liturgical books and official publications. This initiative is undertaken with the full realization that it involves risks and that it may not be reciprocated, but we would ask our brethren to consider the results of 1500 years of experience: after a millenium and a half the followers of Cyril and Severus continue to affirm the impassability of the divine nature in Christ and the full, integral reality of his manhood; at the same time, the Church of the East, along with Theodore and Nestorius, continue to insist on the oneness of the person of Christ and at no time have divided his divine nature from the fully human nature which the Word took for his own. The legitimate fears expressed by each party to this dispute, as each side saw the weakness in the other's terminology, have not been realized. Meanwhile we have faced an increasingly hostile world divided against ourselves in contradiction of our Lord's fervent prayer, "That they may be one." And if it is permissible to draw from secular sources in order to emphasize our plight, Abraham Lincoln put it as well as any: "*A house divided against itself cannot stand.*" If the gates of Hell do not prevail over our embattled segment of Christ's body it will only be because we have found the humility to confess our failure of love and the strength to reach out to one another in brotherly embrace.

¹⁴³ Anastos, 121.

¹⁴⁴ Anastos, 119.

¹⁴⁵ Bazaar, 176-189; 194-205; 210-218.

¹⁴⁶ While today's Church of the East rejects the name "Nestorian" as an appellation for reasons that may imply that this Church was established or came into existence by or because of Nestorius, nevertheless, we, in line with Church of the East Fathers, continue to have every respect for the person of Nestorius and appreciation for his faith in Christ, for which, we believe, he underwent undue suffering.

¹⁴⁷ Editorial, "Papal Address at the Public Audience," *L'Osservatore Romano*, (Vatican City) 16 November 1994, weekly edition in English, 3.

THE PERSON AND THE TEACHING OF NESTORIUS OF CONSTANTINOPLE AT THE COUNCIL OF EPHESUS

1. The Maronite Synaxarium

We read in the Maronite Synaxarium, on the 23 of June, which commemorates the council of Ephesus, the following:

"This Council was held in the city of Ephesus against Nestorius who supported that Christ has two Qnome. ... This miserable was at first a priest in the city of Antioch, he was eloquent and skilled in rhetorics. Thereby, he was appointed patriarch of Constantinople, hoping to succeed St. John Chrysostomos in his teaching zeal and faith against the heretics.

Once he took hold of the patriarchal see, he demonstrated a great zeal in the orthodox faith, to such an extent that he told the king: "Hand me over the world free from heretics and I will deliver you for compensation the kingdom of heaven". However, he did not stick to his straight intention, and forged a new impiety more insidious than all of them, because he went on teaching that Christ has two Qnome, i.e. that our Lord Jesus born from Mary the Virgin is not God but a simple man, that is why the Virgin Mary was not Mother of God, and the Son of God is not the son of Mary. He was opposed in his impious teaching by St. Cyril of Alexandria.

The Council took place in Ephesus and was attended by two hundred bishops. They confirmed that in Christ there is one Qnoma and the Son of God is the son of Mary the Virgin at the very moment of his conception and that his mother Mary the Virgin is truly the mother of God. They excommunicated Nestorius, his teachings and followers and sent him to the desert of Oasis in Egypt where he finished miserably, his tongue rottened and his body disintegrated because of his heresy..."¹

This is the image of Nestorius in the Maronite popular piety.

The famous Maronite historian, Yusuf Ad-Dibs Archbishop of Beirut (†1907), in his book "The civil and religious history of Syria" (9 volumes, 1893), wrote the following about Nestorius:

"As for his error, I particularly mention:

1. The man who took flesh in the womb of Mary the virgin is different from the unique Word of God. Incarnation is nothing but the dwelling of God's Word in that man as his temple; thereby, God is not born, did not suffer and did not die; Christ is not God but a temple for God, possessing two Qnume, human and divine and not one Qnumo.
2. (Borrowed from the first), the Virgin Mary could not be called Mother of God, but mother of Christ because she was not the mother of God who did not take flesh according to his presumption. She was rather the mother of the man inhabited by God...

The heresy of Nestorius started first in Syria. It was created by Paul of Samosata who denied that Christ is true God. It was propagated by Theodorus of Mopsuestia, Theodoretus of Cyrrhus and Ibas of Edessa, by their opposition to St. Cyril of Alexandria and his microbes were instilled by Nestorius. There was in Edessa the Persian school whose teachers and students adopted firm this error and assisted considerably its diffusion through Mesopotamia and Persia.

The heresy of Nestorius cancels the mysteries of incarnation and redemption and it underlines God's sublime love for men.

¹ Maronite Synaxarium, manuscript in the monastery of Notre Dame, Ghosla. This is the image of Nestorius and the reality of his teaching according to a famous Maronite historian.

If Christ is not God but a man inhabited by God like any other saint, although in a more noble manner, then the Word did not take flesh and God did not redeem us by his unique Son; he would have been sent to the world an apostle like any apostle or prophet whose merit, love and mediation between God and men is finite and ordinary and this turns the whole Christian doctrine upside-down...."²

2. The Two Images

To whatever extent these two images correspond to the facts? This is what I would like to highlight in my lecture. A cursory reading of these Maronite judgments on Nestorius' personality and teachings reveals an image of Nestorius radically inconsistent with that conveyed by the venerable tradition of the Church of the East labeled as "Nestorian". When I discovered for the first time, 30 years ago, this Syriac tradition in the writings of its major fathers, in the texts of his liturgy, in the lives of its saints and, especially, in its manifold relationships with my own Syriac Maronite tradition like in the liturgy, in spirituality etc., I said in myself that this Church could not be so obviously heretic and in a systematic dissent with my Catholic Syriac Church.

My church, indeed, shares with the Church of the East in some of the best pieces of his tradition like the anaphora of Addai and Mari called "Sharar", some hymns of very high theological value, the spiritual writings as those of John Saba called "the spiritual old man", those of Isaac of Ninive and some of the exegetical books of Abdallah Ibn At-tayb.

This tradition sacralizes Nestorius' person and upholds his teachings that were unjustly and unfairly condemned by the third ecumenical council of Ephesus.

This matter of fact which I genuinely know through my researches raises thorny questions for me, as a Maronite Syriac Catholic monk, about, in the one hand, the authenticity of this ecclesial tradition and the validity of the negative judgments emitted by my church tradition against Nestorius and the church which defends his position on the other hand.

What are the main accusations of my church against Nestorius?

1. He teaches that our Lord Jesus Christ, born of Mary the Virgin, is not God but a simple man, that is why Mary is not the mother of God and the Son of God is not the Son of Mary. Christ has two Qnume, one is divine and the other is human.
2. He canceled the mysteries of incarnation and redemption
3. He perpetuated the heresy of Paul of Samosata.

3. The Council of Ephesus

The source of these accusations is the Council of Ephesus, especially in the commentaries of some of the fathers of the second letter sent by Nestorius to St. Cyril as an answer to his second letter.³ After having read in the single session of June 22, the fathers started their comments. All the fathers found it contradictory with the Nicene creed without any explanation. Few of them explained this contradiction. Acacius of Melitene considers that Nestorius contradicts the Nicene Creed when "he attributes the economy

² Vol. IV, pp.386-387

³ See "Ephèse and Chalcédoine, Actes des Conciles". Translated by A.J. Festugière, Paris 1982, pp. 221-225

of salvation to the body only, i.e. to the temple of God who solely was born and died. He denies, at the outset of his letter, the unity between God and the body".⁴ Fidus, bishop of Joppe estimates that the letter of Nestorius impugns the very truth and fits perfectly with the nicked heresy of Paul of Samosata".⁵ As for Theodorus of Ancyra, he claims that he has heard Nestorius commenting in one of his homilies that it is impossible to attribute human qualities to the unique Son of God It is also improper to say that God was breast-fed or was born from the virgin".⁶

If we read today this second letter of Nestorius to St. Cyril in order to understand it per se and if we try to situate it in the course of the theological debate of the era, we are not compelled to draw the same conclusions. That what we are going to do briefly, based on the investigation of various contemporary researchers.

4. The Controversy

The sparkling element which triggered the "Nestorius controversy" is his reservation on using the title of "Theotokos" concerning the Virgin Mary. This was termed the "Skandalon Oikumenikon". There were other circumstances that are emphatically political and ecclesiastical which deteriorated the relationships between the church of Constantinople on one hand and the churches of Rome and Alexandria on the other.

We should not dismiss these circumstances if we were to understand properly the evolution of the doctrinal differences and the aporetic nature of this controversy from its very beginning.

5. The Dialogue

The real dialogue that revolved around the "Nestorius controversy" is restricted to seven letters: Three written by St. Cyril to Nestorius, and two addressed by the later to St. Cyril. Another written by Pope Coelestine and one written by John of Antioch to Nestorius.⁷ The letters sent by St. Cyril and Pope Coelestine to Nestorius did not entail any true dialogue; these accuse, threaten and excommunicate.

St. Cyril in his second and third letter outlines the differences and gives his opinion in detail and then threatens of excommunications. The same did pope Coelestine without any doctrinal explanations.

It is only John of Antioch who opens a true dialogue with Nestorius asking him to retract his point of view about the title of "Theotokos". Nestorius answered positively to the Antiochean patriarch when he stated:

"When I came to this city and I found out that some of the adherents of the church were in quarrel among themselves. Some of them claim that the virgin is the mother of God and some others claiming that she is the mother of man. I order do mend the split between them and not to neglect the flock that are likely to perish, alike Christ, we called the virgin Mother of Christ. This expression points clearly at God and man in accordance to the expressions of the gospel. I accepted the statement of Arius and Apollinarius, as if the divinity

of the unique son started with the holy virgin, to the contrary it started by the power of the unity that was performed simultaneously with the angel's announcement.."

He pursues his argument and assures the apprehension of the patriarch that once they meet at the Council "far away from suspicions and in a spirit of reconciliation with everybody, they will be able to define these questions and others."⁸

We conclude from this letter:

a) Nestorius was open to dialogue if he were invited to and was ready to search with others on solutions that may fit with the orthodox faith.

b) The title of Theotokos concerning the virgin Mary was not central in his thought, because his main concern was centered around the concept of Arius about the Logos Treptos.

The Logos according to Arius is a created being who intermediates between divinity and humanity. His incarnation from the Virgin Mary testifies that he is a changing being. Thereby, Nestorius emphasizes that the Logos took flesh through Mary without changing and remained conform to the perfection of his divinity in despite of his union with a perfect man from the very beginning of his conception in Mary's womb.

The incarnation means, according to Nestorius, that Logos assumed a man and united himself with him in order to make possible the realization of our salvation through this man united with him. That is why Nestorius stresses the role of Jesus the man, the second Adam who is united with the divine Logos, in the economy of our salvation. The Salvation's acts such as birth, suffering, death and resurrection are deeds of the divine words, however through the man he assumed from Mary and with whom he united himself. If the Logos is the prime factor in performing redemption, Jesus the man remains the second factor by the very power of the unity between him and the Logos and through his total obedience to the Logos who is one with the father, in nature, deed and will. This is the teaching of Nestorius before the trigger of the doctrinal controversy that led to the Council of Ephesus. He states in his second letter to St. Cyril, which was read at the Council:

"In this connection I commended your distinction of natures in accordance with the special character of humanity and deity, the conjunction (synapheia) of these natures in one person (prosopon), the denial that the Logos has needed a second birth from a woman and the confession that the Godhead is not susceptible to passion ... The sinless temple which is inseparable from the divine nature, underwent birth and death on behalf of sinners ... He is entirely the son of David according to the flesh but Lord according to the deity. The body therefore is the temple of the Son's deity, and a temple united to it by a complete and divine conjunction, so that the nature of the deity associates itself with the things belonging to the body...."

6. The Orthodox Substance

This teaching is orthodox in substance; however it entails basic flaws insofar as the accurate concept of union between the divine word and man that was carried out in incarnation.

⁴ Op.cit., p.222

⁵ Op.cit., p.224

⁶ Op.cit., p.228

⁷ Op.cit., Lettres de Cyrille a Nestorius et reponses de celui-ci, pp.45-66; Lettre de Jean d'Antioche a Nestorius, pp. 139-143

⁸ See "Nestoriana." Die Fragmente des Nestorius, gesammelt, untersucht und herausgegeben v. F. Loofs, Halle 1905

These points sorted out more clearly when Nestorius collided with Cyril's concept of "natural or hypostatical union". He discerned in it some Apollinarist tendencies.

This concept of union, in despite of the reservation of many, as it appears in the Council of Chalcedon, authorized St. Cyril to unite all the acts of salvation in the Logos the incarnate son, overcoming thereby the distinction introduced by Nestorius between the Logos and the man Jesus. However, Nestorius flatly and repeatedly stated that he is not talking about two but about one, emphasizing his adherence to the union between the Logos and the man in the incarnation through Mary the Virgin. This pending question between Nestorius and Cyril is unlikely to reach a balanced solution unless the doctrine of the "communicatio idiomatum" will be clarified, which authorized the attribution of human acts as birth and suffering to the divine Word and the divine acts as omniscience, power to raise the dead to the man. This doctrine remains obscure in Nestorius' teaching.

7. The Concept of Union in Incarnation

Undoubtedly the teaching of Nestorius was marked by grave shortcomings in as much as the concept of union in incarnation. However, we cannot attribute to him before the Council of Ephesus a well planned heresy. Hereby we ask whether it was possible for Nestorius to reach a doctrinal understanding with St. Cyril through a peaceful and calm dialogue? Unfortunately, this was not done in the Council of Ephesus which was held not for dialogue with him but to condemn him and set him aside. This was the decision of both Rome and Alexandria, although this was not the emperor's goal when he called for the Synod and this was not the goal of the Antiocheans.

The council was held in the absence of the Antiocheans who delayed their arrival for constraining reasons and Nestorius refused to attend during their absence because he was sure that the decision of the members headed by Cyril was to condemn him. This happened rapidly in one session of the 22nd of June.

In the evening of that day the sentence against Nestorius was issued and conveyed in a sternly language: "to Nestorius, the new Jude; let it be known, that according to your heretic homilies and your disobedience to the canons of the church, the Holy Synod decided on the 22 of June to discharge you and strip you from all church dignities!.."

8. The Trial of Nestorius

All this was carried out without any discussion and without any accurate definition of the heresies which justified this harsh and grave sentence. We all know the regrettable evolution that followed this long day when Nestorius was tried. The Antiocheans rejected the sentence and excommunicated St. Cyril and the other members of the Synod. The emperor rejected the sentence and invited everybody to review their decisions in a spirit of wisdom and reconciliation. Finally, the consensus took place at the detriment of the person of Nestorius. He was removed to his monastery near Antioch and then exiled in the Egyptian desert, where he died without having the chance to defend himself and put forth his ideas. His image remained black except in the Eastern church which emerged and developed outside the Roman Empire or what used to be called the "oikumene".

It might be possible that Nestorius' personality was not attractive neither was his theological knowledge broad and profound. He was harsh on himself and on the others

with whom he used to deal, sometimes roughly and in an arrogant manner, if we believe some sources.⁹

Anyway, it is difficult to form an objective view of Nestorius' personality because of the cumulative effect of negative judgment around it, except the biographies written by the eastern Syriac.¹⁰ If he was a genius or a saint, as reported in these sources, he was not as mischievous, arrogant and obstinate in the way the antagonist sources try to picture him. If this man was blasphematory to this extent like Jude who betrayed Christ, he would have never written in his latter days, after being left from everybody; "I do not seek to obtain any help from man, for I am henceforth sacrificed and the time is come for me to be dissolved and be with Christ (2 Tim 4/6), so that the people do not stray from the true faith."¹¹

Discussions

Prof. Davids sees very interesting insights in these papers from the perspective of the traditions and churches of the authors and also regarding the opinion of Mc. Guckin. The fact about the ecumenical councils and other councils is that they were convoked by emperors. The Church accepted some as ecumenical, not all (e.g. the "robber synod") which means, she had already a clear concept of council. Ephesus itself was not lawful in the beginning but was accepted later. Chalcedon canonized the council at 381 and implicitly also Ephesus. In fact it was the emperor who canonized the first four councils.

Prof. Chediath sees all three papers as positive and ecumenical. They have a new attitude to the old problems. Fr. Khalife first showed present-day negative traditions of the Maronite Church regarding Nestorius but then he appeals for a reevaluation. Mar Gregorius presented a wonderful ecumenical and positive paper.

He made a distinction between the views of the early and the later Fathers of the Syrian Orthodox Church on Nestorius which is very important for our evaluation of Nestorius. It was moving to hear the appeal of Mar Gregorius to remove the condemnations from the prayer books and to rewrite history in an ecumenical spirit.

As a matter of fact until today all the churches of the West Syriac tradition still condemn Nestorius.

Asking for the removal of condemnations from the liturgical books we have the wonderful example of the Assyrian Church where this step has already been taken.

Mar Bawai's paper is also very positive, it accounts for the plurality of theological expressions and considers Cyril and Nestorius as complementary. He explains the "authentic Nestorius" according to the "Liber Heraclides" in eight propositions. His ecumenical appeal for reconciliation regarding the past and thereby furthering the ability of our churches to evangelize is also praiseworthy.

⁹ See Socrate, HE, VII, 29 pp. 667,804

¹⁰ Cf. Brière, M., *La légende syriaque de Nestorius*, ROC 15 (1910) 1/25; *Lettre écrite de Constantinople à Cosme d'Antioche*, in F. Nau, *Livre d'Héraclide de Damas*, Paris, 1910 App.I.p. 364, Cf. Aussi Nau, F. *Nestorius d'après les sources orientales*, Paris 1911; *Histoire des Nestorius d'après la lettre à Cosme*, PO XIII/2 (1919), pp 279-286

¹¹ Livre d'Héraclide de Damas, p.155

Amba Bishoy remarks to the point that Nestorius was not present to respond to the accusations at Ephesus: In a letter it is clearly written that he was there and discussed with them. Three letters were carried to him by three different bishops, St. Cyril was one of them who urged him to come, but he refused. The council waited for him for 16 days to appear.

Furthermore it is impossible for two prosopa (persons) to become one person. Son and Father can not come together to form one person.

Finally he deplores the mention of the expression "robber synod". This is an insult to our Fathers! It should be called the "Second Council of Ephesus".

Dr. George: Why did Bar Hebraeus take that attitude towards the Nestorian Christians?

- 1) He was living with the Christians of the Church of the East
- 2) He was a friend of the Catholicos of the East
- 3) As Fr. V.C. Samuel made it very clear in his work: terminology is effective, but with defects. He spoke for a dialogue and reevaluation already 40 years ago.
- 4) We forget that there was a church in that area also before Nestorius, not belonging to the Roman system and the Roman imperial church.

Dr. Abramowski: The discussions and research of the last decades have brought the same findings that Mar Bawai mentioned in his paper.

The third letter of Cyril to Nestorius contains anathemata. Under these circumstances Nestorius could not attend the council of Ephesus. The climate there was very threatening too. Nestorius did not want to comply to the questioning by Cyril. We have several descriptions in letters of what happened in Ephesus.

Archbishop Matar: The controversy was ignited by the controversy over Christotokos or Theotokos. The last time we were wondering whether Ephesus has been dividing or uniting. We agreed on accepting Christotokos as a term in the understanding of Mar Bawai but we all should also try to restore and understand "Theotokos."

In Ephesus the dialogue was not as it is now. Since then the Church has learned, unifying truth and love and charity in the dialogue.

Archbishop Al Jamil reads a liturgical text of Mar Addai and Mari: In Holy Mass we believe in Christ our king, redeemer, our salvation, our God and savior. To this statement he makes no further comment.

Prof. Davids: What are the relations between Nestorius and Theodore? They must have known each other but we have only some fragments.

The young Cyril in his writings follows Athanasius until about 422 and does not show any special Christology. In 424 he starts writing against Arianism. The later Cyril was confronted with the problems of Antioch. Theodore was already at his deathbed, having written especially against Apollinarism.

Msgr. Beggiani: Let us try to bring the formulas like duality- unity, prosopon of union and Mother of God into contemporary context. Nestorius' use of prosopon of union was

not the answer to the problem. When Ephesus used these words we today think to know what they meant at that time.

Did Christ have a human ego, personality, consciousness. I think the answer must be yes - what is then left for the person?

Prosopon is the metaphysical, ontological unity. We reach up to our faith which says there is a union between the Divine and the human.

Then: What do we mean by Mother of God? Mother of Divinity or humanity? Mother is that entity that united the Divine and the human ontologically. Theotokos was intended to be a word of piety and prayer but it became a phrase of opposition.

Dr. Hainthaler: The reception of councils is a process in which the Church recognizes its own face and place. Theologians must concentrate on their real and special contributions, not their mistakes and must be careful about their mistakes.

At the first session of Ephesus on June 22 many were not present, also the Pope's delegates were not present.

Prosopa is not equivalent to person. We have to look what it really means.

Fr. Carter refers to Mc Guckin's articles which mention Chrysostom and the synod of the oak. Cyril may have learned something from the synod of the oak.

Mar Cyril makes the general comment that we should not use any more those words that are insulting for others like "the young Cyril" or "robber synod".

Prof. Chediath observes: one cannot understand Nestorius if we look with the eyes of Cyril and judge him by the christological standards of Cyril, this would be methodologically incorrect. He also is of the opinion that we should not translate prosopa to person as we understand it today.

Coming from different traditions we must try to understand the others because we all have the definite goal of the unity of the churches. We should remember that Nestorius was a pastor of souls. He does not explain for the purpose of philosophy. Gregory Nazianzus made a comparison between Trinitarian union and the Christological union and Gregory made a distinction: There are three persons in the Trinity but there are two natures in Christ. Nestorius repeats it in the Liber Heracleides. This shows he knew the distinction: that there is only one person and two natures.

Prof. Davids: The term "latrocinium" or robber synod has been established by Pope Leo the Great in a letter and the term "young Cyril" is not thought to be deprecative at all. It is the French theologians who coined this term which has been widely used since.

Fr. Jammo praises three excellent papers which make today a remarkable day for PRO ORIENTE. The meaning of prosopon: pro makes us ask towards whom? The main scholars all understood that the interpretation is toward me, the manifestation is to the outside. Taking that into account we can understand Nestorius. In the Trinitarian interpretation they preferred the term qnome. Ultimately this is a matter of intellectual exercise. We should not push the term Theotokos to extremes, because then we will face difficulties. If I state: she is the mother of my Lord, everybody will understand.

The term *qnome* is a great contribution to Trinitarian theology and will very much clear the Council of Chalcedon. It functions on both sides: union and separation.

Fr. Sako: We should distinguish between Nestorius and Nestorianism. The term *Theotokos* we do not use, it is not being understood.

Mar Gregorius comments: Nestorius was at Ephesus but not at the council. We should not use expressions like "robber council" any more, they are very hard for our churches. It is obvious why Bar Hebraeus was open minded: in his youth he studied at the feet of the Nestorian scholars. But nobody will deny that the Church was there and existed before Nestorius.

Not all the churches will agree with the explanation of the reception of the councils as Dr. Hainthaler formulated it. Regarding this topic let us look at the PRO ORIENTE texts of the 1980's.

Mar Bawai: I agree that the term "robber synod" is offensive and I stand for an apology to my Orthodox brothers but when other sources are consulted its use becomes inevitable. Let us rewrite our historical books in that sense.

According to Scipioni Nestorius became too much of a systematic theologian regarding the two *prosopa*. He wanted to explain the continuing integrity of both natures, to visualize the oneness in Christ namely so perfect, so unique, so utter that it was one Christ.

Mc. Guckin and the non-theological factor: He attributes the whole reason for the conviction of Nestorius to a wider basis: a development that preceded Nestorius involving especially the aristocracy of Constantinople.

Fr. Khalifé about the dialogue Cyril-Nestorius: Nestorius mentioned in a letter to John of Antioch that he was ready for dialogue. If Cyril and Nestorius would have had dialogue under neutral authority they could have arrived at a common declaration of faith. Rome and Alexandria were the authorities and Nestorius was accused. Antioch was not present.

Fourth working session, Wednesday afternoon:

Chairman: *Father Frans Bouwen*

Continuation of the discussions

Mar Bawai finishes his response: If Christotokos was rehabilitated, why not also Theotokos? It is not part of the patrimony of the Church but it has caused the misunderstanding. The common Christological accord accepted it. We respect, venerate and understand that term and appreciate that the Catholic Church uses that term.

Sometimes the alternative is presented: should we restore the unity or the essence of the Church? I believe unity is essential to the Church.

The councils are necessarily received by the local churches, in the Roman Catholic Church the Pope receives. The question how the ecumenicity of the councils will apply to our churches has not yet been resolved.

Amba Bishoy: The proposal of Fr. Jammo to use *qnome* instead of *prosopa* creates a problem for us when applied to the Holy Trinity, because it would mean: four *qnome*. Regarding Jesus Christ we cannot accept that there is a human ego for our Lord. In the gospels we hear: *ego eimi*, and: before Abraham I was existing. He has one ego, that is very clear. The person is the owner of its nature and all its attributes.

Prof. Mc Vey expresses appreciation for the openness and the willingness to use critical methods. Regarding the role of women these times at Byzanz in the making of decisions she refers to the book of K. Holum: *Theodosian empresses*. There it is shown that apart from interest in power they also had genuine interest in the spiritual dimension and expression, in the working of the Holy Spirit.

Prof. Hofrichter: So far we have been speaking within the borders and the context of the 5th century, which is appropriate and absolutely necessary. But we should widen the horizon and also look beyond. I thank Chorbishop Beggiani that he has raised the question of the relationship of "persona" to the modern concepts of human ego, self and consciousness. That certainly needs further clarification.

I want to draw your attention to the fact that the christological problem was already present at the very beginnings of Christian reflection in the New Testament. The real problem was already then, and remained, the concept of a personal preexistence of Jesus. There are only two very early places in the whole New Testament that deal undoubtedly with this idea. That is the hymn to the Logos quoted at the beginning of the Gospel of John and the christological hymn in Paul's letter to the Philippians.

Our whole christological debate is based mainly on these two texts. However in the whole New Testament these ideas were never again repeated. In his letter to the Romans which he wrote after that to the Philippians Paul already presents us with another concept: namely that Jesus was appointed Son of God by his resurrection.

In his authentic letters after Philippians Paul never again mentioned any preexistence of Christ. What he is writing about is only his post-existence.

In a book which was published recently I hope that I was able to show that the Gospel of John contrary to common opinion was not the last but in its kernel the first of the canonical gospels. This means that the synoptic gospels were already written against the preexistence concept of the prologue of John - along with the theological change of Paul. The same was held by the modalist theologians of the 2nd century until Pope Callistus. New Testament writers and 2nd century theologians excluded preexistence in order not to give room to gnostic speculation and to docetism.

It was only the apologists who renewed the logos - and pre-existence concepts which soon became dominant and led the Church straight into the Arian crisis. The Nicene Fathers in their creed opposed the logos concept and were blamed therefore by the Arians as Modalists, because they would not distinguish enough between Father and Son.

Still Macellus of Ancyra in the mid 4th century wanted to avoid to speak of a personal preexistence of Christ. The solution of the Arian crisis and a certain compromise was the Trinitarian dogma. But the hypostatic preexistence of the Divinity of Christ became henceforth the great problem for Christology. Apollinaris, Theodore and their followers tried from different sides to solve it. A look back into the New Testament itself and the

subsequent developments may show us the relativity of the subject and of the different approaches to it.
The Fathers of Nicaea avoided the use of "logos" but they used: "eternal sonship and presence".

Archbishop Matar: When we look at Ephesus today we must have in mind
1) the fact that Pope John Paul II and Mar Dinkha IV have signed a common communiqué.
2) Ephesus gave the Church a distinct teaching.
3) We are concerned about the purity of the church and we have mutual understanding.

Mar Bawai: There was a misunderstanding about how the Church of the East has taught Christology. We used a different terminology, but the essence is the same. We see Ephesus as a step toward Chalcedon and we see a strong ground for reconciliation on Ephesus.

Msgr. Beggiani: In a contemporary discussion there is the question of the human ego in the sense of psychology. Does it, as the center of consciousness, belong to nature or to prosopon? If we say prosopon, are we not emptying the nature, does he then really have a human nature? Being owner of the nature and its energies is not a philosophical explanation.

Dr. Hainthaler: The paper of Mar Bawai is very rich, a lot of work went into it. The Arians, we must keep in mind, deny the full human nature in Jesus Christ.

Rev. Madathiparampil adds comments on the basis of a suggestion made by Prof. Abramowski. She has pointed out several times that a theological consensus should be understood in the light of our knowledge of Jesus as he is revealed in the gospels. He expands that point further by stating that our understanding of the doctrines of the past should be done in the light of the creeds of each denomination which it believes in now. Who is Jesus, who is Mary to each one of us? In the light of the present confessions we should go back to the past to understand the term in a better doctrinal light.

As it has been pointed out, language is always evolving and changing and never remains static. Every word has meanings and nuances which are not even fully grasped by the person who uses it.

In the past we have become very much hung upon the meaning of a few words. We forget to realize how they have evolved until that particular period of time when they were used and how they have evolved after that. Whole theological edifices have been built on words whose meanings are subject to constant changes!

At a time when textual criticism has become so variable and changing it would be very appropriate not to put emphasis solely on the meaning of words, as a word never is fully and totally understood by all at the same time. In many instances we have seen how flexible and changing interpretation is.

In the vast framework of Indian philosophy God is not understood as a person in the way the Western Christians understand. God is always "neti, neti" = not this, not this. Still they too believe in a Supreme Being.

Dealing with the mystery of incarnation we must remember that language over the centuries undergoes changes and does not have the same meaning. Hence it would be good to examine the past in terms of the beliefs of the present and come together in our common faith in Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Prof. Jammo: In my understanding and expressions I have been using the research of scholars already printed in PRO ORIENTE publications. There is a christological language using two prosopa. It is possible: interpreting one nature we arrive at two natures. The term qnoma might bring new help and aspects to theology, a nature being individuated might bring new light to Trinitarian theology. But we realize: The Pope and Patriarchs are signing agreements without using these terms.

Prof. Abramowski: Following the footnotes of Mar Bawai's paper we can find out that Mc Guckin's main source is the Syrian church historian Barhadbeshabba. In his work Nestorius is described as an ascetic. Mc Guckin has concluded from this report what the social circumstances in the vicinity of the bishop of the capital of the empire might have been.

Other bishops like John Chrysostom too criticize the social circumstances, following and pointing out an ascetic ideal. What we appreciate in his personality we cannot criticize in Nestorius, even if his awkwardness and his hierarchical arrogance are evident.

Amba Bishoy: We tell the Muslims that we believe in God who became man for our salvation. Therefore we don't say that a man became God.
I am afraid of the word "individuation". We call it personalized nature of the Trinity. We can say individuated nature for human beings but for the Trinity I am not sure whether it can be used.

Rev. Sako: The synoptic gospels report that Jesus was growing and developing. Pastoral concerns will always be the reason for us why we try to emphasize either the Divine nature or humanity in Jesus Christ.

Mar Younane: Why does our sister church deny its dependence on Nestorius as it can be seen in a quote of the former PRO ORIENTE Syriac Commission meeting?
Are we not only discussing terminology of the Hellenistic culture? But we are interested in our sister church of the East rooted in our Syriac tradition.
Let us formulate our faith according to our liturgy books and prayers, those which we are using today. Thus we would get to understand each other much better.

Prof. Abramowski: We have reached a new point because of the courage of the theologians present. I experience a new spirit in the presentations and papers.

Fr. Bouwen: After all these discussions we should ask ourselves what we are going to do, what we are aiming at. We have asked how we can read back the communion in our Fathers, given the inadequate nature of human language which leads to the fact that each expression can be wrongly understood.
How can we reconcile our histories and memories?

Mar Gregorius: It was by my personal experience in our prayer that I came to the conclusion of my paper to void and remove all these accusations from our books. In fact in our prayers we always came back to Nestorius. Every church has the authority and can decide whether a tradition will be changed or not and I hope that my Church will cooperate with my ideas.

Mar Bawai: The paper of Mar Gregorius is written in a great ecumenical spirit and gives hope that we can break new ground to restore communion. Instead of following Christ we followed ourselves! That is what the members of our Church have frequently done. It would be useful to publicize the prayers of our liturgy but I hope that the matter of discussion is not the orthodoxy of the Church of the East.

The teaching of Nestorius is a hurdle because of his condemnation at Ephesus, a hurdle for our relations with the Syrian Orthodox brothers with whom we want to restore communion. Graces have already been experienced when we reached agreement with our Assyrian sister church. In that regard we want to clarify our relationship to Nestorius.

Fifth working session, Thursday, July 9, 9.00 a.m.

Chairman: *Mar Bawai Soro*

Mar Cyril Aphrem Karim

ANATHEMATA AND THEIR LIFTING IN RELATIONSHIP TO THE QUESTION OF ECCLESIAL COMMUNION AND HERESY

1. Introduction

The question of anathemata and their lifting was inevitably to come up, sooner or later, in the course of the ongoing dialogue engaging our different churches. Since the ultimate goal of the dialogue is the re-establishment of full communion, which presupposes oneness in faith and its mutually understood expressions, the lifting of anathemata becomes imperative to the question of unity. Indeed, it opens the way to that unity in Christ prayed for by our Lord Himself.

It is essential to first examine what the Church understands by the term anathema. The Scriptures have provided the Fathers with the initial insights into anathemata. In particular Saint Paul's statement in his Letter to the Galatians 1, 6-9:

"I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the one who called you in the grace of Christ, and are turning to a different gospel not that there is another gospel, but there are some that are confusing you and want to pervert the gospel of Christ. But even if we or an angel from heaven should proclaim to you a gospel contrary to what we proclaimed to you, let that one be accursed! As we have said before, so now I repeat, if anyone proclaims to you a gospel 'contrary to what you received, let that one be accursed!' (anathema)

Paul is anathematizing those individuals who have perverted the true faith of the Gospel as handed down by Christ to His disciples. Paul's concern is driven by the danger of the fragmentation of the Church of Christ by such false teachings. Paul's efforts to defend and uphold the true faith in Christ was both an inspiration and a directive to the early Fathers in condemning and excommunicating heretics. In their zeal to maintain the purity of faith, the Church Fathers from opposing sides were united in their concern to condemn the same heretical teachings. However, these same Fathers, the Fathers of the Oriental camp and those of the Chalcedonian party were excommunicated by each other because of what we consider today, a misunderstanding or misrepresentation.

V.C. Samuel has outlined several positions that are considered as heretical by the Chalcedonian definition of faith. The Chalcedonians have accused the Fathers of the Oriental Orthodox such as Dioscorus, Timothy, Severus and Philoxenos of maintaining one or more of these positions. But this accusation cannot be substantiated. These Oriental Orthodox Fathers not only refuted these heresies but have even condemned them.¹

On the other hand, the Oriental Orthodox have always looked at Leo of Rome as a hidden Nestorian who, according to the Oriental Orthodox sources, regarded the two natures of Christ as two persons. But our Chalcedonian brothers, both Eastern Orthodox and Roman Catholics, have denied this as erroneous.²

2. St. Severius on Anathemata

In his letter to John the Scholastic of Bostra, Mar Severus of Antioch addresses the issue of anathema at great length. He distinguishes between two kinds of anathemata. First; the term anathema is applied to that which is devoted and consecrated to God. Things that have been consecrated, are in no way to be utilized for private use. He explains this definition by quoting passages from the Old Testament such as Leviticus 27, 28 and Judith 16, 19.

The other kind of anathema, which concerns us here, according to Mar Severus is that when persons are set apart for death by the sentence and judgement of God. He substantiates his position by citing texts and situations from Scriptures in support his idea (Joshua 6, 17 and Leviticus 27, 29). He then intelligently interprets anathemata as a judgement of death imposed on heretics. By anathematizing them, the Church is in effect separating them spiritually from God, or rather they are separating themselves from God. This separation is in effect a spiritual death. Mar Severus' conclusion is that "In general therefore an anathema is a separation: For it separates the man who is guilty and is removed from God's people, ..." ³

However, Mar Severus is very much aware of the distinction between anathema and separation. Anathema is a separation, but separation may also be used as a method of discipline imposed on the clergy for a specific time or for specific services. This leads us to the next point.

¹ V.C. Samuel, "Condemnation of Teachers and Acclamations in the Eastern and Oriental Orthodox Churches." In: *The Greek Orthodox Theological Review* Vol. XVI, Nos. 1&2, p.236

² Elias Tsonievsky, "The Union of Two Natures in Christ According to Non-Chalcedonian Churches and Orthodoxy," In: *The Greek Orthodox Theological Review*, Vol. XIII, No.2, p.175, 176

³ *The Sixth Book of the Letters of Severus* Vol.II, (Translation), Part B, p. 407

3. *Anathemata in the Canons of the Church*

A brief survey of the canons of our Syrian Orthodox Church gives us a long list of terms that are used by the Church Fathers at various Synods to punish those who deviate from the orthodox faith of the Church. These terms were used regarding three categories of people:

- Heretics, who deviated from the true faith of the Church and were condemned by a Synod.
- Those who were cast out of the Church due to administrative irregularities or canonical transgressions, having nothing to do with dogmas or faith.
- Those who separated themselves from the communion with the canonical bishops, who are accepted by the Holy Synod.

It is important to keep in mind that anathemata are mainly concerned with and centered around the Holy Eucharistic Communion. The anathematized person is denied of receiving the Communion. In condemning the above categories we can identify the following degrees of anathemata used by the Church Fathers and the synods:

1. Deposition: ܐܘܬܪܐܢܐ . ܐܘܬܪܐܢܐ This is used in relation to the different ranks of clergy. We have an example in one of Bishop George's decrees: "A priest or deacon that gives Communion to heretics, is to be deposed."

This deposition, however, is not considered an anathema unless specified as such. In other words, a deposed priest is not denied Communion unless his deposition was related to heresy. Deposition is usually of two kinds:

- a. Temporary, for a specific period of time, referred to as ܐܘܬܪܐܢܐ suspension.
- b. Permanent, which means that a deposed cleric will not be allowed to administer the Sacraments for the rest of his life. He may be referred to in Syriac ܐܘܬܪܐܢܐ , meaning fallen from rank.

2. Excommunication ܐܘܬܪܐܢܐ . ܐܘܬܪܐܢܐ is mainly used regarding lay people, and is also temporary or permanent. The first is for people who commit sins and fall under punishment by being denied Holy Communion for a specific period of time, while the latter is usually for heretics or apostates who either give up the Orthodox faith, or who have contact with heretics or non-believers. Patriarch Kuriakose writes:

"All who go to churches and monasteries of heretics and offer gifts and offerings let them repent or they will be excommunicated."⁴

3. Anathema ܐܘܬܪܐܢܐ is considered greater than excommunication because it not only implies the denial of Holy Communion, but of any kind of contact with the person concerned.

4. *The Addis Ababa Consultation of 1971*

In their joint efforts to achieve full communion, theologians of the Eastern Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox Churches have devoted their fourth consultation in Addis Ababa to the lifting of anathemata. Two papers were presented at the consultation by an

Oriental Orthodox, Prof. V.C. Samuel and the Eastern Orthodox Archpriest Vitaly Borovoy.⁵

After a two day meeting the participants drew up some guidelines regarding the concept and methodology of the lifting of anathemata. They affirmed the need for lifting anathema as a prerequisite for full Eucharistic Communion. This, however, presupposes an essential unity of faith.

The participants have asserted the right of individual Churches to choose the manner by which this can be implemented. This right, they believe, is given to the Churches by the Lord Himself Who gave His Church the authority to bind and loose. The lifting of anathemata does not in anyway compromise or weaken the Church's infallibility in essential matters related to the faith. The participants called for a thorough study of the teachings concerned and the circumstances under which those teachings and persons were anathematized. This study should emphasize the real intention of their teaching and should be motivated by a desire to truly understand the position concerned. It would also be advisable that this study reflect on how anathemata have been withdrawn in the past.

Revising liturgical books to omit anathemata should go hand in hand with a process of educating people of both traditions to be prepared to accept the revised texts and hymns. This revision should also mean reediting Church history and composing new theological manuals and catechetical materials.

The outcome of this consultation was later taken up by the Joint Commission of Theological Dialogue between the Orthodox Church and the Oriental Orthodox Churches, in its meeting in Chambésy, Switzerland, September 28, 1990. At the meeting, the official representatives of the families of Orthodox Churches agreed that all anathemata and condemnations of the past should be lifted by the Church to remove the last obstacle to the real unity and communion of the two families. They then made the following practical recommendations to their Churches:

- a. The Orthodox should lift all anathemata and condemnations against all Oriental Orthodox Councils and Fathers whom they have anathematized or condemned in the past.

- b. The Oriental Orthodox should at the same time lift all anathemata and condemnations against all Orthodox Councils and Fathers, whom they have anathematized or condemned in the past.

- c. The manner in which the anathemata are to be lifted should be decided by the Churches individually.

5. *Second PRO ORIENTE Consultation of 1973*

In its commendable ongoing efforts to bring the Churches of East and West closer, the PRO ORIENTE foundation has touched upon the issue of lifting the anathemata on several occasions. At the second consultation, however, this issue was extensively discussed and a "very fruitful and positive resolution of the problem was achieved".⁶ At the consultation a call for more tolerance and acceptance of pluralism of traditions was

⁵ For papers and the minutes of the consultation see: The Greek Orthodox Theological Review, Vol. XVI, Nos. 1-2

⁶ Bishop Mesrob K. Krikorian, The Theological Significance of the Results of the Five Vienna Consultations, Pro Oriente Booklet No 1

⁴ Bar Hebraeus. Nomocanon, p.6

loudly heard. All participants found it right and recommendable to lift the anathemata imposed on the teachers of other churches. However, some theologians cautioned against an official lifting of anathemata. They felt content with calling upon the churches not to use the anathema, for the time being.⁷ The consultation adopted position, concerning lifting the anathemas, that was pleasing to all. Paragraph 5 of the consultations' communiqué states:

"In the question of anathemata now being pronounced by one side on the teachers and fathers of the other, we were of the opinion that it was not necessary to insist on the acceptance of these as teachers and fathers by those who formally condemned them. A formal lifting of the anathemata also may not be necessary. It may be possible for the Churches simply to drop from the liturgical corpus anathemata of saints and teachers of the other side, as some Churches have already begun to do."⁸

6. Conclusion

1. We all agree that lifting the anathemata is a priority we should deal with as soon as possible.

2. In order to be able to do so, first we must come to a complete agreement concerning the understanding of faith, especially in the areas that have led to our division. In the past, the only way to lift anathemata against an individual or a group of people was to insist on that the parties concerned renounce their heresy and demonstrate real repentance.

3. It is very important that we work very closely with our world-wide ecclesial communions when we arrive at a satisfactory result concerning the lifting of anathemata. We do not desire and can not afford to sacrifice our unity of faith with our sister Churches in our attempt to bridge the gap of division with our separated brethren. I do not feel any of us would wish to reestablish communion with a Church at the cost of breaking our communion with another.

4. The process of lifting anathemata ought to be a gradual one. The impact of anathemata is well rooted in our ecclesiology as well as in our liturgical books and our social and cultural life. The long standing period of anathemata and the spiritual growth that our Churches have since undergone independent of each other, makes lifting the anathemata a difficult, but inevitable and necessary endeavor. Indeed it is a Christian imperative to undertake this task. At the same time, we must be very sensitive to our community of faithful who for more than fifteen centuries have been taught to dissociate themselves from others on the grounds of their faith.

5. A process of educating for people is badly needed. This process should go hand in hand with a revision of some liturgical texts whose language is a hindrance to the process of unity in Christ. We in the Syrian Orthodox Church of Antioch, and I believe others as well, have already begun this revision. The list of people we condemn has yet been officially shortened. But in the light of the recent Christological and pastoral agreements between our Church and the Oriental Orthodox and the Roman Catholic Churches, we try to be more sensitive to our brothers and sisters of these Churches in order to encourage further studies which, we hope, will lead to a fuller unity in Christ our Lord.

⁷ De Vries, *Second Cons.*, p.129

⁸ *Second Cons.*, p.176

Michael J. Birnie

STUDIES ON ANATHEMAS AND THEIR LIFTING IN RELATIONSHIP TO THE QUESTION OF ECCLESIAL COMMUNION AND HERESY

1. Introduction

In the years that have gone by since the Holy Synod of the Church of the East began to reconsider its relationships with other Christian bodies the bishops have turned with renewed interest to the canonical record of fifth and sixth centuries. By returning to the place where factions within the Church in the Persian Empire left off engaging one another in discussion it will perhaps be possible to confront our mutual failure of charity and begin to deal with it constructively. The canonical record of this critical period is included in what is known as the *Sunhados* (or *Synodicon Orientale*),¹ as it is more well-known in the West). This is a collection of official synods of the Persian Church compiled by Timothy I², who served as Patriarch of the East in the late eighth and early 9th centuries. The *Sunhados* contains the record of the official Christology of the Church of the East as it developed over nearly 200 years and reached its final form in the early 7th century. The *Sunhados* describes the outcome of disputes involving the dominant dyophysite party and the minority monophysites. Occasionally it hints at tension between cautious moderates among the dyophysites and the more radical "Nestorians" among them. The history, as it is reflected in the synodal record, shows the dyophysites accommodating one another throughout this period, but refusing to allow the monophysites to be fully assimilated into the Church unless they relinquished their strongly held beliefs. This led to increasing tensions between them and the official Church as time went on. Whatever dialogue existed between the two parties was certainly lost following the "debate" of 612, after which an often bitter relationship kept the two sides apart, suspicious of one another and openly hostile, with separate and unrelated hierarchies taking permanent root.

The intention of the present-day bishops of the Church of the East has been to resume the dialogue which was lost (or never sufficiently pursued), and to repair the injury inflicted upon the Church of the East (and the whole Body of Christ) by our mutual failure to embrace one another in the name of the same Lord Jesus Christ we both worship and confess as the one Son of God incarnate, the Offspring of the love of his Father, whose life we share through the power of the Holy Spirit, and in whom we place our faith and maintain our hope of salvation and eternal life.

In *Sunhados* we possess the record of official Church pronouncements on Christological dogma in the critical period when dissension in the Church degenerated into alienation and separation. By carefully analyzing the anathemas issued by the various synods - by paying attention to what errors they seek to avoid and listening very carefully to those who differ from us speak for themselves about those very same issues - some common ground can be established. From that common ground we can proceed with charity toward the goal of embracing one another as brothers again.

¹ The synodical record used throughout is that edited by J.-B. Chabot, *Synodicon Orientale*, Paris, 1902 (hereinafter *SO*).

² According to Chabot, *SO*, p. 13. Timothy ruled as Catholicos-Patriarch from 778 to 820.

2. Anathemas Affecting Ecclesial Communion: The Synodical Record

Over a period of almost 200 years the theologians of the East struggled to develop a vocabulary which they considered adequate to expressing the unity of the person of Christ. This was an era of conflict between the official Church and a competing party which, to a large extent, was made up of captives of warfare, both lay and clerical, and a monastic element with intimate ties to the Syrian monophysites in Byzantium. The anathemas issued by the Persian bishops during this period were not aimed at the imperial Church of the West, which presented little threat to the internal discipline of the Church of the East. Almost all of the period covered by Sunhados took place after the Council of Chalcedon, and the bishops in the East seemed to feel in basic agreement with that Council's Christological confession. The anathemas ultimately pronounced by these synods are aimed primarily at the monophysite party, and they reflect concerns similar to those which concerned the supporters of Chalcedon.

The issuing of anathemas to refine doctrinal confessions and to exclude alternative formulas of confession began in 410 with the Synod of Mar Ishaq. There it was limited to a repetition of the anathemas attached to the Creed by the fathers of Nicea.³ Between that synod and the critical "debate" of 612⁴, when the terminology of Babai the Great was given official approval in the Church, the Persian Church gradually developed an official authoritative response to the Christological controversies which began in the Roman Empire and spilled over into Sassanian territory. The aggravating circumstances which were the immediate cause of synodal pronouncements and anathemas were usually within the Church itself, however. The bishops do not seem to have been reacting to developments within the western Church. These internal circumstances were disputes between the majority party of bishops and theologians who were dyophysites and the minority of monophysite sympathizers; or they were controversies between the official Church and the resettled captives of warfare who, in the fifth and sixth centuries, were to a large extent also monophysites.

3. The Anathemas: Christological⁵

The first anathemas which the eastern bishops pronounced on the subject of the person of Christ were in 486 at the Synod of the Catholicos Mar 'Aqaq. They reject anyone who ascribes change or suffering to the divinity of Christ; and they reject anyone who does not confess perfect God and perfect man in a prosopic union. The next anathemas were issued at the Synod of Mar 'Aba in 544. They reject those who deny the Incarnation; those who do not acknowledge the suffering and death of Christ's humanity and the impassibility of his divinity; those who do not ascribe the name "Son" to his divinity and humanity together; and those who introduce a "quaternity" into the Trinity. A further anathema, from the Synod of Mar Yausep in 554, rejects those who teach "two Christs" or "two Sons". The final anathemas are pronounced in the Synod of Mar Sabrišo' in 596. They reject those who suggest a mixture, commingling, compounding, or

confusing of the two natures of Christ; those who ascribe to the divinity of Christ the lower circumstances of his humanity; those who consider the humanity⁶ of God the Word as mere man; and those who do not acknowledge that God the Word endured suffering for our salvation in the body of his humanity, "being in it, with it, and toward it in the belly [of the Virgin], on the cross, in suffering, and for ever."⁷

Two of the anathemas mentioned above - against "those who introduce a 'quaternity' into the Trinity," and against "those who teach 'two Christs' or 'two Sons'" - should clarify the Church of the East's own position and to defend it from charges which its opponents had made against it. As for the rest, there is a general consensus among the bishops of the Holy Synod that, on the one hand, they do not apply to supporters of Chalcedon, and, on the other hand, "Neo-Chalcedonian" positions may, in fact, be accommodated within the framework of this synodal legislation. The errors which the eastern bishops sought to guard against by these specific pronouncements seem to be provided for in the Christological framework set forth by Cyril and his later non-Chalcedonian heirs (see below and the appendix to this paper). Whatever the *terms* they choose to use to describe the unitary subject of the Word made flesh, they continue to confess the integrity of the natures in an unmixed, unmingled, unchanged state within the union. They also locate the sufferings of the impassible Word in his humanity, while both Cyril and the canons of the Persian Church allow for the exchange of predicates according to the economy of the union.⁸ Though the bishops of the Church of the East still prefer to refer all passions, and both human and divine characteristics, to "Christ", a name which to them speaks of both his humanity and divinity, they do not deny that "the Word of God fulfilled the suffering of our salvation in the body of his humanity."⁹

By the time, Aqaq's synod had pronounced the first of these anathemas relating to the Christological disputes a bridge of understanding had already been built (even if somewhat uneasily) between Alexandria and Antioch through the "Formula of Union" between Cyril and John of Antioch. Since the "Letter On Peace" of Cyril to John and the Orientals speaks directly to the issues raised by the bishops in the East, I have, in the appendix to this paper, included with each anathema of the bishops an affirmation of the Letter, or of the Formula of Union quoted in the Letter.¹⁰ If one takes into consideration the *affirmations* of the Letter and sets aside, for the time being, the *language* Cyril chooses to ultimately describe the united person of Christ, he will see that there is no conflict between the eastern bishops' anathemas and the affirmations of Cyril and John. If taken at face value, and if one doesn't demand more proof than their own plain words, the anathemas do not present a barrier to reconciliation and peace with those who strongly adhere to the formula "one nature of God the Word incarnate". The bishops of the Holy Synod have a precedent for distinguishing what is assumed to be "defective vocabulary" from *suspected* or *imputed* "error" (see below). Therefore they may in charity give more weight to Cyril's own affirmations as they relate to the anathemas than to the reductions of his positions (sometimes *ad absurdum*) by his critics. They may also, again in charity, decide to ignore the presumed personal animus lying behind his attacks on Nestorius, a

³ SO, pp. 22-23.

⁴ SO, pp. 562-580. Styled a "synod" in the Sunhados, it presents the official Church's *apologia*, presented before Chosroes II in an attempt to dissuade the king from forcing his favored candidate for the vacant see of the Patriarch upon the bishops, a monophysite physician at court who had converted the queen to his persuasion.

⁵ The anathemas are listed in full in the appendix to this paper in the chronological sequence in which they were pronounced.

⁶ Lit., "The Lordly temple of God the Word."

⁷ SO, p. 198.

⁸ "The heretics, that is, in their stubbornness, venture to ascribe the properties and sufferings of the nature of the humanity of Christ to the nature and quoma of the Godhead and Essence of the Word, things which occasionally, because of the perfect union which the humanity of Christ had with his divinity, are ascribed to God economically, but not naturally." SO, p. 136

⁹ SO, p. 198.

¹⁰ See the appendix where I have listed, along with each anathema, a statement of Cyril relevant to it.

presumption which has made this controversy descend so often into the defense of, or attack on, personalities, thus poisoning the atmosphere and adversely affecting the course of the conversation.

It is noteworthy that, though the Persian bishops ultimately approved the use of the term "two natures and two *qnoma* in one *parsopa*", and afterwards consistently used this vocabulary, they did not at any time anathematize those who did not use *qnoma* or *hypostasis* in the same way. This is probably because of the uncertainty which existed about the relationship of the two terms. This uncertainty has continued to the present day, causing much comment, both inside and outside the Church. In the West, where *hypostasis* is meant to be equivalent to "person", the formulation "two *qnoma*" appears heretical; in the East, where *qnoma* is understood to mean "essence/nature", the formula is demanded. In a *memra* appended to the "Book on the Union" Babai himself conceded that orthodox teachers in the past had used the term "one *qnoma*" to describe the person of the Incarnate One, but he attributed this to a mistaken belief that *qnoma* and *parsopa* were equivalent terms:

But the quarrelsome say against us, "Behold, even the early fathers employed the term 'one *qnoma* from two natures.'" Well, then ... the dispute [of] the early fathers was concerning the complete natures of Christ against the heretics, and was not concerning "*qnoma*" They set forth *qnoma* in the place of *parsopa* and *parsopa* in the place of *qnoma* in their teaching in many different things, for there was not at the time an investigation and inquiry into these terms - as, indeed, [is the case] at this time in the land of the Romans, inasmuch as they say these designations are joined.¹¹

And more than a half century after the official adoption of the "two *qnoma*" formula the Patriarch Giwargis¹², in a letter to the Persian Chorepiscopus Mina - a letter which was incorporated into *Sunhados* - showed that he did not feel alienated from those who adhered to the Council of Chalcedon and its "hypostatic union", only a triumphant sense of having inherited a more refined Christology:

Therefore, we knowingly hold the faith, insofar as is possible, which (is) according to great Rome and all Italy, as well as Constantinople, Jerusalem, and all the renowned cities and catholic churches of the cities of the Romans ... [holding to] the truth of the confession of the two natures in their properties and in their operation in the one union of Christ. However, the catholic church in this dominion of the East, that is, of the region of Persia and its neighboring regions, holds this more splendidly, accurately, and clearly, and according to the tradition of the holy apostles, and utterly without corruption.¹³

The authorities in the Church of the East, down to the present day, have repeatedly demonstrated a tolerance of what they consider to be a "misunderstanding" of the term *qnoma* by the adherents of the Council of Chalcedon. Even as Giwargis acclaimed the orthodoxy of the above-named churches, he implies that their terminology is "defective". Such magnanimity has not been shown to those of the neo-Chalcedonian party. Indeed, in the battle for control of the official Church - which is probably the most decisive factor during the period which *Sunhados* chronicles - charity disappeared under the barrage of very personal attack and counter-attack. Brotherly affection gave way before bitter memories of slandered champions and wounded warriors in the righteous struggle

¹¹ I.e., they are synonymous. *Liber de Unione*, ed. A. Vaschalde, *Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium*, Paris, 1915, pp. 305-306.

¹² Ibidem, p.660-680.

¹³ SO, p. 244

for the soul of the Church - and, not incidentally, for imperial sanction. However, in the contemporary world, where the Church is confronted by so many competing and often hostile ideologies, both secular and religious, and we are compelled to admit our weakened condition and to seek one another out for mutual support and encouragement, it is perhaps time to heed the inspired counsel of the Apostle: "Love does not insist on its own way."¹⁴ If on the one hand the hypostatic union formula can be tolerated, as it has been, in spite of a difference of opinion about terminology, and if, on the other hand, all the specific concerns expressed by the anathemas of *Sunhados* are answered by those who differ with us, to continue to insist they adopt our own terminology and to turn our backs on our fellow believers would most certainly be a repudiation of the "more excellent way"¹⁵ of the Apostle.

4. The anathemas: Personal

The unease in the Persian Church about the course of affairs in the imperial Church of Byzantium was exacerbated in 553 when, at the Second Council of Constantinople, the western bishops anathematized the person and writings of Theodore of Mopsuestia. This provoked an emotional and indignant reaction in the East, and added a secondary element to the larger Christological debate. The Persian bishops had never had the same level of commitment to the person of Nestorius as the Alexandrians had to the person and reputation of Cyril, but they were genuinely outraged by the treatment of "the Interpreter of the Divine Scriptures", as they consistently referred to him. Even before the convening of the Council in the West, when Justinian¹⁶ had already begun to agitate for the condemnation of Theodore, the bishops of the East spoke out forcefully about the place Theodore held - and would continue to hold - among them. In the fortieth canon of the Synod of Mar 'Aba in 544 they affirmed their adherence to Theodore and his teaching.¹⁷ This synodal affirmation, which was made at the same time Justinian issued his edict condemning Theodore's person and works (543-4), is an indication of the depth of feeling the condemnation aroused in the Persian bishops. Though they attached no anathema to this simple affirmation, a gauntlet was thrown down, and a line was drawn which no one would thereafter cross without severely damaging his reputation and status in the Church of the East.

An anathema against those who rejected Theodore was later issued by a Synod in 587 convened by the Catholicos-Patriarch, Išo'yahb I. This synod, which continued a pattern of moderate dyophysism in its Christological confession, and exhibited fundamental agreement with the Council of Chalcedon, was anything but moderate in its treatment of those who rejected Theodore. The immediate cause of this pronouncement, again, was something internal to the Persian Church. The leadership of the critical and

¹⁴ 1 Cor. 13:5.

¹⁵ 1 Cor. 12:31.

¹⁶ See Aloys Grillmeier, SJ, in collaboration with Theresia Hainthaler, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, Vol. 2, Part 2, pp. 417-429 (Louisville, Kentucky, 1995), for treatment of Justinian's efforts to have the "Three Chapters" condemned, from the conclusion of the doctrinal dialogue of 532 up to the time of the convening of the Council in Constantinople. In an edict of 543-4 the emperor condemned the "person and works" of Theodore of Mopsuestia.

¹⁷ SO, p. 550: Our interpretation - that of all of us bishops in all the East - of the faith which was set forth by the three hundred and eighteen bishops, which we hold in our confession on our right and on our left, is that which was composed by the holy and God-loving blessed (one), Mar Theodorus, bishop and interpreter of the divine Scriptures.

influential School of Nisibis had fallen into the hands of one who rejected Theodore's Biblical commentaries.¹⁸ He preferred to base his writings on the commentaries of St. John Chrysostom, and his own writings ultimately came under suspicion of error. Therefore, without prejudice to Chrysostom or his commentaries (he was revered in the East as in the West), but with a sensitivity to the reputation of Theodore born out of long veneration and reliance upon his authority as exegete and theologian, and (probably secondarily) scandalized by the outcome of the "Three Chapters" controversy in the West, the bishops spoke emphatically and unequivocally on this issue. They anathematized all who reviled or rejected Theodore and/or his writings.¹⁹ Both the substance of this decree and the tone of its larger context were later repeated in the Synod of Sabrišo' in 596²⁰ and in that of Grigor in 605²¹.

The anathema issued against those who reject Theodore was primarily aimed at internal dissent and at what the bishops perceived to be a weakening of ecclesial discipline in Persia. This may be seen by the way later commentators so often did not even seem to see Theodore's denunciation by Constantinople II as a factor in determining the legitimate standing of "great Rome and all Italy, etc." While they continued to exalt Theodore's reputation in the Church of the East, they regularly overlooked his condemnation in the West, or they gave it little or no importance in evaluating the status of those outside the East. The anathema of the opponents of Theodore would appear, then, to be a relic of the internal struggles of the Persian Church and an anachronism today when so many, both Chalcedonian and neo-Chalcedonian, study Theodore's writings - some for criticism, to be sure, but more often appreciatively and with regret that the larger part of his patrimony is lost. His ultimate fate was already long in the hands of the Judge of all by the time the Fifth Ecumenical Council convened, and final judgment should perhaps be left to him to whom it belongs. A removal of this anathema by synodal decree could be considered and executed without detriment to Theodore's reputation in the Church of the East, and it would certainly remove an irritant to inter-church relations.

It should be noted that during the entire period under consideration there were no anathemas issued against persons by name other than in specific local matters of ecclesiastical discipline. To be sure, in the "debate" of 612 Cyril is referred to as a "troubler of the churches"²²; and the followers of Severus are given the epithet "Theopaschite"²³,

¹⁸ See Arthur Vööbus, *History of the School of Nisibis*, pp.234-317 (Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium, Louvain, 1965), for treatment of the administration of the school at Nisibis by Hnana of Hdayab, and particularly his role in the controversy leading up to the condemnation of those who reject Theodore.

¹⁹ *SO*, p. 138: "Therefore, we decree by the Word of God, who rules over all and holds the height and the depth, that no one from any of the ecclesiastical ranks is allowed, secretly or openly, to revile this doctor of the Church, or to reject his holy writings.... One who ventures, hiddenly or openly, to stand against these things which we have said and written above shall be anathematized...." I consider this to be only secondarily a reaction to Constantinople 2 because opportunity had previously existed to take this action. Two intervening synods had taken place, Yausep's (554) and Hazqiel's (576), which could have, but did not, make a pronouncement on the issue. The immediate cause was the dispute with Hnana and his followers.

²⁰ *SO*, pp.196-198.

²¹ *SO*, pp. 210-211.

²² "... Cyril, the troubler of the churches and the corrupter of the truth of the confession of Christians in the land of the Romans.... Cyril, the troubler of the habitable world.... Cyril, the scandalizer of many." *SO*, pp. 243-244.

²³ "... these Theopaschite Severans, with their corrupt confession. Though their sickness began there [in the West], when they were cast out of holy Church and driven away, they then left and came here, going about covertly in false garb, in concealed corners with rustic men, ill-informed men...."

and Severus' excommunication by the synod at Constantinople in 536 is mentioned²⁴. But a formal synodal anathema by the Persian bishops of either of these men - or of any other directly participating in the Christological discussions - does not appear in the canonical record. Though individual authors of theological works and composers of hymns and anthems have denounced Cyril, Severus, and others in angry and bitter tones, treating them with contempt and scorn, and even assuming their excommunication, yet the Church limited its anathemas to specific confessional issues and avoided directly addressing the status of *individuals* engaged in the Christological disputes. It is true that the reticence cannot be interpreted as indifference, much less approval, but it does indicate a consistent policy of not singling out individuals in the West for censure, and certainly names no one in the East.²⁵ In the *Sunhados* the modern Holy Synod has a model of circumspection in this regard, suggesting that subjects of substance ought to be dealt with without personalizing them. If this model is taken to be an instructive precedent, it should be possible to remove the names of the limited number of individuals singled out for condemnation in the Liturgy, along with unflattering adjectives or curses, again without detriment to the reputations of the fathers of the Church of the East. This would be a salutary gesture toward the other churches who hold these men in high regard.

5. A Twentieth Century Search for Healing

We are confronted with two issues, then - the correct Christological confession and the status of Theodore of Mopsuestia - which set the Church of the East at variance with the Church of the West and with that part of the Syriac-speaking Church, as well as the Copts and Armenians, which loyally adheres to the formulas of Cyril and Severus. The issue of the correct Christological confession at first proceeded toward a common understanding with the Imperial Church in Byzantium, and then faltered, at least from the West's point of view, when the Persian Church adopted a terminology at variance with the hypostatic union formula of Chalcedon. The condemnation of Theodore became an issue when the Persian bishops pronounced an anathema contradicting the Second Council of Constantinople. This anathema was aimed at internal dissent rather than being prompted directly by the Byzantine Council's decision, and it has frequently been overlooked by spokesmen of the Church of the East as a significant factor in determining the legitimacy of other churches or individuals. In discussing the removal of anathemas the Holy Synod is giving close and careful consideration to the Neo-Chalcedonian positions with an eye to removing offense while not compromising basic principle. And though the bishops do not consider their anathemas to apply to Chalcedonian adherents, the same ongoing consultation is being pursued in order to speak to specific matters which give cause for reservation or scandal.

It is with humility that the Holy Synod is participating in these initiatives toward reconciliation. The bishops recognize the Church of the East's part in this long history of division and conflict. In striving for precision in language we have forgotten charity, and we have given offense as often as we have taken it. The golden deposit of faith which we received from our ancestors we have held in frail earthen vessels, often unlovely and to some even unlovable. But we would not leave to our children a legacy of

²⁴ "Severus ... who was bishop in Antioch, and was anathematized and cast out into exile...." *SO*, pp. 195-196.

²⁵ It is significant that not even the offending Hnana was singled out when those who opposed Theodore were condemned.

continued alienation and separation from those whose devotion to our Lord Jesus Christ is as sure as our own - the same Lord who would look upon his torn body with tears, and upon those who tear it with disfavor. To us the opportunity has been given to repair the breaches in the edifice of the Church and to face the world as one, with confidence in God and, through the power of his Holy Spirit, offering the medicine of healing for a broken world.

Appendix A:

A Chronological Listing of Synodal Anathemas in the Church of the East

The first anathema:

(I have divided this anathema into two parts because part (a), though it speaks to Christological issues, is not in dispute. Part (b), however, is frequently raised by eastern polemicists as an objection since a natural union implies, for them, a change of nature.)

[a] But those who say that there was a time when he did not exist, and before he was begotten he did not exist, and that he was made from nothing; or say that he was of some other substance or essence, or [b] consider the Son of God changeable and mutable, such the catholic and apostolic church anathematizes. (Ishaq 410;²⁶ repeated by 'Aqaq 486,²⁷ and Grigor 605²⁸).

Cyril: "But I am far from any such thought as that, and I also consider them wholly to rave who think a shadow of change could occur concerning the Nature of the Word of God. For he remains that which he always was, and has not been changed, nor can he ever be changed, nor is he capable of change."²⁹

The second anathema:

If anyone thinks or teaches others that suffering ... belong[s] to the Godhead of our Lord ... the same shall be anathema. ('Aqaq, 486;³⁰ repeated by Sabrišo' 596,³¹ and Grigor 605³²).

Cyril: "To the same purpose the all-wise Peter also said when he wrote of Christ as having 'suffered in the flesh' and not in the nature of his ineffable godhead."³³

²⁶ (SO, pp. 22-23)

²⁷ If anyone thinks or teaches others that ... change belong[s] to the Godhead of our Lord ... the same shall be anathema. (SO, p.55)

²⁸ The divinity perfected the humanity through suffering, as it is written, though suffering, change, or variation did not enter into the Godhead in any way. We have agreed with this faith ... anathematizing all who in any way lapse from the same. (SO, pp. 209-210)

²⁹ Letter of Cyril to John of Antioch on Peace, taken from *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*. Vol. 14, Henry R. Percival, ed., Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, Mich., p. 252. Subsequent quotations from this Letter and from the Formula of Union are from the same source.

³⁰ See footnote 2 above.

³¹ ... [W]e anathematize and alienate from all contact with us everyone who ... introduce[s], with regard to the union of the Son of God, either suffering, or death, or any of the mean circumstances of humanity in any way, into the glorious nature of his divinity ... or one who does not say that the Word of God fulfilled the suffering of our salvation in the body of his humanity, being in it, with it, and toward it in the belly, on the cross, in suffering, and for ever, inseparably, while the glorious nature of his Godhead did not participate in any of the sufferings. (SO, pp. 197-198)

³² See above, footnote 3.

The third anathema:

If anyone thinks or teaches others... not preserving - in regard to the union of the parsona of our Savior - the confession of perfect God and perfect man, the same shall be anathema. ('Aqaq 486,³⁴ 'Aba, 544,³⁵ Sabrišo' 596,³⁶ and Grigor 605³⁷)

Formula of Union: "We confess, therefore, our Lord Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God, perfect God, and perfect man ..." ³⁸

The fourth anathema:

Anyone who does not confess that in the last time the Only-begotten Son of God, who is Christ our Lord, was revealed in the flesh, let him be anathematized. ('Aba 544³⁹)

Formula of Union: "... of a reasonable soul and flesh consisting, begotten before the ages of the Father according to his Divinity ..." ⁴⁰

The fifth anathema:

Anyone who does not acknowledge the suffering and death of the humanity of Christ, and the impassibility of his divinity, let him be anathematized. ('Aba 544⁴¹)

Cyril: "For we all confess in addition to this, that the Word of God is impassible, even though when he dispenses most wisely this mystery, he appears to ascribe to himself the sufferings endured in his own flesh." ⁴²

The sixth anathema:

Or anyone who ... does not believe that in the name "Son" he refers to the divinity and humanity of Christ together ... let him be anathematized. ('Aba 544⁴³)

Formula of Union: "... of the same substance with his Father according to his Divinity, and of the same substance with us according to his humanity; for there became a union of two natures. Wherefore we confess one Christ, one Son, one Lord." ⁴⁴

³³ "Letter of Cyril to John", p. 252

³⁴ SO, p. 55

³⁵ Behold, from the title "Christ" we learned about the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and we have understood his humanity from the same, and in it is the seal of the entire confession of Christianity. Anyone who does not confess in this way, let him be anathematized. (SO, pp. 542-543)

³⁶ ... [W]e anathematize and alienate from all contact with us everyone who denies the nature of the divinity and the nature of the humanity of our Lord Jesus Christ (SO, p. 197)

³⁷ For the likeness of God took the likeness of a servant ... perfect God and perfect man, perfect God in the nature of his Godhead, perfect man in the nature of his humanity, two natures of divinity and humanity ... We have agreed with this faith ... anathematizing all who in any way lapse from the same.

³⁸ Formula of Union, p. 251.

³⁹ SO, p. 543

⁴⁰ Formula of Union, p. 251.

⁴¹ SO, p.543

⁴² Letter of Cyril, p. 252.

⁴³ SO, p. 543

⁴⁴ Formula of Union, p. 251.

The seventh anathema:

Anyone who introduces a "quaternity" into the holy and immutable Trinity, let him be anathematized. ('Aba 544,⁴⁵ repeated in Yausep 554,⁴⁶ and Sabrišo' 596⁴⁷)

The eighth anathema:

And everyone who thinks or says "two Christs" or "two Sons" ... the same we have anathematized and do anathematize (Yausep 554,⁴⁸ repeated in Sabrišo' 596⁴⁹)

The seventh and eighth anathemata in this list respond to charges often lodged against the Persian theologians. They represent emphatic disavowals of any intentions to imply a duality of persons or the introduction of a fourth person into the Holy Trinity. Such charges were not part of the indictment issued against the monophysite or Chalcedonian parties. I include the anathemas only to present an exhaustive list of synodal pronouncements on Christological matters.

The ninth anathema:

... we anathematize and alienate from all contact with us everyone who denies the nature of the divinity and the nature of the humanity of our Lord Jesus Christ...through mixture and commingling, or compounding, or confusing ... (Sabrišo' 596⁵⁰)

Cyril: "Will your holiness vouchsafe to silence those who say that a crasis or mingling or mixture took place between the Word of God and flesh."⁵¹

The tenth anathema:

... we anathematize and alienate from all contact with us everyone who ... introduc[es], with regard to the union of the Son of God, either suffering, or death, or any of the mean circumstances of humanity in any way, into the glorious nature of his divinity ... (Sabrišo', 596⁵²)

Again the affirmation of Cyril quoted with regard to the fifth anathema above speaks to the issue.

⁴⁵ SO, p. 543

⁴⁶ And everyone who ... on any pretext or in any way stirs up a "quaternity", the same we have anathematized and do anathematize (SO, pp. 97-98)

⁴⁷ Again, we also reject one who introduces a quaternity into the Holy Trinity (SO, pp. 197-198)

⁴⁸ SO, pp. 97-98

⁴⁹ Again, we also reject one who introduces a quaternity into the Holy Trinity, or one who calls the one Christ, the Son of God, two sons or two Christs (SO, pp. 197-198)

⁵⁰ SO, pp. 197-198.

⁵¹ Letter of Cyril, p. 152.

⁵² SO, pp. 197-198.

The eleventh anathema:

... we anathematize and alienate from all contact with us everyone who ... consider[s] as a mere man the Lordly temple of God the Word (Sabrišo' 596⁵³)

This anathema is partially addressed by the quotations attached to the 3rd and 4th anathemata above. However, this anathema addresses a charge often leveled at the Persian bishops who are accused of following Paul of Samosata.

The twelfth anathema:

Again, we also reject one who ... does not say that the Word of God fulfilled the suffering of our salvation in the body of his humanity, being in it, with it, and toward it in the belly, on the cross, in suffering, and for ever (Sabrišo' 596,⁵⁴ repeated by Grigor 605)⁵⁵)

Compare the affirmation attached to the fifth anathema above.

Theresia Hainthaler

STUDIES ON ANATHEMATA AND THEIR LIFTING IN RELATIONSHIP TO THE QUESTION OF ECCLESIAL COMMUNION AND HERESY

1. Introduction

In the new Roman Catholic Code of Canon Law (1983) the term *anathema* can no longer be found. In previous versions of the Code, up to and including the CIC (*Codex Iuris Canonici*) of 1917, *anathema* is defined as a solemn excommunication (see can. 2257, §2: "cum sollemnitate") according to a rite in the *Pontificale Romanum*. Its absence in the new Code has led one German scholar to conclude that *anathema*, in the sense of a solemn excommunication, belongs to the past.¹ In fact, in the documents of Vatican II one no longer finds the formulae "anathema sit" or "excommunication".

To give an initial orientation, I refer to the explanation of the term *anathema* offered in a German Encyclopedia from 1930:

When there was no longer a danger of identifying the anathema with a ban of the Jews, the word became a technical term for an ecclesial ban: soon it became a synonym for excommunication and then a distinct form of an especially solemn excommunication, later as *excommunicatio maior* in distinction from *excommunicatio minor*. The formula for rejecting errors of the faith, with the same effect as excommunication for those who stick to

⁵³ SO, pp. 197-198.

⁵⁴ SO, p. 198.

⁵⁵ The divinity perfected the humanity through suffering, as it is written. . . . We have agreed with this faith ... anathematizing all who in any way lapse from the same. (SO, pp. 209-210.)

¹ P. Krämer, Art. Anathema, III. Kirchenrechtlich, in: LThK 1 (1993) 605: "Deshalb gehört das Anathema als feierlich, in einer bestimmten liturgischen Form sich vollziehende Feststellung oder Verhängung der Exkommunikation wohl der Vergangenheit an."

their error with obstinacy. The contrary of an anathematized sentence is defined.²

To my knowledge no specific study on our subject exists. There are articles on the concepts of anathema, excommunication (ban) and heresy under their exegetical or theological or canonical aspects.³ Maybe we can get some help from those studies which deal with two special events: (1) the lifting of the "anathemas" of 1054 by the Roman-Catholic and the Greek-Orthodox Churches in 1965, (2) the process which has begun in Germany within the Roman-Catholic and Protestant Churches to consider the contemporary relevance of the Condemnations of the Reformation Era and whether they still divide. But most recent canonical studies do not treat our topic, perhaps because the term anathema no longer occurs in the new Code.

The first part of my paper deals with the concept of anathema in Holy Scripture, in the patristic literature and in the text of synods and its relation to heresy and ecclesial communion. The second part of my paper is dedicated to the lifting of anathemas, with special reference of the two events mentioned above.

2. What are Anathemata?

According to Liddell-Scott⁴ *anathema* is mainly a term used in the Septuagint and by early Christian authors and - we could add - by Jewish ones. Lampe⁵ distinguishes four meanings of *anathema*: 1. a thing dedicated or devoted to God, 2. a thing separated from the Church and so devoted to perdition, 3. a curse pronounced by the Church and 4. perdition. The occurrence of the term *anathema* in the New Testament is the basis for its use in the writings of the fathers and the Synods of the Church. Therefore, we shall first consider these NT passages (see also the appendix).

2.1. *Anathema in Holy Scripture*

2.1.1. *In the New Testament*

The word ἀνάθεμα⁶ appears 6 times in the NT: 5 times in Paul's letters⁷ and once in Acts 23⁸ (in the context of a Jewish plot in Jerusalem against Paul). Thus, surprisingly, the term always appears in connection with Paul.

The verb ἀναθεματίζω is used 4 times; 3 times⁹ in Acts 23, and a 4th time in Mk 14,71 (Peter's denial of Christ): when Peter was asked the third time whether he knew Jesus, he starts cursing (but it is not said against whom or against what) and swearing, thereby renouncing Jesus completely. We shall look more closely at these passages since they are so important in later history.

In Rom 9,3: Paul says that he wishes to be himself an anathema for the sake of his brethren, the Jews, who are joined with him by birth, but who have not accepted Christ.

In 1 Cor 12,3: Nobody speaking by the spirit of God says: Anathema Jesus.

In 1 Cor 16,22: If anyone does not love the Lord, let him be anathema.

In Gal 1,8,9: If anyone should preach to you a gospel other than the one that we preached to you - even if we or an angel from heaven - let him be anathema. Paul even repeats the admonition: if anyone is evangelizing you other than what you received, let him be anathema.

In Acts 23,14 the context of this verse is that the Jews in Jerusalem swear (conspire, ἀναθεματίσαντες αὐτόν) not to eat or drink until they have killed Paul (23,12). They tell this also to the high priests and elders (23,14: "we have bound ourselves by an anathema, ἀναθεματὶ ἀνεθελίσαμεν εαυτοὺς, to taste nothing until we have killed Paul.")¹⁰ (anathema is found only here). Again in 23,21 we have the verb used reflexively when Paul's nephew reports the commander about the ambush.

In sum: If we look at the Greek text especially it is obvious that in Paul's letters we always have versions of the same formula, namely: to be anathema (*anathema einai*).¹¹ The verb *anathematizo* in Acts has the meaning of an extreme self-commitment (anathematize with an anathema), otherwise one should be exposed to destruction. Here we only have the term used reflexively, not in the sense that another person is anathematized (Mk 14,71 is unclear on this point). Apparently, only at a later period does *anathematizo* mean to anathematize. It is interesting to see, that Paul is the only one to use the anathema-formula in NT, and in passages where he is dealing with the center of faith, i.e. with the proclamation of the Gospel.

In order better to grasp the significance of *anathema* not only in the context of Acts 23 - it seems to have been a customary Jewish mode of expression -, but also with regard to its connotation for Paul, we shall look now at its uses in the texts of the Old Testament.

2.1.2. *View to the Old Testament*

According to Hatch/Redpath the Septuagint, i.e. the Greek translation of the Old Testament, uses the word ἀνάθεμα/ἀνάθημα 27 times.¹² If anathema renders a Hebrew word, then it is always one of the group _____. Therefore, Lohfink writes:¹³

⁷ Rom 9,3; 1 Cor 12,3; 1 Cor 16,22; Gal 1,8,9.

⁸ Acts 23,14.

⁹ Acts 23,12.14.21.

¹⁰ It seems that there is an allusion to Dt 13,16 and 20,17 respectively: If anybody (inhabitants of a city, men) lead astray to serve other gods, he shall be doomed to perdition. - Maybe, according to the opinion of the Jews Paul proclaims the adoration of an alien god; therefore, they could feel as executors of deuteronomistic law against Paul.

¹¹ I wish to be anathema; Jesus (be) anathema; if anyone ..., let him be anathema. In 1 Cor 12,3 there is no verb, it is a nominal clause.

¹² 18 times as translation for אָנָה, 4 times for variants of the same root אָנָה besides, we have 14 testimonies for ἀναθεματίζω (among them 11 translations for אָנָה high.).

² (A. Landgraf)*, Art. Anathema, in: LThK I (1930) 395.

³ On *anathema*: A. Amanieu, Art. Anathème, in: Dict. de Droit canonique I (1935) 512-516; W. Bauer/ K.u.B. Aland, Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament (Berlin, New York 1988); J. Behm, Art. ἀνάθεμα, ἀνάθημα, κατάθεμα, in: TWNT I (1933) 356-357; ders., Art. ἀναθεματίζω, καταθεματίζω, in: TWNT I (1933) 357; W. Beinert/ P. Krämer, Art. Anathema, in: LThK I (1993) 604-605; H.-W. Kuhn, Art. ἀνάθεμα, in: EWNT I (1980) 193-194; J. N. Gignac, Art. Anathema, in: The Catholic Encyclopedia I (1907) 455-457; V. Grossi, Art. Anathema, in: DPAC I (1983) 187; K. Hofmann, Art. Anathema, in: RAC I (1950) 427-430; N. Lohfink, Art. אָנָה, in: TWAT 3 (1982) 192-213; Ch. Michel, Art. Anathème, in: DACL I (1924) 1926-1940; A. Vacant, Art. Anathème, in: DThC I (1923) 1168-1171; H. Vorgrimler/ W. Doskocil, Art. Anathema, in: LThK I (1957) 494f. - On *ban*: G. May, Art. Bann IV, in: TRE 5 (1980) 170-182; H. Wissmann/ H. Niehr/ G. Stemberger/ P. Krämer, Art. Bann, in: LThK I (1993) 1388-1391. - On *excommunication*: W. Rees, Art. Exkommunikation, in: LThK 3 (1995) 1119f.; W. Doskocil, Art. Exkommunikation, in: RAC 7 (1969) 1-22. - On *heresy*: N. Brox, Art. Häresie, in: RAC 13 (1986) 248-297, bes. 259ff.; R. Kampling/ W. Beinert/ H. Heinemann, Art. Häresie, in: LThK 4 (1995) 1189-1193; A. Schindler, Art. Häresie II. Kirchengeschichtlich, in: TRE 14 (1985) 318-341.

⁴ H. G. Liddell/ R. Scott/ H. S. Jones/ R. McKenzie, A Greek-English Lexicon (Oxford 1968) 104f.

⁵ G. W. H. Lampe, A Patristic Greek Lexicon (Oxford 1961) 102f.

⁶ The word ἀνάθημα = votive gift, only in Lk 21,5, is here without consideration.

"Wherever the context allowed it, the Septuagint chose the words ἀνάθημα/ἀνάθεμα and ἀναθεματίζω - about 35 times", in order to translate the group ____ into Greek. "These words serve exclusively for the rendering of our group. Presumably, the starting-point was the meaning of ἀνάθημα as 'a votive gift set up in the temple'."

But the Septuagint did not succeed in every case in finding an exact equivalent for the Hebrew and, therefore, used verbs meaning 'to destroy, to slay, to extirpate'. Hence Lohfink concludes: "Thus, the Septuagint was successful in its attempt to find one corresponding group in Greek for the Hebrew group only in one half of all cases."

But what is the meaning of *hrm*? Lohfink gives us the following description¹⁴:

a) *hrm hiph* means: "to dedicate something/somebody for the sanctuary as a gift which definitely remains there; during the war, to doom a town or its population to annihilation; to carry out this annihilation; to extirpate a population during the war; to kill".¹⁵

b) *hrm hoph* means: "being condemned to a death penalty; to carry out this penalty; (about goods:) to be confiscated".

c) The significance of *heraem* is: "a thing or person, which was doomed in the sense of *rm hiph* or condemned in the sense of *hrm hoph* or gets into their sphere of destruction by contamination; an act of dedication or of extirpation and killing".¹⁶

This Hebrew word group is used mostly in the context of war and annihilation. But it is also used in a "sacred" context "in the sense of that which is taken out from the profane and singled out for *JHWH*."

We shall point to several such usages. The meaning "doomed to perdition" (devoted for destruction) is found in Jos, especially in 6,17.18: Jericho is doomed to destruction; frequently (7 times) we have this formulation in Jos 7,1-13 where the sin of Israel is that they have taken some of the devoted things for destruction. Similarly in Dt 7,26, Nm 21,3 ("doomed to destruction"); on the other hand Lv 27,28: devoted to the Lord.

It is interesting for our understanding the NT passage (Acts), that the expression ἀναθέματι ἀναθεματίζετε αὐτοὺς can be found in Dt 13,16 and 20,17. In Dt 13 we have the following situation: Some inhabitants in a city have led others astray to serve other gods. Consequently, all must be destroyed utterly. In Dt 20 the context is that all the males in the conquered country have to be destroyed utterly, so that they can no longer seduce to other gods (but the Israelites are allowed to take possession of all their property, including women, children and the elderly).

I don't want to enter into the details of the historical development of the ban in Judaism. Let me simply mention, that in the main it is only after 70 a. C. that the ban was practiced. There was a mild version (*niddui*), which if it was without effect, was followed by an intensification (the *heraem*) which meant excommunication and ruination of one's property¹⁷.

2.1.3. Summary

With this background we can return to the NT texts.

¹³ N. Lohfink, Art. מִקְדָּשׁ, in: TWAT 3 (1982) 192-213, here: 195.

¹⁴ N. Lohfink, TWAT 3, 201.

¹⁵ Concerning: Dt 20,17. Verb: Nm 21,2,3; Dt 13,15; 20,17; Jos 6,20; Judges 1,17; 21,11; 1 Sam 15,3; 2 Kings 9,11; 1 Chr 4,41.

¹⁶ Concerning: Lv 27,28; Dt 7,26; 13,17; Jos 6,16.17; 7,1.11.12.13; 1 Chr 2,7.

¹⁷ See G. Stemberger, Bann III, in: LThK 1 (1993) 1390f.; C.-H. Hunzinger, Bann II, in: TRE 5 (1980) 161-164; C. Thoma, Bann III, in: TRE 5, 167-170 (middle ages and modern times).

It seems that here we always have the notion (if the Old Testament background is taken into consideration, the respective context in the NT is too indeterminate): that *anathema* means to surrender or to leave the person in question to the wrath or destruction of God. The sphere of the sacred is aimed at.

Nevertheless, in contrast to the Septuagint, here we always are dealing with persons and not things. The verb ἀναθεματίζω apparently refers to a formula pronounced on somebody or something. In Acts 23 (perhaps also in Mk 14,71) the verb is used reflexively: to anathematize himself (invoke a curse) as confirmation of a statement or as self-commitment respectively.

Is there a relation here to ecclesial communion? This seems to have more to do with the consequences of *anathema* rather than its immanent meaning. To describe exclusion from the community, Paul uses other terms such as "to deliver to Satan" (1 Cor 5,5; vgl. 1 Tm 1,20) or "to expel resp. purge from your midst" (ἵνα ᾗθῃ ἐκ μέσου ὑμῶν resp. ἐξάρπατε ἐξ ὑμῶν) (1 Cor 5,2 resp. 5,13).¹⁸

The *Didache* is acquainted with the rupture of communication with someone who commits an offence against another person (ἀστοχοῦντι κατὰ τοῦ ἐτέρου) (Did 15,3) until the conversion of the evil-doer, as well as with the exclusion from the eucharist for someone who is in conflict with his neighbour (Did 14,2). Here we have the beginnings of the later notion of excommunication, but the term *anathema* (or the verb) is not used.

2.2. Anathema in the Early Church

2.2.1. Church Fathers

We have a lot of evidence for the use of *anathema* and *anathematizare* in the writings of Latin Christian authors¹⁹. But the term *anathema* is used prior to 300, for instance by Tertullian²⁰, Cyprian, and Apponius, nearly always in connection with one of the above mentioned NT passages (Rom, Gal, 1 Cor), whereby the verb *anathematizare* in this period cannot be found at all. Similarly later fathers - like Ambrose, Rufin²¹, Arnobe, Augustin, Hilarius of Poitiers, Vincent of Lérins, Cassian, Jerome and up to the Scythian monks - speak of *anathema* mostly in connection these passages in St. Paul.

After Nicea (and its *anathema* of Arian doctrines at the end of the symbol) we find lists of *anathemata*: see Rufin (Apologia century Hieronym.), Arnobe (C. Serapionem, CPL 239). The same holds for Greek authors. Obviously the dispute about Arius and later, the one about Nestorius, led to the development of the *anathemata* as a literary genus²² - an example is the famous letter of Cyril to Nestorius.

2.2.2. Anathema in synodical texts

The earliest testimony to *anathema* in the canon of a synod is thought to be can. 52 of the *Synod of Elvira*, a Spanish Synod in the pre-Constantinian period - between 295 and

¹⁸ Cf. K. Hofmann, RAC 1 (1950) 429: "das paulinische A. ... darf nicht mit der excommunicatio gleichgesetzt werden."

¹⁹ CLCLT shows about 275 passages with the verb *anathematizare* and about 600 with *anathema* (without conciliar texts).

²⁰ In De pudicentia 14,48 he uses: *anathema maranatha*.

²¹ Apol. century Hieron. (CPL 197) has phrases of the kind: Si quis ... *anathema* sit.

²² See A. Grillmeier, Christ in Christian Tradition 2/1 (London, Oxford 1987) 81f.

314, perhaps around 306;²³ great attention has been paid to the canons that came down to us from this synod. This canon 52 says: "Those, being found to put down libels in the church should be anathematized."²⁴ It is not easy to discern the meaning of "anathematizetur"²⁵ in this passage and its effect.

Certainly the most important evidence is given by the Council of Nicea (325) at the end of the symbol with the *anathema* (DH 126) on Arian doctrines (without mentioning Arius' name), together with the synodical letter (DH 130) which informs the Egyptians of Arius' condemnation²⁶. On the other hand, the canons of Nicea do not use the word *anathema*, although can. 5 deals with excommunicated persons (ακοινωνήτοι). With the reception of Nicea by the Church, this form of *anathema* was obviously also received. Since Nicea was accepted in 410 at the Synod of Seleucia-Ctesiphon²⁷, this fact is also important for this Consultation.

But we also have to mention the Synod of Gangra²⁸, for here the current formula is fully developed: Each of the 20 canons concludes with the formula ανάθεμα εστω, which shows that the formula of Gal 1,8,9 has been taken over. I should also like to refer to the synodical letter of this synod which makes a connection between the anathema and ecclesial communion (see below).

In the fourth century it becomes frequent to formulate synodical canons as anathemata, see also the synod of Sirmium (351) (DH 140).

The relation between anathema and heresies is evident not only at Nicea, but also at the First Council of Constantinople (381): Can. 7 says that heresies have to be anathematized (verb). In addition the Synod of Laodicaea (end of 4th century) requires for those who have fallen into heresy to say *anathema* against their heresies in order to be received back into the Church (can. 7). We also find a sharp rebuke against Christians holding the *sabbat* or practicing Jewish customs: ανάθεμα παρὰ τῷ Χριστῷ (can. 29); presumably the presence of Jewish communities or of Judeo-Christians was viewed as a serious danger.²⁹

We also have a well-known example for anathemas in the First Synod of Toledo (400): 12 (a longer version lists 18) dogmatic³⁰ errors are formulated and each time the conclusion is "anathema sit" (DH 191-208).³¹ Maybe those who wanted to be resumed had to subscribe to these sentences.

Additionally, the Synod of Carthage (1 Mai 418) uses the word anathema in the context of a dogmatic condemnation in cans. 109-116 against Pelagius (without mentioning his name) for various erroneous doctrines.³²

²³ Cf. D. Ramos-Lissón, Die Synoden auf der iberischen Halbinsel (Paderborn etc. 1981) 6, with Gaudemet, DHGE 15, 318. According to E. Reichert, Die Canones der Synode von Elvira (Diss. Hamburg 1990) 22f., the date is uncertain, but definitely before 314 (= Synod of Arles) and after 295 (consecration of bishop Ossius).

²⁴ Hi, qui inventi fuerint libellos famosos in ecclesia ponere, anathematizentur. Cf. Reichert, op. cit. 167-171.

²⁵ Reichert gives simply the meaning curse ("Fluch").

²⁶ Both times the verb αναθεματίζω is used (once resp. twice).

²⁷ See Synodicon Orientale, ed. J. B. Chabot, (Paris 1902) 22-33 (Syriac), 262-271 (French); in Syriac _vátheμα (and its verb) is rendered with _rm!

²⁸ Usually the date is assumed to be ca 340 (see Joannou), but recently T. D. Barnes, The Date of the Council of Gangra, JThS 40 (1989) 121-124, has proposed a date "probably ... close to the year 355" (124).

²⁹ Also Christians which venerate the martyrs of the heretics or those who adhere to the cult of angels are anathematized (can. 34 resp. can. 35).

³⁰ It is a matter of the basic doctrines on God, Jesus Christ, Trinity, resurrection, holy scriptures. The longer version obviously anathematizes the doctrines of Priscillian, whose name is mentioned in can. 18.

³¹ See Ramos-Lissón, op.cit. 46-49.

³² A previous synod of Carthage (401) declares in can. 81: If a bishop makes a will that heretics or pagans should be his heirs, without their being relatives, he may be anathema. Also after his death there is no commemoration

The Council of Ephesus (431) is of special interest for us: can. VII (which forbids producing, writing or composing any other creed than that of Nicea) says that transgressing lay people should be anathematized (verb used twice); clerics should be deprived of their respective charge.³³ Here, the anathema is applied as a penalty for lay people and not for clerics.

Nearly the same is true for the Council of Chalcedon: The canons³⁴ of Chalcedon always use the verb *anathematizein*; with the exception of can. 7, this is always the penalty for lay people or monks; the context is not a dogmatic one. The definition of faith (*horos*) anathematizes "those who concoct two natures of the Lord before the union but imagine a single one after the union."³⁵ At the end of the *horos* it is said that those who do not accept the Definition are to be anathematized if they are monks or lay people (whereas if they are bishops or clerics they must be deposed).³⁶ Again in both cases the verb is used. Thus, in this context, the "anathema" means a penalty for monks and lay people. Only in the *prooemium*, when the Eutychian position is rejected, the verb *anathematizein* is used, but with a similar meaning and in line with other verbs meaning to oppose, to expel.

The Second Council of Constantinople (553) uses the word *anathema* abundantly (16 times): Indeed, all the 14 canons are formulated as anathemata; moreover, in the *Sententia synodica*, there are explicit references to Gal 1,8 and 1,9. In each case the condemnations are doctrinal ones (cans. 12, 13 and 14 anathematize both Theodor as person and his writings, as well as the anticyrillian writings of Theodoret of Cyrus and the letter of Ibas to Mari). Aloys Grillmeier comments:

"None of the previous councils used such caustic language with regard to opinions to be dismissed and the proponents of these. There was no attempt to give an objective assessment of them. Consequently, no account at all was taken of the positive significance of these theologians, in particular of Theodore of Mopsuestia."³⁷

The Council of Tours (567) is important for our study, because there a distinction between anathema and excommunication was made. Accordingly the anathema is a solemn kind of excommunication.³⁸

This distinction was assumed in later ecclesiastical canons: Anathema is considered as a more serious form of excommunication³⁹. Gratian calls the *excommunicatio totalis* (exclusion from the community of the faithful) anathema. By the 13th century *excommunicatio minor* (exclusion from the sacraments) and *excommunicatio maior* (exclusion from the society of the faithful) are distinguished.

for him at the altar.

³³ DEC, Tanner, p. 65.

³⁴ Can. 2 interdicts an ordination for money. Monks or lay people are anathematized (verb), a cleric should be demoted from his rank. According to can. 7 clerics or monks who, once having joined the ranks of the clergy or have become monks and depart on military service or for secular office, are to be anathematized (verb). Can. 15: Deaconesses are not allowed to marry; if they do so, they and their spouses must be anathematized (verb). Can. 27: those who carry off girls under pretext of cohabitation, are to be anathematized (verb).

³⁵ ACO II 1, 2, p. 129,22; DH 300; DEC, Tanner, p. 86.

³⁶ ACO II 1, 2, p. 130,11.

³⁷ A. Grillmeier, Christ in Christian Tradition 2/2 (1995) 454.

³⁸ CCL 148A, can. 25, p. 193,505: ut non solum excommunis, sed etiam anathema moriatur et coelesti gladio feriatur. Vgl. Hefele, Conciliengeschichte III (1877), p. 27: can. 24 discerns anathema and excommunication (anathema is more serious, accompanied by reciting Ps 108).

³⁹ If somebody perseveres in contumacy after having been excommunicated, he (she) should be stricken with anathema. If again there is no conversion, he (she) should be given over to the secular arm. Cf. CathEncy 1 (1907) 456.

In the Western Church, a very solemn formula of anathema includes the Maranatha (its use in 1 Cor 16,22 was interpreted as an intensification of the anathema); someone is thereby excommunicated, abandoned to the judgement of God and even ejected from the Church until the coming of the Lord. But in this case too absolution was possible.

The CIC of 1917 no longer distinguishes between major and minor excommunication.⁴⁰

2.3. Anathema and ecclesial communion

"At an early date the Church adopted the word *anathema* to signify the exclusion of a sinner from the society of the faithful", according to Gignac.⁴¹ Unfortunately it is difficult to be more specific. The verb *excommunicare* appears the first time in a homily of Augustin⁴² and perhaps also at the Synod of Carthage (390), can. 8; the noun *excommunicatio* is found in the canonical collection of the 2nd council of Arles in the 2nd half of 5th century, in any case in the text of synods in Gaul in the 2nd half of 5th century. Up to this time the terminology is vague.

A connection between the anathema and ecclesial communion is explicitly made in the synodical letter (CPG 8560) of the Synod of Sardica (343): Arian bishops are divested of their rank, and even declared unworthy for communion with the faithful.

"For those who separate the Son from the essence (ousia) and Godhead of the Father and alienate the Logos from the Father, have to be separated from the catholic church and alienated from the name of Christians. Therefore let them be anathema also for us and all, because they have corrupted the word of truth. For it is apostolic command (cit. Gal 1,9). Therefore we recommend that nobody should have communion with them. For there is no communion between light and darkness (cf. 2 Cor 6,14). All these keep away from you, for there is no accord between Christ and Beliar (2 Cor 6,15)."⁴³

Such a connection between anathema and ecclesial communion is also established in the synodical letter (Epistula synodica) of the Synod of Gangra (about 340) when it declares that those who do not consent have "to be anathematized as heretics and excommunicated and separated from the church." But if they anathematize their evil words, they are received again. Therefore the synod has specified what they have to anathematize.⁴⁴

In conclusion: By the first half of the 4th century the connection between the anathema against a false doctrine and exclusion from the ecclesial community becomes explicit. Already at Nicea (325) and in its synodical letter to the Egyptians⁴⁵ there is a connection and this seems to serve as a model for the synodical letter of Sardica.

⁴⁰ W. Rees, *Die Strafgewalt der Kirche* (Berlin 1993) 208f. Excommunication is, according to the CIC/1917 (can. 2257,1), the temporary exclusion of a member of the church. The penalty does not touch on the duties of membership. - In the new Code the distinction between the excommunicated person to be avoided (vitandus) and the one to be tolerated (toleratus) is dropped; the excommunicated remains a (passive) member of the church (ibid. 385f). - On the historical distinction between major and minor excommunication see ibid. 130f.

⁴¹ J. N. Gignac, *Anathema*, in: *The Catholic Encyclopedia* 1 (1907) (455-457) 456: "At an early date the Church adopted the word *anathema* to signify the exclusion of a sinner from the society of the faithful; but the anathema was pronounced chiefly against heretics."

⁴² Sermo 165, 6, 8 und 7, 11: PL 38, 899. 900, so G. May, *Art. Bann IV*, in: *TRE* 5 (1980) (170-182) 170.

⁴³ Theodoret, *HE* II 8, 34-35: Parmentier, *GCS*, p. 112,1-10.

⁴⁴ Joannou, *Fonti* I 2, p. 89.

⁴⁵ DH 130: ἀναθεματισθῆναι τὴν ἀσεβῆ αὐτοῦ δοῦσαν ... all this anathematized the holy synod (ἀπαντα ἀναθεμάτισεν ἡ ἁγία σύνοδος).

3. Lifting of Anathema

3.1. Canonically

According to the new Code of Canon Law a heretic (or a schismatic) incurs automatic (latae sententiae) excommunication⁴⁶. Heresy means (in can. 751) "the obstinate post-baptismal denial of some truth which must be believed with divine and catholic faith, or it is likewise an obstinate doubt concerning the same."⁴⁷ Obstinate denial or obstinate doubt are thus important in this definition of heresy. The recent literature points out that the concept of heretic according to the new Code is applicable only for catholics, who had been in full communion with the Church, but gave up this communion through heresy.⁴⁸

Such an automatic penalty can be remitted by the ordinary⁴⁹ of the place where the offender lives (can. 1356, § 1).⁵⁰ Once the penalty has been declared, the ordinary who imposed or declared it can also remit it. In this case, the author of the precept has to be consulted before remission of the penalty (can. 1356, § 2).

Canon Law assumes that non-catholics are not in a state of excommunication. Thus, in case someone accepts the catholic faith, there is no remission of excommunication.

3.2. Historically

The possibility of absolution is demonstrated in the acts of a Roman synod from the year 495 containing the absolution of the papal legate Misenus, who went over to the Acacian schism (DH 348). According to the tractate "Ne forte" (DH 349), even in case of the gravest sin absolution is possible for those who recede from their sin. However, special problems arise if the anathema concerns doctrine or if those excommunicated are already deceased.

3.2.1. Example: Lifting of the Anathemas of 1054 on 7 December 1965

Karl Lehmann says,⁵¹ that "the lifting of the anathemas of 1054 seems to be the closest and most significant analogy to that which is aimed at in the procedure of 'working through' ('Aufarbeitung') the condemnations." And: "Besides, the event of 1965 is a guide for the future because it makes visible - beyond the condemnations - the wider ecclesial context and contains it already in some way."

3.2.1.1. The "anathema" of 1054

⁴⁶ Can. 1364, § 1: ... haereticus vel schismaticus in excommunicationem latae sententiae incurrit ...

⁴⁷ Can. 751: Dicitur haeresis, pertinax, post receptum baptismum, alicuius veritatis fide divina et catholica credendae denegatio, aut de eadem pertinax dubitatio.

⁴⁸ H. Heinemann, *Häresie IV. Kirchenrechtlich*, in: *LThK* 4 (1995) 1192. Also W. Rees, *Die Strafgewalt der Kirche* (Berlin 1993) 89-90, with reference to K. Mörsdorf and his interpretation, that there is a blockade (obex, CIC/1917, can. 87) in the legal status of non-catholics in the catholic Church.

⁴⁹ According to can. 134, § 1.2, by the title of ordinary in the law is understood, in addition to the Roman Pontiff, diocesan bishops or vicars general or episcopal vicars.

⁵⁰ An automatic censure of excommunication which has not been declared can be remitted in urgent situations by any confessor, cf. can. 1357. See R. Seibert, *Das kirchliche Strafrecht. Kommentar zu den Kanones 1311-1399 des Codex Iuris Canonici* (Frankfurt 1992) 134-142.

⁵¹ *Lehrverurteilungen - Kirchentrennung II*, 48.

What happened in 1054? In the Bull⁵², laid down at the altar of the Hagia Sophia in Constantinople by Cardinal Humbert da Silva Candida on 16th July 1054 in the presence of the emperor, it is written: Anathema Maran Atha (thus the solemn anathema), against the Patriarch Michael and his companions⁵³. After that on 24th July 1054⁵⁴, the edict of the Synod of Constantinople under the presidency of Patriarch Michael Kerullarios was issued. This edict anathematized the bull of the Roman legates, the legates themselves and their collaborators.

When one began thinking about lifting the anathemas several questions arose: Was the sentence against Michael Kerullarios valid at all (since the mandator, Pope Leo, was already dead as the bull was layed at the altar)? Or was the sentence void since its charges were so exaggerated? Was this excommunication directed against individuals (the patriarch and his companions) or against the church of Constantinople? Lifting the anathema would assume its validity, but since the death of Michael Kerullarios the excommunication legally no longer existed. What was in fact the procedure?

3.2.1.2. The events of 7th December 1965⁵⁵

A "Common Declaration"⁵⁶ of Pope Paul VI. and Patriarch Athenagoras was read (by Bishop Jan Willebrands) on December 7, 1965 in Rome in St. Peter in the presence of Pope Paul VI. and of the representative of the Patriarch Athenagoras. This was the last day before the end of Vatican II, which recessed a day later. The same declaration was read (by the secretary of the Holy Synod) in Istanbul in the Cathedral of the Phanar before Patriarch Athenagoras and a representative of Pope Paul VI.

The same day, Pope Paul VI. and Patriarch Athenagoras issued for their respective churches a "Breve" (Ambulate in dilectione) and a "Tomos" respectively. At the end of the session, the Breve (read by Cardinal Bea) was handed over to the representative of the Patriarch, Metropolitan Meliton of Heliopolis, by Pope Paul. In the Phanar, the residency of the Patriarch of Constantinople, in the Church of St. George, Patriarch Athenagoras handed over his "Tomos" to the representative of the Pope, Cardinal Shehan of Baltimore.

*The Tomos of the Patriarch*⁵⁷

The core of this document concerns the decision of the Patriarch together with his metropolitans in the Synod, "to remove from the memory and the midst of the church the mentioned anathema, which had been pronounced by Patriarch Michael Kerullarios in his Synod." By letter is declared, "that the anathema ... is removed from the memory and the midst of the Church henceforth" by the mercy of the Lord.

*The Breve of the Pope*⁵⁸

After emphasizing the charity and unity, the document deplores the chilly relations preceding the events of 1054. After a historical report the Pope declares before the bishops of Vatican II: "We are afflicted by the words and deeds which cannot be approved. We wish to pull out from the memory of the Church the *sententia excommunicationis lata* and remove it, and we wish it to fall into oblivion".

The message of Metropolitan Meliton of Heliopolis⁵⁹ after the ceremony in St Peter (meeting with Pope Paul) underscored, that the anathema ("the symbol of schism") was lifted by a common declaration and a reciprocal ecclesiastic act. He stated, that the differences in doctrine, canon law and liturgy remain and that sacramental communion had not yet been restored. But a basic presupposition for the solution, namely fraternal love, was officially and ecclesiastically established between the two first sees of Occident and Orient.⁶⁰

3.2.2. Example: The Process "Condemnations of the Reformation Era - do they still divide?"

3.2.2.1. The Course of the Process

According to the German Episcopal Conference the history can be described as follows:⁶¹

After the first visit of Pope John Paul II to Germany in 1980, the *Joint Ecumenical Commission* (GÖK) of the German Episcopal Conference (DBK) and the Council of the Evangelical Church in Germany (EKD) was established. This Commission charged the "Ecumenical Study Group of Protestant and Catholic Theologians" (ÖAK) with the task of clarifying their mutual doctrinal condemnations. The Study Group worked from 1981-85 with the participation of a total of 50 theologians, and drew its conclusions primarily by examining three subject areas which were of central importance for the sixteenth-century controversies, namely justification, the sacraments and ministry. In 1986 the Study "The Condemnations of the Reformation Era: Do they still divide?" was published under the editorship of Karl Lehmann and Wolfhart Pannenberg.⁶²

The Study was submitted to the German Episcopal Conference and the Council of the Evangelical Church in Germany "asking them to give the document ... the greatest possible degree of church recognition."⁶³

The Joint Ecumenical Commission asked the leading bodies of the churches involved "to express in binding form that the sixteenth-century condemnations no longer apply to

⁵² The bull of excommunication of Humbert is found in: PL 143, 1002-1004.

⁵³ Cf. G. Dagron, in: *Geschichte des Christentums* 4 (1994), 357; H.-G. Beck, in: *Handbuch der Kirchengeschichte* III/1 (1967) 467-476.

⁵⁴ The excommunication by Michael Kerullarios: PG 120, 736-748, cf. the expression to be submitted to anathema (ἀναθέματι ὑπεβλήθησαν) (747A). He anathematizes those who blaspheme against the orthodox faith together with the metropolitans etc. Vgl. V. Grumel/J. Darrouzès, *Regestes* I (Paris 1989), n. 869, p. 366.

⁵⁵ See W. de Vries, *Das ökumenische Ereignis des 7. Dezembers 1965*, *StdZ* 177 (1966) 65-69; Herder-Korrespondenz 20 (1966) 49-51; H. Schaefer, *Anathema 1054-1965. Die west- und ostkirchlichen Bannflüche und ihre "Beseitigung"*, *Ökumenische Rundschau* 15 (1966) 176-189 (with German translation of the sources).

⁵⁶ Original French, AAS 58 (1966) 20-21; also Irén 38 (1965) 539-540.

⁵⁷ Original Greek; French: Irén 38 (1965) 542-543; German: *Tomos Agapis*, n. 129, p. 89-90.

⁵⁸ AAS 58 (1966) 40-41; franz.: Irén 38 (1965) 540-542.

⁵⁹ Irén 38 (1965) 543f (French). *Tomos Agapis*, n. 130 (German p. 91).

⁶⁰ The day was chosen in a meaningful way: feastday of St. Ambrose, teacher of the Church and father of both churches, but also predecessor of Pope Paul when he was bishop of Milan.

⁶¹ *Stellungnahme der Deutschen Bischofskonferenz zur Studie "Lehrverurteilungen - kirchentrennend?"* vom 21. Juni 1994. Cf. D. Sattler, *Neue Urteile zu den alten Lehrverurteilungen. Die evangelischen Kirchen in Deutschland und die Studie des Ökumenischen Arbeitskreises*, *Cath (M)* 49 (1995) 98-113, a survey of dates on p. 99f. H. Jorissen, *Kritische Erwägungen zur Stellungnahme der Deutschen Bischofskonferenz zur Studie "Lehrverurteilungen - kirchentrennend?"*, *Cath (M)* 48 (1994) 267-278.

⁶² Freiburg, Göttingen 1986. Engl. translation Minneapolis 1990.

⁶³ *Condemnations ...*, p. 177. German, p. 187.

today's partner, inasmuch as its doctrine is not determined by the error which the condemnation wished to avert."⁶⁴

Now, according to the chairman of the EKD Bishop Engelhardt, the Evangelical Churches have "deliberated on the document ... and confirmed with the high authority of their Synods, that none of the dogmatic condemnations pronounced in the sixteenth century on part of the Reformation still applies to the present doctrine of the Roman-Catholic Church, as it is assumed in the Study on the condemnations."⁶⁵

As for the Catholic Church, the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity submitted a voluminous report ("Gutachten") in 1992 which was included by the German Bishops in their "Comment" ("Stellungnahme", 4). This "Comment", dating from 21 June 1994, describes the Study on the Condemnations of the Reformation Era as "extremely positive" ("äußerst positiv", 22) and praises "the scientific thoroughness, seriousness in the intention and the depth of the spiritual impulse". They say that this Study opens up an entry for the understanding of each other which gives hope for broadening the consensus. The condemnations on both sides have the "significance of salutary warnings". The Bishops would welcome it, if the condemnations were no longer a burden for the present-day relationship between the churches and if their memory would fade into oblivion (22). Let me add, this is precisely the terminology which was used for the lifting of the anathemata of 1054.

The German Bishops say that it is an open question, "whether the remaining differences are still dividing the churches or can be considered as an expression of different theological schools." (23) The Bishops' Comment emphasizes also the "hierarchy of truths" (decree on ecumenism of Vatican II, UR 11: *hierarchia veritatum*): one has to consider whether common understandings or differences are related to the origin and center of the faith or whether they are related to truths peripherally connected with it.

Today's hope is, that after the positive votes of the Pontifical Council and of the DBK - according to a formulation of Bishop Engelhardt - "a corresponding statement with highest possible binding degree from the Roman-Catholic Church" will be made⁶⁶.

3.2.2.2. Some remarks on the methodology

The Study on Condemnations was aware of the methodological problems⁶⁷ of dealing with a multiplicity of highly differentiated judgments. They regretted the lack of "a comprehensive hermeneutic" (p. 9). Nevertheless, they tell us that the following leading questions proved useful (p. 8):

1. Against whom is a given doctrinal condemnation directed?
2. Was this condemnatory pronouncement a correct rendering of the target position?
3. Does it still apply to the position adopted by today's partner?
4. If it does, what importance and what significance does the remaining difference have?

Another point to be mentioned is that representatives of both communities refer to the fact that doctrinal condemnations cannot be lifted. Above we already said that the DBK described the condemnations as "salutary warnings" not to depart from the common

⁶⁴ Schlußbericht, p. 195; English: Final Report, p. 186.

⁶⁵ During the Ecumenical meeting on 22 June 1996 with the Pope in Paderborn, see *Materialdienst des Konfessionskundlichen Instituts Bensheim* 46 (1996) 84.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ For this see esp. Preface and Introduction.

basis of the creed. Insofar the condemnations are deeply rooted in the Bible and in the center of the faith, they are still valid.⁶⁸

On the other hand, we could see that historically anathemas of Synods have not been restricted to dogmatic contents⁶⁹, at least not of this kind which must be believed "with divine and catholic faith" (*fide divina et catholica*), as it is required for the existence of a heresy in can. 750 of the new Code. Therefore it has to be found out, carefully, what is the meaning of the condemnation (see the leading questions), and, whether it relates to the center of faith (considering also the "hierarchy of truths").

To conclude, I would like to cite Aloys Grillmeier and his study on "Heresy and Truth".⁷⁰ After having quoted Cyril (in his letter to Eulogius) "there is no obligation to shun and reject everything heretics say - they affirm many of the points we too affirm"⁷¹, he comments:

"There were heresies and it is possible that today there are still some. But by a loveless and anxious polemic a heresy can be created and this has not much to do with historical truth" (242). "To give up clichés and even formulas does not mean a betrayal of the faith and of the truth ... if we are conscious that God's mysteries can never be grasped and articulated in an adequate way by us" (244). But there is an intuition of truth.

Also Fransen gave similar statements⁷²: "We have to be careful, to read the texts of the Council of Trent with our mentality and our theology which has much more nuances and is more developed. We have to give to the words and especially 'dogma', 'fides', 'haeresis' etc. the vague ('confus') and complex meaning which they had in the theological context of their time."

Appendix

ανάθεμα

Rom 9,3:

ἠγχομην γὰρ ἀνάθεμα εἶναι αὐτὸς ἐγὼ ἀπὸ τοῦ Χριστοῦ ὑπὲρ τῶν ἀδελφῶν μου τῶν συγγενῶν μου κατὰ σάρκα

For I could wish that I myself were accursed and separated from Christ for the sake of my brothers, my kin according to the flesh.

1 Cor 12,3:

ὅτι οὐδεὶς ἐν πνεύματι θεοῦ λαλῶν λέγει, Ἀνάθεμα Ἰησοῦς, ...

Therefore, I tell you that nobody speaking by spirit of God says, "Jesus be accursed."

⁶⁸ The Study Group (ÖAK) itself entered into the ecclesiastical comments: ed. by W. Pannenberg/ Th. Schneider, *Lehrverurteilungen - kirchentrennend? IV. Antworten auf kirchliche Stellungnahmen* (Göttingen 1994), here p. 21: "Als Warnungen vor derartigen Gefahren eines sich selbst auf ruinöse Weise mißverstehenden und dadurch sich selber verderbenden Glaubens bleiben die Lehrverurteilungen, soweit sie der Sache nach biblisch begründet sind, auch heute noch in Kraft, wie die Studie ausdrücklich hervorhebt." The DBK says in a similar way: "Die beiderseits ausgesprochenen Verwerfungen behalten dabei 'die Bedeutung von heilsamen Warnungen', die gemeinsame Bekenntnisbasis nicht zu verlassen."

⁶⁹ For instance Gangra, can. 18: Fasting on Sunday etc.

⁷⁰ A. Grillmeier, *Häresie und Wahrheit. Eine häresiologische Studie als Beitrag zu einem ökumenischen Problem heute*, in: *ders., Mit ihm und in ihm* (1978) 219-244.

⁷¹ Cyrill. AL., Ep. 44 to Eulogius: ACO I 1, 4, p. 35; Wickham, *Select Letters*, p. 63.

⁷² P. F. Fransen, *Réflexions sur l'anathème au Concile de Trente* (Bologne, 10-24 septembre 1547), *ETHL* 29 (1973) (657-672) here: 672.

1 Cor 16,22:

εἴ τις οὐ φιλεῖ τὸν κύριον, ἔτω ἀνάθεμα. Μαρινα θα.

If anyone does not love the Lord, let him be accursed. Marana tha.

Gal 1,8:

... καὶ ἐάν ἡμεῖς ἢ ἄγγελος ἐξ οὐρανοῦ εὐαγγελίζηται παρ' ὃ εὐηγγελισάμεθα ὑμῖν, ἀνάθεμα ἔστω.

But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach <to you> a gospel other than the one that we preached to you, let that one be accursed!

Gal 1,9:

... εἴ τις ὑμᾶς εὐαγγελίζεται παρ' ὃ παρελάβετε, ἀνάθεμα ἔστω.

As we have said before, and now I say again, if anyone preaches to you a gospel other than the one that you received, let that one be accursed!

ἀναθεματίζω

Acts 23

12: ... οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι ἀνεθεμάτισαν ἑαυτοὺς λέγοντες μήτε φαγεῖν μήτε πιεῖν ἕως οὗ ἀποκτείνωσιν τὸν Παῦλον.

... the Jews made a plot and bound themselves by oath not to eat or drink until they had killed Paul.

14: ... εἴπαں, Ἀναθέματι ἀνεθεματίσαμεν ἑαυτοὺς μηδενὸς γεύσασθαι ἕως οὗ ἀποκτείνωμεν τὸν Παῦλον.

... We have bound ourselves by a solemn oath to taste nothing until we have killed Paul.

21: ... οἵτινες ἀνεθεμάτισαν ἑαυτοὺς μήτε φαγεῖν μήτε πιεῖν ἕως οὗ ἀνέλωσιν αὐτόν

... they have bound themselves by oath not to eat or drink until they have killed him.

Mk 14,71:

ὁ (scl. Petrus) δὲ ἤρξατο ἀναθεματίζειν καὶ ὀμνύειν ὅτι Οὐκ οἶδα τὸν ἄνθρωπον τοῦτον ὃν λέγετε.

He began to curse and to swear...

RSV: He began to invoke a curse on himself and to swear

Ecumenical Prayer

CHURCHES OF THE SYRIAC TRADITION

PRO ORIENTE ECUMENICAL FOUNDATION

OUR LADY OF LEBANON CHURCH

HILLSIDE, ILLINOIS

CHICAGO, 8 - 11 JULY 1997

INTRODUCTORY RITES

1. Musical Prelude

2. Procession of Dignitaries

Lay theologians

Clergy of other churches

Bishops and/or their representatives

The Patriarch of the church of the East

3. Welcome

Fr. Victor Kayrooz, Pastor of Our Lady of Lebanon

4. Invocation of the Holy Trinity (in Syriac)

All stand

<i>Patriarch:</i>	In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit
<i>Assembly:</i>	Amen
<i>Patriarch:</i>	Glory to God in the Highest, on earth peace to men of good will.
	Our Father
<i>Assembly:</i>	who art in heaven
<i>MC:</i>	Let us pray
<i>Patriarch:</i>	We offer thanksgiving to your Godhead, O my Lord,
<i>Assembly:</i>	Amen.

All are seated

LITURGY OF THE WORD

5. Psalm or Sacred Hymnody

The Maronite Catholic Choir

6. Prayer before the Reading of Scripture

Mar Matar: Blessed Lord,
You have caused the Holy Scriptures
To be written for our learning:
Help us to hear them

To read, mark, learn and inwardly digest them,
That encouraged and supported
By your holy Word,
We may embrace and ever hold fast
The joyful hope of everlasting life
Which you have given us in our Savior Jesus Christ,
Who is Lord forever and ever.

Assembly: Amen.

7. Gospel Acclamation

All stand

Fr. Kayrooz: Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia
Assembly: Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia
Fr. Kayrooz: I give you a new commandment
Love one another as I have loved you.
Assembly: Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia

8. Gospel Reading, John 13, 31-35

Mar Gregorius

Jesus said, "Now the Son of Man has been glorified, and God has been glorified in him. If God has been glorified in him, God will also glorify him in himself and will glorify him at once. Little children, I am with you only a little longer. You will look for me; and as I said to the Jews so now I say to you, 'Where I am going, you cannot come.' I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."

All are seated

9. Homily

Mar Powathil

10. Litany

Co-celebrant: In peace let us pray to the Lord.
Assembly: Lord, have mercy
Co-celebrant: For the peace from above, and for the salvation of our souls, let us pray to the Lord.
Assembly: Lord, have mercy
Co-celebrant: For the peace of the whole world; for the good estate of the Holy Churches of God, and for the union of all men, let us pray to the Lord.
Assembly: Lord, have mercy
Co-celebrant: For this holy House, for those who with faith, reverence, and fear of God enter therein, let us pray to the Lord.
Assembly: Lord, have mercy
Co-celebrant: For all Patriarchs, Archbishops, Bishops, for the venerable Priesthood, the Diaconate in Christ, for all the clergy and the people of the Syriac Tradition that Christ may bestow upon us the gift of full unity, let us pray to the Lord.
Assembly: Lord, have mercy
Co-celebrant: For the unity of all the churches, let us pray to the Lord.
Assembly: Lord, have mercy
Co-celebrant: For the rulers of the nations of the world, and all civil authorities everywhere, let us pray to the Lord.
Assembly: Lord, have mercy
Co-celebrant: For this city, and for every city and land and for the faithful who dwell therein, let us pray to the Lord.
Assembly: Lord, have mercy
Co-celebrant: For healthful seasons, for the abundance of the fruits of the earth, and for peaceful times, let us pray to the Lord.
Assembly: Lord, have mercy
Co-celebrant: For the sick and the suffering; for captives and their release, for the hungry and their nourishment, let us pray to the Lord.
Assembly: Lord, have mercy
Co-celebrant: For our deliverance from all tribulation, wrath, danger, and necessity, let us pray to the Lord.
Assembly: Lord, have mercy
Co-celebrant: Help us; save us; have mercy upon us; and keep us, O God by Thy grace.
Assembly: Lord, have mercy
Co-celebrant: Having asked for the unity of the faith and communion of the Holy Spirit, let us commend ourselves and each other, and all our life unto Christ our God.
Assembly: To Thee, O Lord.

11. Prayer

Mar Yonane: Christ, whose insistent call disturbs our settled lives,
Give us discernment to hear Your word,
Grace to relinquish our tasks,

And courage to follow empty-handed
Wherever you may lead;
That the voice of your Gospel
May reach to the ends of the Earth.
For you are blessed with the Father and the Holy Spirit
One God forever and ever.

Assembly: Amen

12. Profession of Faith

All stand

Assembly: I believe in one God, the Father Almighty,
Maker of heaven and earth,
And of all things visible and invisible;
And in One Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God,
The Only-begotten, Begotten of the Father before all worlds,
Light of Light, Very God of Very God,
Begotten, not made; of one essence with the Father,
By whom all things were made:

Who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven,
And was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary,
And was made man;

And was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate,
And suffered and was buried;

And on the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures;
And ascended into Heaven,
And sits at the right hand of the Father;

And He shall come again with glory to judge the quick and the dead,
Whose kingdom shall have not end.

And I believe in The Holy Spirit, the Lord, and Give of Lifwe,
Who proceeds from the Father,
Who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified,
Who spoke by the Prophets;

And I believe in One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church.
I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sin.
I look for the Resurrection of the dead,
And the Life in the world to come: Amen

13. Introduction to the Lord's Prayer

Mar Aprem: Make us worthy, our Lord and our God, constantly and without blame
to stand before you, with a pure heart and open face and with that free-
dom of speech which is granted by you in your mercies, that we may
all equally call upon you, saying:

14. The Lord's Prayer

Our Father who art in heaven hallowed be Thy Name; Thy Kingdom come; Thy
will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily; and forgive
us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; Lead us not into
temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the Kingdom; and, the Power; and, the
Glory forever and ever: Amen

All are seated

CONCLUDING RITES

15. Announcements

Fr. Victor Kayrooz
All stand

16. Concluding Prayer (in Syriac)

Patriarch of the Church of the East

Glory be to You Jesus Christ our Conquering King, The Brightness of the Eternal
Father, begotten without beginning, before all times, and things which came into
being; we have no hope and expectation unless it be You, The Creator. By the
prayer of the just and elect who have been approved by You from the beginning, pardon
our sin and forgive our offenses, deliver us by Your Living Sign from all harm, hidden
and open, Christ the hope of our nature, now (+) and all times, and forever and ever:
Amen.

17. Dismissal

MC: Go in the peace of Christ

Assembly: thanks be to God

18. Procession of Dignitaries

19. Musical Postulate

JOINT COMMUNIQUÉ OF THE THIRD PRO ORIENTE NON-OFFICIAL SYRIAC CONSULTATION

In the last working session of the Third Syriac Consultation, organized by the Vienna based PRO ORIENTE Foundation, the participants agreed on the following:

The Third non-official Syriac Consultation on Dialogue within the Syriac tradition took place at the Center for Development in Ministry, at the University of St. Mary of the Lake, Mundelein, Illinois, USA, from July 8th to 11th, 1997, at the invitation of Mar Dinkha IV, Catholicos Patriarch of the Assyrian Church of the East, residing in Morton Grove, Illinois, and the late Joseph Cardinal Bernardin, Catholic Archbishop of Chicago.

For this Syriac Consultation PRO ORIENTE invited participants from the Oriental Catholic Churches (Chaldean, Syrian, Maronite, Malabar and Malankara), from the Oriental Orthodox Churches (Syrian Orthodox of Antioch and Malankara Orthodox of India) and the Assyrian Church of the East (old and new calendar), namely all who share a common spiritual and liturgical heritage in the Syriac language and traditions.

Observers were present from the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, the Coptic Orthodox Church, the Mar Thoma Syrian Church, the National Conference of Catholic Bishops of the USA, the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Chicago, the Catholic Near East Welfare Association, and the Faculty of Mundelein Seminary, along with expert scholars and the staff of PRO ORIENTE.

After a preliminary session in which the speakers discussed the mission of the PRO ORIENTE Foundation, the ecumenical activities of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Chicago, and the Illinois Conference of Churches, Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV and Archbishop Francis E. George OMI, of the Archdiocese of Chicago, formally opened the Third PRO ORIENTE Syriac Consultation with prayer. Archbishop George welcomed the participants to the University of St. Mary of the Lake and he reminded those present that "each culture can become a *locus theologicus*, a vessel of Christ's truth."

Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV, for his part, took this occasion to make the following announcements of great ecumenical importance:

1. At its meeting in Chicago, 23 June – 1 July, 1997, the Holy Synod of the Assyrian Church of the East made the decision to remove from their liturgical books the *anathemata* and all condemnations voiced against such figures as Patriarch Cyril of Alexandria and Patriarch Severus of Antioch.
2. The Holy Synod of the Assyrian Church of the East also decided, in concert with an earlier decision of the Holy Synod of the Chaldean Catholic Church, to inaugurate a bilateral program and agenda to bring about the full ecclesial union of the two churches. The agreement is scheduled to be signed by the two patriarchs on 15 August 1997 in Roselle, Ill., on the occasion of the joint consecration of the altar of Mart Maryam church by Patriarch Dinkha IV and Patriarch Raphael Bidawid.

Archbishop Francis E. George announced that he would ask the Latin parishes of the Archdiocese of Chicago to rejoice in prayer with these two Oriental Churches on August 15, 1997, on the occasion of the signing of the agreement by the two patriarchs.

The topics under discussion in the working sessions of the consultation were three:

1. "The Person and Teaching of Theodore of Mopsuestia, and the Relationship between him, his Teaching and the Church of the East with a Special Reference to the Three Chapters Controversy."
2. "The Person and Teaching of Nestorius of Constantinople with a Special Reference to his Condemnation at the Council of Ephesus."
3. "Studies on Anathemata and their Lifting in Relationship to the Question of Ecclesial Communion and Heresy."

1. Relying on the accomplishments of the First and Second Syriac Consultations, held in 1994 and 1996 in Vienna, particularly the clarification of the differing senses of the crucial terms: *physis*, *hypostasis*, *prosopon*, *kyânâ*, *qnômâ* and *parsôpâ* as they are used respectively in our several traditions, we have reviewed the person and works of Theodore of Mopsuestia. In the light of the modern recovery of more of his works than were available to earlier generations, and in the light of the universal esteem in which he was held in his lifetime, we all agree that it is time to re-evaluate the *anathema* imposed on Theodore's person and works at the second Council of Constantinople in 553 AD, one hundred and twenty-five years after Theodore's death. We recommend that our churches consider whether they could remove the *anathema* from their memories.

2. Similarly, in regard to the person and works of Nestorius, patriarch of Constantinople, we wish that a distinction should be made between the person of Nestorius, his faith and his pastoral concern on the one hand, and the heresy called "Nestorianism" on the other. Furthermore, we take notice of the fact that the Assyrian Church of the East had no part in the Christological controversies in which Nestorius was involved. Patriarch Nestorius is not the founder of the Church of the East, as is often assumed, nor one of its hierarchs, but he became one of their honored teachers.

3. Regarding the issue of the *anathemata* of the past, pronounced by synods and hierarchs in the context of the controversies that have divided our churches, we dedicate ourselves to the search for appropriate ways to lift them especially from liturgical texts, as an act of love and mutual respect.

With regard to the expressions *Theotokos* and *Christotokos*, we agree to respect the preferred usage of each community since we now realize that these terms can express the same apostolic faith.

We propose that our several churches undertake to rewrite our histories of the Christological controversies that have separated us, with a view to removing the language of invective used in the past against fathers and teachers whose views cannot be fully endorsed by all. Furthermore, we agree not to use polemical language in our descriptions of persons, institutions, and doctrinal formulae of our sister churches.

Since the three Syriac Consultations have covered some of the key doctrinal issues that separated our churches in the past, it is equally important now to turn to the large common ground that unites us. So we recommend to the PRO ORIENTE Foundation and to our churches that future consultations be devoted to further exploring the ecumenically positive aspects of the theological and historical experience that bind us together as sister churches. We propose the following as possible themes for future study:

1. Sacraments, sacramentality and sacramental theology especially starting with the three sacraments of initiation namely baptism, confirmation/myron and Eucharist;

2. Ecclesiology and especially the question of authority in its various expressions like synodal authority and primatial authority as practiced in the Syriac Churches in the past as well as today;
3. Mission in the churches of the Syriac tradition – its theology and practice in both historical and contemporary experience;
4. Spirituality – liturgical, monastic and popular: its sources, orientation and contemporary expressions in the churches of the Syriac tradition;
5. Common witness and service to the world.

Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV and the Syrian Orthodox metropolitans participating in the Consultation informed the members that during these days of our meetings Patriarch Dar Dinkha IV and Mor Ignatius Zakka I Iwas, Patriarch of Antioch and All the East, have confirmed by letter that they have agreed to appoint a bilateral commission to explore ways to bring about a rapprochement between their churches.

In the evenings the participants in the Syriac Consultation were invited to prayer and *agape* with the Assyrian Church of the East, and at St. John Syrian Orthodox Church, St. Ephrem Chaldean Church and Our Lady of Lebanon Maronite Church, all in the Chicago area. Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV was present on these occasions and he spoke warmly and encouragingly of the need to persist in the endeavor to bring about the union of the churches of Syriac tradition. Furthermore, Mar Dinkha IV encouraged the participating churches to work together in pastoral and other practical projects pending the removal of the barriers that still separate them.

All the participants are grateful for the grace-filled days and evenings during which they have been able to give glory to God together as they have dedicated themselves to promoting ecclesial unity among the churches of Syriac patristic and liturgical heritage. Our hope is that the new millennium will find our churches taking ever more concrete steps toward achieving that union in faith and love of one another for which our Lord, Jesus Christ prayed to his Father, "That they may be one as we are one." (Jn 17, 11)

APPEAL FOR A COMMON DATE OF EASTER

We, the participants at the Third non-official Syriac Consultation, held in Mundelein, Illinois, USA, from July 8th to 11th, 1997, representing all the Churches that share a common spiritual heritage in the Syriac language and traditions, namely the Assyrian Church of the East (old and new calendar), the Oriental Catholic Churches (Chaldean, Syrian, Maronite, Malabar and Malankara) and the Oriental Orthodox Churches (Syrian Orthodox of Antioch and Malankara Orthodox of India), greatly rejoice at the outcome of the World Council of Churches/Middle East Council of Churches Consultation held in Aleppo, Syria, March 5th to 10th, 1997, to study the possibility of fixing a common date for the celebration of Easter, starting from the year 2001.

The participation of so many different Christian traditions in the Consultation is a clear evidence of the importance all Churches attach to this matter. The agreement achieved, stipulating that the continuing application by the Churches of the principles for fixing the date of Easter adopted at the Council of Nicea (325) (the first Sunday following the first full moon after the March equinox), seems to be the best way to come to unity in this matter. We welcome and fully endorse the proposals made by this Consultation.

Our Churches experience the need for a common celebration of Easter with a special urgency, both in their historical homelands and in their migration communities scattered around the world. In their homelands, our churches live in the midst of large communities of believers of other faiths. The visible division manifesting itself in the separate celebrations of the central mystery of their Christian faith weakens their presence and the credibility of their witness. Similarly, in their migration communities around the world, the impossibility of celebrating the Resurrection of Christ on the same day with the Christian communities of their new countries contribute to their difficulties to integrate in their new surroundings and to live in social solidarity and Christian communion with their local brothers and sisters in Christ.

We therefore hope and pray that all Churches and ecumenical organizations will continue their tireless efforts for the realization of a common date of Easter for all Christians, starting from the year 2001. We entrust this concern in a very special way to the World Council of Churches and the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity.

In deep communion with our Churches and in full respect, we renew our personal commitment and our continuous prayer until the Lord bestows on us all the precious gift of a common Easter celebration as an important visible step towards the full communion of our Churches in faith, sacraments and witness.

Frans Bouwen

THE INITIATIVES OF PRO ORIENTE TOWARDS THE ASSYRIAN CHURCH OF THE EAST

In the Christological Declaration which they have signed together on 11 November 1994, H.H. Pope John Paul II. and H.H. Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV. thanked God for their "fraternal meeting" which they considered "inspired" by Him and which they consider as a "fundamental stage on the way towards the full communion which is to be restored between their two Churches". After having announced their common christological faith the two heads of Churches were recognizing that it is the Holy Spirit, who has given them "to understand better their divisions "... which for a major part are based on misunderstandings". The profound spiritual communion already existing between their Churches authorizes them already now in their eyes to "give witness together of the evangelical message" and to "collaborate in specific pastoral situations". And towards the end of their Common Declaration the Pope and the Patriarch commit themselves "to do everything possible in order to remove the last obstacles which still prevent the realization of the full communion" between their Churches.

Most of these elements are to be found in one form or another in the discourses exchanged on the occasion of the signing of this Common Declaration. Pope John Paul II, reminds that already ten years earlier at the occasion of his previous visit to Rome, Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV had expressed the wish to sign such a declaration.² He is stating that a fruitful dialogue "has allowed to overcome the contradictions and the misunderstandings of the past" and expresses his conviction that "this accord will open wide perspectives on the level of pastoral collaboration" Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV has put a special accent on the new hopes which are permitted from now on, hopes as well for the relations between the Churches as for humanity.

On one side he said: "Although our two ancient Churches meet some differences, we hope sincerely that the Declaration of Faith which we sign today will at the same time be a partial realization of the dreams of the past an important step towards the future cooperation and the developed ecumenical relations".

Further on he adds: "our work in view of the unity is a witness of Christian hope in a world where a lot of persons have almost lost hope." He underlines equally the necessity of common witness: "United we can give a stronger witness to the permanent mission of Christ: to make everything new by the Grace of God."

It is under these same perspectives that from now on all dialogue and all efforts of collaboration with the Assyrian Church of the Orient, especially from the part of the

Catholic institutions among which the Foundation PRO ORIENTE numbers, should be integrated with the goal to unite the forces and to avoid any loss or visible concurrence. After fifteen centuries of misunderstandings we unite in joy and in the action of grace in order that this Christological Consensus is able to disperse those misunderstandings which still remain and move on in the search of full communion, to promote pastoral collaboration and to have common witness as a goal: those are the great tasks before which all those find themselves who desire to work in the field of the development of the relations with the Assyrian Church.

Concretely in this line I invite you to see first a short outline of the relations that PRO ORIENTE has already had with this Church and secondly the ecumenical experience that PRO ORIENTE could contribute in the service of these relations and thirdly certain fields of actions which will be possible for PRO ORIENTE in the future.

1. Summary of the relations of PRO ORIENTE and the Assyrian Church of the East

The first contacts of PRO ORIENTE with the heads of the Assyrian Church go back to the date of 8 April 1982, when the then president Dr. Theodor Piffli-Perčević with professor Ernst Christoph Suttner and the secretary general Alfred Stirnemann paid visit to the Patriarch Mar Addai in Baghdad on their way to India. Cardinal Franciscus König accompanied by the president and the secretary general met Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV in Moscow on the eleventh of June 1988 at the occasion of the celebrations of the millenary of the baptism of the Rus'.³

The five Non-official Consultations between theologians of the Catholic Church and the Oriental Orthodox Churches which were held in Vienna between 1971 and 1988 and which came to a christological agreement in the first meeting already were not treating directly the Assyrian Church. The theology of Nestorius and the Nestorianism are only mentioned indirectly as an erroneous extreme tendency which is to be rejected as well as the opposite extreme tendency which is Eutychianism. The notions are then not yet analyzed in a critical way but are just taken as an abstraction in the sense they had acquired traditionally: By rejecting the two opposite extremes they tried to concentrate on the christological accord they had in view.

It was at the first regional symposium which had in view to make better known in the local Churches the results of the five Non-official Consultations that the eventuality of a dialogue with the Assyrian Church had been discussed for the first time in an explicit way. This symposium took place at the monastery of Amba Bishoy in Wadi Natrun in Egypt in October 1991. One the second day under the chairmanship of the Coptic metropolitan Amba Bishoy a prolonged exchange was going on, about the opportunity for PRO ORIENTE to engage in a dialogue with the Assyrian Church of the Orient. According to the minutes of this discussion the Syrian-Orthodox Metropolitan of Aleppo Mar Gregorios Ibrahim wished above all a practical solution in order to make this Church - especially in the Middle East- accepted by the others and in order to reestablish concrete relations with her.

¹ The first lecture of this 75th Ecumenical Symposium has been published in the 2nd Volume of the Syriac Dialogue. Vienna 1996.

² About the genesis of that declaration see *Un pas décisif sur le chemin de la communion*. Reflexion of R.P. Dubasque about the common christological declaration between the Roman Catholic and the Assyrian Church of the East. In: Osservatore Romano, French edition, no 5 (31st January, 1995)

³ See A. Stirnemann. *The Vienna Dialogue between Catholic and Non-Chalcedonian Theologians and its Treatment of Nestorius and Nestorianism*. In: Syriac Dialogue No 1. Vienna 1994, pp.27-33 – See also: Wort und Wahrheit. Supplementary Issue No 5, Vienna 1989, p.204, and: R. Kirchschläger/A. Stirnemann. (Eds.) *Ein Laboratorium für die Einheit. 25 Jahre PRO ORIENTE 1989*. Innsbruck-Wien 1991, p.385

Others were pleading for a new way of understanding Nestorius. Father Elie Hachem a Maronite suggested for the first time the creation by PRO ORIENTE of a special commission composed of theologians belonging to different Churches of the Syriac tradition in the large (wide) sense. According to him an initial dialogue with the Assyrians within this tradition could greatly help to clarify the positions. According to the opinion of Amba Bishoy it would be better to let the dialogue go on in which the Middle East Council of Churches had engaged the Assyrian Church in view of the entering of this Church in the Council; in his opinion a parallel approach by PRO ORIENTE would only complicate the situation. The Coptic Orthodox Patriarch His Holiness Shenouda III. indicated that he would not be opposed to a dialogue with the Assyrians after the conclusion of the efforts of the Middle East Council of Churches.⁴ The subject was taken up again in the final session where everybody seemed to agree that PRO ORIENTE will not include the Assyrians within the consultations between the Catholic and Oriental Orthodox theologians, for this would only complicate the dialogue as well as the reception of its results. But the Catholic Church and every Catholic group just as PRO ORIENTE would evidently stay free to engage a separate dialogue with the Assyrian Church.⁵ As a consequence in the final report and the suggestions of the symposium it says among others: "A study of the faith of the Assyrian Church of the East and its rejections of the Council of Ephesus (431) is not considered as having to be an object of the bilateral or multilateral dialogue in the near future, but this question remains open for a reexamination later on."⁶

The same question came up in a discussion in the Second Study Seminar of PRO ORIENTE on "Councils and Conciliarity" in Vienna in June 1992, without however bringing up new elements.⁷

At the Second Regional Symposium, which was held in Kottayam, Kerala, India in October 1993 an Assyrian bishop Mar Aprem of Trichur of the jurisdiction of Mar Adai, as well as the Assyrian priests and lay people of India took part. In the minutes it is to be noted that Mar Aprem expressed his support for the Christological Formula of the Consultations of PRO ORIENTE and deplored the position of Nestorius in the Communiqués. After the final report he presented the main suggestions which were already made in Wadi Natrun: "The Christology of the Persian Church should be studied in the dialogue be engaged between theologians of all the Churches of Syriac tradition. "The beautiful success of this Second Regional Symposium has revealed with more clarity and force the new possibilities that such a "Syriac" dialogue could open.

This is briefly the experience which has led PRO ORIENTE to organize in Vienna in June 1994 the First Consultation uniting the theologians of all the Churches of Syriac tradition and bringing on "Orthodoxy and the Catholicity of the Syriac Tradition with a

⁴ The Vienna Dialogue Booklet No 3: Middle East Regional Symposium, Deir Amba Bishoy, October 1991, Vienna 1993, p.98.

⁵ The Vienna Dialogue, Booklet No 3, p.151.

⁶ The Vienna Dialogue. Booklet No 3, p.154; R KIRCHSCHLÄGER, A.STIRNEMANN (Ed.), Chazeldon und die Folgen. Festschrift zum 60. Geburtstag von Bischof Mesrob K.Krikorian, PRO ORIENTE Band XIV, Innsbruck-Wien, Tyrolia-Verlag 1992, p.472.

⁷ The Vienna Dialogue, Booklet No 5. On Councils and Conciliarity. Second Study Seminar-June 1992, Vienna 1993, p.53.

Special Attention to the Theology of the Church of the East in the Sasanian Empire". This was a complete new and ambitious initiative. The studies presented and discussion were of high scientific value and have developed in a spirit of fraternal comprehension and have turned out to be very fruitful. Three themes have been taken up:

The Christology of the Assyrian Church of the East, the history of this Church and of its extension throughout Asia and the eucharistic Anaphoras utilized by her. In a common communiqué the participants expressed their will to continue their search for reconciliation and for unity through prayer, study and dialogue. If this consultation has not published a common christological text, this is less due to lack of accord between the participating theologians but out of respect for the oriental traditions which were not represented and with whom it was essential to maintain good relations of dialogue. With the goal to continue this effort of comprehension the participants agreed to form a "follow up commission", comprising one representative of each ecclesial tradition. The goal of this Commission would be to organize consultations, symposia, publications etc. and to elaborate the most appropriate methods of work. The organisation of a tri-lateral dialogue between the Eastern Oriental Churches, the Oriental Orthodox Churches and the Assyrian Church on questions of common interest was decided as well, and the first subject treated should be Christology. Finally the final communiqué recommends that the members of the Assyrian Church should be invited to future regional symposia of PRO ORIENTE with the Oriental Orthodox Churches, as a means to promote a contact and the collaboration with this Church.

In a letter of September 6th 1994 addressed to the president of PRO ORIENTE the Assyrian Patriarch Catholicos Mar Dinkha IV accepted favorably this invitation and delegated Mar Bawai Soro, secretary of the new ecumenical commission of the Assyrian Church in order to participate in the Regional Symposium which was held in Kaslik in Lebanon in September 1994. At this same occasion a "follow-up" commission proposed by the Syriac Consultation of Vienna held its first constituting session. The working methods were elaborated and the first time-table of activities established. The official name of this new commission is "Non-official PRO ORIENTE Commission for the Dialogue within the Syriac Tradition" or shortly "Syriac Commission".

Given the final goal of formulation of an agreement with the Assyrian Church it is hoped that all the Oriental Orthodox Churches could be associated at a final date. This Syriac Commission will begin its second meeting here in Vienna tomorrow and a major part of its members are already present here among us this evening.

2. The Ecumenical Experience of PRO ORIENTE

Before studying more detailed the best ways of working towards the deepening of links with the Assyrian Church of the East - particularly the possible contribution of PRO ORIENTE in that task - it is useful to think over the ecumenical experience which PRO ORIENTE has acquired during its thirty years of activities. Which are the elements of this experience to be preserved and to be made valid in the first place? It is the whole radiation of PRO ORIENTE which should be taken into consideration here, but it is the experience of the Non-official Consultations with the Oriental Orthodox Churches, with their dynamic they had brought about which are important to be looked at closely, because of some similarities of the problematic and of the context.

In the first place there is the principle of the meetings of non-official character. This procedure had already been adopted by the first consultations of 1964 to 1971, between Orthodox Chalcedonian and Non Chalcedonian theologians. The five Vienna Consultations between Catholic and Oriental Orthodox theologians 1971 - 1988 have fully applied this method. The participants were not officially delegated by their Churches, but were chosen personally as for their competence as theologians and for their deep insertion in the tradition of their Church.

Thus a greater liberty of expression and movement were possible without diminishing in no way the sense of responsibility of everyone towards his Church. The positive results of the Vienna Consultations have proved the fertility of this method. Therefore everything indicates that this method should also be applied to serve the approaching with the Assyrian Church, even if in the meantime a mixed official commission for the theological dialogue has been brought on its way between the Catholic Church and the Assyrian Church.

The methodology in the theological approach is an other instruction to be preserved from the Vienna Consultations. Different elements are playing an important role here. It is impossible to analyse them all in detail here. Let us restrict ourselves on some of the most characteristic aspects.⁸

Firstly it is primordial to begin by basing any approach and any eventual agreement on the same apostolic faith, such as it expresses itself in the Holy Scriptures and is affirmed in the Niceno-Constantinopolitan Creed. The First Vienna Consultation there joins directly the three first ecumenical councils of Nicea (325), of Constantinople (381) and of Ephesus (431). The Assyrian Church would have some difficulties with this last council but accepts fully the act of union of 433 between Cyril of Alexandria and John of Antioch. The Christological Formula of Vienna equally appeals to liturgical texts, concretely to the Coptic Liturgy of Saint Basil. The *lex orandi, lex credendi* forms an integral part of those common bases on which is important to rely incessantly.

Secondly it is the feeling and respect for the inexhaustible and inexpressible mystery of Christ which constantly reappear in the texts of the Vienna Consultations and open the way for a wider liberty and for a certain diversity in the theological formulation. The first Consultation affirms in a short and effective (penetrating) form: "In our common faith in our only Lord Jesus Christ, we consider his mystery as inexhaustible and inefable for the human spirit never fully comprehensible nor expressible." The Second Consultation (1973) draws from that the following fundamental conclusion:

"We acknowledge that any formula we could find is in need of an ultimate interpretation. We have seen that what seems to be the right formula can be misunderstood as well as behind an apparently false formulation there can be right understanding." Consequently following the Fifth Consultation (1988), "in the frame of the limits of condemned errors (...) a certain plurality of expressions can be admitted concerning the hypostatic union inseparable and without confusion of the human and the divine in the unique Lord Jesus Christ". This vision has already been explicitly taken up in the final com-

⁸ Facing the impossibility to give all exact references of all citations of the Vienna Consultations, we call back once for all times the "The Vienna Dialogue. Booklet No 1: Five PRO ORIENTE Consultations with Oriental Orthodoxy. Communiqués and Common Declarations, Vienna 1990; cf. our study: The christological consensus between the Catholic Church and the Oriental Orthodox Churches, in: "Proche Orient Chrétien" 43, 1993, pp.324-353.

muniqué of the consultation of PRO ORIENTE of June 1994, on the theology of the Assyrian Church, and should inspire all future initiatives in this field.

Thirdly the importance, to overcome the controversial formulae of the past which have led to the impasse and to division, has to be recalled. Many misunderstandings and differences have grown from the fact that the Churches have lived through diverging developments and have become strange to one another. It is together that they are called to overcome the isolation and the mutual ignorance and the best way to do it are common testimony and service. The Forth Vienna Consultation (1978) says it in its way: "To overcome the differences and to find an accord and a mutual understanding, new manners of thinking and fresh categories of reflection and of vision seem to be requested, in the way that the sister-Churches can assume together their common responsibility towards the Lord and accomplish their common mission to the enlightening of the present situation and for the benefit of future generations." Do not those lines join to what Pope John Paul II and Mar Dinkha IV say in their Common Declaration on the subject of possibilities to "render testimony together of the evangelic message" and to "collaborate in specific pastoral situations", particularly in the field of catechesis?

This theological approach could be applied to other questions than History only, as the non-official dialogue with the Oriental Orthodox Churches has already done, for instance concerning the authority and the acknowledgement of the councils, conciliarity and primacy in general, the anathemata which have been pronounced against certain persons and the way to lift them, etc. In all those fields PRO ORIENTE has already acquired an undeniable experience which could be very useful when it is in question to work out a program for study and for action to revitalize and to reinforce the links of communion between the Assyrian Church and the others. Equally, the practical methods of working already proved, as the creation of a permanent committee, the organisation of consultations on a special subject, of symposia for popularisation, could equally be taken into view, up to the extent they are ready to serve that cause effectively.

3. Possible Field of Activities for PRO ORIENTE

Being rich in ecumenical experience - theological as well as practical - which contribution can the Foundation PRO ORIENTE exactly hope to offer in the approaching with the Assyrian Church of the Orient?

At that point we must underline first that an entirely new fact has come up since the Syriac Consultation on Theology of the Church of the Orient, in June of last year, and since the creation of the "Syriac Commission" last September.

That is evidently the Common Christological Declaration, signed by Pope John Paul II and Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV, on 11th of last November. This puts all projects, up to that event, into a quite new light. The collaborators of PRO ORIENTE deeply rejoice in the fact that the christological agreement, the possibility of which had already been foreseen in the Syriac Consultation of last June, was officially accepted and proclaimed by the Catholic and Assyrian Church. This is a new starting point a new perspective which can be assumed under the acting of grace. From now on all efforts viewing a full communion between these two Churches have to be inspired by that Common Declaration, to evade any useless dispersion. In fact, this Common Declaration draws some main lines which can guide PRO ORIENTE to do really the work of the Church. The question is about the theological work which still remains to be done, the

possibilities of common witness and of pastoral collaboration and the needs of a lived solidarity.

The theological work is not finished with the Common Christological Declaration even if it constitutes "a fundamental etape on the way to full communion". Quite contrarily, the Declaration marks explicitly that there remains still work to be done: "To be full and complete, the communion requires unanimity concerning the content of the faith, the sacraments and the constitution of the Church. Till the present time not having reached that unanimity towards which we must progrede before all, we can unfortunately not yet celebrate the Eucharist together, which is the sign of the ecclesial communion already achieved." At the same time the Pope and the Patriarch strive to do everything possible to "remove the last obstacles which still prevent the realization of the full communion" between their Churches. It is exactly with this goal that they decide to create a mixed commission for the theological dialogue between the Catholic and the Assyrian Church.

That commission is being constituted and will hopefully begin to work soon. PRO ORIENTE should follow its works very closely to see how to get the best coordination. Would it convene to study the same themes by trying to associate a bigger number of theologians with the goal of deepening the research and to procure a wider resonance for it. Or would it be preferable to undertake parallel studies in coordination with the mixed Commission? How could such a coordination be obtained? Those are undoubtedly some of the first questions which the new "Syriac Commission" will have to study in these days. Just as the official theological dialogue of the Roman Catholic Church with some of the Oriental Orthodox Churches has not made the work of PRO ORIENTE in this field superfluous, the same there is place for other initiatives with the Assyrian Church after the Common Christological Declaration. Particularly the sacraments and the ecclesiology want supplementary studies. This work will be less visible less sensational, and will be without doubt take place in the field of deepening and of reception in the local Churches.

The pastoral collaboration is another possible field of activity. After the Common Declaration, such a collaboration is based on "the profound spiritual communion in the faith and in the mutual confidence which already exist between our Churches" which allows that "the particular Catholic Churches and the particular Assyrian Churches can acknowledge each other as sister Churches". This pastoral collaboration is particularly desired in the fields of catechese and spiritual and theological education of the future priests. It is important to notice that for the moment the Assyrian Church does not dispose of any theological seminary, and finds itself before an immense task in the preparation of persons and books for the catechese. Should not PRO ORIENTE seriously study how to make its experience and its means profitable in the field of granting scholarships or academic exchange of persons competent in the education on all levels? Would it not be possible to build up a network of interest and support right to the level of the base?

It is allowed to hope that this pastoral collaboration will soon reach a deeper level, in the frame of a pastoral agreement similarly to the one concluded between Pope John Paul II and the Syrian-orthodox Patriarch Mar Zakka I Iwas, during the visit of the latter to Rome in 1984.⁹

⁹ The Vienna Dialogue. Booklet Nr. 1, 117-119; Proche Orient Chrétien 34, 1984, pp. 101-106

In this agreement it was officially allowed that the faithful of one of the two Churches can appeal to a priest of the other Church for the sacraments of Penitence, Eucharist and Extreme Unction in absence of a priest of their own Church. Such a cooperation would be very precious for the Assyrian Church in its situation of wide diaspora in which it lives throughout the world, as well as for Catholics and Assyrians in difficult situations of remoteness and of tension in certain regions of the Middle East. It seems that among the reasons which have not permitted to sign such an accord up to now there are to be subsumed the questions which left in certain Catholic circles-the absence of the words of institution of the Eucharist in the Anaphora of Addai and Mari, in use in the Assyrian Church. This point has already been studied in the Syriac Consultation of PRO ORIENTE of June 1994, which concludes that we are there in presence of an authentic anaphora of the primitive Church, which constitutes a valid liturgy of consecration, even in the context of Catholic theology. To finish the formulation of that conclusion, to find a wider support for it and to make it known to the authorities concerned all that could be another contribution of PRO ORIENTE:

In his address to the Assyrian delegation, Pope John Paul II insists most intensely on the duty of solidarity "to accept with dignity and to help with efficiency all those who have been uprooted from their land and pushed into emigration", caused by hard afflictions they had undergone. He reminds "the long night of suffering passed by the Eastern Syriac communities, which have been dispersed, persecuted and massacred for the name of Christ in the course of centuries." Mar Dinkha IV speaks of "learning from each other in a confident dialogue and to work together to become instruments of the full presence of God's love in this world." This is a field in which PRO ORIENTE has not until now developed special activity, there might be, however, a concrete field for practicing dialogue and charity. PRO ORIENTE could think about what concrete expressions it would be suitable to give to that solidarity, to make it a form of common testimony of the Gospel, which is wished by the Pope and the Patriarch.

In this same line the Pope promised to help breaking the isolation in which the Assyrian Church has been led to live in, by adding: "A Church which has such a past of heroism in loyalty to faith cannot remain marginalized in the Christian world and particularly among the Churches of the Middle East." The Assyrian Church has waited more than ten years to be admitted in the bosom of the Middle East Council of Churches without much progress, notwithstanding a specially engaged dialogue to that aim. The common Declaration of the Pope and the Patriarch has already had considerable echoes on that plane, as it could be noticed after the announcement of this accord in the General Assembly of that Council by Cardinal Cassidy, some days after the signature. The fact that the precise formulation of the Common Declaration had taken into consideration the preceding christological declarations with the Coptic Orthodox Church (1973) the Syrian Orthodox (1984) and Malankara Orthodox (1990) has contributed a lot. The reference to the fundamental objections of Cyril of Alexandria against Nestorius has also proved to be fruitful, as well as the explicit mentioning of "Mother of God" and of "Mother of Christ our God and Savior" of which both acknowledge "the legitimate and exactness." All of a sudden the doors of the Middle East Council of Churches seemed to open widely.

On the spot even the Coptic Orthodox delegates proposed a theological dialogue to the Assyrian bishops. The first meetings have meanwhile taken place and it even seems

that a first project of common Christological declaration between the Coptic Orthodox and the Assyrian Church is being actually submitted for approbation to the authorities of both Churches. Other dialogues with the other Oriental Orthodox Churches will follow without doubt in the near future. These are developments which have not been foreseeable almost one year ago.

It is in this new context, in full evolution that future initiatives of PRO ORIENTE concerning the Assyrian Church should be placed. Due to its stock of relations with most of the Oriental Churches, PRO ORIENTE can hope to offer a special contribution in the field of coordination and acceptance. From the moment however when an official dialogue has been established on the level of the responsibilities of these Churches any personal initiative becomes more delicate and should attentively take into consideration the ecclesial context. On the other hand there will undoubtedly remain certain areas where the nonofficial initiative offers more chances to produce fruits. The "Syriac Commission" will have as its task to explore these possibilities but constantly in tight link with the official dialogue. If the Foundation PRO ORIENTE can in this way make its long ecumenical experience profitable as well for the theological approach as for the practical organisation, it will have its role to play, a role which then would be appreciated by all Churches.

Permit me to close by citing two more phrases of the speech of Patriarch Mar Din-kha IV on the occasion of the signing of the Common Christological Declaration: "May this new understanding between both our venerable Churches strengthen the base of unity which is already set with other Christian Churches and may it guide us still further on the way of the restoration of the apostolic communion which once existed between the apostles and their Churches during the first generations of Christians. May God the Father grant us wisdom, spirit of charity and courage in our march forward, forcing us to fulfil his will such as he has revealed it in and by His Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord."

Sebastian Brock

SYRIAC DIALOGUE – SECOND CONSULTATION SUMMARIES OF THE PAPERS

F. Bouwen. Summary of the Christological Debate in the Five Vienna Consultations in the Light of its Applicability to the Dialogue with the Assyrian Church of the East. (= pp. 29-38)

This paper reflects on the elaboration and reception of the Christological consensus in the framework of the five Vienna Consultations, under the following eight headings.

1. Interrelatedness between Official and non-Official Dialogues

The non-official status of the Consultations allowed for greater freedom of expression and initiative, but at the same time did not diminish the commitment of the participants either to their own Churches, or to the cause of unity. This double aspect contributed to the reception of the Christological consensus in the Churches, both at the level of the Church authorities (witness the common statements signed by the Bishop of Rome and the Heads of different Oriental Orthodox Churches, and the official theological commissions that have been set up), and at the level of the faithful.

A special merit of the new Syriac Dialogue is that it is multilateral, in contrast to the various official dialogues, which are bilateral; it can thus provide a wider perspective, and (as far as the Syriac tradition is concerned) can help avoid a certain lack of co-ordination that is apt to occur between different bilateral dialogues, and will be especially helpful when dialogues between the Assyrian Church and Oriental Orthodox and Eastern Orthodox Churches are set up. The Syriac Dialogue can thus provide a helpful complementarity with bilateral dialogues.

2. A New Awareness of Communion

The communiqués of all five Vienna Consultations underlined the importance of the fraternal atmosphere of the meetings. The growth of mutual acceptance and trust, and the putting aside of all prejudices of the past, is a particularly important consequence of the Consultations and of the many other contacts between the Churches at various levels over the last twenty or so years. This has led to a new awareness of an already existing, albeit imperfect, communion. An essential requirement for the reciprocal process of the re-discovery of this communion, and its recovery, is an openness and willingness to look at each other with new eyes and to listen with new ears.

3. Common Foundations of Faith

Mutual trust is essential in order to appreciate what we already have in common, and to re-evaluate more justly the importance or the non-importance of what still separates us. Thus, whereas for the Vienna Consultations the Council of Ephesus (431) provided a point

of consensus, for any dialogue with the Assyrian Church this raises serious problems that require a clearer understanding of what is meant by the Christological teachings of this Council, and whether these are to be considered as inseparable from the Formula of Union in 433 (in which case they could perhaps be acceptable to the Assyrian Church).

The explicit reference to liturgy in the Vienna Christological Formula is of great importance, in that it widens the common foundation of faith in accordance with the principle *Lex orandi, lex credendi*. Since the liturgy constitutes an authentic expression of the living faith of the ecclesial community, and is the means by which the faith is preserved and kept alive both in the community and in the individual, it is excellent that the first Syriac Dialogue already paid attention to this aspect and embarked on a study of the Assyrian liturgy (in particular, the absence of the institution narrative from the Anaphora of Addai and Mari). Welcome too, in this context, is the presence of the theme "East Syrian Liturgy as an expression of Christology" in the present Second Consultation.

In the framework of the Syriac Dialogue a further significant element can be added to the common foundations of faith, namely the witness of the martyrs in the different Syriac Churches who constitute a common heritage and source of pride for all the Churches.

4. A Sense of Respect for the Mystery

In approaching the question of Christology it is essential to retain the awareness that we are in the presence of a mystery. This aspect rightly received mention in the Vienna Consultations, and the fifth Consultation specifically recognizes the legitimacy of "a certain plurality of expressions" in describing the union of the human and the divine in the one Lord Jesus Christ, seeing that this is a mystery that can never be fully or adequately expressed.

5. A New Methodology

Already in the first Vienna Consultation it was recognized that the traditional technical terms, such as *physis* and *hypostasis*, had given rise to endless misunderstandings owing to the different ways in which they were understood. This led to a recognition that "every formula that we can devise needs further interpretation", and the realization that "what appears to be the right formulation can be wrongly understood" and that "behind an apparently wrong formulation there can be a right understanding". In the light of this, a new common language needs to be found, one that is accessible to both sides and that reflects as much as possible ancient tradition. Here the apophatic character of the four carefully balanced negative attributes, "without commixtion, without confusion, without division, without separation", proved a godsend for the Vienna Consultations, and should equally be used in dialogue with the Assyrian Church.

The Vienna Consultations had sought to arrive at a narrower circumscription of the truth by specifying the "condemned errors of Arianism, Nestorianism and Eutychianism".

In the light of the First Syriac Dialogue it became abundantly clear that much ambiguity surrounds the term "Nestorianism", and that great uncertainty surrounds the actual teaching of Nestorius (as opposed to what his enemies supposed it to be) - quite apart from the question of how his teaching might be related to that of the Assyrian Church. Thus in dialogue with the Assyrian Church, if it is thought helpful to condemn specific errors, these

will need to be expressed in a different way, avoiding the nicknames of the past.

By contrast, an example of what can be seen as being within the limits of commonly rejected extremes is provided by the Common Declaration between Pope John Paul II and Mar Dinkha IV, which recognizes the legitimacy of both Theotokos and Christokos as titles given to the Virgin Mary.

6. A Renewed Faithfulness to our Traditions

Any Christological consensus that is expressed in a new or unfamiliar way must at the same time be explained as being faithful to the great Tradition. An eloquent example of how to meet this pastoral need was provided by a talk by Pope Shenouda III in 1991: by using the language familiar to the faithful of the Coptic Orthodox Church, he showed at different points how Catholic theology was in agreement with it, thus removing any suspicion on the part of the faithful that something of their faith had been sacrificed in the Christological agreement. Thus, the problem of the conflict over terminology in the traditional formulations cannot just be set aside: the resolution of this problem lies in the gaining a proper understanding of how these differences in terminology came about.

7. In a Soteriological Perspective

Dialogue on Christology is not just an academic exercise, and the soteriological aspect always needs to be kept in mind. As the Second Vienna Consultation put it, "While the meaning behind the ancient terminology remains valid, this terminology is hardly relevant for an adequate solution of these problems. There is urgent need to interpret in contemporary terms how the Son of God becoming one with us in the Incarnation affects the life of man today". A sense of urgency and pastoral responsibility should be an inseparable dimension of all our dialogue.

8. Common Witness and Service

The Common Declaration of Pope John Paul II and Mar Dinkha IV stated that, despite the Christological divergence of the past, their desire is to witness together to their same "faith in the Son of God who became man so that we might become children of God by grace". The Syriac Dialogue, embracing all the Syriac Churches, with their different experiences and traditions, offers a unique opportunity to carry this task further, and to fulfil this responsibility of witness in the contemporary world.

Metropolitan Mar Aprem. Summary of the Christological Debate in the Five Vienna Consultations. (= pp.38-43)

This paper summarized the conclusions of the five Vienna Consultations. Problematic from the perspective of the Assyrian Church of the East are the following points.

In the communiqué of the first Consultation, it is unclear what precisely 'the dogmatic decision and teachings' of the Council of Ephesus implies, since there were in fact two rival councils, the disagreement between John of Antioch and Cyril of Alexandria being patched

up by the concordat of 433. In the same communiqué it is no clear what is meant by the 'Nestorian position' which is rejected: if this simply means the teaching of two Sons, then the Assyrian Church would join in with this condemnation, but it does not consider it necessary to condemn the position of Nestorius, when this is rightly understood.

In the Second Consultation 'Nestorianism' is again condemned, without defining what it meant by this ambiguous term. In this communiqué the phrase 'our common father in Christ' is applied to Cyril of Alexandria. In the present Syriac Consultation, if we attempt to project 'our common father in Christ', it should be anybody other than Cyril of Alexandria or Nestorius of Constantinople. The mutual anathemata of both Cyril and of Nestorius should be omitted by those Churches which at present recite these anathemata.

No special points in the remaining communiqués raise problems for the Assyrian Church. In the context of the present Consultation it is important to remember that the Assyrian Church of the East was not directly involved in the controversies of 431-433; Nestorius is only one of the three Greek doctors of this Syriac-speaking Church, and it is important to remember that Nestorius was the spokesman of the Antiochian school and bishop of Constantinople, and had nothing to do with the Church of the East which was in the Persian Empire.

Mar Gregorius Yohanna Ibrahim. Comments to and Reception of the Common Christological Declaration between Pope John Paul II and Mar Dinkha IV. (= pp.46-55)

This paper looks at the Common Declaration from the point of view of the Syrian Orthodox Church, which has traditionally regarded both the Chalcedonian dyophysite position and that of the Church of the East as 'Nestorian'.

The experience, as a student in Rome in the 1980s, of hearing a sermon in Santa Maria Maggiore on the Mother of God which took the form of an exposition of the Council of Ephesus and its condemnation of Nestorius, had indicated how closely the title Theotokos is still felt, in the Roman Catholic Church, to be linked with the Third Ecumenical Council. The Syrian Orthodox Church likewise very much associates the title with this Council and the condemnation of Nestorius.

In all the Churches traditional catechetical curricular and teaching in seminaries and theological schools has, over the years, highlighted points of disagreement, and the initiative to approach disunity with a new vision came from the decisions of the Second Vatican Council. In this connection PRO ORIENTE has played a distinctive role in promoting non-official dialogue between the Oriental Orthodox and the Catholic Churches, leading to the realization that the divisions over the Council of Chalcedon "arose from the basic inability of men at that time to believe that the same truth may be expressed in different words which may even be apparently contradictory" (W. de Vries, First Consultation). Dialogue based on deep rooted confidence and mutual respect serves as an impetus that encourages theologians and hierarchs to be aware of the necessity of searching for the positive points that call for a unity of faith, instead of separation and schisms.

Today the old atmosphere of suspicion and antagonism is changing, as can be seen from the meeting in 1988 between H.H. Zakka I Iwas and H.H. Mar Dinkha IV, which served as a beginning of a bilateral dialogue whose aim is to work for the revival of these two Churches' mutual heritage. Thus the faithful of the Syrian Orthodox Church of Antioch

rejoiced at the Common Declaration issued in Rome by H.H. John Paul II and H.H. Mar Dinkha IV in 1994.

Though the addresses of the Pope and the Patriarch that accompanied the Common Declaration elucidated some of the theological points underlying the Common Declaration, these public documents do not make any clear reference to the past differences between the two Churches, and Council of Ephesus is simply mentioned as a source of misunderstanding. It is in areas such as this that the Syrian Orthodox Church would like to see clarification, since the acceptance of the Three Ecumenical Councils and the rejection of Nestorianism (along with Arianism and Eutychianism) has been the basis, at the Vienna Consultations and elsewhere, for any confessional affirmation between the Oriental Orthodox and Roman Catholic Churches. Apart from the absence of any renunciation of Nestorianism, the section of the Common Declaration on the common faith in the person of Jesus Christ is not different in its essence from the affirmations stated in other common declarations, and so the Syrian Orthodox Church of Antioch does not see any obstacles standing in the way of accepting a Common Declaration such as this.

The second obstacle between the Syrian Orthodox Church and the Church of the East is the term 'Theotokos': until the Reformation in the 16th century, the Church of the East was the only Church to reject this term. In a modern context, the opposition to excessive Mariology demonstrated at the Second Vatican Council indicates that even in the Roman Catholic Church some at least are beginning to see the dangers of the title 'Theotokos'. Therefore the position explained by Nestorius and consistently maintained by the Church of the East deserves the appreciation of Christians. On this point the Common Declaration has given a new but (from the Syrian Orthodox position) ambiguous interpretation.

In conclusion, the main points in the Common Declaration that arise for the Syrian Orthodox Church are: (1) the absence of any mention of Nestorius or his doctrine, which was the basis of the dispute. What implications does the Common Declaration have for the Church of the East's future attitude to Nestorius: will that Church abandon him as one of their Orthodox teachers; or will Nestorius' writings be studied anew in the dialogue with the Catholic Church to see whether his doctrine was Nestorian in the heretical sense as understood by the Church, or orthodox as understood by other fathers; and if the latter, has the Church of the East ever thought of requesting that his name be lifted from among those anathematized by the other Churches, thus restoring recognition of him like all other patriarchs and bishops who had been accused of heresy by others? (2) Will the Church of the East revise its attitude towards the Council of Ephesus. (3) Will the Church of the East, in the light of what is stated in the Common Declaration, consider it enough to speak of Mary as the "Mother of Christ our Lord¹ and Saviour", or will she, like all other Churches, use the expression "Mother of God"?

Bishop Paul Matar. Commentary on the Joint Christological Declaration of the Catholic Church and the Assyrian Church of the East - Its Reception by Catholics. (= pp.55-62)

It is important to realize that the historic Christological Declaration of 11 November 1994 had been ten years in the making, through meetings and joint consultations between

¹ Sic; the text actually has "God", as is correctly cited on p.153

representatives of the two Churches. Moreover, it was an act of Providence that H.H. Mar Dinkha IV had attended at Rome the Holy Mass of the inauguration of Pope John Paul II's ministry, on 22 October 1978. It was likewise providential that the Pope was inspired to consider ecumenical engagement as one of the pastoral priorities of his pontificate.²

In his address on the day of the Common Declaration the Pope touched on three major lines of thought: (1) the Council of Ephesus with its consequences, past and present; (2) collaboration between the two Churches in the pastoral and catechetical fields; and (3) future relations between the two Churches: each has to develop its own rich heritage since "it is by no means against unity that within it there should be diversity of manners and customs". On the last point the Pope specifically states that "This diversity allows freedom for our Churches to rule themselves according to their own disciplines and to keep certain differences in their theological formulations which, as we have just verified, are often to be considered as complementary rather than as opposed to each other".

In his *Ut Unum Sint* the Pope has provided guidelines for an active and dynamic reception of Common Declarations such as the present one, and he stresses the necessity of always bearing in mind "the distinction between the deposit of faith and the way in which it is expressed".

On the dogmatic problem surrounding the Council of Ephesus historical research and theological study can help clarify some of the ambiguities; thus it is important to make a distinction between the doctrinal gains made at Ephesus, with its positive teaching about Christ, true God and true man, whose "divinity and humanity are united in the person of the same and only Son of God and Lord", and the errors rejected by this Council, the interpretation of whose precise identity is not clear: was Nestorius really a 'Nestorian' in the sense that that term has traditionally been understood? This is clearly not the understanding of Nestorius in the Assyrian Church.

In viewing the past controversies it is important to pay attention to the historical circumstances in the background, and the fact that the Assyrian Church then lived in the Persian Empire, for which the Roman Empire, where Christianity was the official religion, was the traditional enemy. What is remarkable is that, despite the practical consequences of this hostility between the two empires, so much remains in common in the Churches that belonged to each empire: this can dramatically be seen in some of the links between the Maronite liturgical tradition and that of the Church of the East.

The key doctrinal passage of the Common Declaration is that which states: "The same Word of God, engendered by the Father before all ages, without beginning according to his divinity, was in recent times born of a mother, without a father, in his humanity. The humanity to which the blessed Virgin Mary gave birth has always been that of the Son of God himself. This is why the Assyrian Church of the East prays to the Virgin Mary as the mother of Christ our God and Saviour...". In this text there is no difficulty in recognising the very teaching proclaimed at the Council of Ephesus.

The Common Declaration also stressed the theological and ecclesiological problems still pending. One of these concerns the sacraments, among which the Assyrian Church does not specifically include Holy Matrimony and the Anointing of the Sick. This raises

² *Ut Unum Sint*, no. 99

practical problems especially in the case of marriages of Catholics which are sometimes dissolved by admission into the Assyrian Church with the consequent possibility of legitimising their divorce.

The Common Declaration recognises that unanimity about the content of faith, about the sacraments, and about the constitution of the Church, are all matters on which further progress is required before full ecclesiastical communion can be restored. This, however, does not preclude the possibility of making a common witness to the Gospels, and of co-operation in specific pastoral situations, "most particularly in the fields of catechising and of the formation of priests".

For this co-operation to take effect, there is above all a necessity for attitudes to change at every level and in a way concerning all categories of people who are members of the two Churches. Within the Catholic party, the Chaldean Church obviously needs to be most directly involved, and representatives of the Assyrian Church and of the Chaldean Church have already affirmed the unity of their peoples and proposed that their Churches, once unified, should be called one day the Assyro-Chaldean Church. The collaboration of these two Churches is of vital importance, not least because the Chaldean Church is the natural bridge between the Assyrian Church and the Catholic world as whole.

An important reaction to the Christological Agreement was registered in the Middle East, where it is likely that this hastened the admission of the Assyrian Church into the Middle East Council of Churches, where it became a member of the Catholic family, precisely because this Church's dialogue with the Catholic Church had made greater progress than with the Churches of the other three component families of Churches in the MECC.

In both Europe and America the Common Declaration was given an enthusiastic welcome in the Catholic press, and practical consequences can be seen there and elsewhere too in, for example, the welcoming of Assyrian students into Catholic theological faculties, and Assyrian children into Catholic schools. Furthermore, Joint Commission of the two Churches has met in Rome once again (15-16 November 1995), making progress in its study of the theology of the Eucharist, and further meetings are planned.

Two other objects of concern exist for the respective hierarchies of the two Churches. The Assyrians are involved in the effort to restore unity within their own ranks, while on the Catholic side, the hierarchy must urge the faithful, both clergy and laity, to reach a better understanding of their Assyrian brethren.

Improvement in ecumenical relationships achieved during in the last decades of the current millennium can serve as a source of inspiration for discerning what sort of juridical form that future unity might take. The Pope's affirmation, in his address accompanying the Common Declaration, that diversity of manners and of customs is in no way contrary to unity, means that the Church, one, holy, catholic and apostolic, is to be found in the particular Churches known to human history and geography. It also means that the various Churches enrich one another. But in order that all may live together in all this richness of the faith, the Churches must meet and advance together for the realisation of the Kingdom of Christ; furthermore, the historic divisions of the past should be the subject of deep reflection and of a common spirit of penitence involving the whole Christian Church.

In the course of non-official Vienna Consultations it has turned out that the first great schism to rend the Church following the Council of Ephesus has been the last to become the object of fraternal dialogue. In this connection, the Catholic acceptance of the Joint Declaration in Rome is to be seen as an act of faith in God's action in order to re-establish, wi-

thin their diversity, communion and unity between all the Churches. Up to now the Ecumenical Movement has devoted itself to obtaining recognition of the legitimacy of the multiplicity of Churches, with their particular traditions and forms of theological expression. The Ecumenical Movement now needs to consider what are the requirements of Church unity, seeing that the unity of the Christian Churches must be something clearly visible for the world, if they are to bear true witness to the world.

Mar Bawai Soro, Reception of the Common Christological Declaration (CCD) in the Assyrian Church of the East - an Occasion for Christian Joy and Cultural Vitality. (= pp.63-70)

Needless to say, there had been careful preparations within the Assyrian Church of the East prior to the Declaration for its reception and for its implementation. The Synod of the Church, held in Sydney in July 1994, had given its canonical sanction for the signing of the accord, and a Commission on International Church Relations and Educational Development (CIRED) was established, one of whose primary duties was to introduce the CCD and facilitate its reception among the faithful of the Church of the East.

Within the world-wide Assyrian community reactions to the CCD and its contents fall into four dominant patterns:

(1) The religiously moderate pattern: these are people with a strong sense of spirituality and trust in their Church leaders; consequently they were open to considering the CCD without prejudice. Their response has been extremely positive, and they have been supportive of the accord from the beginning.

(2) The religiously conservative pattern: these too are people who trust their Church leaders, but their understanding of history of the past relations between the Catholic and Assyrian Church has caused them to fear that the CCD only represents a new "facade" which the Catholic Church has put on, in no way different from past attempts at deceit, aimed ultimately at absorbing the Assyrians into Catholicism. Their response has ranged from silence to vocal opposition. Though their number is not great, their impact, especially before the signing of the accord, was serious, and has affected others.

(3) The nationalistic pattern: these people viewed the CCD as a giant leap forward in promoting the cause of the Assyrian Church, and thus, indirectly, that of the Assyrian nation. The Assyrian nationalists' on-going support for ecumenism and church unity is consistent with the logic of their nationalism, which includes an emphasis on solidarity between the Assyrian, Chaldean, and Syrian (Orthodox and Catholic) Churches.

(4) The silent reflective pattern: these people, for a number of reasons, have chosen not to express their views. It seems likely that, if they were made fully aware of the theological and sociological implications of the CCD, they would probably join the majority of their fellow Assyrians in welcoming the results of the agreement, or at least would react one way or another to it.

The strategy employed by the Assyrian Church in facilitating the reception of the CCD among these four patterns has been one of candidness and straightforwardness. CIRED was mandated by the Patriarchate to publish in various languages the full texts, accompanied by commentaries, using graphic, audio and video media. These productions have been distributed to Assyrian Church communities and sent to Assyrian secular orga-

nisations and publications all over the world.

As the process of reception went ahead, officials in the Church of the East became increasingly aware of three factors: (1) differences of opinion that have been current over a long period of time require a period of time for reconciliation to be achieved; (2) had the financial resources been available, the work of CIRED could have been made significantly easier; (3) where local clergy had spent the time and effort in explaining and elaborating on the CCD to the faithful in their churches, the results were immediate and obvious, in that their faithful became committed supporters of the CCD. Ecumenical commitment on the part of local clergy would seem to be the most important of these three factors.

A year after the accord, it has become clear that, with the exception of a few localities with particular problems, the general attitude of the faithful of the Assyrian Church has been encouraging, with reactions ranging from mere acceptance to positive enthusiasm. Four factors have helped in bringing about this generally positive response: (1) the high reputation in which H.H. Mar Dinkha IV and the members of the Holy Synod are held by the clergy and faithful of the Church of the East; (2) the charitable compassion and heartfelt commitment of the Catholic Church manifested in the numerous Papal discourses surrounding the occasion of the Patriarchal visit to the Vatican and the signing of the accord; (3) the feeling that there was a new atmosphere of understanding around and that here was a possibility of getting rid of the age-old misunderstanding and misrepresentation, by other Churches, of the theological tradition of the Church of the East; (4) the practical benefits of the CCD that have already been felt, within a year after the signing of the CCD, notably the acceptance of the Church of the East into the Catholic Family of the Middle East Council of Churches.

The response to the CCD from the Assyrian Church in Iraq has been generally unlike the response elsewhere. In certain parts of Iraq it was indeed received warmly, in particular because it helped to ameliorate relations between the Assyrians and the Chaldeans in Iraq as they struggled to persevere in the midst of the political and economic hardships of the present time. On the other hand, other individuals of the "religious conservative pattern", gave voice to criticisms. This negative reaction was due in large part to historical memory: firstly, of past Catholic aggrandizement at the expense of the Church of the East (especially in India); and secondly, of the role of the Catholic Church in the sixteenth-century split in the Church of the East that gave rise to a separate Chaldean Catholic hierarchy. As a result of both these historical memories an ingrained suspicion of all actions of the Catholic Church has built up, so that the disease of mistrust has taken hold and is in need of healing. It is regrettable that the seeds of a remedy, which are in fact provided in the CCD, have in these quarters so far been rejected. In this connection attention should be given to the gracious and vivid testimony given by Pope John Paul II to the suffering of the Assyrian people and the trials born by the Church of the East for the sake of the faith in Christ, with his promise that the Holy See will employ the means at its disposal, through contacts with Governments and International Organizations, to lessen, and if possible, bring an end to, the sufferings of the Assyrian Church in the Middle East.

In contrast to the relations between the Orthodox Churches and their Oriental Catholic counterparts in recent years, there exists a sense of growing fraternity and solidarity between the Assyrian and Chaldean Churches, both in the Middle East and in the Diaspora. Out of several different motivating forces behind this, two might be emphasized here: a sense of their unique cultural and spiritual affinities, and the increasing awareness that their

chances for social, cultural and spiritual survival in the modern world depend on the strengths that each community can (and should) offer the other. Though this conviction has not yet fully settled in the consciousness at the popular level, it has been the focus of efforts on the part of a number of religious leaders and lay personalities in both Churches.

The CCD has led Assyrians and Chaldeans to reflect on the fact that the question of unanimity of faith - the lack of which has hitherto been a reason for continued misunderstanding and separation - has now been settled, giving a new impetus to the "logic of unity." At the same time it must be recognized that 450 years of separation between the two Churches has resulted in certain differing social dispositions and cultural patterns within the two communities, and these differences will also need to be satisfactorily overcome.

The signing of the CCD provides the Catholic Church and the Assyrian Church of the East with a historic opportunity, and the potential of the on-going dialogue between these two Churches has benefits for the entire Christian tradition, and the restoration of full ecclesial unity of one of the most ancient and venerable Christian traditions should be the joy of all believers in Christ.

Mar Severios, The Council of Ephesus: does it unite or divide? (= pp.73-81)

This paper deals with three topics as seen from the perspective of the Syrian Orthodox Church: The Council of Ephesus; the Mysteries of Incarnation and Redemption; the Syrian Orthodox and the ancient Eastern Church.

In the Syrian Orthodox liturgy the Council of Ephesus is commemorated in the Diptychs as one of the three Holy Councils, and at ordination the person being ordained has to declare publicly that he "believes in the faith of the three holy councils", and that he anathematizes the heretics whom these councils anathematized, including Nestorius. In the liturgy Cyril is particularly commemorated as being "the high tower who proved the manhood of God the Word, our Lord Jesus Christ was incarnate..".

The Syrian Orthodox Church regards the procedure of the Council of Ephesus as correct. In response to John of Antioch's report to the emperor Theodosius of his anti-Council, Theodosius wrote stating the abolishment of the first session in which Nestorius was isolated without interrogating him, but without abolishing the other decisions taken and the rest of the Council's work. The Council was regularly recognized in official documents of the later fifth and sixth century.

The most important issue dealt with by the Council of Ephesus was that of Nestorius' heresy. At its sixth session it confirmed the doctrinal statements of Nicaea and Constantinople. The Council supports the Fathers' teaching that Christ has one nature, one hypostasis, one person after the unity, and that Mary is the Mother of God.

St Paul, Mar Ephrem, Mar Jacob of Serugh, Mar Philoxenus of Mabbug, Mar Isaac of Antioch, and St Severus of Antioch all emphasize the mystery of the Incarnation and the fact that it is beyond human knowledge. Attempts to express this mystery led to two main contradictory doctrines being formulated: (1) the doctrine of those who see in the person of Jesus a man and a man only, son of Mary and Joseph, and God raised him to the rank of divinity because of his righteousness; and (2) the doctrine that Divine Entity appeared in the form of mankind, He being God from the beginning, who was begotten from Mary in the flesh. These two doctrines became the source of all other doctrines, leading to the

disruption of the one universal Church.

The Syrian Orthodox Church's teaching on the nature of the incarnation (which conforms to the second of these two positions) is set out in some detail, using its traditional phraseology and terms.³

In the light of the Council of Ephesus, and according to the mentality of past centuries, the Syrian Orthodox Church regards the Church of the East as "heretic"; today, however, a new way of thinking is needed, and the ancient Church of the East can be looked on in more positive eyes, in particular:

(1) The Syrian Orthodox Church and the Church of the East share a common language and cultural heritage.

(2) Appreciation is given to the statement of the leaders of the Church of the East that their doctrine is not linked to Nestorius and his teachings (as these are understood in the Syrian Orthodox tradition). Therefore a distinction should be made between Nestorius and the Church of the East.

(3) From a study of the liturgical rites of the Church of the East it seems that the Church is an orthodox one to a great extent, and the Syrian Orthodox can say that they live with it a life of faith through these common rites, a number of whose texts go back behind the divisions.

(4) In accordance with the directives of H.H. Mar Zakka I Iwas, the Syrian Orthodox Church accepts the baptism of the Church of the East.

Louis Sako. Does Ephesus Unite or Divide? (= pp.82-84)

The aim of convoking the council in Ephesus in 431 was to defend the faith and restore peace and unity, as the emperor's letter to the metropolitans gathered there declares. No new creed or doctrinal declaration was needed, in that the true faith had been sufficiently defined at Nicaea. The immediate reason for the Council was Nestorius' refusal of the title Theotokos for Mary. The background of the controversy lies to different approaches to Christology: the tendency of the school of Antioch (to which Nestorius belongs) was ascendant, from man to God, viewing Christ more from the standpoint of the Synoptic Gospels; by contrast the tendency of Alexandria as descendant: from God to man, following the approach of St John's Gospel. Each school had a different starting point, and both found support in Scripture. Today we realize both Christologies are legitimate and valuable, and it was unfortunate for Ephesus to oppose the mystico-allegorical interpretation of Alexandria to the rationalism and realism of Antioch, and to take the interpretation of Cyril only as true. Furthermore, the terms *physis*, *hypostasis* and *prosopon*, used by both schools, were not precise at that time, and each school understood them in a different sense. Another complicating factor lay in the rivalry between the metropolitan sees, which led to the Christological controversy being conducted in a spirit of acrimony and bitterness for which not just zeal for orthodoxy was responsible, but also personal and political rivalries and ambitions.

Ephesus does not divide from the theological point of view. There was no doctrinal formulation at the Council, and reconciliation between Alexandria and Antioch was made

³ see pp.78-80

in 433. Nestorius was excommunicated personally, but not the Church of Constantinople or of Antioch. The so-called Nestorian Church was not a direct result of the Ephesus controversy, and this Church is wrongly associated with the Council of Ephesus: this council is never mentioned in its synods, and the name of Nestorius only appears in the Synodicon for the first time in the assembly of bishops in 612.

The time has come for a wider vision of Christology, along the lines of what the Catholic and Assyrian Churches in their Common Christological Declaration. Each Church's own personality, history, liturgy and language should be respected and considered a part of the universal Church's heritage.

Elias Khalife-Hachem. Does Ephesus unite or divide? (= pp.85-90)

The statements of two recent Antiochene historians, the Syrian Orthodox Patriarch Mar Yacoub III, and Asad Rustam, show how the Council of Ephesus, although an ecumenical Council accepted by the Church, still gives rise to debate and disagreement among historians. According to Asad Rustam the Council failed to achieve unity in the Church because of Cyril's Twelve Anathemata, while Mar Yacoub considered the Formula of Union (433) to have been an unsatisfactory basis for agreement.

The Council witnessed a struggle between two different conceptions of the union in Christ. According to the one, Jesus Christ is a fully human being assumed by the Son of God, the Logos, from the moment of conception in Mary's womb, in the power of the Holy Spirit and for us and our salvation. This Antiochene view had been formed during the Arian controversy, and was specifically aimed to counter Arian polemic against the Nicene position. The second conception stresses the unity between the humanity and divinity in Christ and considers the Logos to be the one who was born of Mary and died for us and for our salvation in the body taken from her. This view is already seen in the writings of St Athanasius, but in the late fourth century the "unitive" and "distinctive" conceptions were able to exist side by side, both being accepted by St Athanasius as legitimate.

Like St Athanasius, St Cyril takes the Nicene formula as his criterion, but, unlike his predecessor, he introduced new terminology which he considered necessary in order to void the error of "dividing" the person of Christ (the heresy of Nestorius, according to Cyril). Far from clarifying matters for the Antiochenes, these new terms seemed to them Apollinarian in implication, and so this only fuelled the conflict.

In the letters between St Cyril and Nestorius we are before a conflict of two different interpretations of the Nicene Creed. For Nestorius, the Lord Jesus Christ is the true expression of the union between the Son of God and the Son of the Virgin, and so birth, suffering and death should be attributed to him, as being the person of unity. For St Cyril, however, there is a union of identity between the Son of God and the Son of Mary. Thus the Son of God is the principle of unity and action in the Lord Jesus Christ, and this enables him to say that the Son of God was born of the Virgin, suffered and died. Each misunderstood the other's position, seeing the other as saying something different from what they really meant.

The Antiochenes rejected the Council of Ephesus for both its procedures and its teachings. In fact the Council did not really become ecumenical except after an Antiochene formulation of the faith had been accepted by the whole Church, and it was on that basis that peace and unity were restored in 433. This formula was a compromise between Antio-

chene and Alexandrian theologies, and it should have been possible to reach such a formula of union in the discussion of the Council itself, had the procedures been more satisfactory. For the Antiochenes there was a double problem: Nestorius, who belonged to the Antiochene tradition, stood accused concerning the orthodoxy of his faith on a matter that was not of direct concern to the Antiochenes; and their arch-opponent Cyril was presiding.

The Church of Antioch, with its Syriac-speaking people, was the victim of the controversies surrounding the Council of Ephesus, and the divisiveness that had ensued was introduced into Edessa itself when its bishop Rabbula joined the ranks of Cyril, leading to a confrontation with Hibas, head of the Edessa School.

The Council of Ephesus failed to achieve unity because it one-sidedly defined the Nestorian heresy, and then accused Antiochene theology indiscriminately of being Nestorian in the sense defined and refuted by the Council. It thus created a confusion, which has lasted up to today, between the "distinctive" (i.e. Antiochene) and "divisive" (i.e. Nestorian, as understood at Ephesus) trend in the conception of the person of Christ. From a scholarly point of view, the Syrian Church of the East cannot be seen as 'Nestorian' in the manner that the Council of Ephesus defined and anathematized.

Mar Bawai Soro, Does Ephesus unite or divide? A Re-evaluation of the Council of Ephesus - an Assyrian Church of the East Perspective. (= pp.92-102)

This important and constructive paper considers ways in which the Council of Ephesus could be seen by the Assyrian Church of the East in a more positive light.

The Common Christological Declaration (CCD) of 11 November 1994 is of momentous importance since, in Pope John Paul's own words "(this) declaration ... will resolve the separation created by the Council of Ephesus in the year 431". It was clear that by this declaration the heads of the two Churches involved were actually bringing to an end one of Christianity's oldest Christological conflicts and thus effectively initiating a process whose ultimate aim is to heal a wound that has persisted for over 1,500 years in the Church. But, although from the point of view of the Catholic and Assyrian Churches the issue of the Council of Ephesus was dealt with and successfully resolved by the CCD, this is not the case as far as the Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox Churches are concerned; it is this aspect of the matter that the present paper has in mind.

The signing of the CCD led a number of Orthodox Churches to express a desire to reconsider their centuries-old position towards the Church of the East in a spirit of good will. This new spirit was reflected in the admission of the Church of the East to membership of the Middle East Council of Churches. The difficulties that the Orthodox Churches have with the theology of the Church of the East lie in two main areas: (1) its Christology was thought to contain 'heretical' elements because of its negative evaluation of the Council of Ephesus; and these 'heretical' elements were mainly the result of the Church's formula of "two natures and two qnome, in one parsopa", which had also found its way into liturgical texts; (2) the anathemata imposed on Cyril and Severus, and the veneration of Nestorius and Theodore.

In connection with the Church of the East's attitude to the Council of Ephesus is concerned, two initial points of importance need to be made. Firstly, the Church of the East did not take part in the discussions of any of the Ecumenical Councils of the Roman Empire,

since it was situated outside that Empire; secondly, the Church of the East has never been officially approached, either by the Catholic Church, or by any other Orthodox Church, to formally accept or to reject the Council of Ephesus.

The Church of the East's view of the Council of Ephesus is affected by her suspicion of Cyril's formula "one nature of God the Word incarnate" (which seemed to them to be Apollinarian), and the manner in which Cyril and the Council dealt with Nestorius. The theologians of the "Persian" Church of the East were heirs to a more Aristotelian approach, with emphasis on the historic and concrete; this led to their stress on the reality of Christ's historical "humanness", and to make a distinction on the formulaic level between the concrete substantial reality of Christ's divinity and that of his humanity. The motivation behind this formulation was largely derived from opposition to Apollinarianism. By contrast, the theological language of the Alexandrians was considerably influenced by Platonism, and this difference in philosophical approach and methodology led to clashes between the two approaches, and the growth of suspicion of the other on each side.

Much of Nestorius's zeal in his Christological debate with Cyril was aimed at warding off what he saw as a new form of Apollinarianism. This was in fact a wrong judgement, as was shown by the compromise between the Antiochene and Alexandrian positions in 433 and 451. But though Nestorius was wrong on this point, his trial at Ephesus has always been viewed by the Church of the East as unfair and illegal - an opinion shared in many ways by modern scholars. The unsatisfactory procedures of the Council meant that any resolution of the dispute had to await the Council of Chalcedon. As far as the personal status of Nestorius is concerned, the Church of the East would prefer to leave it up to God.

Though the Christological formula of Chalcedon proved generally acceptable to theologians of the Church of the East, the introduction of the term hypostasis, in its Alexandrian usage, was unsatisfactory, since the Syriac translation of hypostasis, qnoma, had a different sense in the Church of the East's usage (which in turn led to misunderstanding by the Alexandrians).

In the modern context theologians of the Church of the East have sought to clarify their traditional Christological formulations in order to dispel the misunderstanding of them by other Churches. This process might also enable the Church of the East to re-evaluate her stance towards Ephesus and fully receive Chalcedon. At the same time it is hoped that the Catholic and Orthodox Churches, too, would re-evaluate their judgement of the Church of the East. The signing of the CCD marked a first and most significant stage in such a process of re-evaluation. Ongoing dialogue in recent years in the Middle East provides a forum for further advances. A draft common agreement, between theologians of the Assyrian Church of the East and the Coptic Orthodox, was reached in January 1995, but awaits consideration and formal acceptance by synods of the two Churches. Topics under discussion in the dialogue were: (1) the mutual acceptance of the legitimacy of different emphases concerning the mystery of Christ in each Church, as a result of different historical and philosophical backgrounds; (2) clarification of the uses and meaning of the term qnoma in Christology and Trinitarian theology, to enable both Churches to avoid misunderstandings in the future; (3) the two Churches' respective understanding of the modality of the union of the divinity and humanity in Christ, their common ground being the confession of one Person of the Incarnate Word of God; (4) the titles Theotokos and Christotokos, and the recognition of the legitimacy of each of these terms; (5) the common rejection of any teaching implying "two Sons" and a duality of persons in Christ; (6) the status of future

relations between the two Churches.

In the course of meetings sponsored by the MECC the Church of the East has made a distinction between Cyril's Christology and the manner in which he confronted Nestorius: the former is accepted, but objection remains to the latter. In order to indicate clearly this positive evaluation of Cyril's thought, the ecclesial authorities of the Assyrian Church have decided on lifting the anathemata imposed on both Cyril and Severus, though the actual canonical proceedings await the convocation of the next Holy Synod of the Church of the East. Theologians of the Church of the East have also given careful consideration to the matter of Cyril's "twelve anathemata" against Nestorius. It is to be hoped that a new spirit of openness within all the Churches will enable them to rise above historical misunderstandings and past misjudgements, and lead to a positive re-evaluation of each other's positions.

When the draft statement of January 1995 is signed by the Coptic and Assyrian Patriarchs, it would be fair to say that considerable progress towards resolving formerly irreconcilable differences will have been made. Nevertheless, though this will remove many obstacles specifically created at Ephesus, there remains the unresolved issue of the mistrust, misunderstanding and personality conflict between Cyril and Nestorius. Here, even though the Church of the East is willing to acknowledge the incompleteness of Nestorius' Christological formulations, it should not be asked to abandon his memory as to revile his name. The Church of the East, for its part, does not ask anyone to revile the memory of Cyril.

Before answering the initial question "Does Ephesus unite or divide?" from the point of view of the Church of the East, three considerations should be kept in mind: (1) since every Christological statement articulated by an authoritative body is an attempt to explain the inexplicable mystery of the Incarnation, and since, at the same time, no single formula or series of statements, are ever able to capture in words the essence of the mystery of the Incarnation, the contents of Christological statements of the Council of Ephesus need to be respectfully considered as having validity among many other genuine expressions from both Eastern and Western traditions; (2) the Christological debate which led the emperor to convene the Council of Ephesus continued to persist with intensity for many years. A more definitive resolution of the problem was achieved in the Council of Chalcedon; accordingly, the theological contents of the Council of Ephesus need to be considered in the light of their subsequent refinement at Chalcedon, whose formula unequivocally affirms the objective reality of both the Divine and human natures, as well as the personal (hypostatic) oneness of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; (3) particular attention also needs to be paid to the Christological definitions and formulae which have been canonically sanctioned in the Church of the East, since these too can add to the spiritual enrichment and theological wealth of the Christian tradition as a whole.

In conclusion: if a distinction is established between Cyril's theological statements at Ephesus, and the manner in which he and the other bishops at Ephesus treated Nestorius, and if the question of accepting Ephesus is limited to the former only, then the Assyrians should view this as an opportunity for making progress toward ecumenical reconciliation and Church unity, for the Church of the East would indeed accept Ephesus and consider it as a council that unites the Church, the "Body of Christ".

[In the course of the long discussion of the preceeding four papers, Amba Bishop presented his view of Nestorius and the teachings of Cyril from a Coptic Orthodox perspective].

At the eighth session of the Fifth Council (2 June 553) the person and writings of Theodore, along with the anti-Cyrrillian writings of Theodoret and Ibas's Letter to Mari (the 'Three Chapters'), were condemned. By contrast, in the Synods of the Persian Church Theodore 'the Interpreter' was singled out as an authoritative teacher by Mar Aba (540-542), while at the Synods of 587, 596 and 605. Since a person cannot be a Father and a heretic at the same time, how is this anomaly, brought about by our divided Christianity, to be resolved? PRO ORIENTE's Syriac Dialogue provides a context in which ways of resolving this problem can be resolved, with a view to future unity of the Church of the East with the rest of Christianity.

Theodore died in communion with the Catholic Church in 428, the year Nestorius became patriarch of Constantinople. After his death, and especially after the Council of Ephesus, there was a systematic propaganda directed against Theodore, depicting him as the Father of Nestorianism. The ultimate outcome of this was his condemnation in 553.

Though political and personal rivalry, along with cultural differences, certainly played a part in the Christological controversies, it must be recognized that those involved in the controversy were entirely sincere in their concern for orthodoxy. The problem, however, was that, instead of accepting both the Alexandrian and Antiochene Christologies as complementary, representing two ancient traditions of the undivided Church, the approach was to measure the other's Christology by the yardstick of one's own. Thus, in the period between 431 and 553, one or other Christology gained the ascendancy, with the Alexandrian prevailing at the Fifth Council. One of the reasons for this was the widespread opposition to the Council of Chalcedon: in order to counter this, imperial policy was to promote an Alexandrian interpretation of that Council, at the expense of the Antiochene. This can be seen, for example, in Justinian's conversations with the Severian bishops in 532.

In the more immediate background of the condemnation of the Three Chapters, the role of Theodore Ascidas is important, in that it was he who, for personal reasons, sought to divert Justinian's attention away from Origenism to Nestorianism; in this, as the Edict against the Three Chapters in 543 and their repeated condemnation at the Council of 553 showed, he was successful. In all these events one can again witness the mentality of the time which was unable to see diversity in theological tradition as capable of being seen as complementary.

Both Justinian's autocratic actions over doctrinal matters, and the way in which texts from Theodore of Mopsuestia were extracted and taken out of context by his enemies, were unsatisfactory. Today, with the help of Babai the Great's Christological treatise, one is in a better position of understanding Theodore, and this enables us to re-evaluate the Antiochene position regarding the union of the two natures, and to reconsider, at least unofficially, the anathemata pronounced against the Antiochene Fathers, Theodore, Theodoret and Ibas, at the Council of 553.

If the Churches are sincere with each other, they must be prepared to admit the errors of the past and to "correct themselves with bitter penitence, sacrificing the self esteem and reputations. The saving grace of the sacraments of the Church does not forsake the quarrelling parts of the Church at these periods of disintegration". (Addis Ababa Consultation, 1970).

The Church of the East's commitment to Theodore has its origins in the early fifth century when works of his were translated into Syriac at the Persian School in Edessa. Narsai, first head of the successor School in Nisibis, speaks of Theodore as an expositor of Scripture in rapturous terms. In the mid sixth century, at almost the same time of Three Chapters Edict, Mar Aba had been elected Patriarch of the Church of the East. Eight years before his election Mar Aba had travelled in the Roman Empire, and in Alexandria he had been permitted to expound the Scriptures using Theodore's commentaries; in Constantinople, however, Justinian (motivated by wider imperial concerns) had attempted to meet with him to persuade him to condemn Theodore. Mar Aba's specific mention of Theodore in the final canon of the Synod of 544 can be seen as a direct counterpoint to Justinian's Edict on the Three Chapters. This Edict, and the repeated condemnation of the Three Chapters in the Council of 553 had no effect on the Church of the East's commitment to Theodore, and the only challenge to his authority came from within the Church, when Henana became head of the School of Nisibis in 570. Though it is difficult to discern Henana's real position, it seems that his negative attitude towards Theodore's commentaries had much to do with the latter's anthropology. Though Henana could conceivably have become an important figure in bridging the gap in understanding between East and West, his rejection of Theodore put him beyond the pale as far as the Church of the East was concerned, and his views were singled out for sharp criticism in the Synod of 587.

In view of the long history of uncritical defense of Theodore, the Church of the East would seem to have become so deeply invested in his defense as not to be able to entertain any discussion of his possible weaknesses. This is not the case: in the light of modern scholarship, carried out in a scientific and dispassionate manner, the Church of the East is prepared to join, in a spirit of ecumenism, the discussion of Theodore and his work. Such discussion needs to be conducted in a spirit of mutual trust and reciprocal openness, and all bitterness and rancour must be denied any place.

The differences between the two theological schools of thought, of Antioch and of Alexandria, led to what has been called "the war of expressions and terminologies". Modern ecumenical dialogue seeks to go beyond this and penetrate to the essence of these schools' respective positions, rather than their outward verbal form. This approach can be seen in the declarations between successive Popes and the Syrian Orthodox Patriarchs Yacoub III and Ignatius Zakka I Iwas, and the Patriarch of the Church of the East, Mar Dinikha IV. From the traditional Syrian Orthodox point of view it was three doctors of Nestorian doctrine who were condemned in the Edict on the Three Chapters. In that they represent the trend that advocates the two qnome, that is, two persons⁴ in Christ, they re-

⁴ i.e. as the term is understood in Syrian Orthodox tradition.

present an unacceptable divisive Christology.

These extreme positions, however, can be seen to be modified by many hierarchs in the Church of the East, to the extent that their teachings could be considered almost close to the orthodox position. Thus the concept of dualism gives way before the oneness of the person of Christ in (e.g.) the Letter of Catholicos Isho'yahb II of Gedala (7th century). Likewise significant is the sixth-century Synod of Catholicos Joseph, in which "anyone who confesses two Christs or two sons", or who introduces "a quaternity into the Holy Trinity" is anathematized. The Synod of Sabrisho', later in that century, likewise rejects anyone who calls the one Christ, the Son of God, two sons or two Christs. Thus there is a great difference between the early advocates of Nestorianism, combated by Philoxenos and others, and the leading theologians of the Assyrian Church of the East who have been called Nestorians.

The teaching of the Syrian Orthodox Church itself can be found in the writings of Philoxenos of Mabbug, Severus of Antioch, and Jacob of Serugh.⁵

There still remains today a wide gap between Nestorianism and Orthodoxy, the former being represented by Nestorius and his partisans (the Three Chapters). But it is also evident that the teaching of the Church of the East, although it has been called Nestorian, is not the same as Nestorianism, as can be seen from the clear expression of oneness in the Common Declaration of H.H. Mar Dinkha IV and H.H. Pope John Paul II.

Vincenzo Poggi SJ. The Controversy of the Three Chapters. (= pp.142-150)

Justinian's unprecedented emphasis on the anathemata, with the condemnation of the 'Three Chapters', at the Fifth Council was due to his wider imperial strategy of trying to win over the non-Chalcedonians, for whom Theodore, Theodoret and Ibas had long been seen as lying at the roots of Nestorian dyophysitism. For the non-Chalcedonians, the attempt made by Chalcedonians, at the conversations of 532, to disassociate Nestorianism from the Antiochene school was unsuccessful. The condemnation of the Three Chapters represents a further (unsuccessful) attempt by Justinian to win over the non-Chalcedonians. Significantly it occurred shortly after hostilities had broken out again with the Persian Empire. This, and internal problems within the Church of the East, perhaps explain why it is not until the Synod of 585 that a canonical reaction to the Three Chapters is found.

Specific theological reaction can be found in Babai's Book of the Union, where he expressly cites, and refutes, the second of the anathemata against the Three Chapters.

The Church of the East was conscious of living in a different cultural context from that of the Church in the Roman Empire. The consequences of this difference were expressed both in the assembly of bishops in 612, and in Patriarch Timothy I's letter to the monks of St Maron's monastery: in the Roman Empire, imperial meddling with doctrinal affairs had resulted in numerous changes of religious policy and led to the emergence of different heresies; by contrast, the Church of the East which had been free from such interference, had preserved the teaching of the apostles unchanged. Regardless of the correctness or not of such a perspective, it is more and more recognized by scholars that the history of the Church of the East needs to be integrated into the general history of the whole Church - and

⁵ a brief overview of their teaching is given: see pp.138-9

this means taking cognizance of the Antiochene Christological tradition as well.

Baby Varghese. East Syrian Liturgy as an Expression of Christology. (= pp.153-161)

Irenaeus already drew attention to the close relationship between doctrine and the eucharistic liturgy, and the Christological dimension of the various anaphoras is clear; indeed, it is sometimes given special prominence by addressing the anaphora directly to Christ (as in the Greek Anaphora of Gregory of Nazianzus, and in the post-Sanctus prayer of the Anaphora of Addai and Mari).

Since for the East Syrian tradition, as in other Christian traditions, liturgy is a celebration of the economy of Christ, many prayers throughout the liturgical year are liturgical expressions of a Christology; this is especially so during the seasons of the Nativity, Epiphany and Easter. In his Catechetical Homilies Theodore of Mopsuestia points out that the celebration of the sacraments is an expression of the faith of the Church, and this faith is confirmed in and through this.

In the liturgical books of the Church of the East there are many texts whose biblical inspiration and Christological contents would be appreciated by the Churches which are not in communion with it. On the other hand, expressions of strongly 'Nestorian' Christological doctrine and sentiment can be found. A *teshbohta* by Babai the Great provides a good example of the classical East Syrian christology; in it, for example, the phrase "The natures are preserved in their qnumi", which to Oriental Orthodox eyes looks as if it means the independent existence of two hypostases with their proper natures in one Christ. Objectionable too is anaphoral prayer, quoted by Cyrus of Edessa, that Theodore put on the lips of the man Jesus. Some prayers in the Anaphoras attributed to Theodore and to Nestorius likewise use distinctively East Syrian Christological phraseology. Characteristic too is the regular use of clothing imagery (e.g. "put on our humanity"). Though this is a favourite expression in early Syriac fathers to describe the incarnation, the East Syrian usage is to be understood in the light of the subsequent Christological developments. The indwelling of the Word in the temple of the human body is another favourite image for the Antiochenes, and it is found in the writings of Nestorius.

Some later liturgical texts, such as an Epiphany prayer by Shimsa Saidnaya, seem clearly to separate the Godhead and the Manhood, and in the Holy Week liturgy expressions such as "crucified God" or "God died on the cross" are almost absent, reflecting Theodoret's refusal of the expression "God died on the cross".

It is because of the almost regular presence of Theodoran concepts, such as the indwelling of the Word, in East Syrian liturgical texts that the other eastern Churches have accused the East Syrians of holding the doctrine of two sons. Such concepts, however, can sometimes be traced back long before the time of Theodore. In this respect, the East Syrian approach is in perfect continuity with early Christian tradition, but this does not mean that the other eastern sister Churches can easily appreciate their doctrinal contents, which sometimes seem to them to be too much coloured by 'Nestorian' terminology. Thus, in an ecumenical context, their correct interpretation is of utmost importance.

Johannes Madey. Syro-Oriental Liturgy as an Expression of Christology. (= pp.162-169)

The Syro-Oriental Church did not come under the influence of Hellenistic schools of

thought, and so developed her own terminology and liturgy in accordance with her Semitic genius. Her liturgy is thus deeply rooted in the Bible.

A characteristic feature is the recurrent emphasis on the resurrection, seen, for example, in the widely used Laku Mara hymn. This hymn also has a strong Trinitarian dimension, and this also appears in the many prayers addressed to the Father "through Christ our Lord in communion with the Holy Spirit". Numerous prayers can also be found addressed directly to Christ.

Fine examples of doxological christology can be found in the post-Sanctus kushapa of the Anaphora of the Apostles, and in the teshbohta sung from Subara (Annunciation) to Epiphany, attributed to Babai the Great. The changes introduced by Paul Bedjan into his Chaldean edition of the Breviarium can certainly now be regarded as obsolete. Although "Mother of Christ" is the preferred terminology of the Syro-Oriental Church, "Mother of God" is implied in a prayer for Ramsha (Vespers) on Wednesdays: "Our Lord God, equip us with strong and invincible armour through the prayers of your blessed mother Mary...". For some unknown reason Bedjan omitted "your" from his Chaldean edition.

Many further liturgical texts are cited, illustrating how the liturgy of the Syro-Oriental Church is the very locus theologicus of Christology and its sacramental and ecclesiological dimensions.

Pierre Yousif. Christ in the Liturgical Tradition of the Church of the East. (= pp.173-185)

The paper aims to present a general picture of how the liturgical texts of the Church of the East speak of the Son of God who became man, who is Christ. To perceive Christ as He is presented in the Liturgy it is not enough to see what the liturgy says of him, but it is necessary to live this liturgy, where Christ is worshipped, praised, loved and understood. Liturgy, however, is also a confession of faith, not only through the Creed, but as a whole. Here it is necessary to remember the Semitic and Mesopotamian cultural background of the liturgy of the Church of the East: the problem of the number of natures in Christ is a Greek problem which was imposed on our tradition.

The paper falls into five descriptive sections:

(1) [= section 2 of the paper] The Dispensation as the weft of the Theology of Christ in the Liturgical Year. This deals with the organisation of liturgical year, and how the Church makes memorial of the different mysteries of Christ and tries to actualize them for the faithful in worship.

(2) [= section 3] The Liturgy of the Hours, the Weekly Celebration of Christ.

(3) [= section 4] Christ in the Liturgical Sunday Synaxis.

(4) [= section 5] Christ in the Sacramental Rites.

(5) [= section 6] Some Main Themes of Christology. Although the liturgical tradition presents Christ under different lights, everywhere presupposes the unity of his person, and personal identity as the Son of God, and the duality of his natures, as God and man. The dispensation (in the yearly cycle) shows him as mediator and redeemer; the weekly prayers, as the Son of God coming into the world; the Eucharist, as the Incarnated, Messenger, crucified, and glorious Son; while the sacraments indicate the different ways he communicates himself to the church and her members. The liturgy presents Jesus the Christ as real man and real God, acting properly through the two concrete natures (qnome) and so realizing

effectively our redemption.

Some texts illustrating points of christology are provided; these concern the Person of the Sonship, the two qnome, and the duality in the unity. The doxological character of the expression of christology in the liturgical texts of the Church of the East is excellently summed up in the Christological section of the Gloria in Excelsis, chanted at the end of Matins on Sunday.

Corbishop M.J. Birnie, The Church of the East: Liturgy as an Expression of Christology. (= pp.185-190)

The paper specifically addresses the question of whether the Christology reflected in the Church of the East's liturgical texts expresses and nurtures a faith in the unitary person of the incarnate Logos, the Son of God. In particular, the aim is to demonstrate, through cited examples, that a single subject in the person of Christ is addressed, or spoken of, in these texts. Furthermore, it is shown that there are clear (though rare) examples of the use of the "exchange of predicates" between the divine and human natures of the person of Christ (it should be noted that this also has a qualified approval in the Synodicon Orientale).

The language of prayer and praise is formative in the worshipper. In the liturgies of the Church of the East, in prayers addressed to God or the Lord God, where Christ is meant, the language employed to describe his human experiences directs the worshipper's mind to the Deity as antecedent. The subject of those experiences is conceptualized as one, and not as one and another. Whatever "duality" may emerge in the course of polemic discussion or theoretical contemplation disappears in hymnic wonder and prayerful certitude in the Assyrian Christian as he, in his ordinary worship, addresses his Lord and God, the Word become flesh. The relationship thus conceived and acknowledged between worshipper and worshipped is one to one. The suggestion of an internal, independent relationship of the divine nature to the human in the united Christ is absent from the worshipper's adoration, and he acknowledges only the ontic unity which the Incarnate One is perceived to be in his person and in his relationship to his people. The language of worship and adoration in the liturgies of the Church of the East does not lead the worshipper to conceptualize a human person existing by himself in relationship with the Logos. The personal identity of the complete and undiminished manhood taken by the Logos is that of the eternal Son of God.

THE CHRISTOLOGICAL CONVERGENCE AT PRO ORIENTE'S SECOND SYRIAC CONSULTATION AND SOME CRITICAL OBSERVATIONS ON THE SECOND COUNCIL OF CONSTANTINOPLE (553)

The Consultations on Dialogue within the Syriac Tradition held under the auspices of PRO ORIENTE play a remarkable role in the concert of bilateral and multilateral, official and unofficial ecumenical dialogues.¹ This so-called Syriac Dialogue includes all those churches which share a common liturgical and spiritual heritage in the Syriac tradition and language, namely the Assyrian Church of the East (old and new calendar), the Syrian Orthodox Church of Antioch, the Malankara Syrian Orthodox of India, and the respective Oriental Catholic Churches (Chaldean, Syrian, Maronite, Malabar and Malankara).

Up to now three Consultations have taken place: two in Vienna (1994, 1996)² and one in Chicago (1997) which is documented in this volume. Here I want to reflect on the Second Consultation which took place from 22-27 February 1996 in Vienna and which produced some utmost interesting results.³ The subjects treated there were the Christological agreement already achieved, problems of the Council of Ephesus (431), the Three Chapters Controversy and the liturgical expressions of Christology in the East Syrian tradition.

In the following the main results of the Second Consultation will be presented (1 and 2). Then I will give some observations on the Three Chapters Controversy and in particular on the Second Council of Constantinople (3).

1. Christological Convergence and terminological Clarification

Shortly after the First Syriac Consultation in Vienna in June 1994 the Common Christological Declaration between the Catholic Church and the Assyrian Church of the East was signed by Pope John Paul II und Catholicos Mar Dinkha IV.⁴ Now the Catholic Church has common declarations with the Assyrian Church and with the Oriental Orthodox. Already with the "Vienna Christological Formula" produced by Oriental Orthodox and Catholic theologians at the first PRO ORIENTE Consultation in Vienna 1971 the common faith in Christ has been expressed. This formular has been the basis for subsequent official declarations between Roman pontiffs and Oriental Orthodox Patri-

archs.⁵ An official christological consensus between the pre-Ephesian, the pre-Chalcedonian and the Chalcedonian churches is still missing. However, some sort of such a multilateral christological convergence was achieved for the first time in ecumenical history at the Second Syriac Consultation. In the Joint Communiqué the Symbolum of Constantinople (381) is seen as the basis; and "the participants agreed with and were able to proceed from the Unity of Faith that was expressed in the Vienna Christological Formula".⁶

It is noteworthy too that a theological correspondence between the Church of the East and the imperial church was discovered: "The theological thought and formulations of the Church of the East as present in its liturgical and synodical sources are considered to be in line with the teachings of the Ecumenical Councils of Nicaea (325), Constantinople (381) and compatible with those of the Council of Ephesus."⁷ If we consider that Nestorius was condemned by the last, one may be surprised that "the theological contents discussed at the Council of Ephesus 431 are shared in one form or another by all the Churches of the Syriac Tradition."⁸ That means, from a *theological* point of view the question "Does Ephesus unite or divide?" which was asked at the Second Consultation⁹ may be answered in favour of unity.

The christological problem is mainly a result of the identification of Syriac with Greek terminology. Therefore another important step was done with the distinction "between the understanding in the Church of the East of the term *qnoma* (i.e. individuated, but not personalized nature) and that of some other Syriac Churches where *qnoma* is regularly understood as the equivalent of hypostasis in the sense of person."¹⁰ Further the Assyrian, Chaldean and Syro-Malabar delegations of the Church of the East presented an explanation of the term *qnoma*: "In Christology, as expressed in the synodical and liturgical sources of the Church of the East the term *qnoma* does not mean *hypostasis* as understood in the Alexandrine Tradition, but instead, individuated nature. Accordingly, the human nature which the Holy Spirit fashioned, the Logos assumed and united to Himself without any separation, was personalized in the Person of the Son of God. When we speak of the two natures and their *qnome*, we understand this very much in the same sense as two natures and their particular properties (*dilayatha*). It is important to note that the term *qnoma* is used in a different way in Trinitarian theology."¹¹ It seems that in east Syrian Christology *qnoma* has the meaning that is closer to the Greek *idiotes* than to *hypostasis*. However, this definition should be taken into consideration in any further discussion. Old prejudices should not be repeated all the time and one should try to find out what the east Syrian theologians intended to say with the terms they used, rather than asking what their opponents imagined to read in these expressions. With the words of the Joint Communiqué: "...there is a necessity to make an absolute distinction

¹ Cf. D. W. Winkler, "The Current Theological Dialogue with the Assyrian Church of the East", in: René Lavenant (Ed.), *Symposium Syriacum VII*. Rom 1998 (Orientalia Christiana Analecta 256) and in: A. Stimmann - G. Wilflinger (Ed.), *Syriac Dialogue 2*. Second Non-Official Consultation on Dialogue within the Syriac Tradition, 225-236.

² Cf. PRO ORIENTE (Ed.) *Syriac Dialogue 1*. First Non-Official Consultation on Dialogue within the Syriac Tradition. Vienna 1994 and *Syriac Dialogue 2* (cf. note 1 above).

³ Mainly on the christological result reflects S. Brock, "PRO ORIENTE's Second Consultation on Dialogue within the Syriac Tradition 1996", in: *Sobornost* 19 (1997) and in: *Syriac Dialogue 2*, 222-225 (cf. note 1 above).

⁴ Cf. *Osservatore Romano*, Nov. 12, 1994; *Syriac Dialogue 1*, 230f.

⁵ Cf. D. W. Winkler, *Koptische Kirche und Reichskirche. Altes Schisma und neuer Dialog*. Mit einem Vorwort von Franz Kardinal König (Innsbrucker theologische Studien 49), Innsbruck-Wien 1997, 260-330 where all these ecumenical communiqués are analysed.

⁶ Joint Communiqué of the second PRO ORIENTE non-official Syriac Consultation, in: *Syriac Dialogue 2*, 192. (Emphasis mine).

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Cf. the papers of Mar Severios, Louis Sako, Elie Khalifé and Mar Bawâi Soro in this volume.

¹⁰ Joint Communiqué 193 (cf. note 6 above).

¹¹ Ibid.

between the doctrinal position of the Assyrian Church of the East and the position, recognized by all to be heretical which holds, that there are two Sons, two prosopa in the one Incarnate Christ, a position which is traditionally described by the Chalcedonians and Oriental Orthodox as 'Nestorianism'.¹²

2. The Three Chapters Controversy at the Second Syriac Consultation

What became evident in the Second Syriac Consultation is that the Three Chapters Controversy was a controversy within the Imperial Church. The papers and discussion showed that the historic proceedings before and at the Council of Constantinople (553) seem to have been of little interest to the Assyrian and Syrian Orthodox participants. Their papers spoke about the condemned persons and writings, but not in the context of the council and not with a critical evaluation of its proceedings.¹³ Only the papers of the Catholic participants treated the topic in the way the Occident is used to do it.¹⁴

The joint communiqué of the Second Syriac Consultation contains only *one* sentence concerning the discussion on the Three Chapter Controversy. However, this one gives a methodologically important advice: "Our discussion of 'Three Chapter Controversy', and the ensuing condemnation of the 'Three Chapters' at the Council of Constantinople (553), led us to see the need to make the distinction between doctrines condemned and persons anathematized."¹⁵

That is why the participants suggested to study Nestorius and Theodore in the context of their condemnations. This has been done at the Third Syriac Consultation published in this volume. Nevertheless I want to note a few critical remarks and questions on the Second Council of Constantinople in this paper.

3. Some observations concerning the Second Council of Constantinople (553)

It is not my aim to repeat the whole Three Chapter Controversy, but it may be useful to recall the principle points of it. Trying to reconcile Chalcedonians and anti-Chalcedonians Justinian oscillates between theological concessions and violent re-integration. Finally the Fifth Council was doomed to fail politically. It had no consequences for several churches, because at that time they were already outside the borders of the Imperium Romanum and the Imperial Church.

Between 543 and 545 Justinian wrote an edict on the Three Chapters.¹⁶ The affair was probably brought up by Theodor Askidas who wanted to draw attention to Origenism. Justinian demanded with three capitula the condemnation of (1.) the person and writings of Theodore of Mopsuestia, (2.) the writings of Theodoret of Cyrus, (3.) the letter of Ibas of Edessa to Mari the Persian. By that he tried to get the sympathy of the anti-Chalcedonians. However, the following confrontations were not useful to recover anti-

Chalcedonian terrain, rather they incriminated the relations between Rome and Constantinople: Rome saw the authority of the Council of Chalcedon undermined by the condemnation, whereas Constantinople meant to guard that authority against the accusation of Nestorianism.

The quarrels in the years up to the Council of Constantinople (553) are not a glorious page in imperial church history. In key-words: The African bishops considered Justinian's edict as heretical; Pope Vigilius was deported to Constantinople by Justinian in 547 and imposed a penance on Patriarch Menas who had signed the edict; Patriarch Menas then imposed a penance on the Pope; Pope Vigilius entangled himself between rejection and approval of the condemnation of the Three Chapters and finally submitted to the pressure of Justinian (548); as a result the African bishops excommunicated the Pope (550); in the meantime Pope Vigilius refused communion with Patriarch Menas who on the other hand did not mention the Pope in the liturgy any longer; with a second edict Justinian condemned the Three Chapters in 13 anathemata (551);¹⁷ now the Pope declared himself against the anathema (552); finally the council was summoned without the Pope who refused to come, because he was prohibited from returning to Rome to consult the western bishops; 168 bishops were present at the council, only eight from the Occident, i.e. from the African provinces;¹⁸ the council then executes the condemnation of the Three Chapters according to the edict of Justinian.

From the point of view of church politics the result of the Three Chapter Controversy was terrifying: the unity of the Church, the desired goal of the council, receded into dim distance and the trenches between Chalcedonians and anti-Chalcedonians became deeper. In the Occident continuous differences came up between Rome and some provinces, especially in northern Italy, in Africa and Illyricum. The reputation of the Pope declined enormously.

From a theological point of view the most valuable contribution of the controversy was Justinian's edict of 551 with the clarification of the terminology in the spirit of Chalcedon. The unclearness of the term hypostasis had been a main defect of the formula of Chalcedon. Now the exact definition of the terms definitely helped the Chalcedonians to save their christology from Nestorian interpretation. However, the Council of Constantinople 553 used the terms in a Chalcedonian sense, but it did not give a definition of *hypostasis* as distinguished from *nature*.¹⁹ The Antiochene heritage is an important and legitimate balance to Alexandrine tradition. Unfortunately by the condemnation of the Three Chapters this heritage had almost been lost in the Imperial Church.

And what about the anti-Chalcedonians? After all the aim of the council was to regain them. In a History of Councils published in 1993 Panayotis A. Yannopoulos holds that the Council of Constantinople finally re-established the order and the unity of the church, but it did not bring a rapprochement or reconciliation with the "Monophysites", because they did not accept the resolutions of the council.²⁰ Yannopoulos' opinion

¹² Ebd.

¹³ Cf. Michael J. Birnie and Mar Gregorios Saliba.

¹⁴ Cf. the papers of Geevarghese Chediath and especially Vincenzo Poggi.

¹⁵ Joint Communiqué 192 (cf. note 6 above).

¹⁶ This edict got lost. Fragments v. E. Schwartz, "Zur Kirchenpolitik Justinians", in: Idem, *Zur Geschichte der Alten Kirche und ihres Rechts*. Berlin 1969 (Gesammelte Schriften 4) 321-328; Cf. also E. Schwartz, *Drei dogmatische Schriften Justinians*. München 1939 (ABAW.PH 18) 45-69 (II. Justinians Schreiben gegen die drei Capitel).

¹⁷ Cf. Schwartz, *Drei dogmatische Schriften Justinians* 71-111.

¹⁸ Cf. A. Grillmeier, *Jesus der Christus im Glauben der Kirche II/2*. Unter Mitarbeit von Th. Hainthaler. Freiburg 1989, 459 note 492 with reference to E. Chyros, *Die Bischofslisten des V. Ökumenischen Konzils (553)*. Bonn 1966.

¹⁹ Cf. Grillmeier, *Jesus der Christus im Glauben der Kirche II/2*, 484 (cf. note 18 above).

²⁰ Cf. P. A. Yannopoulos, "Vom Zweiten Konzil von Konstantinopel (553) zum Zweiten Konzil von Nicaea (786-787)", in: G. Alberigo (Ed.), *Geschichte der Konzilien. Vom Nicaenum bis zum Vaticanum II*. Düsseldorf 1993, 149.

shows a very limited ecumenical understanding of the Church. Which unity was re-established if there was no reconciliation with the anti-Chalcedonians? The unity between Rome and Constantinople? But even in that case the circumstances are not so clear as one wants to see it today. The imperial synod of 553 was accepted as the Fifth Ecumenical Council in the Occident only in the 7th century.²¹

That brings us to a view basic observation. The goal of the Council in 553 was to reconcile Chalcedonians and anti-Chalcedonians. Therefore a responsible ecumenical theology has to ask today, to what extent the anti-Chalcedonians were involved in the process of the council and in what way this council is noticed by them:

1. According to the lists of participants of the council there was *no* bishop of the anti-Chalcedonian movement present.²² This is remarkable since the supporters of the Imperial Church have atrophied to a Greek minority in Egypt, and since the church in Syria was on the way to get a durable organisation in the mid 6th century.

2. Without doubt the central anti-Chalcedonian province was Egypt. Nevertheless only eight bishops from *imperial* Egypt were present. The head of the delegation was Patriarch Apollinarius (551-570), who was a fanatic Chalcedonian and not very qualified for reconciliation. He acted ruthlessly against the anti-Chalcedonians in his dioceses.²³ By keeping away the anti-Chalcedonians the Council of Constantinople (553) failed its goal already with the convocation.

3. The accepted head of the anti-Chalcedonian movement in the 6th century was Theodore of Alexandria († 566). He was exiled to Thracia by Justinian in 537. However, he hid in one of the palaces of the empress Theodora from 539 onward and succeeded to guide the Egyptian Church as well as those anti-Chalcedonian Churches which were bereaved of their bishops. In 542 he ordained Theodore of Arabia and Jacob Baradai. According to his responsibility for the anti-Chalcedonian churches he was called an "ecumenical Patriarch"²⁴ by his supporters. We do not know exactly where Theodosios was at the time of the council of 553. But we may suppose that he was in Constantinople under Theodora's wings. Nevertheless the known sources do not inform us how and if Theodore of Alexandria noticed the council. The letters examined by me do not mention either the Fifth Council nor the Three Chapter Controversy.²⁵

4. It is impossible to examine the whole anti-Chalcedonian literature in this paper in order to answer the question whether the Second Council of Constantinople was received in some or another way. A view over those sources mentioned in relevant lexica brings a negative result. No anti-Chalcedonian collection or author is mentioned there. Even the texts published by Chabot, *Documenta ad origines monophysitarum illustran-*

²¹ Cf. Y. Congar, "Der Primat der vier ersten Ökumenischen Konzile. Ursprung, Bestimmung, Sinn und Tragweite eines traditionellen Themas", in: B. Botte et al., *Das Konzil und die Konzile. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des Konzilslebens der Kirche*. Stuttgart 1962, 125.

²² Cf. A. Grillmeier, *Jesus der Christus im Glauben der Kirche II/2*, 459 note 492.

²³ Cf. J. Maspero, *Histoire des Patriarches d'Alexandrie depuis la mort de l'empereur Anastase jusqu'à la réconciliation des églises jacobites (518-616)*. Paris 1923, 165.

²⁴ Cf. the sources mentioned in A. Grillmeier, *Jesus der Christus im Glauben der Kirche II/4*, Freiburg 1990, 53.

²⁵ Cf. CPG 7134-7136.7138-7147 according to *Documenta ad origines monophysitarum illustrandas*, ed. by J.-B. Chabot. Louvain 1952 (CSCO 17.103); CPG 7148-7149 according to Zacharias Rh., *Historia Ecclesiastica*, ed. by E. W. Brooks. Louvain 1953 (CSCO 38.39.41.42); CPG 7133.7137 and Ep. ad Armenios according to *Monophysite Texts of the Sixth Century*, ed. by A. Van Roey – P. Allen. Leuven 1994 (OrLova 56).

das, – all of them from the time between 535 and 581(!) – do not speak about the Synod of 553. The three theologians condemned by the Three Chapters – Theodore, Theodoret and Ibas – only appear in lists which include everybody heterodox to the anti-Chalcedonian theology from Arius and Appollinarius to Eutyches and Nestorius. The three theologians do not have an extraordinary position. The anathema against the Three Chapters seems not to have been useful for a reconciliation of Chalcedonians and anti-Chalcedonians. Was the Second Council of Constantinople ignored by the anti-Chalcedonians? It seems to have been a *quantité négligeable*. Herewith the council produced no effect and changed from an ecumenical council to an imperial synod.

5. In the same way it would be necessary to examine if and how the council echoed in contemporary East Syrian literature. In the PRO ORIENTE's Second Syriac Consultation Mar Bawai Soro said that the Council "was met with scorn, derision, and defiant rejection in the Persian Church"²⁶ but unfortunately no references are made. It is not clear since when theologians of the Church of the East judge like this.

6. At the mid 6th century the formation of a own anti-Chalcedonian Church had already been completed in Egypt. Relevant for that is a) the confessionalization of the theology and b) the doubling of the hierarchy. The first was achieved by Severus of Antioch, the second happened in 537 by the deposition of Theodosios of Alexandria and by the enthronement of Paulos Tabennesiota as Chalcedonian Patriarch of Alexandria.²⁷ The anti-Chalcedonian Church had entered her way through history outside the Imperial Church. The council was convoked too late in order to reconcile Chalcedonians and anti-Chalcedonians.

²⁶ Cf. Mar Bawai Soro, "The Person and Teachings of Theodore of Mopsuestia and the Relationship between him, his Teachings and the Church of the East with special reference to the Three Chapters Controversy" in this volume.

²⁷ Cf. Winkler, *Koptische Kirche und Reichskirche* 135-163 (cf. note 5 above).

THE CHRISTOLOGICAL AGREEMENT OF 433: MODEL OF ECCLESIAL RECONCILIATION?

Besides the "models of ecclesial communion" which are more or less theoretical (as those which can be found in the Lutheran-Catholic Dialogue of 1985 "In Face of Unity") there are patristic examples of doctrinal reconciliation (namely the mediation of Athanasius in the trinitarian controversy of AD 362 or the christological agreement of 433 between John of Antioch and Cyril of Alexandria) from which ecumenism could still profit today. We would like to outline briefly here the judgement which patrology can give on the value and the limits of the second of these examples.¹ The Council of Florence of 1439 seems to have already considered the agreement of 433 as a model of union, since its dogmatic decree starts with a quotation of the Psalms and with the Pauline *allusion* with which Cyril has begun his letter to John. "Let the heavens be glad and the earth rejoice." (Ps 95,11) "The barrier which separated us has been destroyed." (cf. Eph 2,4) (V 127,1, p.486=cf. p.495, 13-15).

The two texts nonetheless contain a striking formal difference: whereas the Florentine definition was promulgated by Pope Eugene IV (p. 459, 5-7), the agreement of 433 does not show the least trace of a Roman initiative nor even of any intervention. This absence of the Apostolic See in the process of reconciliation is all the more striking, as it was Pope Coelestine I, who had charged Cyril to carry out the sentence of the Roman Synod of 430 against Nestorius. (Vr 1, p.6, 21-28). Also it was as a "lieutenant" of the "archbishop of the Church of Rome" that the Alexandrian had presided over the Council of Ephesus (V 33, p.119).

It is true that Pope Xystus III was to be duly informed about the restoration of the unity of faith between Antioch and Alexandria; but this was done by "letters of communion" according to the practice of the time and not at all to confirm an ecclesial act, took its validity from its own existence. In his answers to the notification of the peace (17 September 433), the successor of Coelestine, does not at all show any awareness of possessing the exclusivity of St. Peter's ministry (Vr 31, p.109,25-31). Even more: he attributes all merit in obtaining the agreement to the emperor Theodosius II acknow-

ledging unreservedly the imperial "cura" for the purity of the Church and of the apostolic faith (I 31-41). The bishop of Rome thus did nothing but express the general conviction of his time, of the "political theology" of the Christian Empire.

We must acknowledge, by the way, that the initiative for the reconciliation lies completely with the emperor (through his executive agent, the "tribune and notarius" Aristolaos) (V 122, p.472). Dismissing the Cyrillian fathers of Ephesus, in October 431, Theodosius had blamed them for their disunity and for their refusal to dialogue with the Orientals, and had informed them that he would never condemn the latter, since they had not been found guilty before him of any crime (A 97, p. 622). The admonition to make peace can thus be found already, in a way, in the imperial decree dissolving the conciliar assembly, so that one can consider the agreement of 433 as the real conclusion of the Third Ecumenical Council. This was to be the conviction of the "permanent synod" of Constantinople, approved by the Fathers of Chalcedon, as it canonized in 448 as "synodal" the letter of peace sent by Cyril to John of Antioch on the same basis as his second letter to Nestorius, which the Fathers of Ephesus had declared to be in conformity with the faith of Nicea (ACO, 2/1, p. 276,19-277,8).

After having, probably as early as spring 432, consulted the same synod, as to how to reconcile John and Cyril, the emperor first considered the possibility of confronting them face to face by calling them both to his residence of Nicomedia (V 120,3, p. 468). But too much resentment separated the two bishops who had excommunicated each other at Ephesus, without anything or anybody being able to reconcile them. Theodosius then quickly understood that he had to turn to the mediation of a wise man and the intercession of a saint. He had already contacted them just before the Council: They were the venerable Acacius of Berea whom he asked to intervene (A 103, p. 623-624) and the Simeon Stylites whose prayer he requested (V 121, p.470-471). The first being, then more than a 100 years old, turned on the devotion of his young colleague Paul of Emesa, making him the direct negotiator between Antioch and Alexandria.

The only condition the emperor imposed on John in order to return to the communion of Alexandria and Rome consisted of "subscribing to the deposition of Nestorius and to anathematize his doctrine" (V 120,2, p.468). But the concession he thus demanded was heartbreaking for the Orientals, who had always maintained that the man condemned in Ephesus was orthodox and unjustly deposed. Forced to submit to such a humiliating denial, they at least maintained that ultimate defence of those persecuted in their conscience which moralists call "the mental reservation". It is the regrettable lack of ecumenism illustrated by the demand for the anathema on Nestorius, which led to the preach in communion, which the Syro-Oriental Church of the Sasanide Empire decided in the years 480 vis-à-vis the Church of the Roman Empire. After more than fifteen centuries of separation, we can hope that the spirit of Christ may finally bring together, by a common declaration of faith in Christ the Saviour, the Roman Church and the one which today is called the Assyrian Church of the East.²

However, the dogmatic reconciliation of 433 between Antioch and Alexandria can not be reduced to a surrender of the Orientals. They also had their grievances and their claims. They had come to Ephesus in order to unmask Cyril's "Apollinarism", which in

¹ The reconciliation of 433 between Antioch and Alexandria is told in the history of the Church and of the councils. Two studies of details deserve to be praised: J.LEBON, *Altération doctrinale de la "Lettre à Épicète" de saint Athanase*, in *Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique* 31 (1935) 713-761; G.BARDY, *Acace de Bérée et son rôle dans la controverse nestorienne*, in *Rev SR* 18(1938) 20-44. The critics of Lebon by R. Y. EBIED and L.R. WICKHAM, *A Note on the Syriac Version of Athanasius "Ad Epictetum"* in *MS B.M. Add.14557*, in *JTS* 23 (1972) 144-154 does not seem acceptable to us. Our non-biblical references are introduced by the following signs: CF= *Quae supersunt actorum Graecorum concilii Florentini* (Concilium Florentinum, Documenta et scriptores, B, 1/5), Rome, Pont. Inst.Orientalium Studiorum, 1953; PG= *la Patrologia Graeca* de J.-P. Migne; ST=R. TONNEAU and R.DEVRESSE, *Théodore de Mopsueste, Les homélies catéchétiques* (Studi e Testi, 145), Vatican, Biblioteca apostolica vaticana, 1949; an above all ACO = E. SCHWARTZ, *Acta conciliorum oecumenicorum*, t.I: *Concilium universale Ephesenum*, Berlin-Leipzig, Walter de Gruyter, 1925-1933: the number and order of the piece are indicated in different "collections": A = Atheniensis; C = Casinensis; P = Palatina; V = Vaticana; Vr = Veronensis; than the page and the line; for A and V the page refers to the French translation of A.FESTUGIÈRE, *Épître et Chalcedoine. Actes des Conciles*, Paris, Beauchesne, 1982.

² This agreement has been signed in Rome on 11 November 1994. Cf. *Declaration christologique commune entre l'Église catholique et l'Église assyrienne d'Orient*, in *Documentation Catholique* 91 (1994), 1069-1070 (Editor's note).

their eyes was condensed into the twelve Alexandrian anathemas of autumn 430 (V 6, P. 66-68), which were judged contrary to the faith of Nicea (V 96,3-5.p. 366-368). But all the efforts to discuss these "heretic chapters" at the Council had failed (V 97,5, p.371/2).

Here therefore are first Eastern peace proposals discussed at Antioch and at Berea before being conveyed by Cyril to Aristolaos: "We stick to the creed of the Holy Fathers assembled at Nicea (because) it contains the evangelic and apostolic doctrine and does not need (any) addition. The very saintly and blessed Athanasius, bishop of Alexandria and confessor, has rendered its meaning clearly in his letter to Epictet, bishop of Corinth. We therefore also keep to this, since it contains an accurate interpretation of the faith explained above. We reject the recently-added, by letters or by chapters, dogmas as interfering with the common (dogma): since we are satisfied by the ancient legislation of the Fathers (of Nicea) and we are also docile to the One who has said: "Remove not the ancient landmarks which your Fathers set up (Pr. 22,28)." (A 105, p. 624)

It is interesting to note here that the theological norm invoked for an agreement on doctrine is that which is still proposed today to the Churches by the Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches, that is the Nicene Creed (confessed liturgically since the sixth century in its Constantinopolitan form), considered as a summary of the evangelic and apostolic doctrine. But it is no less instructive to notice in spite of its "sufficiencency" the Creed seems to have needed as early as the years 430 a correct interpretation (just as today it needs the "ecumenical explanation" that has been elaborated, in the name of the Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches by the committee for the study on the apostolic faith presided by Father J.- M. R. Tilliard).

The christological debate between Cyril and Nestorius had developed in the form of a conflict between two rival interpretations of the Nicene Creed. This is why this debate was to give birth in the ancient Church to the literary genre of patristic florileges, those function was to defend Orthodoxy through the witness of tradition whose unanimity clearly reviewed the true meaning of the Creed. The Antiochian propositions skillfully presented as the authorized interpreter of the Nicene Fathers one of the predecessors of Cyril in the See of Alexandria who was credited with being one of the greatest defenders of the faith of Nicea.

As a matter of fact the reference of the Orientals to Athanasius' letter to Epictet was in no way fortuitous. Not only the Alexandrians state directly that the faith confessed by the Nicene Fathers "following the Holy Scriptures" was "sufficient on order to overthrow all impiety and to establish the pious faith in Christ" (PG 26, 1052 A 1-5); but the Orientals found still more conclusive the list of the aberrant christological opinions made known by Epictet, most of which doubtlessly reminded them of the Apollinarianism they now denounced in the Cyrillian "chapters" (1052 C 9-1053 B 14). Moreover to refute these heresies, Athanasius appealed occasionally to metaphors which were dear to the "Antiochian School" such as those that describe the humanity of Jesus as the "temple" or as the "vestment" of God the Word (1068, A 1 et 8).

However, as early as the beginning of the fifth century, moderate Apollinarian circles in Alexandria (which archbishop Theophilus, an uncle of Cyril had reunited to his communion) had insidiously interpolated the letter of Epictet in order to blunt its anti-apollinarian peak and confirm its christology to the Alexandrian view (Λογος-σαρξ).

During the peace negotiations of 432-433 Cyril allowed himself to be convinced that this garbled version of the letter constituted the original Athanasian text, whereas the version usually accepted as authentic must have been falsified by the Nestorians (Athanasius had attacked the adoptionism which Cyril improperly ascribed to Nestorius, 1068 A 10-1069 A 10). This is what the bishop of Alexandria emphasized to Paul of Emesa when entrusting Paul with "copies (of the letter), coming from ancient copies not falsified from us" for John of Antioch (V 127,11, p.491; V 127,11, p.491; V 128,21, p. 503-504).

But though he expressed his critical mistrust in this way, Cyril in his irenic letter to John, was nonetheless showing his appreciation of the letter of the Nicene Creed (with the allusion to Pr. 22,28!). He thus declared: "We follow everywhere the opinions of the Saintly Fathers, especially those of our blessed and most illustrious Father Athanasius, and we refuse to deviate from them in anything whatever in might be (V 127, 10, p.490). Did the Antiochians allow themselves to be convinced of the authenticity of the Athanasian text Cyril sent them (and which were never recognized anywhere other than by the Syrian-orthodox)? Maybe this question was not very important for them henceforth since they achieved a more decisive concession.

In fact Cyril just had accepted "a short exposé on the Incarnation of the Word" which Paul of Emesa had conveyed to him on behalf of John of Antioch (V 122, p.472). This profession of faith (V 123,3, p.475) resumed (with only one variant without doctrinal significance) the one which in August 431 the Orientals had submitted to the emperor, as an answer to a request for information on the expression "Mother of God" (A 48,6, p.580); they now added an article concerning the christological titles common to the one person and those proper for the one of the two natures (V 123,3, p. 475). Now after having scrupulously copied this oriental profession in his letter of reconciliation (V 127,4-5, p. 487-488) Cyril declared he had now discovered that Antiochians and Alexandrians were thinking similarly, that means that the two Churches had the same faith, "in conformity with the divinely inspired Scriptures and the tradition of our Saintly Fathers" (V 127,6, p.488)!

Contrasting with the pitiless harshness of a still very recent confrontation, this acknowledgement by Cyril is somewhat inexplicable. In fact, the oriental profession presented the very exegeses of the Nicene Creed (in its Antiochian version) that the Cyrillian Fathers of Ephesus had just judged to be incompatible with the faith of the "Threehundred-eighteen Fathers" (V 46-48, p.221-226). This exegesis one finds already in the catechesis of Theodore of Mopsuestia (3 an 5, 1-2, ST, p. 53-75 and 99-103), and which received a renewed confirmation in the new clause of the oriental profession (V 123,3, p.475). It consisted in distinguishing, in the second article of the creed a triple christological entitling: the names common to the two natures (Lord, Jesus, Christ, Son, Only Begotten), the names proper to the divinity of the Word (those of the "theologia" underlining the eternal and consubstantial birth) and the names proper to the humanity (all the "economia" from the first coming until the return for the judgement).

In this last category the Antiochian profession made no concessions to Cyril being scandalized about the Nestorians, denial of a second birth of God the Word from the Virgin Mary, because it did not accept the Marian title of the "Mother of God", except with the meaning already formulated by Nestorius (P 24, p.46,16-17 = C 78, p. 7,7-8), that by incarnating and humanizing himself God the Word unites to himself the temple (John 2,19.21) assumed from Mary (as early as his conception) (V 123,3,p.475).

In acknowledging from now onwards the orthodoxy of the profession to which Nestorius, condemned in Ephesus could have unhesitatingly subscribed, Cyril displayed exceptional ecumenical tolerance. He undoubtedly lies the exemplary character of the reconciliation of 433. As a matter of fact the peace letter founds and warrants the legitimacy of the "Antiochene" christology with its insistence on the wholeness of Jesus' human nature and on the essential function of the Saviour's human and free will in rectifying the disobedience of the first Adam.

But what kind of satisfaction would the bishop of Alexandria have given for the hostility to the Orientals against the "recently introduced dogmas in the form of letters and chapters" (A 105, p.624)? The allusion to the third letter to Nestorius with the twelve anathemas was obvious (V6, p.57-68). Therefore Cyril's reaction was such as could be expected: they asked of him the impossible since renouncing his doctrine would be tantamount to denying his faith. So he persisted in being faithful to his writings and his thought (A 107, 1-33, p.626-628; A 117, p.154,37-39). Cyril nevertheless proposed an honorable compromise to the Orientals: the reception of the "chapters" would not be imposed on them, as the Cyrillian Council of Ephesus demanded from those who wanted to join its communion; it was sufficient from now on for Cyril that the Antiochians were no longer accusing him of agreeing with Apollinarius' views.

To guarantee his commitment he gave the following pledge: "The aim of the chapters is only to contradict Nestorius' dogmas because they exclude what he had wrongly said and thought" (A 107,8, p.630); Cyril was here only repeating what he had always said, that is the point of his anathemas was exclusively anti-Nestorian, that is anti-adoptionist. Finally, admitting implicitly that certain of their expressions were likely to be misunderstanding, he promised that as soon as communion restored, "if anything of what has been written by us was not correctly thought by some people, this would be very easily clarified" (A 107,8, p.630).

The concession which was asked for in these terms could seem to the Orientals to be largely compensated by the acknowledgment of their christological profession; so John of Antioch was able to accept it without difficulty in reminding the bishop of Alexandria in any case of his promise to explain the true sense of his twelve chapters (A 108,2, p.633). This explanation takes the entire central part of the letter of reconciliation (V127,7-9.p. 488-490). Cyril denies having ever thought or said that the "Holy Body of Christ had been brought from heaven and was not born by the Holy Virgin" (p. 488, which refers to the radical Apollinarism), or that there ever was any mingling, mixture or confusion of God the Word with flesh" (p.489, which would be the tendency of moderate Apollinarism itself). And when he added:

"The Word of God is impassible", even if sufferings which fall on the flesh are ascribed to him, according to an appropriation in allegory to theopaschism, while they agreed on the other hand, like Nestorius himself, that "the nature of the divinity appropriates what affects the temple of his body" (V5,7, p.55). Under this apology which Cyril had already built up from the beginning of his controversy with Nestorius (V 4,3-5, p.49-50) one can discern in the peace letter of 433, the indispensable function of real ecumenical dialogue which consists in clearing up notional misunderstandings. If the bishop of Alexandria had applied in examining the christology of Nestorius the same favourable prejudice he was asking for his own, the "ecumenical scandal" could have been undoubtedly cleared up without the "tragedy" of the disunion which Cyril himself now estimated as having been "absolutely vain and inopportune" (V127,3, p.487).

May one conclude from the above account that the christological agreement of 433 constitutes an ideal ecumenical model? Unfortunately, we have to state that after the euphoria of the following days of the restored ecclesial peace, each one of the two parties was triumphing and asserting that it had converted the others to its own views. When Theodoret of Cyrus described the contents of the Cyrillian paper to his archbishop as being "diametrically opposed to the twelve chapters" (C 183 ,p.131, 23-25), had he really noticed that Cyril was repeating the explanation of the title "Mother of God" in the terms of his first anathema (V 127,7, p.488-489=V 6,1, p.66)? And how could John of Antioch himself, with the same Theodoret imagine that Cyril was from now on confessing "the two natures with their differences" (A 119,3, p.641; A 128,1-2, p.649-650), even when he, Cyril, himself assured his anxious friends that the Orientals now accepted the "one incarnate nature of God the Word" (V128,15, p.500; V 132,3, p.513; etc)?

So these two parties brought themselves into a misapprehension which still today hampers certain ecumenical "consensus" or "convergences" in matters of doctrine. Lacking common biblical hermeneutics and sufficiently clarified theological conceptuality, Antiochians and Alexandrians persisted on each side to interpret the agreement of 433 in the light of their own presuppositions. From this point of view the contradictory inquiry which Athanasius had led at the Alexandrian synod of 363 between supporters of one or of three divine hypostases remains as a model (PG 26, 801 A2-804 A 7). Seventy years later the lack of understanding between the school traditions worsened by a still quite close controversy and by certain integrist extremisms was unfortunately to oppose efforts to understand the respective christologies by "empathy", thus preventing them from meeting in the transcendental truth of the living mystery of Christ.

The peace of 433 remained big with an understanding which was to burst violently less than fifteen years later. The most critical among the Orientals toward the letter of reconciliation, such as Euthérius of Tyana or Nestorius himself, had very clearly exposed his ambiguity, though explaining it from their own Antiochian point of view. Cyril avoided professing the "complete man" and "consubstantial with us" (V 127,5, p.488), by stating only the "man came from heaven" (John 3,13) "who is complete according to his humanity" (V 127,8p.498) and echoing the oriental formula "there has been a union of two natures" which evidently supposed the permanence of the two united natures between which the christological titles had to be distributed (V127,5, p. 488). He only evoked that "the difference of natures starting from which we say that the ineffable union has been made" (V127,8, p.489), which meant for him the "One incarnate nature of God the Word" (C291,18-22, p.219,3-220,25; C 209,5-6, p. 152,16-153,6).

The conflict between dyophysism and monophysism being latent in the peace letter of 433, was soon to rise again for want of sufficient mutual trust and to produce a new and lasting polemic, that broke the Communion of the Oriental Churches without its being sure that their recent Christological Agreement was free from all ambiguity. If it was legitimate to generalize the example of the reconciliation between Cyril and John, one could say that the idealization of the patristic ages witnesses of an ingenious romanticism and that its unreflected transposition into the present ecumenical dialogue could only lay it to bitter disappointments. History does not supply us with ready-made ecumenical models; history is pointing out lessons for us. It rests with the Churches to turn them to account in order to speak "the truth in love" (Eph. 4, 15) under the impulse of the Spirit of Him who has reconciled us in one Body through the cross, from where he killed hate and proclaimed peace (Eph. 2,14-18).

GUIDELINES FOR THE RECEPTION OF COMMUNION FOR CATHOLICS

This statement was adopted by the NCCB bishops in November 1996 at their general meeting for the purpose of providing a brief summary of Catholic discipline on the reception of communion for publication in parish misalettes.

As Catholics, we fully participate in the celebration of the Eucharist when we receive Holy Communion. We are encouraged to receive Communion devoutly and frequently. In order to be properly disposed to receive Communion, participants should not be conscious of grave sin and normally should have fasted for one hour. A person who is conscious of grave sin is not to receive the Body and Blood of the Lord without prior sacramental confession except for a grave reason where there is no opportunity for confession. In this case, the person is to be mindful of the obligation to make an act of perfect contrition, including the intention of confessing as soon as possible (canon 916). A frequent reception of the Sacrament of Penance is encouraged for all.

For our fellow Christians

We welcome our fellow Christians to this celebration of the Eucharist as our brothers and sisters. We pray that our common baptism and the action of the Holy Spirit in this Eucharist will draw us closer to one another and begin to dispel the sad divisions which separate us. We pray that these will lessen and finally disappear, in keeping with Christ's prayer for us "that they may all be one." (Jn 17,21)

Because Catholics believe that the celebration of the Eucharist is a sign of the reality of the oneness of faith, life, and worship, members of those churches with whom we are not yet fully united are ordinarily not admitted to Holy Communion. Eucharistic sharing in exceptional circumstances by other Christians requires permission according to the directives of the diocesan bishop and the provisions of canon law (canon 844 §4). Members of the Orthodox Churches, the Assyrian Church of the East, and the Polish National Catholic Church are urged to respect the discipline of their own Churches. According to Roman Catholic discipline, the Code of Canon Law does not object to the reception of communion by Christians of these Churches (canon 844 §3).

For those not receiving Holy Communion

All who are not receiving Holy Communion are encouraged to express in their hearts a prayerful desire for unity with the Lord Jesus and with one another.

For non-Christians

We also welcome to this celebration those who do not share our faith in Jesus Christ. While we cannot admit them to Holy Communion, we ask them to offer their prayers for the peace and the unity of the human family.

JOINT SYNODAL DECREE FOR PROMOTING UNITY BETWEEN THE ASSYRIAN CHURCH OF THE EAST AND THE CHALDEAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

1. In the service of our Lord and the People of God, we, the bishops of the two branches of the ancient „Church of the East,“ declare that the noble quest for restoring Christian unity remains, for us and for our Churches, a profound Christian obligation. Our Lord's prayer for the unity of His followers prompts in us, today, a deep desire to reach peacefully and fraternally the full communion with all other Christians in the one holy Church of Christ. Seeking to implement the will of our Lord Jesus Christ, according to the scope of our responsibility, we, in our respective Churches, realize that the actual meaning of Jesus' prayer „that all may be one“ (Jn 17, 21-23) can be fulfilled factually as we strive to restore the unity of the Church of the East, as known by our common forefathers.

2. The basic theological agreement between the Catholic Church and the Assyrian Church of the East, as articulated in the „Common Christological Declaration“, signed at the Vatican, on 11 November 1994, by Their Holinesses Pope John Paul II and Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV, has cleared the way for the Chaldean and the Assyrian Churches to initiate a process of dialogue and collaboration toward the goal of unity.

3. With the same spirit and purpose in mind, the two heads of our Churches, Their Holinesses Mar Dinkha IV and Mar Raphael I Bidawid met, with their respective delegations, in Southfield, Michigan (USA), on 29 November 1996, inaugurating officially the process of dialogue and collaboration; and, in a „Joint Patriarchal Statement“, they called upon their churches to rally behind them for the success of this noble purpose, and for their Holy Synods to formulate concrete plans toward the realization of the goal of unity.

4. We, the Fathers of both Holy Synods, wholeheartedly respond to the call of our Patriarchs, which is ultimately the call of the Lord himself, and declare that we join them in this course toward our common destiny, totally endorsing their proposals as formulated in their joint statement. Consequently, we adopt the following measures in the quest for unity:

- 4.1. Close collaboration in the area of catechesis, particularly in training of catechists and in the development of related teaching material.
- 4.2. Collaboration in the preparation and printing of liturgical books.
- 4.3. The establishment of an ecclesial education institute in the Chicago-Detroit region, and possibly wherever members of both communities exist, for the purpose of training future priests, deacons and catechists from both Churches. This institute shall also offer continuing religious education to the active clergy of both Churches. For the fulfillment of the general theological program - in addition to in-house formation program - the institute shall reach a suitable arrangement with appropriate Catholic universities and/or institutions in the locality where the institute exists.
- 4.4. The formulation of a joint and common attitude emphasizing the usage of the Aramaic mother tongue, in both of its classic and vernacular forms, in liturgical ceremonies as well as in cultural endeavors of both Churches.
- 4.5. The development of pastoral programs and educational projects as expressions of ecclesial and cultural collaboration between the two churches.

4.6. The development of a wide range of other activities and programs through which the faithful of both the Assyrian and the Chaldean Churches will become prepared to accept, as a common enrichment of their „*Church of the East*“ the variety of particular practices that have been developed in both Churches during the period of separation. The characteristics of the authentic heritage of the ancient „*Church of the East*“ shall be a basis for evaluation and a point of reference in such endeavor. Nevertheless, we shall consider diversity, within agreed and recognized limits, as an enrichment benefiting all the children of this Church.

5. To implement the above approved plan, we hereby decree that a „*Joint Commission for Unity*“ (JCU) shall be constituted, according to a special statute approved by both patriarchs, to be composed of twelve members selected from both Churches - six from each side. Since the „*Common Christological Declaration*“ (CCD) is the basic foundation for the collaboration between our two churches, all questions related to the areas of dogmatic and fundamental theology shall be reserved to the „*Mixed Committee for Theological Dialogue*“ (MCTD) that has been formed accordingly between the Catholic Church and the Assyrian Church of the East.

6. Looking with fraternal understanding to our past and directing our hearts with trust and hope to the future, we commit ourselves and offer public testimony of the shared love and respect between our Churches at the present. Thus, we, mutually and reciprocally, declare that we recognize in each other, as living today in our Churches, the same apostolic succession, sacramentality and Christian witness. Therefore, we call upon our clergy and faithful everywhere to interact as brothers and sisters, founding their relationship upon Christian charity and employing evangelical principles of fraternal equality and social justice, in and throughout the testimony of their individual and communal lives.

7. Recognizing in both of our Churches the binding unity of faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, that we share, as well as our common liturgical and theological heritage, taking pride in the same Fathers, Doctors of the Church, acknowledging the same shared ancestry and culture, we nevertheless recognize the existence of actual differences between our churches that have been formed during the period of separation. Therefore, for the sake of being truthful with each other and toward our people, we respectively declare our basic intents and together formulate the following principles for dialogue:

7.1. Whereas the Assyrian Church of the East sees that

7.1.1. the preservation of her ecclesial identity as expressed in her liturgical, theological, spiritual and disciplinary patrimony as well as her Mesopotamian-Aramaic culture and

7.1.2. the recognition of her freedom and self-governance are principles that must be preserved continuously throughout the process of dialogue and in any achieved model of unity; and

7.2. Whereas, in like manner, the Chaldean Catholic Church sees that

7.2.1. while the preservation of the same above-mentioned ecclesial identity as expressed in her liturgical, theological, spiritual and disciplinary patrimony as well as her Mesopotamian-Aramaic culture must be maintained, the adaptation of that patrimony to existing regional and cultural conditions and

7.2.2. the preservation of her full communion with the Roman See must be basic principles continuously maintained throughout the process of dialogue and in any achieved model of unity.

7.3. Therefore, since some of our basic stands are distinct, both Holy Synods ratify the need for further dialogue and more involved collaboration between the Assyrian Church of the East and the Chaldean Catholic Church, and, in due time and manner, between them jointly and the Roman See, in order to bring about unity between the Assyrian and the Chaldean Churches.

8. We sincerely hope that the „*Church of the East*“, restored to its historic fullness in faithfulness to the Lord, shall be an instrument for spiritual renewal, social harmony and cultural renaissance among her faithful, prompting them, once again, to bring the Good News of the Gospel to the four corners of the world for the glory of God's name.

9. Therefore, we call upon all of our sons and daughters to raise fervent prayers for the purpose of achieving our full ecclesiastical unity, through the patronage of the Virgin Mary, Mother of our Lord Jesus Christ and our own blessed mother and the intercessions of the Apostles of the East, Mar Toma, Mar Addai and Mar Mari.

10. By the authority granted to us by the Holy Spirit, we declare that this „*Joint Synodal Decree for Promoting Unity*“ effective for both Churches from this date, the fifteenth day of August 1997, the Feast of the Blessed Virgin. As a confirmation to this historic occurrence, we list out names under the names and signatures of our two venerable Patriarchs.

† Mar Raphael I Bidawid
Catholicos Patriarch
Chaldean Catholic Church

† Mar Dinkha IV
Catholicos Patriarch
Assyrian Church of the East

Members of both Holy Synods

Chaldean

1. Mar Emmanuel Delly,
Patriarchal Auxiliary
2. Mar Andre Sana,
Archbishop of Kerkuk
3. Mar Abdulahad Sana,
Bishop of Alqosh
4. Mar Youhanna Issaye,
Retired Archbishop of Tehran

Assyrian

1. Mar Narsai Debaz,
Archbishop of Lebanon, Syria
and Europe, Patriarchal Vicar
2. Mar Timotheos,
Patriarchal Representative in India
3. Mar Aprem,
Archbishop of India
4. Mar Gewargis Sliwa,
Archbishop of Iraq and Russia

5. Poulouse Mar Poulouse,
Bishop of Trichur
6. Mar Aprim Khamis,
Bishop of Eastern USA
7. Mar Paul Karatas,
Archbishop of Diyarbakir
8. Mar Hanna Zora,
Archbishop of Ahwaz
9. Mar Abdulahad Rabbgan,
Bishop of 'Aqra
10. Mar George Garmo,
Archbishop of Mosul
11. Mar Ibrahim Ibrahim,
Bishop of the USA
12. Mar Yousif Sarraf,
Bishop of Cairo
13. Mar Youssif Thomas,
Archbishop, Bishop of Beirut
14. Mar Thomas Meram,
Archbishop of Urmia and Salmas
15. Mar Antoine Audo,
Bishop of Aleppo
16. Mar Ramzi Garmo,
Archbishop of Tehran
17. Mar Gabriel Kassab,
Archbishop of Basra

5. Mar Stephane Babaca,
Retired Archbishop of Arbil
6. Mar Hanna Kello,
Bishop of Amadia and Zakho
7. Mar Bawai Soro,
Bishop of Seattle,
General Secretary of CIRED
8. Mar Meelis Zaia,
Bishop of Australia and New
Zealand, Secretary of Holy Synod
9. Mar Emmanuel Emmanuel,
Bishop of Canada
10. Mar Odisho Oraham,
Bishop of Europe

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