

THE GOD-MAN

**AN ENGAGEMENT WITH THE THEOLOGY
OF ATHANASIUS OF ALEXANDRIA, ITS
GENESIS AND IMPACT**

by

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Abstract

This dissertation sets the Christology of Athanasius of Alexandria in the context of its sources, and evaluates its reception up to the Council of Chalcedon. His well-known emphasis upon the Son's divinity is shown to be underpinned and counterpointed by a theological integration of *creatio ex nihilo* into his Christology. Recognizing the lack of continuity between the soul and divine being, Athanasius insisted upon the need for an ontological understanding of mediation, a project opposed by Arius. This dissertation demonstrates that the influence of *Contra Gentes / De Incarnatione*'s dynamic emphasis upon the Logos's divine identity, is evident in both miaphyostatic and dyohyostatic Christological trajectories, and that different aspects of the Athanasian corpus are responsible for multi-dimensional Christological developments. The impact of Athanasius is shown by a re-evaluation of Apollinarius, and in an exploration of the development of Christological language in Antiochene and Alexandrian Christologies of the fifth century. The motif of ontological mediation and relation of both natures in the God-Man in these diverse contexts demonstrates that Athanasius's resolution was pivotal in subsequent Christian theology.

Dedicated in gratitude to

Frances Young

Here have I seen things rare and profitable;

Things pleasant, dreadful; things to make me stable

In what I have began to take in hand:

Then let me think on them and understand

Wherefore they shewed me was, and let me be

Thankful, O good interpreter, to thee.

John Bunyan, *The Pilgrim's Progress*, Part 1 (1976:44).

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Finally, and no-doubt idealistically, I also hope that this study encourages continued lively theological conversation and re-assessment of Athanasius and the struggles of this period, and a commitment to an authentic Christian unity, which respects the significance of local traditions, but assents to a living community of doctrine, service and love with a vibrant, diverse unity.

Andrew Teal

Pembroke College Oxford and Ripon College Cuddesdon

Ash Wednesday / St David's day, 2006

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Abbreviations

Abbreviations conform to S. Schwertner (ed.), *Abkürzungsverzeichnis der Theologische Realenzyklopädie* (Berlin/New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1994) except the following:

- ACO* *Acta Conciliorum Œcumenicorum*, eds. E. Schwarz & R. Reidinger, 1910-24. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter.
- ANF* *The Writings of the Fathers down to A.D. 325: Ante-Nicene Fathers*, ed. A. C. Coxe (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, ²1995, reprint of American edition of 1887).
- BCP* 1969. *The Book of Common Prayer and Administration of the Sacraments and other Rites and Ceremonies of the Church, according to the Use of the Church of England [1662]*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- CCL* *Corpus Christianorum, Series Latina*, Turnhout.
- CSCO* *Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalum*. Louvain.
- JECS* *Journal of Early Christian Studies*, (Journal of the North American Patristics Society – formerly *The Second Century*), Baltimore, Maryland: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- JTS (NS)* *Journal of Theological Studies (New Series)*, Oxford.

- LXX Septuagint. Editio minor: duo volumina in uno, ed. A. Rahlfs (Athens: Biblikh Etairia / Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft).
- NH Nag Hammadi.
- NHL *The Nag Hammadi Library in English*, transl. by Members of the Coptic Gnostic Library Project of the Institute for Antiquity and Christianity, J. M. Robinson, director (Leiden: E.J.Brill, 1984).
- NPNFi *A Select Library of the Christian Church: Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers. First Series*, ed P Schaff (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 21995, reprint of American edition of 1886).
- NPNFii *A Select Library of the Christian Church: Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers. Second Series*, ed P Schaff and H Wace, (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 21995, reprint of American edition of 1890).
- OED *The Complete Oxford English Dictionary (Compact Edition)* (1989) Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- PG J. P. Migne, *Patrologiae cursus completes, series graeca*. 161 vols. Paris: 1857-1866.
- PL J. P. Migne, *Patrologiae cursus completes, series latina*. 221 vols. Paris: 1844-1864.
- SC *Sources Chrétiennes*. Paris.
- SJT *Scottish Journal of Theology*. Edinburgh: T & T Clark.

SP *Studia Patristica*. Papers presented at the Oxford Patristics Conference. Formerly Berlin, subsequently Oxford; Kalamazoo; latterly Leuven: Peeters.

TZF *Texte zur Forschung*. Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft.

ZNW *Zeitschrift für Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft*, Berlin.

Scriptural quotations and abbreviations in this dissertation are from the New Revised Standard Version [NRSV] of the Bible, unless indicated otherwise. Translations of patristic texts are my own unless otherwise stated. I have used Greek without transliteration in quotes and for technical terminology. Irenaeus's *Epideixis* and the *Book of Heracleides* are approached in English and French translation rather than Syriac editions. References in the text are cited in the Harvard style when a reference to secondary material is made, or when an ancient authority appears in a modern scholar's translation. References to primary material, or where there is a short discussion or debate about variant perspectives in secondary literature merits a footnote so as to be less intrusive to the flow of argument of the thesis. I have adopted the style of Edwards, 2002, which I consider to be an effective use of both methods without being inconsistent. In accordance with the University of Birmingham's notes on the arrangement of theses, footnotes are used both as references and as footnotes proper and so are sequentially numbered through the whole dissertation.

INTRODUCTION

a. The subject of this study and its context

Williams (2005) observes that historiography is never neutral. He suggests that the next phase of patristic study will be marked by an acute awareness of the distortions of historians of thought, and will be required to pursue scholars' constructions critically, with an eye to the impact of social and personal prejudices of scholarship. This dissertation is located in the area of the history and development of theological ideas. Whilst it would be improperly narcissistic to offer an analysis of my own socio-economic, theological and personal prejudices, it is appropriate to outline explicitly the ways in which this study took shape and so offer a narrative as to how the research area developed into a specific study of divine mediation in and through the God-Man.

An interest in the notion of divine mediation was the genesis of this research in 1998. Athanasius of Alexandria's well-known aphoristic climax to his *De Incarnatione* (hereafter *DI*), Ἀὐτὸς γὰρ ἴσχυον ἠνθρώπων, ἵνα ἡμεῖς γεποιοῦμεν (*DI* 54:3, Kannengiesser, 1973:458) as described in Young (1983) had fascinated me since encountering it as an undergraduate. It provoked a desire to explore the place and dynamic of the conception of salvation in Christian descriptions of mediation. In particular, this became focused upon how and why talk of "divinisation" was connected with networks of descriptions of Christology, creation, and humanity.

R. P. C. Hanson's work, *The Search for the Christian Doctrine of God*, revealed the complexity and diversity of the struggle to find a language with the greatest capacity to speak of the Christian God during the fourth century "Arian" crises. An interest in assessing the roles of Athanasius and Arius in this controversy expanded into a desire to explore the impact each had in subsequent Christological debate. Arius's initial role in focusing the question, however, soon gave way to a general rejection of his theology. No-one, no matter how critical their theology of Nicaea and *Ἐμμοῦσίσις*, sought to be cast as a "new Arius", whereas in the playing-out of later Christological controversies, the part of the "new Athanasius" was a desired role. The research thus expanded to desire to assess the *impact* of Athanasius's thought. This is reflected in the form of this dissertation. Athanasius occupies central place, but the significance of his contribution requires an examination of the issues in figures before Athanasius, and an evaluation of his contribution requires an assessment of his impact in succeeding Christological debate. The research area thus began to explore how the divine and the created were construed Christocentrically in Athanasius, and how (and why) this achievement eventually becomes paradigmatic.

Further significant factors gave dynamism and direction to the research represented in this thesis. My supervisor, Professor Frances Young, suggested that a distinctive aspect of this dissertation might be achieved by approaching Athanasius archaeologically rather than chronologically – that is, observing from primary texts *after* Athanasius how he was evaluated as a Christological authority and working backwards to Athanasius and his context. The advantages of this method in the research stage of this dissertation were significant. It revealed the

enormity of the contrast between the canonization of Athanasius as a measure of Orthodoxy (especially in Cyril of Alexandria) with the difficult reception of his Christological construction in the fourth century. This methodology highlighted the inharmonious clashes in the process of Christological development. By the time of Theodoret – which was my starting point – it was clear that there had been a cultural reconstruction of Christological arguments, which themselves played out (as it were) themes from earlier debates. The “reverse methodology” thus highlighted that the hagiographical viewpoints around Chalcedon had emerged from a starting point that was more bleak and complex than later assessments allowed.

Working backwards revealed the *drama* of Christological development in the fourth and fifth centuries – highlighting many ironies at the assumptions and reconstructions in the process of constructing doctrine. But a problem with this method emerged, namely that working from identified *later* perspectives led to a tendency to find what later generations said was there in earlier texts, leading to an anachronistic reading of the whole. When this became apparent (especially in important cases, for example, of Ἐμμοῦσίσις and πρὸς ὄσων) it was increasingly difficult to write with clarity. Because of the difficulty of establishing a “voice” with which to analyse and evaluate the complex processes of development in reverse, a chronological method was re-adopted, so that debates around significant developments might be discussed with less scope for confusion.

Other secondary material which motivated the centrality of Athanasius and the appropriateness of focusing upon the theme of mediation and its implications for

descriptions of divine and human being included the inaugural lecture of F. L. Cross, given on 1st December, 1944 in Oxford, in the dark days of the Second World War, conveying a passion to evaluate Athanasius by scholars of all nations after international conflict had ceased. T. F. Torrance's unusual study *The Trinitarian Faith* (1997) likewise conveyed an energy in these ancient textual disputes to witness to the peculiarities and nuances of Christian conceptions of mediation and salvation. Alongside Hanson's magisterial *Search* (1988) – though very different in genre - both communicate the magnitude of the significance of Athanasius's provocation to conventional Christological assumptions, set as they were in a hierarchical Platonism of late Antiquity.

Another major reading of Athanasius, Anatolios's *Athanasius: the coherence of his thought* (1998) located Athanasius in the worlds of Middle Platonism (*sic*), Judaism and especially the Biblical approach of Irenaeus of Lyons. This work provided both an approach to test and an agenda, using mediation to focus the genesis and impact of Athanasius's Christological discussion. Anatolios's reading achieves a convincing description of Athanasius's thought, an exploration of mediation might evaluate the influence of the Patriarch's Christological achievements. This thesis therefore tests Anatolios's argument, particularly that the Patriarch hones his native Alexandrian theological tradition through his engagement with the Biblical theology of Irenaeus of Lyons. The first Chapter of this thesis explores some Christological norms Athanasius inherited, leading to an evaluation of his transformation of them.

Frances Young's challenging 1997 study *Biblical Exegesis and the Formation of Christian Culture* has had an important impact on the form of patristic endeavour – especially in locating exegetical discussions of the Arian conflicts and the Christological Controversies in the context of the creation of cultural readings of the period. Athanasius's Christology becomes identified centrally with the struggle to establish a Nicene Trinitarian *culture* as his legacy. The task of testing these emerging evaluations, and of resisting a reduction of them into a singular sweep (as I believe is a tendency in recent important readings relevant to this assessment by Ayres, 2004, and Wessel, 2004), is also an objective of this dissertation. The complexity of the issues is lost in such overviews, and because of this, the dissertation is pitched upon key primary texts to prevent a collapse of a multi-dimensional picture into an improperly "linear" reading. Moreover, the chief aim of the thesis is to establish, through this analysis, the degree of Athanasius's contribution to the development of Christology and the dynamic which mediation contributes to this.

b. The selection of texts in this study

With these objectives in mind, it is clear that a discursive and creatively connected style was required, both in terms of selecting appropriate texts, and in their use (see c, below). In part one, which explores some models of Christological construction before Athanasius, the discussion pivots on three characters: Justin Martyr, Irenaeus of Lyons, and Origen. In this section, texts are used to compose a theological *overture* highlighting key Christological questions and method. In the case of Justin, the two arenas of engagement with host and mother cultures are determining contexts for his method of

Christological explication in his *Apologies* and *Dialogue*. Additionally, because Justin marks the beginning of this study, this section is inevitably lengthy as issues and ideas are introduced for the first time. Irenaeus is explored primarily through his *Epideixis* (in translation) – because this is explicitly a brief Rule of Christian Faith and therefore more focused and positive, though reference is also made to his heresiological work (*AH*). Origen is explored through the *Peri Archon* and selections from other works in his corpus. But these explorations are restricted because of their place in the thesis to be more thematic in nature than sustained readings of texts.

A central section explores Athanasius' early dual tractate *Contra Gentes / De Incarnatione* (henceforth *CG-DI*) first, because this is recognized to have been an early work, and – as will emerge in the thesis – is a basis for a host of “Nicene” arrangements of doctrine – including that of Apollinarius. The second chapter in the Athanasian section explores the conflict with Arius as Athanasius reads it, and here may be observed a considerable degree of modification and clarification of terms, which are used more loosely in *CG-DI*. The anti-Arian literature is thus the prime material for chapter 3. It is here that a reading of Arius's Christology – as a contemporary Alexandrian theologian with Athanasius – is analysed.

In order to test the reception of Athanasius, Apollinarius has been selected as the writer to represent a reading of Athanasian Christology that will come to be rejected as heretical. This chapter will, however, attempt to show continuities between Apollinarius and Athanasius. Other examples of what has been coined

miahypostatic Christology – especially that of Marcellus – are more distant from the early Athanasius, being (in the case of Marcellus) at once more creative and more primitive – transforming an earlier Logos Christology, conceiving the Logos to be projected from God and ultimately re-assimilated. Apollinarius' *Kata Meros Pistis* (KMP), however, provides an example of post-Athanasian Christology – a reading from which Athanasius reluctantly distances himself.

The part of this thesis that took most editing and revision was the chapter analysing Cyril and Nestorius. It was difficult to break free from the fascinating and dark narrative of the period in order to look at each Patriarch's *theologies*. The correspondence between the characters remains a prime focus for this discussion, but there is a real need for an exploration of Nestorius's theology as being rooted in a reading of Athanasius. In seeking to show the influence of Athanasius on both parties, different dimensions of Athanasian thought are drawn out of Nestorius' argument. A recent important collection of essays edited by Thomas Weinandy and Daniel Keating, *St Cyril of Alexandria: a Critical Appreciation* offers a more nuanced and focused evaluation of Cyril's *thought*; this chapter attempts, in response to that example, a reading of Nestorius's Christology preserved in the *Book (or Bazaar) of Heracleides* (in French and English translation from the Syriac). The point of this chapter remains to evaluate the impact of Athanasius upon an emerging Christological location of mediation. Susan Wessel's 2004 study attempts to show that Cyril claimed Athanasius by rhetorical tropes, but the chapter in this dissertation urges that *theological* continuity with his predecessor marks the core of what Cyril is attempting to do, even if his methodological *Realpolitik* is multidimensional in its approach, using

rhetorical, political and ideological strategies. So, in depicting his rival as the new Arius, Cyril claimed to be the continuation of the heretic's nemesis, Athanasius – even though a key notion was grounded not upon an Athanasian but an Apollinarian text.

The final chapter evaluates the significance of Athanasius to the later Antiochene theological tradition by analysing the place of Athanasius in the text and theology of Theodoret of Cyrus. Both the text and citations (in the *florilegia*) of Theodoret's *Eranistes* are used to evaluate how Athanasius was claimed by the theological tradition most hostile to the later Alexandrian attempts to monopolize Athanasius. Theodoret is significant because, although Nestorius claims Athanasius for his Christological arguments, Theodoret does so in a measured, and referenced way – even if some of his citations are from texts now established to be deuterio-Athanasian (as was the case with Cyril). This does not matter in this context because there is no suggestion that Theodoret manufactured this attribution. Attribution at this point is evidence enough of the reputation of Athanasius in the discussion.

This thesis therefore attempts to establish, by a focused exploration of the Christological worlds of significant figures before and after him, that Athanasius begets and drives Christological controversy uniquely in the fourth and fifth centuries. His early articulations in the *CG-DI* require further explication in the *Contra Arianos* where he makes sophisticated Christological accommodation for a shift in the hierarchical schematization of mediation.

By focusing upon Athanasius's impact and reception, this dissertation describes a shift in an understanding of divine mediation which necessitated an accommodation by traditional (mostly Logos-) Christologies. Late Antiquity's underlying assumption that despite different orders of being there was an overlapping hierarchy enabling formal participation under strict conditions is rendered inappropriate by the acceptance of *creatio ex nihilo*. At the outset of the fourth century, there is an unbreachable gulf between the divine and the created, a description most explicitly articulated in the Christology of Arius. Athanasius's acceptance of this gulf is as radical as his solution – salvation and mediation are only properly construed as the coming together of creatureliness and divinity in the Christ – the God-Man.

c. Mode and genre of this dissertation

The selection of key texts, and the thematic connection of these throughout this study, places this dissertation in the realm of the history of theological ideas, rather than history proper, or the establishment of a key text with critical apparatus, or detailed exegesis of texts. A reconstructive methodology is required to identify continuities and to establish differences not just between texts, but between the worlds of these texts. Consequently exegetical analysis gives way to a tentative exploration of the environment of each text. This requires a methodology which is reconstructive and possibly, at times, conjectural. There remain difficulties – it cannot be assumed, for example, by the mere existence of these texts, that there is any formal connection or causality in the realm of ideas. Neither can this difficulty be resolved by detailed exegesis, nor a more general “opencast-mining” model of establishing a generalized overview. An analogy appropriate to this dissertation's style is one employed in a conversation with the

late Professor J. Neville Birdsall: that of sinking mineshafts into the theological topography to identify where the strata are at given points in time. This method allows some evaluation of the layers and development of Christologies. This accounts for the sense of an overarching or theological evaluation of the texts in this dissertation. It is acknowledged that the cost of this approach is that it sacrifices close exegesis for a broader, thematic analysis, using the evidence to build up a systematic picture rather than to engage in specific textual arguments. The justification for this is that this essay is primarily concerned with observing the history of religious ideas, and Athanasius's place in the emergent models of speaking of God's connection with creation. Clearly these descriptions are grounded in the texts selected, but Athanasius remains the lens through which these are read.

d. The particular contributions of this study

An evaluation of Athanasius, whose reputation was formed by the conflict with Arius and who embodied this conflict in his long episcopate and exiles, is best achieved when set in a longer-term context – from second-century attempts to articulate Christology, until the preservation of the tensions inherent in Christological description at Chalcedon.

The bringing together of these texts and the worlds they represent establish the centrality of Athanasius in the emergence and honing of Nicene Christological description. The thesis highlights in particular his contribution in establishing a place for *creatio ex nihilo* in Christology in opposition to Arius's pattern based upon the assertion that "there was when the Logos was not". Athanasius uses the themes of created nature and eternal being in a counterpoint. This is re-

presented with many variations in succeeding Christologies of the fourth and fifth centuries, but all depend upon Athanasius's attainment. In particular, it is argued that Athanasius's language in *CG-DI* begat Apollinarian theology, as well as providing the archetype to which Cyril appeals in his arguments with Nestorius, while also being a foundation for Nestorius's position, and an authority to the Antiochene tradition of Theodoret in a more nuanced way. Athanasius's centrality in the process, and the reception and manipulation of the patterns in *CG-DI* throughout the period provides a different approach and perspective to Ayres's 2004 *Nicaea and its Legacy*. He writes

Major texts by authors are not extensively considered where their influence is hard to trace. Thus the reader will look in vain for any extended treatment of Athanasius' *On the Incarnation*: but the same reader will also look in vain for any substantive evidence that this treatise had any effect on the later fourth-century readers I discuss. (2004:5).

It is hoped that the reader may find satisfactory evidence of this influence in this dissertation.

PART ONE

**CHRISTOLOGICAL CASTINGS IN A PLATONIC
MOULD**

THE RELATION BETWEEN DIVINE BEING AND CREATED
NATURE IN CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY BEFORE ATHANASIUS OF
ALEXANDRIA

**CHAPTER ONE: A CONSTRUCT AND ITS ORIGINS:
THE CONTOURS AND DYNAMICS OF CHRISTOLOGY BEFORE
ATHANASIOS.**

The greater one's ability to place theologies within the traditions that nurtured them, the better one understands their dynamic (Ayres, 2004:20).

1:1 Introduction: The backcloths of pre-Nicene Christology

Christology attempts to depict the work and person of Jesus Christ in terms accessible to the concepts of the intellectual and religious worlds in which it is constructed. After introducing some key texts which were powerful in forging the cosmological and theological emphases of late Antique Christianity, this chapter focuses upon the work of three figures in order to show how fundamental theological questions – and different patterns of responses to them – emerged around the issue of the relation or mediation of God to creation, and, in particular, the *Christological* location of that connection. The purpose of such an enterprise is to set questions Athanasios addresses directly in contexts which illustrate the significance of his construction of a coherency in the struggles after Nicaea. Conversely, they will also illustrate the cost of his achievement in terms of the statement of Christian faith less in terms of engaging or transforming narrative and more in terms of processed interrelated ideas.

Part one is, therefore, not a systematic description of the second and third century contexts of Athanasius but, rather, sketches other attempts to move from part-processed theological narrative into a language of more systematic scope (Williams, 2001).

This dissertation explores critically the role of these questions in the Arian or Nicene battles of the fourth century, and their continuation in the so-called Christological controversies up until the Council of Chalcedon. Exploring the evolution and development of ideas in their relation one to another, the purpose of Part 1 is to identify key theological trajectories cohering around Christology, often discussing or reflecting upon assumptions about, divine mediation in the Son.

To avoid a generalised depiction of intellectual, theological and social milieux, providing at best a pastiche of imagery, connecting figures have been selected to focus this background. The Christian appropriation and application of cultural philosophical assumptions in theological texts is particularly evident in the discussion of attempts to account for the relation of Father and Son before Athanasius. The aim of this explication of themes is to demonstrate the distinctiveness (in terms of theological articulation and content) expressed in the *CG-DI*. After resistance and competing interpretations of the Christology of this central figure, Athanasius eventually becomes appropriated by all sides as the archetype of orthodox Christology in the mid fifth century – even if *what* he is saying is still a matter of heated debate as late as Theodoret.

Three figures from the history of early Christianity through whom assumptions and explicit theological arguments may be more readily identified, are selected to expose something of the models of Christological method before Athanasius. They are Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, Bishop of Lyons, and Origen of Alexandria.

Before commencing an exploration of these theologies, it is appropriate to justify their choice as representatives of Christian thought before Nicaea by elucidating some significant connections between these figures.

Each experienced cultural fluidity, negotiating degrees of dislocation in their life and theology: Justin's origins, though Roman in culture, were Samaritan in terms of his formative years; Irenaeus, originally from Asia minor became bishop of the Church at Lyons after persecution (which may itself have been rooted in cultural suspicion); Origen's difficulties with the patriarch of Alexandria accounted for his migration from his home to Caesarea. The theologies of each of these figures, then, were worked-out in relation to a hostile state and the pressing needs of their communities. Each knew persecution first hand, and ministered among communities experiencing martyrdom. They shared a fundamental response: each articulated their concern to reject Gnostic theodicies. Though it will be observed that they differ in their descriptions of creation, they exhibit a common refusal to respond to persecution with any concomitant rejection of creation as merely entropic.

There are also, of course, significant differences, which are valuable to register a diversity of theological perspective in the period. Their contexts were contrasting: Justin taught in Rome in the early second century, Irenaeus wrote in the late second-century as bishop of Lyons, whereas Origen's massive theological outpourings have both Alexandrian and Palestinian settings in the first half of the third century. The use of these three figures therefore provides enough diversity to allow an evaluation of the chronological and topographical differences in early Christian understanding of mediation.

Moreover in terms of justifying their presence in a thesis focused primarily upon Athanasius, there is a yet more significant reason to explore the context through them. In all probability, there is connection between all three figures and Athanasius, which is important in an exploration of his expression of mediation as a central theological and Christological concept. Athanasius knew Justin probably mediated through Irenaeus (Behr, 1997:11-14). Droge (2006:238) argues that Celsus may well have responded to Justin – making Justin a more significant and provocative figure than has often been allowed, and providing a link with Origen.¹ Athanasius read Irenaeus with a characteristically Alexandrian interpretation. Irenaeus' *Adversus Haereses (AH)* was a valuable tool in forming the shape of Alexandrian Christianity (Anatolios, 2004:2), whose work was sought in that province “not long after the ink was dry on the author's manuscript” (Roberts, 1979:54 in Anatolios, 2004:243). Yet Irenaeus was received by Athanasius through the spectacles of a specifically Origenian hermeneutic

¹ The possibility that Celsus was responding to Justin, suggested more than a century ago by Elysée Pélagaud, was argued at considerable length by Carl Andresen in his magisterial *Logos und Nomos* of 1955 (fn.: Especially pp.345-372). Andresen has convincingly shown that Celsus employed the same strategy as Justin, although with completely opposite results. Droge, 2006:238-239.

(Anatolios, 2001:463, 465, 469). A critical examination of their assumptions about mediation, evident in their Christological constructs, illuminates the significance of Athanasius' contribution in *CG-DI*, and thereafter – with some self-conscious and urgent explication – in the *Contra Arianos (CA)*. If Athanasius did not manage a synthesis of Irenaeus biblical theology with the Alexandrian philosophical tradition (which was, after all, no-where his stated intention), he does at least provide a model of Christology working within certain set boundaries, a model which works by reference and movement within those margins rather than as a linear or monolithic dogmatic system. The fact that he further refines his model after weaknesses in his manner of describing the person of the Son in *CG-DI* were exposed in the fourth century conflicts, as well as extending this discussion to include the Spirit in his later writings, bears witness to one working by referential connection (like Irenaeus and Origen). Before turning to explore the texts of these figures in a sustained manner, it will prove useful to set their agendas in the broader room of late-antique philosophy.

1:2 Platonic moulds for the casting of ideas of Mediation in Christian Theology before Nicaea

Christological speculations are traceable in the New Testament, but it is not until Platonism begins to organize these that it is appropriate to speak of a conceptual model. Crucial for the development of that model are particular strands in the early material. Dunn (1996) draws attention to one strand, perceived as provocative to contemporary monotheistic mind-sets, and which has an impact in the “two powers in heaven” controversy of the Rabbinic period as well as Christological development. Whether this was a form of bi-theism as caricatured

by the authors of the Rabbinic writings, or a form of dualism which finds most extensive description in Gnostic material (Dunn, 1996:80f, after Segal, 1977) is less significant than its witness to a concern to “protect” the divinity of God and the creatureliness of humanity and yet allow authentic mediation and participation.

One significant force in the development of attempts to allow such mediation is an extension of conventional Wisdom language from periphrastic or reverential speech, (which sought to protect the transcendence of God) into a more ontologically hypostasised sense. This elevation of wisdom, personified as Sophia, can be seen in *Sapientia* (*The Wisdom of Solomon*, probably an Alexandrian work of around 50BCE (Wright, 1992: 510)). Here, Sophia is very near to God, perhaps even the sole aspect of God intelligible to humanity:

For in wisdom there is a spirit intelligent [noerÒn] and holy, unique [monogenšj] in its kind, yet made up of many parts, subtle, free-moving, lucid, spotless, clear, invulnerable (*or*, working no harm), loving what is good, eager, unhindered, beneficent, kindly towards men, steadfast, unerring... For wisdom moves more easily than motion itself, she pervades and permeates all things because she is so pure. Like a fine mist she rises from the power of God, a pure effluence from the glory of the Almighty [çpÒrroia tÁj toà pantokr£toroj dÒxhj e„likrin»j].²

² Wisdom of Solomon 7:22b-25a, LXX.

The quasi-materialistic description of the spiritual nature of Sophia, here, as interesting as it is (perhaps as a means of subordination to the absolute divine being), is of less significance than the assertion that Sophia is an *emanation* or *spiritual manifestation* of God:

Right from the book of Job, Sophia had been radically related to God. Now her connection is expressed in a manner that even goes beyond “begetting” (Prov. 8:22) or “coming forth from God’s mouth” (Sir. 24:3). As R. E. Murphy says, in a sort of effusion, radiation, or emanation from the divinity, she emerges as a “reflection” or “mirror image” of God (O’Collins, 1999:28).³

This provocative picture opens the possibility for new spiritualities and theologies, which counterbalance absolute monotheism, or mediate the awesome transcendence of God – such a model of projection and ultimate divine recapitulation motivate creative Logos theologies like those of Marcellus. The cosmological consequences of such a picture of the mediation of God’s purposes through Sophia remain normative in patterns of salvation and cosmology grouped as ‘gnostic’. Influenced by a powerful mixture of despair and hopelessness about the human condition, energized by notions of transcendence and an adoption of the near-universal belittling of the material creation to the superior, “spiritual” realm, Sophia emerges as the first cause of the moulder of matter, the Demiurge. But this model also accounts for why neither Arius nor Athanasius in their contested readings of Prov. 8:22, for example, think to note

³ O’Collins cites R E Murphy, *The Tree of Life*, here, p.144, but gives no further reference for this citation.

that Scripture speaks of Sophia *not* the Logos, as their conceptual currency – in contrast to some Gnostic models – requires an *identification* of the two. This, indeed, was to a great extent and in different ways the achievement of Justin, Irenaeus and Origen.

Varied forms of Gnostic mythology in the *NHC* demonstrate that amid great diversity, common theological concerns are presented: (i) the connection between cosmology and theology, (ii) consequently, a clear relation of the *person* of the Mediator to that of the Creator and Redeemer is articulated, (iii) the nature of that mediation must be explicated - located in the codices in the gnostics' life. As a whole, the texts are evidence that the engagement with "Gnostic" forms of early Christian doctrinal explication⁴ prompted Justin Martyr,⁵ Irenaeus,⁶ and Origen (among others) to clarify the relation of Old to New Covenant, committing themselves to a Christian cosmology, and to a recapitulative understanding of creation and redemption, sensitive enough to the dynamics of a living tradition, rich in texture, but consonant with the Judaeo-Christian tradition's ambiguity towards the material creation. Gnostic texts evidence that Irenaeus, for example, formulated recapitulation as a response to the soteriologically-focused (if alienated) re-workings of the Genesis material in the *NH* accounts. This is seen

⁴ Walter Bauer provocatively asserted Gnostic thought to be the most widespread and earliest forms of Egyptian Christianity. W Bauer, *Orthodoxy and Heresy in Earliest Christianity*, (translated & edited R A Kraft, et al, Philadelphia, 1977: 44-53. Bauer's view is called into question by Colin H Roberts, *Manuscript, Society and Belief in Early Christianity* (The Schweich Lectures of the British Academy for 1977), London, 1979, urging that the earliest papyrus evidence is third century. See the review of viewpoints in Birger A Pearson, "Earliest Christianity in Egypt: Some Observations", chapter 8 of Birger A Pearson & James E Goehring, eds, *The Roots of Egyptian Christianity: Studies in Antiquity & Christianity*, Philadelphia, 1986 (pb1992)

⁵ Eve-Mary parallelism is explored in Justin Martyr, *Dial.*100, below.

⁶ Eg *AH* III.30.1, 32.1, 21.10, 22.4, V.19.1, and *Demonstration of the Apostolic Teaching*, 32-4 cited below.

in an example from Irenaeus which, in contrast to the complex mythology, and tainted view of matter, asks:

But whence, then, was the substance of the first-formed? From the will and wisdom of God, and from virgin earth - "For God had not caused it to rain," says Scripture before man was made, "and there was no man to till the ground." (Gen.2:5). So, from this [earth], while it was still virgin, God "took mud from the earth and fashioned man" (Gen.2:7), the beginning (ἀρχή) of mankind. Thus, the Lord, recapitulating this man, received the same arrangement (ὁμοίωμα) of embodiment (σάρκωσις) as this one, being born from the Virgin by the will and wisdom of God; that he might also demonstrate the likeness of embodiment (σάρκωσις) to Adam, and might become the man, written in the beginning "according to the image and likeness of God" (Gen 1:26) (*Epideixis* 32, Behr, 1997:61).

Like Irenaeus, Arius's self-understanding may have been that of one who sought to maintain the Church's *regula fidei* against what he saw as Sabellian speculation. But Arius seeks to emphasize the goodness of creation, willed by God the Father, with a cosmological role for the *created* mediator. The Logos, created in the beginning of God's works, is the means of creation and salvation, offering both the loving purposes of God, and an ethical pattern of creaturely obedience. This provokes Athanasius's lengthy response in the *CA* – not least to

clarify his own position – seeking to establish a proper, core mediatorial role for the Logos in creation.

NHL contains a diverse variety of forms of Gnostic mythology, both in terms of literary genre and ideological framework, evidence that there were patterns of description of the relationship between God and the world that differ radically from the emergent Christian tradition. However, their survival into the fourth century as part of a Pachomian monastic tradition, is evidence that there is a significant hang-over into the time of Arius and Athanasius, and that the Gnostic conflict was not merely a past controversy. Both theologians engage critically with it and it gives substance to the urgency of their attempts to apply *creatio ex nihilo* to Christology albeit in very different ways. The library reveals why Justin Martyr, Irenaeus and Origen – among others – in different styles strove to clarify the relation of Old and New Covenants, and committed themselves to cosmologies which did not pitch Creator against Redeemer. Though the results are significantly different, a recapitulative understanding of creation and redemption proves an important motif in Athanasius's approach to the relation of God to creation in Christ.

Meanwhile – Tertullian notwithstanding – Platonism provided a more satisfactory conceptual model. The text which was to become a dominant hermeneutical lens

through which Plato was read in late antiquity, was the *Timaeus*⁷. *Timaeus*'s attraction, particularly to Christian reflections upon creation, is striking:

The splendid vision of a mathematically ordered world modelled after the eternal, paradigmatic Forms – a work of art conceived and executed by a supremely wise and good deity – was received as the fitting climax of Plato's transcendental philosophy and commended itself to generations of theologians of the early Christian era as philosophical corroboration of their own creation theologies (Zeyl, 2000:xiv).

However, the picture of divinity and its relation to the cosmos offered in the *Timaeus* is also problematic for Christian theology. Leaving aside a readjustment in the dating of the *Timaeus* in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries so that it may no longer be assumed to represent the chronological climax of Plato's theological cosmology,⁸ there is a real controversy concerning the nature and perspective of apparently theistic language in the *Timaeus*: in particular, whether the language is literal (imagining an objectively real divine being), or analogical or metaphorical, where theistic language is merely used as a communicative teaching stratagem (Zeyl, 2000: xx-xxv).

In the Late Antique context, Zeyl argues for a predominantly *analogical* reading of the creation story among academicians:

⁷ Zeyl's text (2000) is used here. The conventional numeration for references, is followed by page numbers from this edition. Zeyl comments "From late antiquity onward... the *Timaeus* enjoyed a position of preeminence among Plato's works... it was virtually the only work of Plato's that had been translated into Latin" by Cicero (106-43BCE), and subsequently." *Ibid.*, xiv.

⁸ For a thorough review see Zeyl, 2000:xvi-xx.

The Neoplatonist Proclus (412-85 C.E.) reports that Xenocrates' student and successor Crantor perpetuated the metaphorical view, which appears to have been the dominant one among subsequent generations of Platonists down to the time of Plotinus (204/5-70 C.E.), though the literal view was also maintained by at least two eminent Platonists of the first and second centuries C.E., Plutarch and Atticus. (Zeyl, 2000:xxi).

A Christianized reading of the *Timaeus* – such as Justin's – may have tapped into the literal, more theistic comprehension of creation, or, indeed, have contributed to it, and thus reflected real philosophical debate. It may be the case, also, that the popularity of a literalist reading of the *Timaeus* exploited in Christian apologetic, confirmed the Academics' metaphorical preference as a cultured despising of theistic readings, in a manner not dissimilar to the Christian utilization of the *Septuagint* led to its abandonment by the Jewish community.

Moreover, *Timaeus* is far from unambiguous concerning the precise ontology of the Demiurge. *Timaeus* 27d5 – 47e2 (Zeyl, 2000:13-36) establishes, firstly, that the most fundamental distinction is not between spiritual or material existence, but between *being* and *becoming*.

We must begin by making the following distinction: What is *that which always is* and has no becoming, and what is *that which becomes* but never is? (27d. Zeyl, 2000:13).

In *Timaeus*, time is a function of creation, and has a beginning: it marks, in the created dimension, another parameter to locate and determine existent things. The world of time is inferior to the changeless perfection of eternity, but is a good copy of it: creation, for all its subordination to the eternal, is very good:

[W]henever the craftsman [δημιουργὸς] looks at what is always changeless and, using a thing of that kind as his model, reproduces its form and character, then, of necessity, all that he so completes is beautiful. (28a. Zeyl, 2000:14).

The Demiurge's nature and motives ensure that the created world is good: a continuum of benevolence and goodness pervades the cosmos. Gnostic thought introduces a breach by ascribing malicious intent to the Demiurge. For Plato, however, there is no place for such a neurotic perception of creation. He asks rhetorically:

Now why did he who framed this whole universe of becoming frame it? ... He was good, and one who is good can never become jealous of anything. And so, being free of jealousy, he wanted everything to become as much like himself as was possible... so he took over all that was visible – not at rest but in discordant and disorderly motion – and brought it from a state of disorder to one of order. (29e-30a; Zeyl, 2000:15).

In *Timaeus*, this fundamental goodness is essential in Plato's attempt to harmonize the layers of subordination to the real eternal vision (the eternal divine Being, or the truly divine forms, which the Demiurge copies). A non-literalist

interpretation might read the copying of eternal forms as analogical: but the *drama* of the story depends upon an actual sense of dislocation and beyondness. Divine perfection is viewed with longing from a distance as that which the Demiurge is not. The unchangeableness of the eternal is conveyed *by* this sense of distance, and combined with the good motives and capacity of the Demiurge, a means of connecting the universe intelligibly is offered:

Now surely it's clear to all that it was the eternal model he looked at, for, of all the things that have come to be, our world is the most beautiful, and of causes the craftsman is the most excellent. This, then, is how it has come to be: it is a work of craft, modeled after that which is changeless and is grasped by a rational account, that is, by wisdom. (29a. Zeyl, 2000:14).

Plato's hermeneutic, then, is that creation is intelligible, and so, by extension, are the Demiurge and the transcendental eternal truths comprehensible. Plato's method in philosophy – a method Justin will apply to theological hermeneutics – is through an intellectual appropriation of eternal truths from the order of creation,⁹ thus establishing fundamental accessibility or overlap between created and creator, the temporal and the eternal.

This method is clearly dependent upon a vision of a universe with a graduated system of connections, a Monist cosmology which can contain in its hierarchical order the Cosmos, gods and humanity in communion. The mathematical order of the created world applies to the intellectual and the spiritual. Divinity is equally distributed throughout the universe in its *World-Soul* (Dillon, 2005). So as well as

⁹ Note the role of this argument in Cicero, *De Natura Deorum*, II:129-130.

being conducive to Christian self-expression, this cosmological-theological model is problematic. The hierarchy of being, as well as the means for the pedagogical improvement of matter by order, and creatures so that they may be more like the Creator – a sort of moral or developmental *apotheosis* – has a gulf which it would appear that even the Demiurge may not bridge apart from his capacity to contemplate the still distinct eternal forms. This gulf is bridged only by an underlying assumption that there is an ontological kinship consisting of a dispersed “divinity” copied into the realm of becoming – this is a different form of transcendence from the Biblical tradition (articulated in Young, 1991). This communion or kinship is characterised by a noetic or intellectual participation (Dillon, 2005; Bremmer, 2005). Above the gulf is Mystery and absence of change. Despite the conflict with the Judaeo-Christian tradition, it does have sufficient parallels to contribute to subsequent complex descriptions and debates of the relation of the ineffable Father to the creating and redeeming Son, as well as questions of the nature of the soul’s origin.

Even in the context of a Platonic hierarchy of existence, conceptually there remains space between the Being beyond all participation and a dispersed divine nature in which all things participate. The Demiurge might be said to occupy this space and, whilst standing distinct from absolute and immanent divine natures, is a mediator who has copied his true vision into the capacities of matter by his handiwork. His power and supremacy is limited, however, to the ordered cosmos, and even then governed by and subject to the transcendent:

The creation of the world takes place on the basis of this principle of necessary unity, and it is for this reason that the creator does not

simply choose to but *must* make the world spherical, since the spherical shape is that of unity, and thus of perfection. (Zizioulas, 1997: 29 [fn 4]).

This imprecision and fluidity enables the possibilities in Late Antiquity of either equating the Demiurge with Being or God *in toto*, or seeing the Demiurge as a deÚteroj qeÒj, or the summation of all the dispersed divinity in the cosmos, the basilikÒj LÒgoj.¹⁰ Dillon (1977:265-303) argues that in late Antiquity despite the decline of Stoic materialism, the emergence of a personal or theistic religious view is anachronistic. Though there was an increasing tendency towards transcendence (for example in Albinus), who described the ideas as God's own thoughts, true divinity, is QeÒj, or Ð prËtoj noàj, clearly *distinct from the Demiurge*, and described in apophatic terms as ¥rrhtoj, indescribable so certainly never subject to human *definition*.¹¹ This imprecise location of the Demiurge's nature gives rise to the possibility of describing true Being as the *beyond-Being* God (in contrast to the Demiurge who is responsible for the realm of becoming). Plato's emphasis, as we have seen, is, however, on the *beyond-Becoming* Divine Being. Nonetheless, this

¹⁰ Jean Daniélou [1973:109] comments on *Timaeus* 28c: "It is undoubtedly the popularity of this text in Middle Platonism which explains the constant quotation of it by Christian writers, but they are also indebted to the same source for their exegesis. In Plato himself the words refer to the Demiurge, who is distinct from the Good; but in Middle Platonism the two are identified – the Creator is also the supreme God. This much is clear even from the variant forms of the quotation: in place of the pat¼r ka^ point»j of Plato, Albinus writes tÕ timiètatou ¥gaqon, and Apuleius qeÒj. Numenius alone distinguishes the Father, who is the first God, from the Demiurge, who is the second (Eusebius, *Praep. Evang.* XI, 18, 1-2)." Andresen, 1952-3:157, evaluates Justin as having a dependency upon Middle Platonism's tendency towards a religious reading of Plato and the concomitant "unmaterializing" of Stoicism, rather than his contribution to a recasting in a personally "literal" theistic sense. Ragnar Holte indicates that Christianity may have been despised by philosophers because it was seen to be a part of the process of popularizing Plato in a personal, theistic religious sense. (Holte, R., 1958:109-168.) On the genre of the apologists' work, cf. Edwards, M., Goodman, M., & Price, S., (in association with C. Rowland) (eds.): 1999.

¹¹ Albinus, *Didaskalios*, 10 (edition of C. F. Hermann, *Platonis Dialogi VI* (1853)) in May 1994;4 fn. 15.

gulf, which Gnostic theology exploited,¹² and to which Justin alludes, is something Origen also addresses creatively as he offers a resolution in the *eternal* generation of the Logos. In *Timaeus*, however

That the supreme god of Plato's cosmos should wear the mask of a manual worker is a triumph of the philosophical imagination over ingrained social prejudice... this divine mechanic is not a drudge. He is an artist or, more precisely, what an artist would have to be in Plato's conception of art: not the inventor of new form, but the imposer of pre-existing form on as yet formless material. (Vlastos, 1975:26-27).

Although god of the Cosmos, the Demiurge takes his place in a hierarchy which might be depicted thus:

¹² The psychological investment of fury at the Demiurge in Gnostic texts is striking, suggestive of a sense of betrayal by the creator, (so Grant, 27ff) and described as a "madness" by C. Saldanha 1984:37: "Gnosticism... epitomized the decadence and corruption of that same philosophy. Gnosticism was, in fact, a form of paganism – Greek ideas had gone mad and masquerading in the disguise of borrowed doctrines." This reading of Gnosis is not dissimilar from the method of heresiologists in deriving it from the antithesis of revelation, and is far from a more nuanced appreciation of its Jewish-Christian roots. Grant's perspective remains convincing in that only the dramatic conversion of those who once viewed the Demiurge as good and loving really accounts for the bitterness of their position and reading of Scripture.

The realm of Divine Being: The Demiurge may contemplate this but does not appear to participate ontologically in the Divine vision

cwrismÒj or *Gulf bridged only intellectually, by the Demiurge's longing contemplative vision or frÒnhsij*



The Demiurge, *who (or which) has the capacity both to contemplate Being and to order matter making*



the Universe, and the world of becoming, including time as one of the ordered boundaries, with the divine World-Soul evenly distributed throughout it; *as part of this oikoumene are*



the gods who come after the creation of matter into spherical imitations of perfection, but to whom delegated responsibilities of the creation and education of humanity are given; who synergistically participate in the creation of



humanity and



all creation

In this *schema*, the symbol between each level beneath the Demiurge, \updownarrow , is taken to represent constant, mathematically-measurable connection, indicating that the controlling concept of the *Timaeus* is that of the wholeness of all things. This mathematical precision, however, falls at the hurdle of unlikeness when it meets the realm of Being. Plato neither says that the Demiurge participates in it or does not do so, but the Demiurge remains subordinate to it, hence our attempt to depict a gulf with the symbol ===== , and the relation only of contemplative participation by \uparrow . This interrupts the gradation of the cosmology depicted by the darkening text. Still participation is a core motif of this world-view, and the apparent contradictions of this *schema* are accepted as normative cosmological assumptions by Arius in his drawing of an explicit line of division between the Father and the Logos. Both the hierarchy and the communion of the divine throughout the whole are vital to Plato's system:

Plato believes the soul and God are invisible, and he also stresses that God cannot be spacially located; to say that God is beyond heaven is not to set him in a particularly remote place, but to say that he cannot be thought of in terms of time and space which have themselves come into being. In light of this, it is surprising how physically located higher religious realities are: the higher one goes physically, the nearer (it would seem) one is to God. (Scott, 1991:13).

But in *Timaeus*, the Demiurge is not a Created Creator – any activity on the part of Being would imply change, and thus degrade it into becoming; and nothing is said

of the Demiurge's origin or relation to the realm of Being.¹³ This is a silence many words in the Christological controversies will strive to explicate.

For the Platonic tradition, then, in which the early Christian communities found self-expression, the Demiurge's activity authentically reflects the will of Divine Being, because he is neither defective in his envisioning of Divine Being, nor without the capacity to create. The Divine Being's nature is revealed, or, better, alluded-to, by the fact that the essentially inadequate, non-being-ness of chaotic matter should be brought into a pattern of order by a mere vision of Ideas. Antiquity's reading of Plato is a cosmology which Justin wishes – among others – to affirm and develop. There is also, of course, a tendency in this cosmology towards a profound – but not antagonistic – dualism. The Creator is understood to imprint his will upon matter. However, matter is not the *creation* of a good God: because matter is not perfect, but chaotic, and the perfect God would be lacking either potency or goodness had he have created matter thus. Gnostic theology identifies evil with matter, but the non-being of the material upon which the Demiurge imposes order is not depicted in such terms in *Timaeus*. Here, matter becomes morally good by progression. Evil, rather, describes that intent or process in reverse. While this view of evil adds dynamic to Athanasius's depiction of the decay of the world out of communion with its creator in *CG-DI*, in Plato, matter receives the imprint of the divine gladly, without resistance. Divine nature is thus majestic, and characterised by its being utterly consistent, and unchanging, because, unlike the creature, it need not change to become better, indeed, it may not change, for it would then cease to be perfect, and thus be evil in the cosmological moralism outlined

¹³ Though this point is obscured in a theistic interpretation of the Demiurge, because a divine Demiurge, partaking of being, would not require protological comment.

above.¹⁴ Plato's argument refuses to concede that Divine Being's freedom to change is prior to his being: the all-Wise will not commit folly, God will not change himself, and is subject to eternal, transcendent necessity – the Eternal Ideas.¹⁵ Anthropomorphism is conspicuously absent from Platonic descriptions of Divine Being; despite the generic use of "father" of the Demiurge in the *Timaeus*,¹⁶ this remains a cosmological description, rather than an ontological one. The Demiurge is the father of the Cosmos, which is his monogen»j.¹⁷ This use of Father as explicative of the Creator's nature, with monogen»j describing that the creation illuminates Arius's use of the term applied to the Logos as a proto-creature. Thus we may already see that Nicene application of ἘμooÚsioj ontologically to the Logos will need strong justification against this Platonic tide. Athanasius will therefore argue that he is taking Scripture's priority over philosophy, and that his opponent is conformed to worldly philosophy, even though Athanasius' word is non-Scriptural and has philosophical roots. Arius will argue that he is being Scriptural – and the debate will rage around key texts (Prov. 8:22 etc.). But both construct models with common philosophical and Scriptural connections arranged to reflect different theological priorities. Central to the argument will be the way in which God is creator and Father, whether the monogen»j is ontologically part of the divine or created, and what is the distinction between the metaphorical use of Father *vis-à-vis* creation, and the linguistic propriety in describing the Father's relation to the Son.

¹⁴ *Republic* 381c, in Shorey, P., 1953: 190-193.

¹⁵ The significance of this issue will emerge in the controversies around the ontological dynamics of the incarnation: and is a bug-bear on all sides of the argument. A measure of the sway of this Platonic commonplace among Christian writers is seen in Justin, Origen, Arius, Nestorius, Theodoret who have a desire in common with Apollinarius and Marcellus to construe the incarnation in such a way so as not to endanger God's ultimate unchangeableness. Cyril expounds Athanasius proudly proclaiming the divine paradox of "the swaddling bands of God."

¹⁶ Father appears to be a synonym for creator, and is strongly analogical, e.g., *Timaeus* 37c-38a.

¹⁷ E.g. *Timaeus* 92c, cf. 31c, 34c.

For Justin Martyr, the notion that the Cosmos's order and goodness reveal the divine will, and that a harmonic fellowship borne of a common origin and end is the ideal manner of mutual participation within the universe is a useful apologetic tool.¹⁸ The opposite of this harmony and *koinwn...a* is chaos, which has no being – as it is that from which the Craftsman made the living universe. It is indicative of Being's goodness that the Demiurge is allowed to contemplate Divine Being, in order to impress this vision faithfully upon chaotic matter. Both the divine nature and the Demiurge are good, the latter is generously willing to share his perception of Being's perfection so that matter may receive the image of eternity.

This is why the thing that is to receive in itself all the [elemental] kinds must be totally devoid of any characteristics. (*Timaeus* 50e; Zeyl, 2000:40).

The Creator must make an impression of his vision of true Being upon the material: but matter is never able to make such an impression upon the eternal. The categories of “physical” and “spiritual”, therefore, possess a kinship: they are together the truly living aspect of the created Cosmos which animate matter and take it out of chaotic alienation from the Divine by the imposition of order.¹⁹

Elsewhere in the Platonic corpus, there is depicted the soul experiencing a fall from the perfection of immaterial Being. Just as there is possible a hopeful reading of Plato's *Timaeus*, his tone in describing *la condition humaine* can be dark indeed.²⁰ There is a psychological sense of a fall in Plato, then, construed

¹⁸ *Gorgias* 507d-508a, in Hamilton & Cairns (eds.) 1999:290.

¹⁹ *Timaeus* 37c-38a, in Zeyl, 2000:40.

²⁰ E.g., “We live in a hollow of the earth and think that we are on the top of it, and we call the air sky, and suppose that the stars move through this sky. But the truth is the same as before. From feebleness and want of enterprise we are not able to pass through to the confines of the air. For if

ontologically, not in terms of a breach in relation with God, nor an ethical disjunction, but a sense of ontological humiliation coterminous with material existence. This perception of material existence as fall is taken up *de rigueur* in the *NH* texts, and it is unsurprising therefore that a passage of Plato is among the documents found in that collection.²¹ But Plato also depicts the loving will of the Creator in his ordaining of the *noāj* as Helmsman, or *kubern»thj*. Mind is the intermediary help or shepherd in stewarding creation,²² which is redemptive in its refusal to witness a shipwrecked race fail to find refuge. The role of an intermediary in leading home the broken is an important connection – the mediator effects salvation.²³ The scattered *Logos* orientates life towards the good. In the (Stoicized) Platonism of late Antiquity, the *Logos Spermatikos*, whether the scattered or scattering *Logos*, can persist in this function because it participates ontologically with the eternal ideas (Holte, 1958). But this is not clear in Plato himself, where the analogies are more pragmatic. In ethics, for example, the duty

anyone did pass through to them or got wings and flew there, like the fish who emerge and see our world so would he emerge and see the world of the upper air, and if his nature was strong enough to endure the spectacle when he saw it, he would learn that that was the sky in the true sense, and the true light, and what we call the true earth. This earth down here and the rocks, and the whole region are corrupted and eaten away, like things in the sea are by the salt water. Nothing of any value grows in the sea, and nothing comes to perfection so to say, but where there is earth, it consists of caves and sand and limitless mud and mire, of no account whatever compared with the beauties of our surroundings.” *Phaedo* 110A, in Fox (1957:57).

²¹ *NHC* VI.5, = *Republic* 588B-589B, *NHL* p.290-1.

²² *Statesman* 273a-e, in Hamilton & Cairns (eds.), 1999:1038-1039.

²³ “Wherefore at that point God who had endued it with order, seeing it in dire straits and solicitous that it should not be wrecked by its confusion and break up and sink into a sea where nothing could be defined or identified, again took charge of the helm, reversed what was out of gear or missing in the world’s former drifting course, restored it to order, and setting it to rights made it not subject to decay or death.” *Statesman* 273e, Fox, 1957:49. Cf. Justin Martyr *1 Apol.* 60; Irenaeus *AH* V.xviii.2: “in hoc mundo existens, et secundum invisibilitatem continet quæ facta sunt omnia, et in universa conditione infixus [Armenian “and in all this world in-crucified” (*sic*)], quoniam Verbum Dei **gubernans** [=kubern»thj] et disponens omnia”; *Epideixis* 34: the visible Son works the Father’s will as focus of his presence “and steers across the breadth of north and south; summoning all that are scattered in every quarter to the knowledge of the Father.” Robinson 1920:101. Athanasius, *DI* 6-7: humanity is steered out of danger by the *Logos* taking a mortal body and, (*DI* 9), making his flesh an offering for our souls. E. P. Meijering, 1991:313-326, connects the Platonic role of *nous* with God’s offering of this saving steering, through human *nous* (*CG* 2, 30), in the cosmos (*CG* 35) and in Scripture (*CG* 45-6), cited by K. Anatolios, 2001:466.

of the leader is proper influence or governance in the steering of people to the truth,²⁴ yet even here it is the presence of this governing principle and the great thoughts that it engenders which confers the dignity of cooperating with divine law, that illustrates kinship with the divine.²⁵ Indeed, the intellectual presence of *noàj* is the most authentic locus of a divine image in humanity for Plato. Humanity abounds when people imitate the divine, their true identity.²⁶ This divine element, located in the *noàj*, is the constituent part which differentiates humanity from mere matter and chaos. It is the goal and end of life to return to the fullness (*pl»rwma*) of Being, to return home²⁷ through death: such an anthropology assumes pre-existence. Participation in that glory will be unencumbered by any remnant of chaotic matter.²⁸ Virtuous living will have trained the soul to soar by hard toil,²⁹ this alone will establish the qualitative distinction between the incontinent and the spiritual - sound and leaky vessels.³⁰ Plato reinforces an ontological-moral connection: the *noàj* must direct the soul, as *kubern»thj*, otherwise both body and soul will be lost, and spiritual death, a return to the primordial chaos, will ensue:

[W]hat we must understand is the reason why the soul's wings fall from it and are lost. It is on this wise. The natural property of a wing is to raise that which is heavy and carry it aloft to the region where the gods dwell, and more than any other bodily part it shares in the divine nature, which is fair, wise, and good, and possessed of all other such excellences. Now by these excellences especially is the

²⁴ *Cleitophon* 408b, in Fox, 1957:118.

²⁵ *Critias* 120e-121c, in E. Hamilton & H. Cairns (eds.), 1999:1224.

²⁶ *Republic* 500e-501b, in Fox, 1957:107-9. Fox notes "James Adam's comment on the end of this passage is worth recalling ...: 'Plato means to suggest that Man is most manlike when he most resembles God.'"

²⁷ *Phaedrus* 247E, in Fox, 1957:60.

²⁸ *Phaedrus* 250b-c, in Hamilton & Cairns (eds.), 1999:496-7.

²⁹ *Laws* Book IV, 718d-719a, in Hamilton & Cairns (eds.), 1999:1309.

³⁰ *Gorgias* 493D-494A, in Fox, 1957:167.

soul's plumage nourished and fostered, while by their opposites, even by ugliness and evil, it is wasted and destroyed.³¹

The soul is the locus of human nature, because it is eternal and nearer the divine,³² participation in divine life is by the soul's contemplation of the Divine Being and its governance of matter after the example of the Demiurge. Divinity is the ultimate goal of human being, yet happiness *before* liberation from the body may be achieved. The

true moral ideal, whether self-control or integrity or courage, [which] is really a kind of purgation from all the emotions, and wisdom itself is a sort of purification... he who arrives there purified and enlightened shall dwell among the gods.³³

Death is described as a midwife to the soul's eternal destiny, to be welcomed with courage and vivid interest, as Socrates demonstrated in the context of impending death: looking, "oxen-eyed", upon the experience of death as edifying.³⁴

³¹ *Phaedrus* 246d-e, in Hamilton & Cairns (eds.), 1999:493-4. This theme will be a recurrent one in this dissertation. It is taken up in Irenaeus's *Epideixis*, which appears to be the basis of Eusebius's *Theophania*. It may be right to construe *CG-DI* as Athanasius's *Contra Eusebium*. It was believed that *Theophania* was a work of the 330s [so, for example, Young, 1983:69; Kannengiesser, 1970:383-428]. Anatolios, 1998:29, however, argues for a date before the Trier exile (between 328 & 335) as a revision of "the imperialist triumphalism of Eusebius of Caesarea by making sure that the triumph of Constantine is strictly attributed to Christ, to the point of not even mentioning the emperor", before his personal exile would have taken the shine off his triumphalist tone, "it is impossible to see how any contemporary reader would have failed to see an absurd irony in an exiled bishop, attacked from within the Church itself, proclaiming the Church to be the manifestation of the victorious glory of Christ, and contending that "those brought up in Christ do not war against themselves."

³² *Laws* Book X, 896c-d, Hamilton & Cairns (eds) 1999:1452.

³³ *Phaedo* 69c, Hamilton & Cairns 1999:52.

³⁴ *Republic* 330d-331b, *Apology* 30c-e, 32c-d, 40c-41d, 42a, cf. Fox, 1957:79-84.

Before death, however, the steering guidance of the *noaj as kubern»thj* mediates and unveils the Creator's copy of the divine in creation. Each soul has this immanent "blueprint" implanted by the Demiurge's creativity, which might properly be described as a mediatorial source of connection to the divine *a kubern»thj*, able to

convey and transport to the divine the things of man and to man the things of god, prayers and sacrifices being the things of men, and directions and answers to prayer the things of god. The supernatural, being a mean between the two, supplements both and combines them into a self-contained whole... God has no direct contact with man, but all commerce and conversation between gods and men, whether they wake or sleep, is by supernatural means. The supernatural beings are many and various, and Love is one of them.³⁵

The divine in humanity enables Plato's anthropology to be one where humanity is part of the self-articulating mind of the Cosmos, having, in its properly-steered spiritual reality, something of a mediating role for the universe. This saving self-knowledge is a different calibre of knowledge than the craft-worker's skill. The Delphic oracle's inscription so key to Gnostic theology and anthropology, *gnîqi seautÒn*, is for Plato a cosmological-theological junction located in humanity. We will observe that Irenaeus's biblical opposition to Gnostic thought is maintained by an apparent paradox: a scriptural emphasis upon transcendence (which is *more* ontologically radical than Plato and Platonic thought (Young, 1991:139-151)) is

³⁵ *Symposium* 202D-203A, Fox, 1957:45.

juxtaposed with an assertion that this same God is active in history with a continuity attested by the fulfilment of history and prophecy in the Christian dispensation.

Plotinus continued to promote a pro-cosmic spirituality, steering hard against Gnostic readings of Plato and against the Judaeo-Christian tradition where the transcendence of God is so rigorous that it threatens those hermeneutical connections of Platonic thought which link the world of becoming through a discernible order, and make it comprehensible. The world in all its imperfection is the end result of divine purposes, and is to be beautiful beyond compare.³⁶

Humanity's destiny is to be conceived of with some confidence [beba...wj] because of the hierarchy of being which pervades the Cosmos, "to this extent [is humanity]... a complete vessel as it is granted to him to be perfected."³⁷ The hierarchy, with its descending gradation, ensures for Plotinus that there is no reason to loath the earthly and material: rather, the *unity* of the whole provides the possibility of a method in theology and cosmology.

We now turn to scrutinise examples of Christian exploration in Christocentric cosmology that clearly bear the hallmarks of being influenced by this Platonic milieu. This review has revealed some of the problems that Christian articulation will necessarily have to face and attempt to resolve. High among these is how monotheism may be reconciled with Middle Platonism's dualistic distinction of "first degree" Divine Being (as it were) over a universe itself endued with the promise of divine nature because of the work of an intermediary, the Demiurge.

³⁶ *Enneads* III, 2.3.

³⁷ *Enneads* III, 2, 12, cf. Rudolph, 1983:61.

1:3 Christianity as *Philosophia*: Justin Martyr [c.100 – c.165]

Justin Martyr is a competent example³⁸ among early apologists of the desire to communicate and translate Christian theology into a philosophical linguistic medium.³⁹ Jewish claims, Gnostic “deviations” and their impact upon the Church’s credibility before a persecuting state, underscore this motivation to articulate a Christian *philosophia*.⁴⁰ In contrast to the rhetoric (rather than the

³⁸ May, 1994:120: “Justin Martyr is a theologian who must not be undervalued... Justin considers himself to be a philosopher. Christianity is for him the true philosophy, resting on the age old wisdom of the prophets. The classical philosophy of the Greeks also stands in a tradition connected with that of the prophets, but in the course of history it has increasingly distanced itself from the one ancient truth, so that it now possesses the latter only in an obscure and broken form.” Cf. Stead, 1994:81: “Justin... rather unusually for a Christian, was a teacher of philosophy at Rome in the second century. Justin was a sensible man who did good service in formulating the primitive Christian tradition. There is not the slightest reason to think him inferior to his professional rivals among the Roman pagans; indeed his attachment to Christianity was in many ways an advantage, as setting him new problems outside the traditional agenda of the Platonic schools.” Stead draws attention (1994:93-4) to Henry Chadwick’s positive evaluation of Justin [1966:20]: “he is easy to underestimate... Justin is a plain man, but he is not stupid; he can be shown to be as competent an expounder of Platonism as his contemporaries... What is central in his thought is the way in which the Biblical doctrine of God and his relation to the world provides him with a criterion of judgment, in the light of which he evaluates the great names in the history of Greek philosophy. Justin does not merely use Greek philosophy. He passes judgement upon it.” Contrast Norris, 1966:33-56, especially 53: “He uses philosophical ideas, not systematically or speculatively, but pragmatically. That is, he employs them as and when they seem to him to coincide with the teaching of the Scriptures... [I]t is just this policy which accounts for the puzzles in Justin’s thought: the inconsistencies and superficialities that dog the steps of his expositions. Neither his use nor his revision of philosophical ideas is governed by the scientific impulse to present a coherent view of the world”; Goodenough’s judgment is that Justin is in no sense a philosopher, but primarily a traditionalist, viewing Christianity as an escape from metaphysical speculation, and instead offering a revelation which solves the diverse problems of philosophy. “But if he added anything to Christianity at all, it was not by transplanting foreign conceptions into Christianity, but by going deeper than ordinary Christians into a body of thought which was recognized as a legitimate source for Christian metaphysics” Goodenough, 1968:293. Zizioulas, 1985:72-78 evaluates Justin negatively on the contrary grounds that Justin sacrifices authentic Christology to Hellenic Cosmology.

³⁹ On the issue of texts of the ancient world being “performed” out loud as the context for genre discussion, see Dihle, 1994:256. It is irrelevant for this study whether the *Apologies* [*1Apol.*, *2Apol.*] are separate or are a single text, or whether *1Apol.* and *2Apol.* were actual appeals for justice. The unity of the *Apology* is accepted by Schmidt, 1975:253-281; so Grant, 1988:55, who argues strongly that Polycarp’s martyrdom must have been Justin’s immediate context and prompt, and whilst this point is well-made, there are significant problems with a reading of *1Apol.* as an actual appeal of any use given the fact that chapters 30-60 are lengthy and turgid examinations of Old Testament prophecy. Reference to the texts as *1Apol.* and *2Apol.* is so widespread, and the alternative numeration of chapters so problematic, that conventional referencing is retained.

⁴⁰ The contention that self-definition was primarily a concern *vis-à-vis* Judaism is strongly countered by Young, 1999:81-104, where she explores the *Apologies* in relation to their contribution to Christian identity and patterns of appropriation and distinctiveness with regard to *classical* texts.

practice) of Tertullian,⁴¹ Justin thus seems to recognize that civilization was based – from paide...a through civic life – upon the reading, exegesis and reception of classical texts (probably through florilegia or text-book selections rather than complete works), and unlike Tertullian, does not find the view that philosophical truths are a reflection of the truth of Christian revelation repellent.

Writing in the mid-second century,⁴² Justin is thus a significant starting point to evaluate a Christian response to the assumptions and norms of contemporary philosophy and cosmology. His two-part Apology⁴³ (hereafter *1 Apol.*, *2 Apol.*), and a debate in the form of a constructed dialogue between himself and the Jew, the *Dialogue with Trypho*.⁴⁴ The prime provocation for these works was an urgent need to undergird the life of the Church by articulation of the Christian filosof...a.

⁴¹ Tertullian *De Praescriptione Haereticorum* VII.9 (Refoulé, 1957). Tertullian's well-known "Quid ergo Athenis et Hierosolymis? Quid academiae et ecclesiae? Quid haereticis et christianis?" goes further than merely equating heresy with *false* philosophy. He asserts that pagan philosophy is the parent of heresy. That he may be being 'deliberately extremist' [Armstrong, 1980:88] does not prevent this also being his viewpoint.

⁴² *1Apol.* 46.1 dates the *Apology* around 156ce – roughly corresponding to the mention of Felix as prefect of Egypt in *1A* 29.2-3 (Grant, 1988:53 – citing papyri evidence that Munatius Felix was prefect as late as 11 November, 148, but not in office on 29 August, 154).

⁴³ The critical text of Marcovich, 1994 is used here for the Apologies, though the text of J. Goodspeed, 1914:90ff is also viewed.

⁴⁴ The Greek text cited is primarily that of Marcovitch, 1997, and, for *Trypho* 1-9, van Winden, 1971. Goodenough, 1968:87, evaluates *Trypho* "as ... so astonishingly dull", and reads *Trypho* as Justin's attempt to recapitulate Jewish-Christian theological discussion by a literary construction to guide Christians in encounter with Jews. Barnard, 1978, is something of a lone voice in his arguing not only that Justin's knowledge of Judaism is less stylized than Goodenough urges, but also that *Trypho* reflects historical fact. He argues that Trypho's "character is only too human... These personal touches preclude, [Barnard]... believe[s], the view that the figure of Trypho is an ideal construction which Justin has created to embody the best of both schools of Judaism" (Barnard, 1978:108). Instead "Trypho was a Hellenistic Jewish layman who combined the culture and enquiring spirit of the Hellenistic world with a knowledge of traditional Jewish exegesis and haggadah" (1978:110). The introduction to the *Trypho* assumes that Jews and Christians are alike concerned with interpreting revealed truth, and give the strongest clue to its intended readership, i.e., Christians concerned to equip themselves to answer either Jewish claims to authentic Scriptural interpretation, or (more likely) Imperial anti-Christian arguments that Christians were not even Jews, so did not share the protection of the law to practice their religion, or both. Rajak 1999:80 outlines arguments for its intended readership, connecting the "battle of the books, and also a battle for souls" (*ibid.* p.80). Whilst there is possibly more corroborative evidence that there is some authentic understanding of patterns of Judaism in the details of the *Trypho*'s argument than Goodenough allowed, the obsession to locate the *Trypho* as historiography misses the text's point.

For Justin this was nothing other than the Christian discipline of faith.⁴⁵ This clothing of Christianity in a philosopher's cloak by Justin is an attempt to expose the nakedness of the Empire's philosophical clothing apart from the Logos, whom it is persecuting. In a similar way, Justin's claim upon the truth of the Old Testament seeks to strip Jews (whom Trypho represents) of their claims to be faithful recipients and disciples of the truth of revelation. Justin, significantly, appears to have recognized that he had to account for the truthfulness and beauty of philosophy, and attempt a hermeneutical connection between the Logos and created things which made the universe a concern of Christian theology. Justin's Platonic personal history was, no doubt, a factor which urged him to try to portray Christian theology as intelligible with a uniting structural hermeneutic if it was not to be caricatured as simply ridiculous by its cultured despisers. This was a much more demanding task than the relatively simple statement of the Christian case in terms of morality or in racial taxonomies (such as offered by Aristides). It was a procedure in which Justin had to exhibit pioneering theological boldness, using language with a *Sitz-im-Leben* outside revelation in order to express more clearly the significance of Christian belief.⁴⁶

⁴⁵ Grant (1988:53) argues that the actual occasion of the Apology [i.e., 1A & 2A] was the martyrdom of Polycarp in 155/156, as the sort of defense Polycarp might have offered had he not been prevented from so doing. In particular references to the fires of *eternal* punishment (rather than the 1000 years of Plato [*Phaedrus* 249A; *Republic* 615A] = 1 *Apol.* 8. 4), reflect, Grant believes, the fate of Polycarp, the Christian Socrates: "what motivated him must have been the knowledge of the fiery martyrdom at Smyrna." For a review of the history of the perception of "sources" for Justin's philosophical theology see Holte, 1958:109-116. Holte argues that the use of *logos spermatikos* by Justin is primarily a device of asserting the Christian-ness of any philosophical glimpses of the truth. Goodenough, 1968 connects Justin's texts with other literature contemporary to them, assigning ideas to their sources with the unsustainable confidence of an early twentieth-century historico-critical method applied to the currency of ideas.

⁴⁶ This daring practice of expressing the significance of Christian faith in a thought-world alien to it is imperative in mission, something to which Arius will object in connection with the non-biblical pedigree of ÐmooÚsioj, but a method which Justin displays in order to describe Christian faith more fully.

Descriptions of the philosophical world in which Justin framed his theology have, since Carl Andresen's study of 1952-3:157ff, accepted as foundational that a religious interpretation of Platonic texts, together with a discernable movement away from Stoic materialism, was the essence of the eclectic hybrid, Middle Platonism. Dillon, 1977, attentively described this, although this taxonomy has been challenged by Edwards, 2002. Consequently, there has been a tendency to describe Justin's affinity with much philosophical vocabulary as determined by these "external" factors, rather than evaluating Justin's work as an informed theological venture.⁴⁷

The problem with such an interpretation of the period has two aspects: namely, (a) as already noted, that there appears to have been a sustained wrestling for literal or analogical interpretations of Plato among philosophers, a debate *into which* Justin, and Christian mission, reached in order to posit distinctive, personal, *theistic* understandings of "divinity"; and (b) that Justin is not simply trying to interpret Christianity to the philosophical world: his apologetic intent is *missionary*, seeking to set distorted philosophical assumptions aright, at least as much as "explaining" Christian faith in philosophical terms.

As has been explored above, the notion of a demiurge creating from the ideal prototype is a commonplace. Dillon (1977) argues that in "Middle Platonic" constructs, the Logos is this Demiurge, evidenced in, for example, as a consequence less of Philo, (whom, he argues, had precious little impact on other

⁴⁷ E.g., Saldanha, 1984:37: "Philosophy in the second century A.D. was inseparable from religion. It should hardly surprise us, then, to find Justin and Clement going to the extent of interpreting Christianity as a philosophy, for when we stop to consider with what the Greeks could compare the Christian religion, we find that there was in Greek thought nothing but philosophy corresponding to it."

“Middle Platonists”) than a prevailing Stoic influence in the Platonism of late Antiquity. Thus the cosmos is governed and made by the mediating *noāj* or *LÒgoj* *basilikÒj*, with the capacity to connect Being with Becoming, and knowledge of two kinds (the intelligible and the sensible). The connection, making philosophical hermeneutics possible, thus elevates the notion of mediation to a pivotal place, because creation and divine connection is located in this figure rather than in an evenly dispersed divinity. This is a very different theological cosmology from the Monist perspective where the Universe has an immanent ontological connection with divinity which was observed in Platonic texts, above (1:2). A hypostasized mediator works in late Antique thought because it (he) either is part of a dispersed divinity throughout creation (in Stoic conceptuality), or because it (he) belongs properly to neither realm (being ontologically located in neither). The Logos in Christian expression will facilitate *comprehension* of both divine being and created existence by *participation in* both, and by its imposition of order (“creation”) – as an image of true Being – upon the world of becoming.⁴⁸ These late Antique trends might be described as towards *abstraction* as towards *transcendence*, and such a description might prevent language about the divine being automatically (and perhaps incorrectly) construed *theistically*. Nonetheless, interpretations of both *noāj* and *LÒgoj* hypostasized in almost personal terms are present in “Middle Platonic” (*sic*) writers beyond Philo (Dillon, 1977).

Justin lifts Aristotle’s epithet of *αἰώνιος*⁴⁹ to describe the Father whom the Son reveals, but uses it consistently in a *personal* way. *ἄγῳνιος* is used to contrast the purity of the divine with humanity’s licentiousness before its being shepherded

⁴⁸ Here we anticipate an aspect core to Arius’s understanding of the Logos, see chapter 2, below.

⁴⁹ Aristotle, *Metaphysics* III.3.999.b.1.7ff, used to denote the eternity and causelessness of divinity, “not brought into being from anything outside itself”. Tredennick, 1947: 116-121.

back to God by the Son.⁵⁰ It is, also, used to describe the One to whom Christians have dedicated themselves in contrast to the shameful deeds of those commonly, but falsely so-called gods, now exposed by Jesus Christ as being far from the *ϕγšnnhtoj* and impassible (*ϕπαρεῖς*) true God.⁵¹ Elsewhere also, there are very definite *moral* overtones in Justin's use of *ϕγšnnhtoj*: Christians, unlike the Jews, responded to the coming of Christ (thus fulfilling Scriptural prophecy),⁵² casting away their idolatry to be filled with joy and faith, and so equipped to dedicate themselves to the Unbegotten God through Christ.⁵³

Elsewhere, Justin uses *ϕγšnnhtoj* in another sense – to highlight the paradox upon which Christians are staking their salvation. Christians are convinced, through the prophecies pointing to Jesus Christ written long before his coming,⁵⁴ that this crucified man is indeed the first-born (*prwtòtokoj*) of the unbegotten God.⁵⁵ Justin links together the non-biblical term *ϕγšnnhtoj* with the biblical *prwtòtokoj*⁵⁶ and this

⁵⁰ *1 Apol.*, 14.1: *qeù de mòñj tù ϕgenn»tj di| toà ufoà ῥpòmeqa*. In context, the unbegotten-ness of God carries a rhetoric in the text, contrasting the impurity and lawlessness of the lifestyle of many Christians to which Justin confesses before they were brought to the Good and Unbegotten God (*ϕgaqù ka^ ϕgenn»tj qeù*), *1 Apol.* 2, through the Son.

⁵¹ *1 Apol.*, 25.2.

⁵² I.e. Isa. 65:11 and 5:20 in this case. The import of the fulfillment of prophecy in general and of Isaiah in particular is noteworthy. Fulfillment of prophecy was a legitimate philosophical interest (cf. *De Natura Deorum* II.73-162), and Isaiah's place in Justin is very evident in the *Apologies* (see Marcovitch, 1994:171-2), and in the *Trypho*, upon which Rajak [1999:80] expounds.

⁵³ *1 Apol.*, 49.5: *tù ϕgenn»tj qeù di| toà Cristoà*.

⁵⁴ *1 Apol.*, 53.2: *e., m¼ martúria pr^n À ἡμῶν ἀποκρίσειν ἡμῶν γενόμενον κερύγμα ἡμῶν*.

⁵⁵ *1 Apol.*, 53.2: *prwtòtokoj tù ϕgenn»tj qeù*.

⁵⁶ The most relevant parallel to this usage of *prwtòtokoj* is Col. 1:15, referring to "the first-born of all creation." Arius will connect its significance more to Ro. 8:29, *prwtòtokoj* of many brethren (cf. Gregg & Groh 1981:43-76), thus interpreting the resurrection in a soteriologically-orientated (i.e., an ecclesial rather than a cosmological) sense. Justin's application of the term is located in the relation of the Logos to God (the Father), and there is little *substantive* difference from Jn. 1:18, where the Evangelist articulates that the Logos is the Father's complete self-articulation. On the relation of Justin to the Fourth Gospel see Braun, 1959:136f; Davey, 1965:117-122. It should be registered that this marks a change in the conceptual connections, by pushing the image ontologically further than is explicit in the New Testament. *Prwtòtokoj* in the context of being the first-born of the *ϕγšnnhtoj* God introduces the paradox of the relation of procession within the mystery of divine being without articulating it. This will prove to be a fertile and contentious trajectory in Christology and Trinitarian theology which we shall accompany in the main body of this dissertation.

is both creative and allusive – Justin does not explicate the mysterious relation of Father to Son, or Unbegotten to First-born, but its fertility is nurtured by Origen into a pattern of describing divine interpersonal relations in the eternal begetting of the Son. We should note, however, Justin’s contribution to that *process* of Trinitarian description by this creative selection and juxtaposition of relation and procession.

In Justin’s own language, however, “God” proper is restricted to the Father, as the first “rank” of divinity,⁵⁷ yet this mystery is fully revealed and taught by Jesus Christ⁵⁸ who is described as “next to” God.⁵⁹ This language reflects a Platonic conceptuality of a hierarchy of connection in order to permit intelligibility. But close analysis of the relation of the (incarnate or otherwise) Logos to the transcendent Father again is not forthcoming in Justin⁶⁰ - indeed it would be naïf and anachronistic to expect it. Justin’s theology depends upon a Christocentric subordinationism,⁶¹ which protects monotheistic language and yet juxtaposes this

⁵⁷ E.g., *1 Apol.* 13.1-2.

⁵⁸ *1 Apol.* 13.1-2, did£skaloj. Cf. Marcovitch, 1994:186.

⁵⁹ *2 Apol.* 13: tÕn g|r çpÕ çgenn»tou ka^ çrr»tou qeoà LÕgon met| tÕn qeÕn proskunoàmen ka^ çgapîmen.

⁶⁰ If Justin did know Philo, as is sometimes claimed, he studiously avoids not only the term deÚteroj qeÕj, but also avoids equating the Logos with the Demiurge. Shotwell, 1965:97ff, compiles an exhaustive compilation of alleged textual correspondences, cf. Goodenough, 1968:52: “It is this obligation to preserve the unity of the divine nature even while going so far as to affirm the separate personalities of the Divine Beings which mark the Christian metaphysics of Justin and his successors as having its roots primarily in Hellenistic Judaism rather than in Hellenism itself”; and 93: Trypho has “no implacable prejudices against believing in an intermediary and secondary Deity, whose complete divine character is yet insisted upon (*Dialogue* 60.3, 63.1). Trypho only parts from Justin on the possibility of the incarnation of the Second Deity, and especially of that incarnation’s actually having taken place in Jesus.” However, this need not preclude Palestinian influences, so Segal, 1977. Justin prefers the description kt...sthj, to *Demiurge*, and always refers it to God (by which he means Father, not Son). The Logos cannot be described as exercising in Justin the sort of intermediary role Goodenough describes as Philonic, i.e., neither created nor uncreated, but a kind of “hostage”, guaranteeing to God that humanity will not rebel, and to humanity that God will be faithful (1968:50). Barnard, 1978:118 insists that Justin was unfamiliar with Philo asserting instead that Justin had “a good working knowledge of post-biblical Judaism... [The *Trypho*] is proof that... there was a close intercourse between Christians and Jews even after the promulgation of the *Birkhath-ha-minim*” (*ibid.*).

⁶¹ This stylistic and theological method recalls that of the Fourth Gospel’s emphasis, so Barrett, 1982:12: “Here I may mention again the apparent clash between such statements as ‘I and the Father are one’ and ‘The Father is greater than I’. John finds himself obliged to make these two sets of statements about the same person, because he must make it clear that God in his

with descriptions of the Logos which far exceed that of a cosmic *didaskalos*, relying instead upon an understanding of the incarnation as an epiphany of love.

In describing the nature of the love which the Christian ascribes to God as *ἀγαπή*, Justin cites the consistent, obedient love of the Son for the Father, to evoke a love of the same order from Christians for the Father first, and then for Jesus Christ.⁶² Justin has thus managed to introduce the notion of inter-personal love as explicative of divine nature in contrast to the stories of the gods of Greek religion: these are, he contends, lesser and often malicious divinities.⁶³ The power of the term *ἀγαπή* is employed by Justin to counter paganism and suggest the pure love of the Christian God.

A similar setting is the context for Justin's meaning when he writes of the "ineffable glory and form" of the true God.⁶⁴ The carving of idols and their worship as divinities is not only senseless (*ἄλογον*) but *hybris* against God's *ἄρρητον δὲ ὄξαν καὶ μορφῆν*. It would make no sense to speak of God as "formless" – as this is a description of matter before it receives order from the Creator. The love of God, in its pure glory, is manifest in the reciprocal love of the Son for the Father and this is the mysterious and glorious *form* of the divine. Justin uses this analogy without threatening the divine unity, and the Father, Logos and Spirit represent a model of the harmony of pure love in communion. In this sense the "persons" of Father and Son are paramount. Justin refers to Father and Son, in

revelation is truly God; that Jesus reveals not a secondary deity but the Most High God. Yet he is *Deus revelatus*; not the whole abyss of Godhead, but God known." Cf. also on 'The Father is greater than I' (*ibid.*, p.35): "The new quest calls for a new Christology, or, better perhaps, a new thinking-through of the raw materials of all Christology. It may be that the next generation will find the right formulas, reminded by a better understanding of the historical Jesus that the New Testament, and not least the Fourth Gospel, is in the end about God."

⁶² 2 *Apol.* 13.4.

⁶³ Cf. 1 *Apol.* 5, & 54.

⁶⁴ 1 *Apol.* 9.3.

personal terms,⁶⁵ but does not appear to hold a distinct doctrine of the hypostasis of the Spirit.

By this strategy in terms of a second-century context, Justin adequately manages *neither* to compromise the unity of God, *nor* to imply that the Son and the Spirit are each begotten by the Father by the vagueness of the divine procession which he describes, even if it is couched in terms of Platonic hierarchy, and achieved by such an indistinct doctrine of the Spirit that later theologians will have to redress it. Justin's silence is significant: the Spirit is *not* the divine *ousia* which constitutes the Trinity's divinity, nor is the Spirit a "necessary" *idea* which in any way constrains the freedom of God's presence to creation.

That God's being *is* love is a significant key to comprehending Justin, particularly evident in the context of the *Trypho* (perhaps against perceived Jewish and Marcionite theologies).⁶⁶ Justin begins his discussion with Trypho on common ground. Unlike the philosophical, non-theistic tradition, Justin and Trypho have much in common, enabling Trypho to cut to what he believes to be the centre of philosophy: its true purpose is to investigate the divine. Justin then clarifies the problem further, that is, that most philosophers do *not* so comprehend philosophy, because the divine is not construed *theistically*. In such cases, Justin claims that philosophy descends into self-contradiction if the divine is restricted to generalities, as a nurturing principle or self-governing necessity, but not apprehended

⁶⁵ *1 Apol.* 36.2.

⁶⁶ Perhaps the identification of the nature of God with love has always been a part of the arsenal of supersessionist arguments (cf. Wilson, 1996, ch. 9 and Rajak, 1999). The latter's reading of the *Trypho* sees little 'love' in her description of it as a vituperative "defence (by attack) against Judaism" (*ibid.*, p61). With some degree of irony, Rajak acknowledges that Justin's endeavours are still "path-breaking work" (*ibid.*) in terms, no-doubt, of demolition and disconnection! Certainly it is a distinguishing feature that Marcion, (and Justin's probable protégé Tatian) emphasize to contrast the Christian dispensation with the Jewish.

personally or regarding the particularities of individual existence.⁶⁷ This concisely exposes a fundamental difference between biblical and Hellenistic conceptualities of divinity. Justin rejects as intolerably labyrinthine the philosophical quest when it leads along musical, astronomical or geometric courses of study.⁶⁸ Truth, for the philosophical tradition, is primarily cosmological. It is arrived at, or uncovered, though the pursuit of the truth of all things since Plato urged upon the academy a hermeneutic dependent upon the equal distribution of divinity throughout the cosmos in the World-Soul.⁶⁹

Justin will attempt to re-cast philosophy in a Christocentric monotheistic manner, attempting to connect God's presence to creation in the Logos even if such a construct would fail later tests of Trinitarian orthodoxy.

Evidence for this includes an interesting textual question around *Trypho* 3.5, which regardless of its resolution, is a useful indicator of the connection in Justin's mind between God and Being. The old man, though really leading the conversation in the vignette, appears to have asked a clarifying question in their introductory conversation about philosophy: "What do you call Being (τὸ ὄν)?"⁷⁰ Justin replies that that which is unchanging and the first cause of all things is God.⁷¹ The old man focuses upon the foundational assumption of Platonism that there is an

⁶⁷ *Trypho* 1.4.

⁶⁸ *Trypho* 2.4.

⁶⁹ See above, 1:2.

⁷⁰ *Trypho* 2:6. The majority MS tradition has Qeὸν. Goodspeed, 1914, follows the MS Parisinus gr. 450, (c.1363/4) exaratus, fol. 193^r - 241^r (= 'A'), van Winden restores τὸ ὄν on the grounds that both paleographically and verbally the two are easily confused: a scribe may have mistaken the regular Greek abbreviation for God [QN] rather than ON. If the text were dictated, τὸ ὄν and Qeὸν would be undistinguishable to the hearer. The context is one of a discussion about Being. It may be, of course, that Justin so equates the two that he deliberately *switches* to theistic language. Either way our argument that Justin wishes to redress philosophical concepts of Being by rooting them in theology is supported by this drift of vocabulary in the text. Bobichon, 2003:190 has Qeὸν without comment.

⁷¹ *Trypho* 3.5.

ontological connection in the form of a divine kinship, which allows philosophy to be revelatory. Undermining this destroys Justin's confidence in the ability of rationality or *noāj* to behold God without the instruction of the Holy Spirit.⁷² It would appear then, that without being the defining essence of divinity, the Holy Spirit alone is capable of communicating the totality of God's being and the truth necessary to perfection.

This achievement of what is an 'impersonal' theology of the Holy Spirit will be a convention which persists until Athanasius, who draws upon the same subject, that is, the salutary action of the Spirit, this time to prove the Spirit's *personal* divinity.⁷³ Justin's concern is to avoid implying that there is a higher God than the creator.⁷⁴ The true God is not composite,⁷⁵ and thus the theophanies are not of God the Father but Logophanies.⁷⁶ Despite the problems of such a description which Origen will attempt to address, it is clear that Justin avoids a radically cosmological answer: the *Deus revelatus* is the Logos, but the Logos does not have the role of Plato's demiurge: the Father is the supreme God in splendour, having made the cosmos. His likeness, however, is focused and fully revealed *in* the Logos the Son (rather than *to* the Demiurge), and present to creation in the Spirit. Together these are paradigmatic for later Trinitarian descriptions. To Justin's picture of the divine relation to the cosmos we now turn.

⁷² *Trypho* 4.1 Ἄ τῶν θεῶν ἕνα ἕνα ὄντα... ποτε μὴ ἴδωμεν... τὴν πνεύματι κεκοσμημένην;

⁷³ Grounds for this argument were expounded at a paper read at the thirteenth International Conference on Patristic Studies by Dominique Gonnet entitled 'New approaches to Athanasius's Epistles to Serapion according to the manuscript tradition' which became the 2001 article 'The Salutary Action of the Holy Spirit as Proof of his Divinity in Athanasius' Letters to Serapion.' Gonnet's careful observations are stimulating – here again the notions of participation in God's grace convey a unity not only of divine will but *identity*.

⁷⁴ *Contra* the Gnostic tradition, but for his own *theological* grounds: cf *Trypho* 11.1; 60.2; 80.4; and *1 Apol* 16.6.

⁷⁵ *Trypho* 114.3.

⁷⁶ Or Christophanies, see section 1:iv, below. Justin omits to indicate what was the *nature* of the form the Logos had before the incarnation, or the relation of this "body" to the one brought to birth through the Virgin Mary.

Justin's very different view of the theological significance of the cosmos from his philosophical peers will find explication in his use of the motif of *Logos Spermatikos*, but this is not an expression interchangeable with contemporary thought about divine immanence: Justin does *not* imply that God is equated with the normal life of the cosmos, providing an automatic or 'natural' connection with the divine. The universe is enlivened by the Holy Spirit's creative act of hovering above the chaotic waters:⁷⁷ 'order' is not its animating principle, but it is, rather, the presence of God to creation in the Spirit. Angels are one means whereby Justin discusses this: they are active agents of God, bringing messages to humanity and acting as guardians to protect people.⁷⁸ This all fits very harmoniously with Justin's objection to philosophy's rejection of the *personal* care and attention that God lavishes upon humanity. To Justin, God the creator *is* attentive and personal love, and the duty of human beings is to return this love in worship and service. Angels do not fit into a philosophical cosmology, and Justin makes no attempt to demythologize them into (for example) ministering natural laws or principles, which enable the universe to be. Angels are not the *ideas* which the Creator copies, but God's servants, sources of divine inspiration and guidance, thus far from being "natural fragments" or "seeds" of divinity or divine reason. For Justin, angels are not creative powers which make the universe. His reverence of angels has echoes with that criticised in Col. 2:18, but it is far from the idea of the creation of the universe *through* angels as in some forms of early Gnosis.⁷⁹ Angels are *made* to

⁷⁷ 1 *Apol.* 59.2-5, 60.15, another alleged case of Plato's plagiarism of Moses according to Justin, and 64.3-4 – a case of *demonic* copying.

⁷⁸ 2 *Apol.* 5.2

⁷⁹ Cf. May 1994:51f.

be like the Son,⁸⁰ and thus are important evidence that charges against Justin exhibiting a basic Hellenism in cosmology are inaccurate.

However, there is one imperative issue where Justin appears to be very close to Platonic conceptions of matter and the cosmos: God does not create the cosmos *ex nihilo*, but orders pre-existent amorphous matter:

Καὶ πρῶτα τῶν ὄντων, ἡγαγὼν ὄντα, δημιουργᾶσαι αὐτῶν τὰ
ἄμορφου ὕλης διὰ τὴν ἀνάγκην...⁸¹

May argues that emergence of the doctrine of *creatio ex nihilo* in Jewish and Christian theology:

not only represents an attempt to draw a line against the philosophical doctrine of the origin of the world, but is also an interpretation of the biblical idea of creation in philosophical terms... *creatio ex nihilo* was developed not only out of contradiction of the creation notions of gnosticism, but just as much in direct debate with the philosophical model of world-formation. (May, 1994:24).

Yet even if May were correct, a hesitation is required in the interpretation of *1 Apol.* 10.2. Although Justin exercises himself to demonstrate a theistic philosophy, his failure to demonstrate that he holds a doctrine of *creatio ex nihilo*, merely locates him in his day – and reflects a sense of Genesis 1, even though there seems little textual correspondence with the LXX. Moreover, that Justin wrestled for a profound shift in cosmological understanding has already been observed. Despite

⁸⁰ *1 Apol.* 6.2.

⁸¹ *1 Apol.* 10.2

the issue of *creatio ex nihilo* Justin's personal, monotheistic cosmology is otherwise dissonant from Middle Platonic cosmology.

Justin insists however that God made the universe as it is out of his goodness for the sake of humanity, which consequently bears an order reflecting his purpose and will.⁸² Justin appears to have believed the creation story of Genesis 1 (which he argues was copied by Plato in the *Timaeus*⁸³) to have taught that God created by the Spirit moving over the watery chaos.⁸⁴ Justin reads the biblical concept of creation to be about ordering, naming and blessing, reflected in the notion of God bringing forth good things by separating or dividing chaos:

The act of creation is understood as a transformation, as a changing of chaos or nothingness, however these are understood, into the world as it now is, that is, into the world which is destined for people to live in. This way of speaking about transformation prevents the world and its existence from being taken for granted; the world and

⁸² Though not his nature, the image of that is reserved for humanity (for whom, according to Justin, the whole was made). The influence of Gen. 1:10b, 12b, 18b, 21b, 25b & 31 find echoes in Justin's words in *1 Apol.* 10.2.

⁸³ *1 Apol.* 59.1-5.

⁸⁴ Gen. 1.2a. von Rad (1972:49) argues that the Hebrew for "created" in v.1, arB (LXX: ἡμετέροισιν), "contains the idea both of complete effortlessness and *creatio ex nihilo*, since it is never connected with any statement of the material. The hidden grandeur of this statement is that God is Lord of the world. But not only in the sense that he subjected a pre-existing chaos to his ordering will!... Here the subject is not a primeval mystery of procreation from which the divinity arose, nor of a "creative" struggle of mythically personified powers from which the cosmos arose, but rather the one who is neither warrior nor procreator, who alone is worthy of the predicate, Creator". Von Rad does little to help a connection of this assertion with the description of the formless void of the watery darkness, ἡ ἀβυσσὸς (LXX: ἡ ἀβυσσὸς καὶ ἡ ἀκατάστατος), and primeval storm of v.2, even if it is to be regarded as a heading to the Priestly creation hymn. Claus Westermann (1984:100) rejects the assertion that arB implies *creatio ex nihilo* in the Old Testament at all: it "is quite inappropriate to ask if P's description of creation has anything to do with *creatio ex nihilo*. This is a complete distortion of the intention of P; he wants to guard with reverence the mystery of creation not to explain it." (*ibid.*, p.174). Of course, Justin read from the LXX, and came to the text with the categories of Platonic cosmology very familiar to him: but *1 Apol.* 10.2 need not be read as a grotesque *Platonic* distortion of Genesis at all. On the contrary, observing the philosophical difficulty of speaking about "before creation", Westermann notes "If Gen 1:1-2 intended to describe *creatio ex nihilo*, then that would be a *metábasij e„j ¼llo gšnoj*, something that simply cannot be reported. One can teach *creatio ex nihilo*; but one cannot narrate it" (*ibid.*, p. 46).

its contingency is traced back to an event which transcends it,
namely the act by which the creator brought about change.

(Westermann, 1984:44).

Plato did not understand the pre-existent chaos or “non Being” which the Demiurge orders in creation to have been evil in nature, though even when it is ordered into a world of becoming, exhibiting a reflected order and beauty of the divine, it remains in some ways antithetical to perfect Being. This is another weighty reason why Justin did not jettison a common assumption about creation. Gnostics may have construed matter as opposed to the will and purpose of the true God revealed in Jesus Christ, so that salvation is construed as escape: Justin did not. The most philosophically-orientated aspect of Justin’s theology of creation proves to be the idea that the whole cosmos was created for humanity. This is radically transformed by Justin out of any Stoic cosmology by his personalist theism which relates this concept “specifically to the history of salvation” (May, 1994:128). Creation is, for Justin, indicative of God’s redemptive love. The manifestation of the Son far exceeds Plato’s assertion that the Demiurge out of his goodness desires to endue matter with divine order. In Justin’s theology, the Holy Spirit, despite being described indistinctly and subordinately, is the means by which God and the Logos are made present to this creation in person, as it were. In other words, the Spirit is a manifestation to the cosmos of the present dimension of that love which is God’s being. If Justin’s lack of use of *creatio ex nihilo* threatens to land him in trouble to later orthodoxy – even though it would have been demonstrably innovative for Justin to have sustained a theology of *creatio ex nihilo* in the mid second century – his doctrine of God makes for a compelling foretaste of Trinitarian theology in its unity, differentiation and drama.

Justin's Christocentric methodology in cosmology marks also a new direction in theological anthropology. The human being, as a microcosm of the World-Soul, may be described as a focus of the cosmos in a Middle Platonic thought. This is one consequence of the assumption that the highest element of humanity, the mind or reasoning intellect, was *ontologically related* to divinity. If reason, or intellect, was the thing which made human beings human, it was because it was the means whereby a *reconnection* with divine nature was possible. Albinus approaches mystical expression in his description of an abstract divinity attained through asceticism:

The aspiration for wisdom, or the loosing and wrenching of the soul away from the body, [comes] when we turn ourselves to the intelligible and the true Existence (Goodenough, 1923:30).⁸⁵

In the Middle Platonic milieu, it is the *body* that is transcended in order to liberate the true self, which is present all along. This unchangeability of the divine thus meant that humanity, also, in its truest identity, may not change, but may know itself ever more truly.⁸⁶ This focus upon the *generic identity* of the human being finds little appreciation in Justin. We have observed that Justin despises the inconsistency of philosophical insistence that God cares for the generic but not the personal.⁸⁷ The reason for this is his conviction that each soul is not *naturally* a hypostasization of the divine. Justin strikingly asserts that the cosmos came into being for humanity,⁸⁸ so that human beings may be recipients of divine love

⁸⁵ citing Albinus, Freudenthal, 1879:152.

⁸⁶ It is not entirely adequate, therefore, to speak of a static-ness of identity, movement and development characterize Greek *paide...a*. For a broad discussion of notions of static-ness and development in understanding patristic thought, see Young, 1993:265-283.

⁸⁷ *Trypho* 1.4.

⁸⁸ *1 Apol.* 10.2; *2 Apol.* 4.2; 5.2; *Trypho* 41.1.

and receive what they are *not*. Humanity can (and should) develop and change, in wisdom and in piety, salvation, and Christian discipleship sustained by the will and the Spirit result in humanity becoming what it was not.⁸⁹ Christian salvation is offered to the sinner and the righteous person alike, and all are free and obliged by that freedom to choose the good. Souls that do this come to eternal life.⁹⁰ A deliberate choice of that which is wrong is the sin in which demons urge human participation, so joining their rebellion against the good God.⁹¹ Purity of life is a pre-requisite for salvation, because it indicates whether or not one is participating in the governance of the good God or participating in active rebellion against him.

Whilst there is significant overlap between the meaning of *noāj* and the *LÒgoj spšmatikoj*, both being implanted rational seeds common to the human race,⁹² implantation alone is inadequate for the salvation of souls. Human beings have not followed the promptings of the *noāj* but sinned: they have not participated in the Logos himself, nor remained in him, even though the seeds of reason within humanity leave no person guiltless. Freedom, Justin emphasizes, is core to being a *created* person.⁹³ Whilst Origen will so emphasise freedom that it almost becomes constitutive of human being, Justin presents, from within a philosophical framework, a radical challenge to late Antique philosophy. This is clear in his celebration of baptism⁹⁴ as an effective *ontological* (as well as moral)

⁸⁹ *1 Apol.* 60.11, *2 Apol.* 10.8.

⁹⁰ *1 Apol.* 8.4, 18.2.

⁹¹ *1 Apol.* 44.1-8; on participation cf. *2 Apol.* 13.6, below.

⁹² *2 Apol.* 8.3.

⁹³ Cf. Gregg and Groh (1981) who argue that this trajectory is significant in understanding the psychological power of Arius' insistence upon a created Logos.

⁹⁴ Justin does not use the term *bēptisma* in the *Apologies* though he describes the rite with clarity in *1 Apol.* 61 with the terms *ϕnagšnnhsij* / *ϕnagenn£omai*. Justin uses baptism explicitly in *Trypho* 14.

new beginning. The restoration of a participatory relationship with the divine through the power of the Holy Spirit at baptism connects Christians to the Logos completely.⁹⁵ Baptism enlivens each soul with the life of Christ;⁹⁶ Christ being the complete Logos incarnate⁹⁷ who makes Christians thus become the effective *Iògoi spšmatikoi* for the whole creation. Their presence and worship is thus the reason for the world's preservation.⁹⁸

Redeemed humanity's salvation and life depend upon the action of God in creation and redemption,⁹⁹ in general and in particular. This activity is historical, revealed in the Law of Moses, which had people obeyed, would have brought salvation. Justin intimates, though, that there was an inherent hardness in people's hearts. The revealed Law is thus powerless to redeem, even if, like natural reason, it is a good guide. The redeeming Shepherd, fulfilling both prophecy and seminal reason, incarnate of the Virgin Mary condemns death in the flesh and brings divine life as gift.¹⁰⁰ This divine life sustains Christians in communion with the divine at the Eucharist,¹⁰¹ which is the life-giving sacrifice, sustaining the whole world,¹⁰² celebrated in obedience to Christ's command.¹⁰³ This Eucharistic emphasis is strong evidence that Justin viewed the basis of the relationship between humanity and the divine to be Christ's *sacrifice* as the only ground of participation, less in terms of intellectual contemplation, and certainly not in terms of Mithraic¹⁰⁴ or

⁹⁵ *1 Apol.* 61.2.

⁹⁶ *1 Apol.* 61.2.

⁹⁷ *2 Apol.* 10.

⁹⁸ *2 Apol.* 7.

⁹⁹ *Trypho* 45.4.

¹⁰⁰ *Trypho* 45.

¹⁰¹ *Trypho* 41.1-3; 70.3-4.

¹⁰² *Trypho* 117.1-3.

¹⁰³ *Trypho* 117.3.

¹⁰⁴ *1 Apol.* 65-6.

Dionysiac¹⁰⁵ theophagy or sacrifice.¹⁰⁶ Justin describes Christian life in terms of participation in the whole Christ, extending, as it were, the incarnation. Christians suffer persecution and martyrdom because of their association with the name of Christ.¹⁰⁷ For Justin, despite the rhetorical display of the Jews' hardness of heart, of the pagans' sins manifesting the disconnection between people and the divine, and the emphasis we have observed on judgement according to works, any ontological mediation remains *Christocentric* and, in particular, is Eucharistically-envisaged,¹⁰⁸ not primarily moralistic. Justin then, for all his perceived anthropocentric cosmology, derives this from a superabundant vision of the cosmic Christ in whom he participates eucharistically. This evaluation of Justin Martyr will conclude with a reading of his Christology.

In Justin, the Spirit of God (who is also the Spirit of Christ) is the means whereby the Father and Son engender a connection between the worshipper and the Logos,¹⁰⁹ Jesus Christ. Participation in the redemptive Christ is Justin's way of

¹⁰⁵ *1 Apol* 21.2 (body), 54.6 (wine & dismemberment before ascension).

¹⁰⁶ Justin uses *quos...a* to describe only the worship of false Gods, but never describes the Eucharist with this term in the Apologies.

¹⁰⁷ *1 Apol* 4: Justin does not explicitly follow the argument of *1 Clement* 45, which develops the thought of Col 1:24, that Christians actualize the sacrifice of Christ, though Origen will – see section 2:iii of this chapter.

¹⁰⁸ *1 Apol* 66.2. Cf. Cuming, 1980:80-82, and Young, 1979:239-284, where she applies a honed interpretation to the nature of sacrifice, exploring Justin in terms of Communion-Sacrifice (*ibid.*, pp.250-251) and Thank-offering (pp.256-260, 263-4).

¹⁰⁹ There is some reluctance on the part of NT writers to adopt as foundational contemporary trajectories of the wisdom tradition, a reluctance which Justin shares in as much as he avoids the elevation of personified *Sophia* [LXX] - contrast, however, *philosophia's* universal revelatory role in Justin. In contrast to the *Torah*, *Sophia* is accessible to all people and nations, and therefore it is superficially curious that it does not appear more centrally as a weapon in the Apologist's or Evangelist's arsenal for the *propaganda fidei*. (Cf. Prov 1:1f.) There is a universal dimension to Wisdom, which balances antithetically the specificity and particularity of the mediatorial role of *Torah* in forging the people of Israel. Obedience to *Torah* was construed as enabling Israel to be the mediating, priestly people for all the nations. Patterns of the personification of Wisdom, (which Gnostic mythology freely draws upon), describe a woman worthy of being pursued with all that one has. (e.g., Prov 1-9, cf., Mt.13:45). Wisdom is of divine origin, a great blessing to humankind, but in much canonical literature of the genre, not a divine being, or generally even an aspect of the divine, (O'Collins, 1999:24: "Within a monotheistic faith, Wisdom takes on functions and attributes of *hwhy*, and within a strongly patriarchal religion, Wisdom emerges in a feminine way") but is, rather, the created means or pattern of all creation, and the proclaiming mediator *within all*

reconnecting anthropology and cosmology *soteriologically* in the Son, whom he has described as being “next to” God.¹¹⁰ We have observed that this reconnection became necessary in Justin’s philosophical theology once an ontological connection between the cosmos or the soul with the divine was removed. Although Justin did not employ the doctrine of *creatio ex nihilo* to establish this, substantially his cutting of ontological connections requires of him to find another means of epistemology, and he does this by making it a function of Christology, and construing cosmology in terms always dependent upon God’s act of creation.

Further Christological exploration will enable a closer description of the nature of mediation envisaged by Justin, and will show that Justin had already articulated many of the theological puzzlements which Irenaeus and Origen continue to struggle to resolve, and which Athanasius approaches afresh in his refutation of Arius.

The perhaps intentional vagueness in Justin, particularly the interchangeability of *LÒgoj* and Son in his works, allows for secondary nuances to co-exist without in a , where scattered reason (as in the Stoic doctrine of the *anima mundi*) is a basis of epistemology appropriate in his Platonic context.¹¹¹ This application of Logos to

creation of God’s bounty, not unlike the place of *logos spermatikos* in Justin. Cf. especially Prov. 6-8. Sir.24:8-11, LXX: “Before the ages, in the beginning, he created me [™ktisšn me].” We will return to this tradition at length in part two of this thesis to explore how Arius develops this Christologically. But note that it is *Logos* not *Sophia* in Justin that is personified. No doubt this is attributable most of all to the fact of the incarnation in the *male* Jesus makes more conventional hypostatic sense to choose Logos rather than the feminine Sophia. Note the central Soteriological place of the Spirit in Athanasius, Apollinarius and Cyril, below.

¹¹⁰ 2 *Apol.* 13.4.

¹¹¹ The Logos, in a Christological conception of *LÒgoj basilikÒj*, identified and incarnate in Jesus Christ, and a derived, localized and scattered common reason within the universe is a more straightforward reading of the text of Justin than attempts to identify closely the relation in terms of contemporary (or near-contemporary) philosophical traditions. Cf., e.g., Pfädtisch, 1910, who interprets the difference thus: the Logos proper, is the Platonic “form”, in fact: the distinct divine form of the Logos is Christ in his absolute transcendent identity. Justin’s use of the *spërma toà IÒgou* represents the life-giving participation of the Logos in the soul. Cf. the discussion of Meyer, 1914, sets in terms of the Stoic doctrine of the *anima mundi*. Cf. Holte, 1958:109-117. This

Christ exploits both Biblical references to the creative Word of God (in the Old Testament and the Johannine tradition), and philosophical conceptual vocabulary. The Logos is thus the source of delightful¹¹² doctrines which are true, both in terms of the undergirding reason which makes the universe intelligible, and, more significantly, in terms of his authoritative teaching of the nature of God.

But as there is a double aspect to the Logos, (the Logos in himself, and his reign in the world of creation). Justin makes it explicit that all participation in rationality - kat' LÒgou mšroj - without knowledge of the whole Christ is partial and fragmentary.¹¹³ Before the incarnation it was impossible to know the whole Logos. So contradictory opinions¹¹⁴ abounded, which find resolution only in that which is greater than human teaching, Christian doctrine, the superlative nature of which stems from the complete incarnation of Christ.

Two consequences of Justin's argument are particularly worthy of explication. Firstly, a missiological dimension is present in Justin's insistence that human contradiction and schism reflect the fact that the whole truth is not fully grasped: this drives Justin's ecclesiology. It is imperative, this being the case, that the Church is not obsessed by opinions that are rooted in the world of lower reasons, or polluted by notions contrary to these seeds of the Word. The Church's unity

important distinction of Justin's makes no *ultimate* claims for language - or human reason - about God. This not only is a conventional necessary modesty in an apophatic climate, but also a serious theological awareness rare in the height of rhetoric or conflict. Justin identifies a means of allowing religious discourse not to be self-defining but transfiguring, potentially something that urges towards self-transcendence, a language of "maximal scope" as in Williams's discussion of Arius (2001).

¹¹² Cf. *The Martyrdom of the Holy Martyrs Justin, Chariton, Charites, Paeon, and Liberanus, who suffered at Rome*, in ANF 1, pp.305-6. In chapter 1 Rusticus sits in judgment of Justin, who recounts pleasing doctrines of Jesus Christ. The sense of aesthetically-pleasing doctrines corresponds with Justin's desire to describe the intelligibility of the universe being sustained by the singular Logos of the Father present to creation in the Spirit, and confirms the philosophical mind-set of Justin.

¹¹³ 2 *Apol.* 10.2.

¹¹⁴ 2 *Apol.* 10.1-2.

signifies that the graceful and complete reign of the Logos has found authentic expression within it.¹¹⁵ Secondly, the significant dynamic in his argument is Christocentric. Truth is located in Christ, not in secondary reason, and therefore in the realm beyond the control of human *noāj*. The incompetence of scattered reason (in contrast to the excelling strength and capacity of the Logos in himself) is central to Justin's rhetoric. He exalts the essential Logos at the expense less of the economic Logos than human beings' lack of obedience to the seed of the Word. Without the whole Logos, humanity lacked the strength to comprehend or actualize the fullness promised by reason and philosophy. The Prophetic Spirit alone makes sense of this "lack": it was to be remedied only by the incarnation to which it bore witness by prophecy. In predicting the coming of the *whole* Christ,¹¹⁶ Justin again reveals that his concern is less with morality than with an *ontological* means of re-establishing authentic epistemology. Though it appears on one level *notionally* possible that souls may follow the promptings of reason embedded in the structure of creation and thus do the good, and be rewarded for it,¹¹⁷ Justin's point is that the total structure needs setting aright from within by the whole Logos, enfleshed –

tŃ Ólon tŃn fanšnta di' 1m©j CristŃn gegonšnai, ka^ sĭma ka^ logŃn ka^ yuc»n.¹¹⁸

Justin concerns himself *not* primarily with morality, then, but with Christ:

¹¹⁵ This both accounts for Justin's desire to expose and expel heresy, and illustrates a – perhaps unexpected – latitude in his allowing a spectrum of interpretations on questions he deemed to be legitimate *quaestiones disputatae*: "Justin knows and mentions deviations from what he considers to be correct Christian views, but which it is legitimate to express, [= *Trypho* 47.1-4; 48.4; 80.2,5; cf. 128.2-4] but he emphatically separates himself from the heresies which falsify Christianity and bring it into disrepute.[= *1 Apol* 26; *Trypho* 35; 80.3f.]” May, 1994:120.

¹¹⁶ *2 Apol.* 10, 15.

¹¹⁷ Justin needs to sustain this possibility to maintain the fairness of God in judging and condemning the sinner. Justin re-states the Pauline dilemma outlined – again unresolved – in Ro. 1-11, that God is not unjust in condemning sin, even though the law of conscience, like the Torah, can only limit or prescribe sin rather than work positively to remedy it.

¹¹⁸ *2 Apol.* 10.1.

[What the philosophical schools] lacked – and what the Jews forfeited – was a special gift of God, a *κρίσις*, to understand the prophetic Scriptures and so to discover in them the face of the Word Incarnate.¹¹⁹

Christ is central in the philosophy and cosmology of Justin: *πρωτότοκος*¹²⁰ of the unbegotten¹²¹ God (i.e., the Father), or *πρωτόγονος*.¹²² The transcendent God has a Son,¹²³ and the Father-Son relation is the prime foundation upon which depend both appropriate theological description, and also the structuring reason which constitutes the rationality of the ordered cosmos. The style of Justin's rhetoric thus reveals the crucial ambiguity of *Λόγος* as both the wisdom, and expressed mind of God, thus mediating divine being and creation. The *nature* of the Logos-Son, though distinguished from the Father is thus divine: *Λόγος καὶ πρωτότοκος ἰνὰ τὸ αἰὼν, καὶ γεννητὸς πατρὸς*.¹²⁴ Despite its problematical dimension, Justin's hierarchical picture of Father-Son-(angels)-Spirit ensures that the nature of the Logos's divinity is not one merely endowed by the Spirit, or comparable with angelic origins. Adoptionism is not a possibility, and neither is there construed an intermediate between the Father and the Logos. The Spirit reveals the significance of the Logos before the incarnation, reiterating the pivotal place of the Logos both in creation and in divine reality. The Logos holds together both philosophical ontological concerns and (carrying for Justin the weight of the LXX translation of *רַבּ*) makes way for a more *linguistic* understanding of Logos, as God's spoken word-deed in history, bearing the challenge of the possibility of the

¹¹⁹ Cf. Saldanha, 1984:10-11, citing *Trypho* 55.3 and 78.

¹²⁰ *1 Apol.* 46.2; 53.2.

¹²¹ *1 Apol.* 53.2.

¹²² *1 Apol.* 58.3.

¹²³ *1 Apol.* 63.15

¹²⁴ *1 Apol.* 63.15

radical freedom of God to love creation personally, already noted as a priority for Justin.

Justin's hierarchical subordination of the Trinity, whilst not describing the nature of the distinction between Father and Son in terms of divine ontology, seeks to retain a concern common to both biblical and philosophical worlds, namely, the priority of the Father (and thus monotheism). Justin does not structure his relation of Father to Son in the terms of later orthodoxy, so it is distorting to presume that Justin conceived there to be a differentiating barrier between the Father and the Son (upon which Arius will insist). *1 Apol.* 63.15 reflects Justin's sense that although the Son, if really divine, cannot logically be other than the eternal and infinite God – he cannot be *merely* a manifestation or effulgence of the undifferentiated totality of God either.

He is different from God the maker of all things, but I speak numerically not gnomically.¹²⁵

This “gnomic identity” indicates not only divine intelligence, judgment, and purpose, but also intimates a *locus of identity*. Justin is paradoxically attributing to the Logos both a distinct identity and a shared reality with the Father. The Logos is the *Father's* Word. Justin's Logos–language represents an important dynamic in the development of theology and cosmology, focusing the question of the nature of the Son as both determined *before* creation (as the eternal God's Will), yet finding full expression only *in* creation.

¹²⁵ *Trypho* 56.11: φρ...qmē lšgw φll; οὐ gnēmV.

Because Justin exploits the potential of immediacy possible in the language of *Logos* to promote the possibility of God's temporal and personal presence to creation, he is characteristically misconstrued as holding a *temporal* notion of the begetting of the Son.¹²⁶ But Justin's Logos theology demonstrates a capacity to juxtapose ontological and relational descriptions of divine mediation. Justin does not resolve these, but he does lay them bare by this terminology. Together with Justin's subordinationism, the Word is construed as the hypostasized thought of the Father, yet distinct in number, so preventing an understanding of the Logos as an effulgence from God (a perceived characteristic of Gnostic patterns of description). The subordination of the Son is *eternal*, consequentially, the being of the Logos / Son is not contingent upon the creation of the cosmos despite being the means of its genesis.¹²⁷ The Logos is not just an economic "device" for the creation of the world, but eternally the expressed will of God. In this regard, Justin contributes something profoundly satisfying in the emergence of the concept of the Trinity even whilst exploiting images and patterns of relation that will prove inimical to later orthodoxies.

In relation to the cosmos, the economic dimensions of Justin's Logos Christology may be described in terms of *structure*, and also in terms of its fuller, *incarnate revelation* in the life, teaching, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The two achieve a sort of dramatic juxtaposition in Justin. Justin was concerned to make sense of truth in the cosmos, and found that a theistically-orientated adaptation

¹²⁶ Goodenough, 1968:153-4, argues that Justin makes no attempt "to soften the temporal implications" of the begetting of the Son before and for creation, arguing that whilst the "inference is very remote" he "slightly suggests that the Logos was begotten not long before creation" (*ibid.*, p.153), citing 2 *Apol.* 6.3.

¹²⁷ This corresponds with Origen's use of Ἐμμοῦσιος of the son (Edwards, 1998).

of the doctrine of LÒgoj spšrmatikoj fitted these requirements. Rather than Justin directly identifying the *World-Soul* with Christ,¹²⁸ his use of Logos as also the structural presence of reason reinforces the centrality of the Logos because it is nothing other than his imprint upon creation, which is *derived* from him through reason. Truth discerned by philosophers with integrity before the complete coming of Christ were discovered “according to the share each had of the divine word sown [in creation]”¹²⁹ which explicates Justin’s use of spšrma toà LÒgou¹³⁰ and katı spermatikoà IÒgou mšroj.¹³¹ Significantly, these partial descriptions are then contrasted by Justin with the superlative picture of Christians having fullness of life and knowledge kıta tš¼n toà pantŔj LÒgou Ó TM sti Cristoà¹³² and diı tŔ IÒgikon tŔ Ólon tŔn fanšnta di’ 1mŔj CristŔn gegonšnai.¹³³ Justin suggests that *universal* human culture is a means of structured preparedness for the fullness of truth revealed in Jesus Christ. It is not just Israel, therefore which has little excuse for failing to recognize the divine reality in Jesus Christ.

Justin insists that *all* humanity shares an intrinsic intelligibility through the spšrma toà LÒgou¹³⁴ which orientates the possibility of openness to Christ, as an epistemic preparedness rather than a direct ontological *participation* in the divine.

In addition to this structural, philosophical connection between the Logos and the cosmos, Justin’s priority for the elevation of the particular above the generic¹³⁵ is evident where he argues that in Logophanies the *personal* love of the Logos for

¹²⁸ Cf. Norris, 1966:46.

¹²⁹ ϕpŔ mšrouj toà spermatikoà qe...ou IÒgou, 2 Apol. 13.3.

¹³⁰ 2 Apol. 8.1.

¹³¹ 2 Apol. 8.3.

¹³² 2 Apol. 8.3.

¹³³ 2 Apol. 10.1.

¹³⁴ 2 Apol. 8.1.

¹³⁵ *Trypho* 1.4.

the plight of the Israelites may be seen. So it is Christ who conversed with Moses from the flame of the burning bush,¹³⁶ his will to rescue Israel demonstrates the nature and identity of the *Logos* before the incarnation. Whilst this is temporally before the incarnation yet, Justin says in perhaps simply untechnical and conventional language, that it was *Christ* who appeared. *Logos* would have fitted more neatly if one were to describe Old Testament theophanies as *Logophanies* – here it is a Christophany.¹³⁷

Highly significant also in Justin's description of the incarnate life of Jesus, are the miracles.¹³⁸ Though they are not sufficient a basis *in themselves* upon which to base as great a Christological claim as Christians do in asserting the divinity of the Son, they are epiphanic¹³⁹ especially because they were foretold by the Spirit of Prophecy.¹⁴⁰ The sinlessness of the Son witnessed by his conception and birth as in his earthly life¹⁴¹ and his teaching in word and deed,¹⁴² achieve importance because they signify the *nature* of this incarnate Christ:¹⁴³ both are vital

¹³⁶ *1 Apol.* 62.1-3.

¹³⁷ The plain consequence of this is the best – Justin uses Christ and Logos completely interchangeably.

¹³⁸ *1 Apol.* 48.1, 30, *Trypho* 69.4.

¹³⁹ Justin believes that without the testimony of the Prophetic Spirit, and without the context of Jesus's virgin birth, life, teaching, death, and resurrection, they might simply indicate that he was a magician, a fact he explicitly counters, *1 Apol.* 30.

¹⁴⁰ The Spirit in Jewish Scripture foretold many aspects of his coming, which, Justin believes, accounts for them being copied by deceptive demons in order to detract from the uniqueness of the incarnation when it took place. The motif of copying of Scriptures is obviously one upon which Justin relies both in regard to demonic imitation and Plato's plagiarism. Cf. *1 Apol.* 54-56.

¹⁴¹ Cf. *Trypho* 17.1; 102.7; 103.2; 110.6.

¹⁴² described as the power of God, *dÚnamij qeoà*, *1 Apol.* 14.5.

¹⁴³ The parallel with Socrates as a type of Christ does not exalt Socrates to the level of the incarnate Logos. Socrates managed to follow the truth of reason uncompromisingly, and thus he, without the presence and power of the Incarnate Logos, heroically managed to refuse to participate in the *cultus*, thus scandalizing conventional requirements of reverence. Cicero perpetuates an approach which connects such a refusal to sacrifice as a crime against the public good, and thus rightly leading to resentment. Over these concerns for social cohesion and welfare, Socrates sets his mind on the question of truth. Justin appears to read Socrates as turning philosophy from the world of social science into that of theology, giving ethics a theological dimension. Yet for all its wonder, Socrates's achievement was far from that achieved

dimensions of Justin's description of what is significant in the manifestation of the incarnate life of the Son.¹⁴⁴

The climax of the revelation of Jesus Christ in the flesh for Justin, however, is the double mystery of the crucifixion and resurrection. Justin makes no attempt to collapse the paradox that this glorious Christ was at the same time in his earthly economy *paqhtŃj ka^ ¥doxoj ka^ ¥timoj ka^ stauroàmeno*j.¹⁴⁵

Indeed, the humiliation of the Son by crucifixion is, rather than something needing explanation, described as the one mystery which the demons could not deduce from the witness-beforehand of the Spirit of Prophecy: that the nature of love was cross-ward *™p' ørcÁj*. Whereas demons may not have reckoned upon the grounds of mediation and reconciliation between God and humanity being anything to do with the crucifixion,¹⁴⁶ Plato's copying of Moses, according to Justin, led to his partial comprehension of the cross-focused universe in the *Timaeus*¹⁴⁷ where Plato's world-soul acts as an intersection between the worlds of being and becoming in the shape, as it were, of a 'c'. This crucial intersection of the worlds of being and becoming are pivoted as it were, for Justin, in the form of the cross, upon which Christ offered his life for the ontologically-inferior life of the world out of obedience to the Father's love for creation. This pivot is echoed for Justin mystically in his observance of crosses in the physical world, the sea is crossed only beneath this symbol, the earth made fruitful only after being

by Jesus Christ, whose incarnation for Justin enabled the teaching of the ignorant of these and more wonderful mysteries still.

¹⁴⁴ Cf. especially *Trypho* 32-110.

¹⁴⁵ *Trypho* 110.2.

¹⁴⁶ *1 Apol.* 35, 55, 60, 65.

¹⁴⁷ *1 Apol.* 60.1, alluding to Plato, *Timaeus* 34b and 36b.

ploughed with its shape, even the human form is distinct from that of beasts because of its cross-shape.¹⁴⁸ The soul of the universe, thus, stands in relation to the divine only through the pivot of the sacrificial love of God manifest supremely in the crucifixion, and vindicated in the resurrection and breathing of the Spirit upon Christians. The Spirit conveys divine life to the Christian community, so that ecclesiology is a consequence of Justin's Christology, but not its limit. The cosmic dimension is not lost, because in Justin's thought the presence of the Christian community in the world replaces any rôle assigned to a "natural" *sp̄rma toà LÒgou* in late Antique thought. Justin connects the complete mediation of the Cosmic Christ with the residual presence of Christians which preserves the world¹⁴⁹ by their life in the Spirit and in Christ, and thus are means of divine revelation and mediation. Clearly this is not as worked out sacramentally as will be found in later writers – for example Cyril, who assigns to a sacramental theology the means of appropriating and sustaining divine life for Christians in the world. Though Cyril's theology owes much to Athanasius's presentation of faith in in *CG-DI* and elsewhere, the notion of Christians preserving the world by their presence and divine life is present here. The significance of this observation is slanted in an apologetic direction in the context. Justin does not elucidate his observation because the thrust of the text's point is that despite (or perhaps because of this) Christians are unjustly persecuted. This state of affairs, though demonstrated to be unjust and unwise, does not shock Justin, nor should it shock those whom he wrote to strengthen: this is a characteristic response from the world - it happened to the good philosophers as

¹⁴⁸ *1 Apol.* 55.3-5.

¹⁴⁹ *2 Apol.* 7.1.

to the Hebrew prophets,¹⁵⁰ and to Christ.¹⁵¹ Christians now know the pain of the mediation of Christ through their participation in that life of divine love which is self-offering.¹⁵² In this way, the nature of the Christian *Deus revelatus* is shared by those participate in Christ after his death.

Justin has thus managed a theological connection between the eternal Logos and the imprinted seed of the Word in the structure of the whole creation, and an ontological link through the Spirit between the incarnate Christ and the baptized. The connection remains hierarchical, because at this point there is no alternative pattern which allows participation, and Justin is not the systematician to achieve this. The Logos participates in the Father because he is begotten by the Unbegotten. Creation participates unknowingly in the seminal Logos whenever it acts according to reason, but Christians, on the other hand, participate ontologically in the personal and complete Christ. Arius will provoke a re-evaluation of this model, undermining its *content* by asserting that the Son was from nothing, whilst appearing to retain its *form* as the received tradition of the Church. Much of the resistance to Athanasius from so-called “semi-Arian” communities will reflect how far this *form* of theological and cosmological description was perceived as normative. However, Justin has sketched a model of Christology and soteriology which engages critically with conventions contemporary to him, yet is accessible and intelligible to the norms of philosophical culture. Subordination plays a vital role in Justin’s theological schema, at once keeping the parameters from collapsing and protecting monotheism, as best as he can, avoiding Christologies of effulgence.

¹⁵⁰ E.g., *2 Apol.* 8.

¹⁵¹ As foretold by the prophets, Justin explicates, e.g., *1 Apol.* 49-50.

¹⁵² *1 Apol.* 56-57.

1:4 The Creating Word: Christ and Cosmology in Irenaeus of Lyons (c.130 – c.200)

The significance of Irenaeus of Lyon to Athanasian studies has become a celebrated *leitmotif* in the recent studies of de Andia (1986) and Anatolios (1998, 2001). The latter's treatment is extensive and it is unnecessary to replicate it here fully: this section is thus less lengthy than that on Justin and Origen, where it is necessary to establish their place in the mindscape of Athanasius. There is at the outset, however, one theme which does not find full discussion in Anatolios which merits consideration, namely the shunt in Irenaeus from Logos theology to an economic Trinitarianism.

Irenaeus's emphasis upon divine activity and his use of the bodily metaphor of hands illustrates this clearly. Calculated to reinforce his juxtaposition of God and creation in an anti-Gnostic manner, it is a means of ridiculing Gnostic speculation about Aeons emanating from the Logos's hand like branches from a tree.¹⁵³ Hands are Irenaeus's motif for a person's self-extension, but this need not be construed as effulgence – there is a more acceptable, holistic model,¹⁵⁴ which culminates in Irenaeus's contrast of Gnostics' 99 extensions of divinity with a rather more anthropomorphic model of two hands.¹⁵⁵ The Creator is not afraid to get his hands dirty: encompassing all things material and spiritual,¹⁵⁶ they are

¹⁵³ Irenaeus, *AH* II.17.6 (Rousseau & Doutreleau, 1982:162-165).

¹⁵⁴ Irenaeus, *AH* II.24.4 (Rousseau & Doutreleau, 1982:242-245).

¹⁵⁵ Irenaeus, *AH* II.24.6 (Rousseau & Doutreleau, 1982:248-239).

¹⁵⁶ Irenaeus, *AH* II.30.1 (Rousseau & Doutreleau, 1982:301).

those of an artist or sculptor.¹⁵⁷ Indeed, an early Trinitarian model (with echoes from Philo) for the mission of the Son and the Spirit finds expression as they are described as being the hands of God, *together* the means of creation and redemption. The image is important for all its being well-known: the Son and the Spirit are not substantially separate from the divine identity of the Father.

Irenaeus admits that this is a metaphor:

æj aÛtoà „d...aj m» œcontoj ce«raj¹⁵⁸

but Son and Spirit together make all things and sustain them in their freedom, to them does the Father address the words of Gen. 1:26 – and they mould and make all creatures perfectly in accordance with the Father’s will:

øe^ g|r sump£restin aÛtù Ð LÒgoj ka^ 1 Sof...a, Ð UfÕj ka^ tÕ
Pneàma, di' ín ka^ ™n ofj t| p£nta ™leuqšrwj ka^ aÛtexous...wj
™po...hse.¹⁵⁹

This connection marks a movement from binitarian pattern of Logos-theology to a practical Trinitarianism which involves all persons of the Triad in the act of creation.

The theological method of Irenaeus of Lyons as witnessed both in *Adversus Haereses* (hereafter *AH*), and the *Epideixis* was forged in the pressing pastoral context of the confutation of Gnostic cosmogony and theology. Irenaeus is, therefore, anxious to provide a thorough alternative to the collection of ‘words

¹⁵⁷ Irenaeus, *AH* II.30.5 (Rousseau & Doutreleau, 1982:308).

¹⁵⁸ Irenaeus, *AH* IV.20.1 (Rousseau, Hemmerdinger, Doutreleau & Mercier, 1965:627).

¹⁵⁹ Irenaeus, *AH* IV.20.1 (Rousseau, Hemmerdinger, Doutreleau & Mercier, 1965:627).

and sayings at haphazard, ... [with]... unnatural and unreal connection',¹⁶⁰ which is his analysis of Gnostic exegesis. In contrast, to the *NHL*, where there are copious references to cosmological theories supporting theological disclosure,¹⁶¹ Irenaeus's exegetical method above all attempts to preserve the unity of a dramatic narrative of creation-fall-salvation. Though often described as typological, allegory is also central to his method of countering ensuing fragmentation by this separation of creation from redemption. This strategy is, not improperly, described as "Scriptural" (Lawson, 1948: 66-82; Simonetti, 1994; Young 1997:161-185; Cameron, 1994:65), but Irenaeus' chief theological characteristic is Christocentricity, which holds and governs the interpretation of Scriptural texts.

Irenaeus strategy to undermine what he believed to be distortingly 'disconnected' readings of Scripture was an integrated and inter-connected engagement with Scripture, uncovering patterns of prophecy and fulfilment in Christ. He thus produced a weave of themes and prophecies from the Old Testament balancing them with their resolution in the Christian economy, by focusing them consistently upon Christ. This is significant for Irenaeus's conception of mediation in as much as it locates this idea in the open presence of God in creation *ab initio*. All creation points to Christ who is its source and its end. Irenaeus thus does not toil over how this may be philosophically possible.

This is a significant achievement – attained through the somewhat unfocused refutations in *AH*. Irenaeus Christologically re-aligns Jewish Scriptures. Though

¹⁶⁰ Irenaeus, *AH* I.9.3, which the *ANF* edition renders (p330): "a system which they falsely dream into existence, and thus inflict injury upon the Scriptures, while they build up their own hypothesis."

¹⁶¹ E.g., *On the Origin of the World* [*NHL*II. 97, 27-127, 17, in Robinson, 1984:162ff].

there is evidence of ecclesiological concerns, especially as the Church's unity is an essential witness to the cosmic achievement of Christ,¹⁶² Christocentric concerns are prior. For him, the Church's continuing ministry of reconciliation has serious theological significance as ecclesial life manifests Christ's cosmic role. Through the presence, prayer and mission of Christian communities, Christ will be made known in all the world, and all things will come to be reconciled in him by a singular Rule of Faith by which the Church lives.¹⁶³ The Christian community shares the singular sonship as the anointed heir *in Christ*, in contrast to the diversity of the sects each having their own founder and competing theologies.¹⁶⁴ So, despite a significant role for the Church expounded in Irenaeus, this importance is based upon and referred back to the centrality of Christ. The Church never usurps an ontologically mediatorial role from him.¹⁶⁵

The Christian tradition's rhetoric of self-distinction from Judaism, from Paul onwards, sought to diminish and profoundly relativise the Torah as a mediating agent, overwhelmed, claimed Paul and others, by a far greater "splendour" in the person of Christ.¹⁶⁶ However, in Irenaeus's battle against a perceived abandonment of the plain reading of Scripture by his opponents, the Old Testament narrative, though subordinate to his thorough Christocentricity, forms Irenaeus's presentation of Christian identity. In particular, it provides a structure to highlight the Christocentric nature of the *k»rugma*.¹⁶⁷ Irenaeus's claim to fidelity to

¹⁶² *AH* I.10.1. Rousseau and Doutreleau, 1979:155f.

¹⁶³ *AH* I.22.1. Rousseau and Doutreleau, 1979:308f.

¹⁶⁴ *AH* I.28.1. Rousseau and Doutreleau, 1979:354f.

¹⁶⁵ Witness, for example, the description of baptism in *Epideixis* 7 which focuses upon the divine prerogative and emphasizes the giver of grace rather than the "gift" of salvation as a *tertium quid*.

¹⁶⁶ E.g. 2 Cor. 3, where ministers of the new covenant proclaim not themselves, but the surpassing splendour of the minister of glorification.

¹⁶⁷ Hence Irenaeus's complaint that Gnostics "collect... words and sayings haphazardly, giving them unnatural and unreal connection" *AH* I.9.3. *ANF* vol. I (p.330) creates a hybridized

the Old Testament finds expression both in his Christological method and his assertion that the Christian community's life in the world will be consistent with a plain reading of Scripture's ethical injunctions.¹⁶⁸

Humanity's relation with God did not pass through nature but through obedience to the will of God, a fact that gave to Christian spirituality an ethical character ("doing the truth") and a strongly personalist dimension: it was through personal relationships that the human person's union with God was realized. (Zizioulas, 1986:23).¹⁶⁹

construct, "a system which they falsely dream into existence, and thus inflict injury upon the Scriptures, while they build up their own hypothesis" (*ibid.*).

¹⁶⁸ Ethics and morality have a significant apologetic weight in early Christian argument. Justin refutes the divinity of the cosmos or the soul, and the behaviour of Christians is indicative of an ontological re-calibration to God by Christ in the Spirit. Origen's assertion that God is the source of all things urges that creation, formed by God's goodness, is fundamentally good. Paide...a and Christian discipleship (*askēsis*) as vital for the soul's ascent nevertheless reflects a view of salvation fundamentally as self-knowledge. In contrast, approaches towards ethics in NHL reflect antagonism towards the cosmos and the Demiurge. Either participation in the material world – especially sexually – should be completely eschewed (as contributing to Demiurgic tyranny), or his neurotic restrictions should be disobeyed. Ethics, for the Christian community is reckoned, even in diversity, as a means of countering causes of hatred and persecution (Workman, 1980: 43-80; Fox, 1986:336-374; Grant, 1988:65-73); and for an ethical reading of Irenaeus see Meeks, 1987:160, the Christian tradition "is a story, Irenaeus claims, in which each of us is a character. The difficulties we face are explained by that great struggle between God's will for our redemption and the Satan-inspired outworkings of disobedience which provides the dramatic tension of the plot; our hope is made possible by our union with the Son, the image of God, who came to "recapitulate" that struggle, to overcome it in his victory, and to "restore" our nature; our future is resurrection to face his judgment and reward. That is the subtle pattern within which each of our actions must be deemed good or bad. As Irenaeus himself summed it up:" This, beloved, is the preaching of the truth, and this is the manner of our salvation, and this is the way of life, announced by the prophets and ratified by Christ and handed over by the apostles and handed down by the Church in the whole world to her children. This must be kept in all security, with good will, and by being well-pleasing to God through good works and sound moral character.' (*Epideixis* 98 – translation of Behr, 1997:100).

¹⁶⁹ Zizioulas, 1986:23. His reading is historically distorting of the diversity of approaches facing Christians before Nicaea. One unfortunate effect of this (appropriate) description of Irenaeus is that it condemns Clement [of Alexandria] and Origen, as attempting not distinctively Christian cosmologies but "Gnostic" by association.

Zizioulas's description might benefit from a more reflexive dimension when applied to Irenaeus. The significant theological issue is less that humanity passes through history to God, than God is present to the world in history:

In short, God is conceived here as “towards creation,” and creation is conceived as “towards God.” This kind of correlation of God and creation is by no means construed by Irenaeus in terms of necessity. [fn: Cf. *AH* II.5, 4] God remains free in the act of granting creation the gift of existence and in his continual presence to creation. (Anatolios, 1998:20).

This claim of God's “presence to creation” is central in Irenaeus's strategy vis-à-vis Gnosis. This is clear in both in *AH* – his uncovering and refutation of falsely so-called Gnosis¹⁷⁰ – and in his exposition of the apostles' teaching, the *Epideixis*.¹⁷¹ Irenaeus intends to expose falsehood by countering misconception with the whole

¹⁷⁰ *AH* IV.33.8: the true gnosis is the doctrine of the apostles, the true Gnostic, therefore, abides in this doctrine and teaching. The MSS tradition is complex. Lietzmann, 1961:206 summarizes thus: “The Fathers who fought against heretics in the next centuries frequently copied out this primary document, and as consequence have preserved numerous passages in the original wording. It was then forgotten by the Greek church, with the result that no manuscript containing the whole has survived. In the west, the work continued to be prized. At an early date, perhaps while the author was still alive, it was translated into Latin; this translation was very frequently copied, with the result that more than a dozen manuscripts have survived to our day. Moreover, even the Armenians made a translation, and of this we possess the last two books; an Armenian translation provides us with a substitute for the lost, original text of Irenaeus's second writing which was still extant in Eusebius's time [fn: *H.E.*, 5,26] and which bore the title, *Record of the Apostolic Preaching (Epideixis)*.” See also Carrington, 1957:307-308), where *Epideixis* is reckoned to be not only “shorter and simpler” but also later. It exhibits, Carrington argues, “an almost entire dependence on the Old Testament, which was still in the mind of Irenaeus the real Bible of the Church.” (*ibid.*). Texts referred to here are primarily the ANF translation of A Roberts [*AH* I, II] and W. H. Rambaut, [*AH* III – V] and Migne [1857, subsequent to Steiren's German text of 1853] with the *Corpus Berolinense: Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten drei Jahrhunderte*, herausg. Von der Kirchenväter-Kommission der Königl. Preußischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, (Liepzig, 1897ff) in Rouët de Journal, 1981: 79-104.

¹⁷¹ *Epideixis* in ET from the Armenian in Robinson, 1920, and Behr, 1997. *AH* suffers from the same problem as Origen's *Contra Celsum*, namely a lack of sharp structure and rambling subjects in an unwealdy format. The most convincing fact about *Epideixis* being a later clarification of *AH* is its focus and beivity, attempting to redress this. There is internal evidence in the concluding chapters of *Epideixis* (98, Behr, 1997:100), where reference is made to the *AH*. (*Contra* Behr, 2001:112, who argues, on account of its more primitive use of Scripture, that the main body of the text is earlier.)

apostolic truth, characterized by continuity with the plain reading of Scripture.¹⁷² Irenaeus cites Justin Martyr with approval twice,¹⁷³ where Justin exalts Scripture and the tradition of the Church (demonstrating the priority of revelation) over *philosophia*.¹⁷⁴ For Irenaeus, God is referred to through the witness of creation, but perfectly known only by participation in the sacramental life and rhetoric of the Church, where Scripture informs human understanding, and where the Sacraments and *disciplina sacra* refine the life of the Christian. Entry into this community of truth is by baptism and the interrogative prelude to it after catechesis. Irenaeus's rhetoric witnesses to his belief that a universal authoritative articulation of faith is necessary in a *Regula Fidei*. This is particularly evident in the structure of *Epideixis*, where Irenaeus is at pains to point out continuities. The faith held by the Church is that learned by the apostles from Christ – particularly concerning the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.¹⁷⁵ There follow summary demonstrations of the mighty acts of God in Christ (*Epideixis* 8-42), and then a series of demonstrations of the proof of Scripture by connecting prophecy to event in the life and ministry of Christ (*Epideixis* 42 – end). This section of the *Epideixis* can legitimately be seen as a continuation of the emphasis Justin showed in his explication of Old Testament passages, which “proved” that both Christ and the Scriptures were true, because Christ fulfilled the prophecies and the texts pointed

¹⁷² Irenaeus “ne pretend pas être un théologien original. Il expose la doctrine commune. Ses sources sont avant tout la tradition catéchétique et les Écritures. Mais il exprime cette doctrine avec un profondeur qui en manifeste la richesse spirituelle et qui porte en elle-même comme un témoignage d’authenticité divine... Son enseignement est animé par l’Ésprit.” J. Daniélou et H. Marrou, 1963:143, in Vallery-Radot, 1999:360.

¹⁷³ *AH* IV.6.2 where Irenaeus cites the lost *Against Marcion* with relish that Justin would not believe the Lord [Jesus] himself had he introduced a God other than the Creator; and V.26.2, where he alludes to Justin explaining Satan’s quietism before the incarnation of Christ and the subsequent openness of his teaching. Satan is exposed by the truth plainly set forth, and thus sent into furious opposition to Christ and his servants, the seeds of the Word.

¹⁷⁴ We have observed, above, that for Justin, *philosophia* proper is revelation: the schools are human attempts at re-construction of what Plato observes in Moses.

¹⁷⁵ *Epideixis* 3-7, cf. Behr, 2001:112.

to Christ in some detail. There is an obvious *a priori* taste to Irenaeus's argument, but that circularity is common to both Justin and Irenaeus. What has been observed about the Christocentric method of Justin's biblical theology is directly applicable to Irenaeus. The Old Testament shapes "the whole of the Christian revelation itself" (Behr, 1997:13), but Christ shapes and inspires the Old Testament. Given the probable connection of *Epideixis* with Athanasius (Anatolios, 2001), it remains both to review the foundations of that assumption and explore in detail the explicitly theological section of *Epideixis* (3-7, Behr, 1997:42-44).

Anatolios argues that the writings of Irenaeus directly shaped Athanasius' theology. The former's insistence, for example, against Platonic conventions, upon God's presence to the world in Creation and in Christ, comes to a climax in the 'blending and co-mingling' (*AH* IV, 20, 4) of divine and human being in Christ (Anatolios, 2001:465). Anatolios urges that this notion governs both structure and argument in *CG-DI*, with a particular emphasis upon that which, though present in Irenaeus, reflects a characteristically Alexandrian (Origenian) concern. In particular, despite the divine presence to creation, Athanasius maintains that God remains ultimately unknowable because human beings are created. This places an emphasis upon the divine motivation of love in self-disclosure, which is God's own being.¹⁷⁶ Divine nature, then, makes up for any ontological inequality by grace:

This structural employment of an Irenaeian motif, which places the dialectic of divine unknowability and accessibility to human knowledge within God's nature itself, stands in strong contrast with the Eusebian approach, in which the incommensurability between

¹⁷⁶ Anatolios [1999:465] gives the following references in support of his argument: *AH* II, 13,4; II,28,2; III, 24,2; IV,20,1; IV, 20, 5.

human nature and divine nature makes knowledge of God inaccessible to humanity is resolved by the secondary divine status of the Mediator-Logos. (Anatolios, 2001: 465-466, citing *Theophany* I, 5).

Summarizing Meijering's structural analysis of *CG-DI* (1991:313-326), Anatolios echoes the rhetorical impact of Athanasius moving from the accessibility of God, by his gracious self-disclosure in human being,¹⁷⁷ the created world¹⁷⁸ and Scripture¹⁷⁹ less to the Pauline position that human beings are without excuse for their breach of communion with God, but to the climax of *DI* where the depths of divine mercy and identity are revealed in the Incarnation (Anatolios, 2001:466). It is in reaction to Eusebius's working of Irenaean theology that the depiction in *DI* displays a more attentive dependence upon *Epideixis* 14-16, where communion with God requires obedience to commandment. Obedience is the means of remaining (*menekn*), firstly in communion with God the source of life, and, derivatively, in health and life itself. Anatolios calls this state as remaining within a "receptivity", which constitutes human life in its fullness: 'Haec enim Gloria hominis, perseverare ac permanere in Dei servitute'.¹⁸⁰

Athanasius dramatically extends the consequences of falling from this state by depicting the tragedy of a loss of identity, integrity and life. Without participation in divine life, humanity falls back into the nothing from which it was made. Here it is Irenaeus rather than Origen to whom Athanasius is closer. Origen's schema of fall

¹⁷⁷ CG 2, 30.

¹⁷⁸ CG 35.

¹⁷⁹ CG 45-46.

¹⁸⁰ AH IV, 14, 1. SC 100/2, p.540. In Anatolios, 1999:467.

from obedience is cast in Aristotelian terms in *Peri Archon*.¹⁸¹ in creation souls were free and therefore possessed goodness as an accident, not ontologically (were they by nature good, then there would have been no virtue in choosing good). These arguments, however, are not explored by Athanasius. Human being is constituted by the possibility of receptivity, where divine power sustains life.

Recapitulation above all sets out the fundamental importance of the humanity of the Saviour, the “new Adam”, going over the same ground as the old one, humanly yet now with divine power, fulfilling God’s intentions rather than disobeying (Minns, 1994:92-93). This figure has to be human for the notion to work, yet he is also the hand of God – as Luke puts it ἡμῶν δὲ κτῆσι θεοῦ¹⁸² - illustrating that already “two natures” are anticipated in Irenaeus, establishing another dimension of his being a precursor to Athanasius.

Anatolios links *DI* 44 with *Epideixis* 31, arguing for a dependency of the former on the latter – the entry of corruption into the very structures of human being represents an early example of the identification of interiority with authentic human being. Because humanity is corrupted within, no external remedy is sufficient. The Logos had to become flesh, so that in the communion of divine and human natures in the God-Man, sin might be expelled from the human condition. Anatolios urges that this development of the Irenaeian tradition is an extension of the ideas of the apologists (2001:469), so Meijering:

Während die Ausführungen zur Überwindung des Todes durch die Inkarnation weitgehend in der Tradition eines Irenäus stehen,

¹⁸¹ *PA* I,2,4; I,5,5. Anatolios, 468, fn 20.

¹⁸² Luke 11:20, though it does not appear that Irenaeus cites this text, see Elliot, 1984:253.

bewegt sich die nunmehr folgende Argumentation zur
Wiederherstellung der Gotteserkenntnis mehr auf den Spuren der
Apologeten (1989:103).

Irenaeus describes God the Father primarily as Creator, a means whereby he opposes cosmological speculation fundamentally and decisively. God is present to humanity in creation, creation is the frame for directly encountering God. These themes are reworked by Athanasius 'through the typically Origenian and Alexandrian epistemological framework' (Anatolios, 2001:469) but retain a discernable kinship.

However, the influence of Irenaeus in Athanasius's later works – especially the *CA* – is less obvious. Anatolios accounts for this by considering the rhetoric required to counter Arian thought was necessarily to be rooted in the texts of the conflict. If written after the outbreak of the controversy with Arius and his supporters, *CG-DI* seems to be purposefully aimed at redressing Eusebius' reading of Irenaeus (in his *Theophany*) along an Origenian epistemology. But a tenet of "Arian" theological perspective was the unknowability of God even to the Logos (Anatolios, 2001:470, *De Synodis* 15). The emphasis becomes one of contrast between a created mediator and a divine Word – so the emphasis on the mediatory function of creation is strategically dropped (Anatolios, 2001:471). It is God who restores the relationship between fallen human beings and himself, because the state of salvation is not an accident, rather it constitutes direct relationship. The divine Logos is no mediator of a message *other* than himself: he is the means of relationship with God because that is his very nature. Athanasius has thus moved from the emphasis in *CG-DI*, but even here, Anatolios points out, there is an

Irenaeus connection. Citing a text in the second florilegium of Theodoret's *Eranistes*,¹⁸³ Anatolios conclusively drives home his argument for the textual dependence of Athanasius upon Irenaeus. Irenaeus describes Christ as the mediator between God and humanity in these terms:

who unites (ἑνωσων, *adunivit*) the two by his habituation to both, brings them into friendship and concord, presents (παρῆσαι, *adsumeret*) humanity to God, and makes God known to humanity (Anatolios, 2001:472).

This echoes ideas both of union and presentation with CA 2:70,¹⁸⁴ but there remains a significant difference between the “soteriological symmetry” of the two. Irenaeus's conviction was that

unless it was humanity that conquered the devil, the victory would not be legitimate; and unless it was God who had given salvation, we would not have received it securely (Anatolios, 2001:472).

Athanasius' emphasis is that were the Logos a creature then the battle with evil would not have been securely won: the divine nature is required in terms of its power to establish salvation securely (Anatolios 2001:473). Anatolios exposes that Athanasius does not seem to exhibit the clarity which Irenaeus had concerning the significance of the Holy Spirit, particularly if *CG-DI* is the basis for such a judgement. The early Athanasius seems to have “regressed”, relegating the Holy Spirit to the Apologists' “Spirit of Prophecy” until the CA. Anatolios concludes that the Arian crisis had the effect of intensifying discussion on the relation of the

¹⁸³ *Eranistes* II Florilegium, [Fr. Gr. 26] in Ettliger, 1975:153.

¹⁸⁴ Bright, 1884:140.

Father and Son, and that this took time to expand into a larger question of procession (*cf.* Ayres, 2004), but significant to our discussion, too, is his assertion that

Nicene orthodoxy is not primarily the construction of a divine metaphysics, but is organically linked to, and is indeed derivative of an underlying conception of the structure and the story of God's relation to the world (Anatolios, 2001: 476).

Indeed, Anatolios's analysis highlights the role that the nature of creation and cosmology plays in the theological debate.

In distinctive contrast to the varied and detailed cosmologies described in Irenaeus's *AH* and evidenced in the *NHL*, his insistence upon the primary description of God as creator is a means of resisting cosmological speculation. God is present to humanity in creation, creation is thus the context for directly encountering God, and this motif of directness is extended into Irenaeus's understanding of the incarnation.

This is evidenced in the focus of his rule of faith in *Epideixis* 6 in a surprisingly sophisticated Trinitarian manner. The Father is described as "Uncreated, uncontainable, invisible, one God, the Creator of all" (Behr, 1999:43). Apophatic epithets are appended to a kataphatic assertion about God's singularity and his being the creator and therefore the source of all things. That God is the creator of *all* things will be reiterated in the Christological summation. It is no accident that it is emphasised twice, because in contrast to Platonic dualism, Irenaeus retains a notion of the Sovereignty of God in creation. In contrast to May (1994), the

emergence of *creatio ex nihilo* as a theological tenet appears in *anti*-gnostic polemic (Young, 1991).

Irenaeus's description of the Son avoids the suggestion of an intermediary being. It is predicted by the prophets – and known in history – to be:

according to the nature of the economies of the Father, by whom all things were made, and who in the last times, to recapitulate all things, became a man amongst men, visible and palpable, in order to abolish death, to demonstrate life, and to effect communion between God and man (*Epideixis* 6, Behr, 1997:43-4).

This depiction, whilst retaining some ambiguity, tends towards a monarchian expression whilst also certainly communicating both the pre-existence of the Son and explains his mission in terms both of removing the effect of sin, and the establishment of relationship between God and humanity. The Son is not described as a third ontological entity overlapping or connecting divine and created natures, not simply because this is not Irenaeus's preferred theological style, but because for Irenaeus the Son *is* that communion. Just as Irenaeus opposes an intermediate habitation or "place" in terms of cosmology or anthropology – God remains present to creation without the need of a Gnostic cosmic revealer – so he avoids describing the Son's mediation in terms of his being an intermediary. Indeed, he reserves this as a perjorative term in *AH*¹⁸⁵ which characterizes Gnostic cosmology. As the notion of God's presence to the world is paramount in Irenaeus' cosmology – it is pivotal also in his *Christology*, expressed compactly

¹⁸⁵ *AH* I.5.3; 5.4; 6.4; 7.1, 5; 8.3,4; 13; II.16.4; 29.1, 2, 3; 30.2, 5, 7.

here. This is another important prelude to a theme in Athanasius, namely, a Christological use of *creatio ex nihilo*.

Epideixis 6 concludes with a description of the Holy Spirit, exhibiting the familiar motif of concern for continuity between Old Testament history and Christian experience. The Spirit is the action of God, by

whom the prophets prophesied and the patriarchs learnt the things of God and the righteous were led in the path of righteousness (Behr, 1997:44).

But in the end-times, the Spirit has been outpoured upon humanity throughout all the o„koumšnh ‘renewing man... to God’ (Behr, 1997:44).

As if to explicate the means of this renewal, Irenaeus interjects a word on baptism (*Epideixis* 7) – which takes place in the name of this Trinity, and is the work of the Spirit, who leads Christians to union with the Son and regenerates (paliggenes...a) humanity in him to be presented to the Father, who lavishes the gift of incorruptibility upon the baptized person. This is theologically significant, and exceeds the sophistication of the early Athanasius in the role accorded to each person in the Trinity to salvation. Irenaeus makes explicit the need for all persons of the Godhead for salvation to be secure:

without the Spirit it is not [possible] to see the Word of God, and without the Son one is not able to approach the Father; for the knowledge of the Father [is] the Son, and knowledge of the Son of God is through the Holy Spirit, while the Spirit, according to the

good-pleasure of the Father, the Son administers, to whom the Father wills as He wills (*Epideixis* 7).

This emphasis upon the necessity of baptism and the priority of divine will and action in salvation manifests a brake in the extent to which knowledge of God is accessible naturally through creation, which we find elsewhere in *Epideixis* and is a characteristic distinction between Athanasius's *CG* and his *DI*.

Mediation therefore is construed within a framework of divine initiative and presence to humanity in creation. The Son embodies this graceful will of God in terms consistent with a theology of history. Unlike Origen, there is little here in terms of a philosophically-couched discourse around cosmological mediation. These two paradigms, soteriological and ontological, co-exist in Athanasius' method through a more explicit use of *creatio ex nihilo* as the means to hold both aspects in view.

Irenaeus's centre is one where the re-established relationship between God and human beings epitomises salvation. The God-Man embodies this in himself, and actualises it in history by retracing the path of the first Adam with divine power and humanity— a process described in Scripture. But the covenant is re-sited, not in Scripture *per se*, but in Christ. Christology, rather than Biblical *theology* as a *tertium quid*, is central. Irenaeus's project may be described as the Christianizing of the Old Testament along the lines of the plain reading of Scripture and the proof from prophecy. Although Irenaeus's prime description of God is creator, the Gnostic context against which he writes accounts for this, e.g.:

[the Creator] is not a father in the proper sense, nor a god, because he has someone who begot (him and) who created him.¹⁸⁶

A characteristic of Irenaeus is his thorough opposition to a speculative cosmological framework for theology. His basic presupposition is that God is present to humanity in creation. His achievements in maintaining this have been initially indicated in examining the connection with Athanasius (above). But Irenaeus does not explore *how* the incarnation can add to this assertion. The writings of Irenaeus are not a good place to find answers to this type of philosophically-contrived and speculative question. It is to Origen that one must look to find a meaningful addressing of questions of this type. But it is important to reiterate Irenaeus's achievement and influence. He persistently refuses the possibility (or necessity) of an intermediate habitation (τὸ ποῖον) in terms of cosmology or anthropology. Mediation thus conceived – as a *tertium quid* – is cast in perjorative terms in *AH I* and *II*.¹⁸⁷ Instead, in contrast to such concerns, Irenaeus's style is marked by a balancing of Old Testament data with New Testament resolution, and with the possibility of participating and remaining in communion with God:

For to follow the Saviour is to be a partaker of salvation, and to follow light is to receive light... for this is proper human glory: to continue and remain permanently in God's service.¹⁸⁸

His combat with Gnostic cosmology produces a robust depiction of the work and being of the Logos in terms of recapitulation of the good creative purposes of the

¹⁸⁶ *NHC I*.51.38 – 52.2. Robinson, 1984:55.

¹⁸⁷ *AH I*.5.3; 5.4; 6.4; 7.1,5; 8.3,4,13; *II*.16.4; 29.1,2,3; 30.2,5,7.

¹⁸⁸ *AH IV*.1, *SC 100/2*, Rousseau, A., Hemmerdinger, B., Doutreleau, L. & Mercier, C., 1965:540: "Haec enim Gloria hominis, perseverare ac permanere in Dei servitute".

true God. He refines description of the Logos through this onslaught impacting upon developing Trinitarian theology and soteriology: the debate must centre around the person of the mediator, and the mediator's relation to God the Father. These questions Origen approaches in a manner accessible to Platonic hearers. Athanasius and Arius will address the issue more directly.

1:5 Origen (c.185 – c.254) and the Alexandrian Theological Tradition: A Christian Philosophy without tainting Pagan paradigms.

Irenaeus's use of the Old Testament is central to his portrayal of a unitary picture of revelation. New Testament texts were notoriously preferred by such as Marcion who wished to establish a contradiction between old and new dispensations and theologies.¹⁸⁹ The centrality of the Old Testament is striking in the "biblical" pattern of cosmology and Christology in Irenaeus of Lyons, who represents a different approach from both Origen and Justin. For Justin, we observed that Christians were the true Israel, the community where the fullest exegesis of Mosaic monotheism found expression. The familiar motif of philosophy as a copy of

¹⁸⁹ The earliest commentary on a NT book (or part of one) is Heracleon's commentary on the Fourth Gospel, concentrating upon dividing the God of this world from Jesus Christ. In this commentary, the Demiurge is pitched against the supreme God, and humanity is, in a symptomatically Gnostic style, divided into different natures by origin and destiny. Cf. M. Simonetti, 1994:18f., Ashton, 1991:121-280. Gnostic language appears to be deliberately employed in the Fourth Gospel with subversive intent. A Gnostic Christology refuses any cosmological dimension to the Messiah's *mediatorial* role: Christ offers redemption *from* history and created existence. History *is* the fall, preventing participation in the divine nature, which is also the true, if presently submerged, identity of the Gnostic. Gnostic thought, for all its diversity, shares an approach which is a "Revolte gegen Zeit, Geschichte und Welt... Sie ist Negation des Vorhandenen und in Geltung Stehenden." N Brox, 1967:265, cited in G Vallée, 1980:183. Heracleon's commentary may be seen as an attempt to redeem the Fourth Gospel for Gnostic use, attempting to defuse its powerful anti-Gnostic Christological developments. The Fourth Gospel energetically engages with characteristic motifs explicated in Gnostic texts unambiguously from Jn.1:1ff. The Logos, rather than Sophia (perhaps because of Gnostic mixed-metaphors vis-à-vis the fall of Sophia), is implicated not merely in redemption but in the work of creation $\phi\rho'$ $\phi\rho\acute{\alpha}\lambda\eta$. The Logos represents the sole means of all things coming into being, spiritually or physically: "and without him was not anything made that was made." (Jn.1:2b).

revelation, is extended as Christians are philosophers proper, people of the living Word, seeds of the Logos, those for whose sake the world is preserved.¹⁹⁰ Justin's desire produced a strong statement of case to counteract the accusation that Christianity was an intolerant superstition. The monotheistic moralist framework, however, led to a particular casting of the relation of the transcendent God with the Word in Justin's Christology. Irenaeus's exegetical Christocentricity side-stepped dimensions of the issue of mediation by asserting God's presence to the world in creation and in Christ. However, Origen will attempt to resolve the relation of the Beyond-Being God with the Son by a hierarchy of being connecting all things in a cosmology where subordinationist language functions through an ontologically-connected cosmos.¹⁹¹ Origen's interest is an authentically philosophical one: the pursuit of Christian *gnosis* was an urgent task for the Alexandrian Christian community – vital to establishing the truth of the Christian faith with rigor in a vivid intellectual context.¹⁹² The Christian philosopher, the true Gnostic, is the ideal Christian for Clement and Origen. *Contra Celsum* (CC), though in many ways the culmination of Christian apologetics, is to be read as part of Origen's sustained attempt to explore truth and to present Christian doctrine as a science against Gnostic misunderstandings of creation, and sectarian patterns of Christian identity.

¹⁹⁰ Justin Martyr: διὰ τῆς σπέρματος τῆν κρίσιν ὁ γινέσκει τῆν τὴν φύσει ὅτι ἀπὸ... ὡς ἐν 2 *Apol.* 7. Cf. Holte, 1958:109-168.

¹⁹¹ Origen's attempt to approach models of divine being expressed in Plotinus [and possibly Basilides] is a conciliatory resolution, hypostasizing the Logos in terms of a Platonic mediator. Cf. May, 1994:62-84, Krämer, 1967:336 (fn 531): "He rightly sees the specific feature of Christian creation doctrine which distinguishes it from Neo-platonist metaphysics in the single, once for all creative act 'which as the will and free choice of God among endless possibilities (Augustine) is the consequence of conceiving God *personally*.'" Cf. Young, 1991:150 who connects *creatio ex nihilo* to concerns about the nature of God: "...creation out of nothing was not just a doctrine about the world. It was doctrine about God."

¹⁹² "The life of the gnostic is, in my view, no other than works and words which correspond to the tradition of the Lord" [Clement of Alexandria, *Strom.* VII. 104,2]. With his conscious use of the concept "gnosis" for the Christian knowledge of truth Clement once again attempted to overcome the breach between faith and knowledge in the church and not to remain stuck in a mere denial of the claims of the "false" gnosis.' Rudolph, 1983:16.

The diverse and speculative thought of the controversial figure of Origen is often constructed from a mixture of Origen's work with the early explorative work *Peri Archon*¹⁹³ (or *De Principiis*, hereafter *PA*) being pivotal. *CC*,¹⁹⁴ coming from the end of Origen's corpus – after 236CE¹⁹⁵ – sought to provide patterns of constructive and responsive theological explorations as paradigms for approaches to apologetic. Sensibly, Crouzel (1989) insists upon the need for an intertextual approach to Origen's works, which is a model employed here.

In the preface Origen says that he is reluctant to respond directly to a little-known anti-Christian text.¹⁹⁶ Martyrdom was the widely-celebrated testimony to Christian truth far above words,¹⁹⁷ with an integrity more consonant to its subject-matter than argument against ridicule. Nonetheless, Origen did submit to his patron's request, producing a text described as “the most important apologetic writing of

¹⁹³ The text used here is that of Görgemanns & Karpp, [TZF 24] 1976. McGuckin, 2004:36-37 offers a brief critical introduction, dating the work between 220 and 230.

¹⁹⁴ The text used here is that of Koetschau. For critical notes on MSS traditions, see the critical introduction by P. Koetschau, 1899:lvii- xc. A shorter review appears in Chadwick 1980:xxix – xxxii. Unless otherwise stated, Chadwick's translation is used in this dissertation. On the genre of *Contra Celsum* as apologetic see Fédou, 1989; M. Frede, 1999:131.

¹⁹⁵ So Eusebius, *HE* 6.36.1, Origen was over sixty when he began the work, therefore in Caesarea, with the intent of strengthening those of weak faith. Cf. McGuckin, 2004:33.

¹⁹⁶ *CC* Praef. 2, 3: “Jesus is always being falsely accused, and there is never a time when he is not being accused so long as there is evil among men. He is still silent in the face of this and does not answer with his voice; but he still makes his defence in the lives of his genuine disciples, for their lives cry out the real facts and defeat all charges, refuting and overthrowing the slanders and accusations. I would therefore go so far as to say that the defence which you ask me to compose will weaken the force of the defence that is in the mere facts, and detract from the power of Jesus which is manifest to those who are not quite stupid.” Chadwick, 1980:4. That this was not a conventional expression of authorial modesty is urged by Frede, 1999:139f, arguing that Origen's misgivings are rooted in the recognition that the most powerful trial of truth in Christ was not met by a systematic forensic foray in conventional rhetoric, but that the truth spoke most eloquently in silence.

¹⁹⁷ *Contra Celsum* III.40, Chadwick, p.156: “That is why Christians forthwith say of images that ‘they are not gods’ [Acts xix.26], and maintain that created objects such as these are not compatible with the Creator, and are worth little beside the supreme God who created, holds together and governs the universe.” These images or ornaments (εἰματα, Koetschau, 1899:236) made by creatures should be taken to include all constructs about the divine as well as idols: they lack being, because they emerge from the world of existence and becoming, the doctrine of *creatio ex nihilo* here appears to emerge as the conceptual foundation of Christians' appropriate atheism. This would appear to be a much more powerful *Sitz-im-Leben* of that doctrine than a Gnostic attempt at rapprochement with the Church (contra May, 1994).

antiquity” (Crouzel, 1989:47). Written 70 years after Celsus’s¹⁹⁸ anti-Christian ‘*Alhq¾j LÒgoj*,¹⁹⁹ Origen no doubt also responded to Celsus’s refutation of Christianity because he read the seriousness of the times correctly and sought to strengthen Christians for a renewed bout of persecution,²⁰⁰ and also because, in demonstrating the necessity of such an enterprise for the life of the Church, Origen could defend himself and explorative theology from the accusations of his ‘simple’

¹⁹⁸ Michael Frede argues that Celsus is “without a doubt” a Platonist philosopher writing after 160CE, [1999:132]; Henry Chadwick urges that Celsus’s “philosophy is that of Middle Platonism, and with Epicureanism he betrays no affinities at all”, and that his *True Account* was written around 177-80 [1980: xxv & xxix]. Wilken offers a similar date for Celsus’s *Alēthēs Logos* at around 170CE [1984:94]. Origen believed Celsus to have been a friend of the second-century satirist Lucian, and he thus initially assumes Celsus had been an Epicurean. Upon a closer engagement with Celsus’s text, Origen admits that he was not (CC 4.54, Chadwick, 1980:228). The idea that the *Alēthēs Logos* is anti-Christian polemic triggered by the arguments of Justin (or Aristides) has been seriously considered since Carl Andresen’s argument that it is prompted by the text of Justin’s *Apol/s*. [Andresen, 1955:308ff], Trigg, 1998:52-3 (after Pichler, 1980:43-50). Eusebius’s *Ecclesiastical History* (6.36.1-3) dates the *Contra Celsum* during the reign of Philip the Arab (c.244-249CE). Chadwick places a great deal of weight on *Contra Celsum* 3.15, referring to insurrection which he identifies with the troublesome year of 248, “which suggests that Origen is writing on the eve of a persecution, the imminence of which is already apparent to those with eyes to see” Chadwick 1980:xiv-xv. A gap of at least 64 years is well accounted-for by Michael Frede’s argument that Origen’s reluctance to respond at length would at least partly resurrect arguments by a more-or-less unknown critic, who drew upon a whole artillery of arguments in this “extensive anti-Christian compendium” (Frede, 1999:133). The thrust of Celsus’s *Alēthēs Logos* is that the true reason for the world’s existence, and the most faithful description of its nature, is most properly that of the *ecumenical* vision of an accommodating Pagan culture, which holds together the cultures not only of the civilized Graeco-Roman authority but all the world, (Frede, 1999:133-134; *Contra Celsum* 1.14, Chadwick 1980:16-17). The interweaving of all religious traditions both relativizes exclusive and localized *tribal* claims upon divinity, yet preserves the particularity of the local by including them in the organic whole of paganism. The theological effect of this, Celsus argues, contributes to a critical theology where assumptions and conventions are challenged by the experience of life in a commonwealth. The assumption that God must have many names and manifestations which is fed by this social reality and which contributes to its ideological preservation is a strong and serious argument against Christianity’s obscurity and exclusivity (CC 1.24, 5.41, 6.49-50, Chadwick, 198:23-4; 296-7; 365-7, Frede, 1999:133-4) which Origen is urged to address.

¹⁹⁹ Although Chadwick consistently translates this *The True Doctrine*, a more literal Greek title for Celsus’s work is preferred here, as it carries more resonance to the different significances of *Logos* in Christian and philosophical vocabulary (Chadwick, 1980:5). Even if the title is *not* a deliberate rebuttal of Justin (or Aristides, or other *Logos* apologists), it makes sense to allow the ambiguities of the Greek to make its own connections than this title or *True Account* (Frede’s preferred translation, 1999:131ff.) allows.

²⁰⁰ Cf. Trigg, 1998:53, “The parlous state of the Empire, threatened as never before by inflation, internal dissention, and external invasion, induced in some pagan intellectuals an apocalyptic mood as Rome celebrated the millennium of its founding in 247. Some blamed Christians, favored by the reigning Emperor, Philip the Arab, who tolerated Christians and with whom Origen himself had been in correspondence [cf. Eusebius, *EH* 6.36, *not* 6.38.1 as in his reference], for Rome’s disarray.”

detractors.²⁰¹ Celsus's choice of title revealed that he was concerned with addressing what he saw to be the serious philosophical error underlying Christian thought with its potentially lethal social consequences:

It is clear from the last section of Celsus' polemic that he is in truth deeply concerned about this fanatical new movement that is taking people away from the worship of the old gods and is undermining the structure and stability of society. Let the Christians return to take their stand upon the old paths and abandon this newly invented absurdity of worshipping a Jew recently crucified in disgraceful circumstances.²⁰²

Whatever other personal advantages may have been gained for Origen in rebutting Celsus's arguments, the prime theological prompt for Origen was the need to address directly the accusation that the Christian notion of God's voluntarist relation to the world led to a fundamental ontological and cosmological instability. Celsus pointedly focuses the central *theological* question: in the Christian *schema*, if God is not to be identified *with* the cosmos in a graduated way, is not Christianity a form of di-theism? Are not Pagans, actually, more monotheistic than Christians by recognizing an ontological relation between the divine and the cosmos?²⁰³ Origen recognises that language explicative of the mediation of God in Christ thus needed an ontological resolution, but *in similo modo* to Irenaeus in his context, Origen argues that this resolution must be

²⁰¹ Trigg, 1998:55: "The opportunity to score points off simpler Christians by refuting Celsus was probably an inducement to comply with Ambrosius's request. Origen's use of the *Contra Celsum* to defend himself against those ("simple" in his opinion) who objected to his ideas is most evident in his response to Celsus's charges that Christians conceive of God as a celestial cook planning to set fire to the world and that they irrationally hope to reanimate their corpses."

²⁰² Chadwick, 1980:xxi.

²⁰³ CC VII: 68-9, Chadwick, 1980: 452-3.

Christological, urging that a Christology capable of addressing Celsus's critique must relate both sides of the ultimate cosmological distinction implied by *creatio ex nihilo* which Origen (like Irenaeus) uses against the Gnostics. Origen's attempts to do this in a Trinitarian schema, for all the hierarchy and subordination of Son to the Father which will draw later condemnation, marks a distinctively new stage in Christian articulation even from what has been observed, above. Origen's triadic resolution begins the process of a more profoundly Trinitarian and ontological style of resolution, a trajectory which Athanasius will re-work after the questions Arius poses at the turn of the fourth century. Origen's contribution to the development of the meeting of Trinitarian description and mediatorial language of Christ is foundational to this study. This reading of Origen, in his Alexandrian and Caesarean contexts, is of one who took his responsibility for the public construction of articulate theological models in a fundamentally explorative, adventurous way with the utmost seriousness.²⁰⁴ Origen's ambiguous evaluation by later Christian orthodoxy²⁰⁵ is properly set alongside the context of his intellectual ministry in the enormously advanced cultural and intellectual milieu of Alexandria (and Caesarea). Origen's sensitive appreciation and searing critique of Jewish scholarship and practice, for example, need not be viewed as being

²⁰⁴ *PA* is less a single systematic model than outline descriptions of and explorations in the foundations of Christian faith. Cf. Lyman, 1993:43-4, 'Whether or not Origen may be called systematic in the strictest sense, it is clear from *On First Principles* and the function of his theological language generally that he deliberately set out an organized metaphysical scheme within which to explore contemporary problems of the relation of God, Christ, and the world'.

²⁰⁵ Cf. Crouzel's beautiful description of Origen's reception under the *devise* "In signum cui contradicetur". Crouzel, 1989:xi-xii. Cf. Lyman, 1993:39: "Traditionally, Origen has been 'suspected of a great orthodoxy' [Charles Williams, *The Descent of the Dove* (New York, 1939), p.37]. His Christian commitment was unquestionable, but his theological conclusions stimulated passionate apologetic or repudiation; he was too right to be wrong, or too attractively wrong to be ignored". Trigg (1998:61) poignantly comments that Origen's survival of torture (albeit in such a weakened state that he died within a year or so of being released) prevented his joining the ranks of martyrs: "An unequivocal death by martyrdom would have been better for Origen's posthumous reputation". See also Clark, 1992, for an analysis of the roles Origen is cast in later controversy.

restricted merely to his later, Levantine period.²⁰⁶ An awareness of the responsibility to articulate Christian doctrine in the context of metropolitan life, with all its dangers and social tension, may well have found its mature distillation in the product of his Caesarean years in *CC*, convincing him of the need to prepare Christians for the brewing Decian persecutions.

In *CC*, Origen had, like Justin before him, to evaluate “the dispensation of Paganism”,²⁰⁷ by acknowledging, tacitly or explicitly, that *unaided* reason has not the capacity fully to comprehend truth. Familiar motifs from Philo, Justin and Clement of Alexandria reappear: but with more confident handling in Origen, and certainly more sophistication and depth. Justin’s theme of Plato plagiarising from Moses²⁰⁸ alongside variations of the argument from distorted inspiration from daemons fallen from divine grace are to be found.²⁰⁹ We will observe something of Origen’s skilfulness in introducing the power of grace in this setting, confirming that

²⁰⁶ Though this is the clear scholarly consensus. Cf. the positive picture Nicholas de Lange paints of Origen’s *unusual* approach to Jews, describing the *Contra Celsum* as “ a great work of apologetic... staunchly defending the Jews from the pagan challenge... [T]he Ancient Israelites [had to]... be defended by the champion of Christianity from the slurs cast on them by the enemies of Judaism. The *Contra Celsum* is unique in Christian apologetic literature for the mildness with which it treats the Jews... What we do see from the *Contra Celsum* is how much common ground there could be in the mid-third century between Church and Synagogue, when both faced the same attack from outside”. de Lange, 1976:64-5. John Gager is less positive, selecting passages of de Lange to temper a positive evaluation of Origen *vis-à-vis* the Jews even in the perceived “friendly”, Caesarean years: “At one level, he merely confirms the existence of an important facet in Jewish-Christian relations throughout this period: the existence of a “lively debate” between Christians and Jews. We have already noted that Origen complains in several places of Judaizing practices among Christians. Thus despite his scholarly discussions with Jews in Caesarea and his very considerable knowledge of Judaism, he will explicitly forbid any mutual give-and-take between the Church and the Synagogue.” Gager, 1985:165, citing de Lange, 1976:87. C. Haas, 1997:105-6, cites Wilken 1971:43; de Lange, 1976: 8-9, 23-28; J. A. McGuckin, 1992:1-13, *et al*, to justify a similar conclusion, namely, ‘much of the evidence used to establish a “Jewish connection” between Origen and rabbinic teachers is probably attributable to the period after he took up residence in Caesarea.’

²⁰⁷ A phrase from J. H. Newman’s sermon for Easter Tuesday, 13th April, 1830, preached in the University Church of St Mary the Virgin, Oxford, reproduced in McGrath, 2001:26.

²⁰⁸ E.g., concerning creation, *Contra Celsum* 7.31 (Chadwick, pp419-20).

²⁰⁹ *Contra Celsum* VIII: 4, Chadwick, 1980:456, Origen argues that Plato is inspired by the devil to write *Phaedrus* 246e-247a, 250b

reason alone is an *interpretative function* or a “preconceptual apprehension”²¹⁰ of humanity to receive divine truth and grace, and is not something indicative of a kinship with the divine, certainly constituting no prior claim upon God.²¹¹ Origen, nevertheless, recognized that he had to set about relating this reason to the Christian economy, and attempts critical explorations of the relationship between them. A thorough examination of Origen’s *CC* with a particular eye to mediation may enhance an understanding of the subtlety and intricacy of Origen’s depiction of the relation of divine will and being interpenetrating with creation’s freedom, and though beyond the scope of this thesis would contribute to Origen studies.

CC displays an extraordinary awareness of the problems of theological epistemology, with the relation of God to creation as a central issue. Celsus has accused Christians of having an unthinking approach to theology; particularly repulsive in its focus upon the resurrection of the flesh, which he asserts is only defended by the dubious Christian mantra ‘anything is possible for God’.²¹² This is a *reductio ad absurdum* of a Christian emphasis upon the voluntarist and personally-construed relation of God to creation. Celsus insists that just as God may not do what is shameful, neither does he desire what is contrary to nature or his own character: the created cosmos is sustained by reasonable laws, revealing that God’s purposes are not arbitrary but good. For Celsus, Christian theology is irredeemably anthropomorphic.

Origen responds by rejecting that such a description fits Christian theology at all: Celsus has fictionalised it himself, or derived it from simple and naïve souls, whose

²¹⁰ Rowan Williams (describing Karl Rahner’s theological anthropology), 2000:18.

²¹¹ So Justin Martyr’s reflections upon *L’Ogoj spšrmatikoj* find fuller, and clearer, explication.

²¹² *Contra Celsum* V:14, Chadwick, 1980:274-5.

ignorance should not be taken for Christian wisdom.²¹³ Origen characteristically criticises the assumption that one can readily know *a priori* what God is or is not like - Origen thus places revelation centrally. Sure enough, Scripture refers to God “seeing” and “hearing”, but this should not be read simplistically. An *analogical* use of language is present in Scripture, which is part of its living wisdom, and God is incorporeal, as Christian vocabulary about the Spirit indicates. God constantly gives a share of his own Spirit to those who are worthy to participate in him²¹⁴ in a non-materialist, and therefore unfragmented, way. Christian theology proper, Origen argues, attempts to sustain a personal and sanctifying vision of the divine, with the Spirit as the *eidos*²¹⁵ of the body of Christian believers. God is, indeed, immutable, and pagan identifications of the divine with the cosmos in its flux and change are dismissed by Origen as grotesque irreverence.²¹⁶ The resurrection is not to be construed as equating divinity with the corruptible at all, but rather the latter’s transfiguration by the endowing of divine life upon the creature. It is *Celsus*’s theology which equates divinity with the material cosmos, not the Christians’.²¹⁷ Origen extends the conventional Christian ridicule of idolatry as the worship of human *work* to include the constructs of human *thought*, so that assumptions about the divine – human ideas and *a priori* conventions – constitute no valid prior claim upon the freedom of God.²¹⁸ Idolatry of this order, namely a

²¹³ *Contra Celum* VII: 27, Chadwick, 1980:416.

²¹⁴ *Contra Celsum* VI:70; Chadwick, 1980:384-5.

²¹⁵ In this case more a unitary principle than *genus*, derived from H. Crouzel’s description of Origen’s anthropology, 1989:248-257.

²¹⁶ *Contra Celsum* I:21; Chadwick, 1980:21.

²¹⁷ *Contra Celsum* III:40, Chadwick, 1980:155f.

²¹⁸ For idolatry as resting in anything other than God cf. *Contra Celsum* III:40ff, Chadwick, 1980:155f. This, of course, notoriously, applies for Origen to the literal letter of Scripture, so that analogous, symbolic or “allegorical” means of interpretation are required: “He does not mean to dispute the historical value of the biblical narratives, which he defends repeatedly in the *Contra Celsum*, but their value as revelation when they are not read in the light of the New Testament: the myth is the interpretation of the Jews when they stop at the letter. This meaning is not without

denial of relation to God as the foundation for being, will re-emerge with a biblical or Irenaean style in Athanasius' *CG-DI*, and also in Cappadocian thought.²¹⁹ Origen's epistemology thus carefully distinguishes between theological words and the divine Word. God should not be understood to be in any sense restricted by theologically pre-determined "necessities" which define him *a priori*. Rather, Origen urges that theological descriptions, if they fail to describe the divine reality, are simply untrue. Theological assertion, rather than God sovereign in his freedom, is curtailed by Origen's hermeneutical rigour. Various epithets or ἑπιθέματα describing God, work ecologically in *CC* in various contexts to depict aspects of the divine mystery analogically. Knowledge of God is thus always dependent upon divine self-revelation. "Ἀσκήσις alone is insufficient, for God is neither known by synthesis, distinction or analogy, and he resists the arrogance of philosophical claims to know of themselves the divine."²²⁰ Celsus, for one, from the sections Origen cites at least, simply does not appear to comprehend that theological description has to be radically contingent to divine being. In Origen's terminology, true human knowledge must appropriate a wound of knowing an ontological gulf between creation and divinity. Origen demurs from Plato's optimism because of the state of affairs revealed in Scripture and Christian truth. Far from the *Timaeus*'s

answer which appears to be little more than a poetic repetition of the question: a demiurge, resolving to communicate the beauty of the intellectual paradigm to everything, imposed it upon the nature which

analogy with that which contrasts Truth with symbol instead of with falsehood. The symbol does not lie, so long as it participates in its model." Crouzel 1989:108-109.

²¹⁹ Cf. von Balthasar 1995:27-8: "[the creation]... is suspended in God, and, in order to be able to subsist, it participates in the inexhaustible source of being. But if it turns away from this source with a desire to belong to itself, it no longer merits the name of being. This profoundly ontological privation of being is sin, which is veritably an annihilation (ἡ ἀφάνισις)." ²²⁰ *Contra Celsum* VII:44, Chadwick, 1980:431-2.

is most devoid of stable and determinable properties, creating the best of possible universes as an everlasting image of the Good.²²¹

Origen insists that, of itself, this nature does not subsist in the fallen creature. The Creator's goodness is not called into question, but the capacity of creation to retain ontological stability without communion with God is refuted.²²² Christian theology, therefore, must correspond to the *wounds* of Christ the Word, only then representing Christ immanently, as it were:

we might say that after the Word there is marked upon the soul the impress of the wounds, and that this is the Christ in each individual, derived from Christ the Word.²²³

This woundedness as the basis for Christian theology expresses in a mystical style an apophatic theological priority.²²⁴

Yet this scandal of *wounded* particularity, far from being grounds for Christian arrogance (Celsus had claimed that Christians assert that God only favours

²²¹ Edwards, 1998a:12.

²²² We will observe the development of this especially in Athanasius's *Contra Gentes / De Incarnatione*, chapter 3, below. For the influence of the ontological gulf on anthropology and soteriological ontology (and the meaning of *theopoiesis*), cf. Gregory of Nyssa, *C. Eunom.* 1; II, 368 C: "It is precisely through its comparison and union with the Creator that it is other than him" translation of von Balthasar, 1995:28. von Balthasar adds, "This abyss that separates the two forms of being is the fact of creation, which in and of itself surrounds that which is created with a magic circle, which it will never escape. There is no stratagem by which the creature will ever understand its own origins [*In Cant.* 10; I, 980 B]."

²²³ *Contra Celsum* VI:9, Chadwick, 1980:323.

²²⁴ "[T]he 'negative way' is a guard against our projections becoming idols. In doing this it takes up many of the tools of suspicion used by those who understand God as merely a projection, but the tools are used in the interests of the logic of overflow. The negative way has endless subtleties, intellectually and spiritually. These point to the double truth that discernment here requires both sensitivity to a whole ecology and a rigorous self-criticism that is at least as searching and comprehensive as the projectionist critique." Hardy & Ford, 1984:113-4; cf. R. Williams, 1979.

them),²²⁵ is the prompt for Christian mission. Origen insists that the Church's witness is born of a costly desire and obligation to share the longing of God in love for creation.²²⁶ Origen asserts that Christians, far from belittling the divine to the closed and decaying systems of the cosmos, or self-interestedly worshipping a vindictive God, full of fury and favourites, rather challenge the assertion of *any* kinship between the created and the divine, yet paradoxically thereby invite wholesale participation in the life of God in Christ, whose Spirit makes God fully and personally accessible to all. Origen applies the doctrine of *creatio ex nihilo* to reiterate the ontological instability of creatures and deny any shared substance between humanity and God. Whatever other usefulness Origen makes of his insistence upon divine immutability, then, it fits perfectly in CC's rhetoric against pagan theology,²²⁷ urging the probability that this is its primary location in Christian theology, i.e., as an important strategy of Christian apologetic.²²⁸

Origen's description of Christian theology certainly lacks the popularist rhetoric of Celsus, but demonstrates by its subtlety and intelligence that Christian faith may not be dismissed as barbarian ignorance or superstition. The CC has the effect of making his opponent's arguments appear brittle and infantile, as Origen offers a sustained and thoughtful critique to the selections of Celsus's text, exhibiting a sophisticated capacity to highlight the epistemological problematic in conventional pagan limitations of divine freedom, and a rare understanding that *truly* theological language must have an awareness of the lack of a hermeneutical basis for an

²²⁵ "It is foolish of them to suppose that, when God applies the fire (like a cook!), all the rest of mankind will be thoroughly roasted and that they alone will survive..." *Contra Celsum* V:14, Chadwick, 1980:274. Cf. the discussion of the issue of worship and sacrifice in this context in F. M. Young "A time for silence' Dare we mention prayer?", in Young, (ed.) 1995.

²²⁶ *Contra Celsum* IV:6, Chadwick 1980:188.

²²⁷ H. Crouzel emphasizes its place in countering Valentinian gnosis (with ideas of cosmogony as divine emanation), Marcionite "division" of Old and New Testament theologies, and Christian "literalists" or *simpliciores*. Crouzel, 1989:153-156.

²²⁸ *Contra May*, 1994.

arrogantly confident “natural” theology. Christian theological exploration must be marked, for Origen, by a self-critical recognition, or “wound”, that when human language is applied to God, triggers a painful awareness that it is over-extending its natural capacity. This wound avoids over-simplistic assertion in Origen’s theological language. For example, Celsus asks whether or not God is universally accessible – rather than merely the tribal divinity of the Christian sect – that is, does he not have many names?²²⁹ Origen corrects Celsus’s conceptual elision: the question about God’s many names is not sequential upon his assertion of God’s universality, because names are not accidental, rather they participate in coherent social and linguistic systems. The name of God in his particularity distinguishes him from the cosmos and establishes the basis of a relation of the two in terms other than kinship.²³⁰ Universal accessibility need not, indeed Origen argues that it *may* not, depend upon theological multiplicity, as this would be what Williams (2000:21) describes as

settling for a plurality of contingent projects, radically vulnerable to the distortions of history, with no inherent critical elements to keep them in motion and dialogue.²³¹

CC offers a profound theological counter to pagan universalism by exposing the latter’s inadequacies and incapacity to reckon with the truthfulness of divine description in its particularity. Origen’s theology of revelation thus has a pivotal

²²⁹ *Contra Celsum* I:24; Chadwick, 1980:23f.

²³⁰ *Contra Celsum* I:25; Chadwick, 1980:24.

²³¹ Williams adds “there gradually develops the fully articulated doctrine of God characteristic of patristic and medieval theology: the unconditioned act of self-diffusion and self-sharing upon which all things depend – with the important corollary that this act is ‘simple’, it is what it is without the admixture of elements or constraints from beyond itself, and so is entirely at one with itself, consistent and faithful.” (*Ibid.*) Origen is a most significant landmark in this articulation, and foundational for the shift from a focus of the Christian argument about God from creation to Christology.

place for the Revealer, the incarnate Logos, less because of a body of knowledge which the Logos reveals than his own *eternal participation* in the Father's nature – with all the necessary hierarchically subordinate caveats as strategies to prevent *confusion* of Father, Son and Spirit (cf. Edwards, 1998). The Logos has a foundational role in the creation of the cosmos, and is the mediating meeting point of creation with the divine. Creation's participation in this mediator is the dynamism of Christian life, and, Lyman argues, is the motivation for Origen's use (and transformation) of many genres and patterns of description:

[Origen's] masterful use of Middle Platonic ontology and Stoic psychology, his enquiries into Hellenistic Jewish exegesis, and his relentless repudiation of Gnostic election theology were all ordered by his optimistic belief in the accommodation of the Logos to the mind and life of the individual person. ... [His spirituality] consisted in the intense, disciplined search for God through the movement of the mind as led by the Logos.²³²

But this "optimism" comes *only* when the wound of knowledge which we have observed above has been Christologically healed.

In CC, the Father is never described by the epithet *ὁ παρὰ*, perhaps for fear of playing into misconceived ideas about transcendence as inactivity or disinterestedness with regards to creation:

Origen underlines the titles of Creator and Father in order to express not only divine power and divine transcendence, but divine goodness

²³² Lyman, 1993:45.

as unhindered, active care, if not love of creation.... God's desire (qšlhma) is the linchpin between his nature and power, so that the will (boul») of God operates in no impersonal or abstract way in creation or redemption. Origen's God is never beyond love for the individual or intervention; divine will is not merely for the good, but to increase the goodness of creation by specific actions.²³³

The Father is not explicitly distinguished from the Son (or Spirit) by this term here, either. However, Origen unambiguously denies that God should be conceived of as acting pathologically or irrationally in his wrath. On the contrary, wrath is accounted for theologically and soteriologically: its function is to correct those who remain in a state of sin:

When we speak of God's wrath, we do not hold that it is an emotional reaction (oÙ p£qoj)... That the so-called wrath of God and what is called His anger has a corrective purpose, and that this is the doctrine of the Bible, is clear from the words of Psalm vi...²³⁴

Origen's reiteration of wrath not being the abusive fury of God in the same chapter²³⁵ indicates the style with which Origen uses p£qoj here, namely as a

²³³ Lyman, 1993:55, 58.

²³⁴ *Contra Celsum* IV: 72, Chadwick, 1980: 241. On the broader notion of corrective punishment, and the implication of this for the eternity of hell, see Crouzel 1989:234-5. In *CC* the emphasis is clearly and definitively upon the remedial meaning of punishment. Origen does not attempt to defend a God who is a terrorist. Rebecca Lyman emphasizes that God is consistently portrayed in Origen as setting life before all creatures. "God did not harden Pharaoh's heart, but... instead Pharaoh's refusal of God's long-suffering grace hardened his own heart." Lyman, 1993:57. She correctly asserts that "physical existence is not a punishment, but a means whereby creation may return to God" (*ibid*, p.61), properly redressing imbalanced perceptions about the material creation as fall and alienation, and reiterating the pedagogical, rather than the punitive purposes of God. Crouzel, however, paints a more complex picture of hell and punishment, illustrative of Origen's explorative rather than categorical style. In the *Contra Celsum*, nonetheless, Origen persistently focuses on the redemptive goodness of God as the basis for wrath or corrective punishment.

²³⁵ *Contra Celsum* IV: 72: Óti d' oÙ p£qoj toà qeoà ™stin 1 Ñrg».

theological corrective to excessively projectionist or anthropomorphic perceptions of divine motivation and action.

Origen also seeks to address the surpassing transcendence of the Father even from the eternally-begotten Son and the Spirit. The Spirit is constitutive of God in himself and in relation to Creation, but not to be confused with the 'spiritual nature' of humanity:

the first great Christian philosopher does not agree that man can be united in his essence with the Godhead, or can come to know it by his own desire. The essences of creatures are eternal and consubstantial with the Logos, but the subsistence of these creatures as single entities depends on matter (*PA* I.6.4), and this is neither an effluence of the deity nor a coeternal substrate, but a creation out of nothing by his will.²³⁶

Edwards has properly removed much of the usual attribution of Hellenization to Origen, but not removed the hierarchical frame even though it is more nuanced than classically conceived. There remains a hermeneutical hierarchy which Athanasius will finally abandon as a result of his engagement with Arius.

The Spirit is not the ontological connection with creatures by the fact of their creation, but by the fact of their restoration in the Son. The baptism of Jesus by (or in) the Spirit means that

²³⁶ Edwards, 1998a:17.

Traces of that Holy Spirit who appeared in the form of a dove are still preserved among the Christians.²³⁷

The incarnation is not to be construed as the embodiment of God's Spirit, however the Spirit *makes present* the ontological communion between created and eternal natures in the Son for Christians:

If Celsus had understood what we say about God's Spirit, and that 'as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God' (Rom. 8:14), he would not have invented a reply for us that *God thrusts his own Spirit into a body and sent him down here*. God is always giving a share of His own Spirit to those who are able to partake of Him, though He dwells in those who are worthy not by being cut into sections and divided up.²³⁸

This sharing of the Spirit as the basis for ontological reconciliation, expressed in the *Contra Celsum* as participation in the Sonship of Christ and his relation to the Father, is more expressed in the conclusion to Origen's *Letter to Gregory*, where he more explicitly explores the theme of participation,²³⁹ anticipating later patterns in terms of both theology and soteriology – but Origen still belongs to the intellectual *ancien regime*.

²³⁷ *Contra Celsum* I: 46, Chadwick, 1980: 42. In VI:52, Chadwick, 1980:368, Celsus appears to have garnered some impressions from a Marcionite or Gnostic theology of contrast between the creator and the coming of the Spirit to earth as to strangers. See Chadwick's footnote 5, *ibid*. It may conceivably be the case that Celsus is attacking the Christian presumption that the relation of God to the cosmos is that of ontological alienation, but this is unlikely in the context of the whole chapter.

²³⁸ *Contra Celsum* VI: 70.

²³⁹ 'If my boldness was good or not, God alone would know, and his Christ, and he who participates in the Spirit of God and in the Spirit of Christ. May you be such a participant, and may you always grow in such participation, so that you may not only say "We have become participants with Christ" (Heb. 3:14), but, "We have become participants with God." *Letter to Gregory* 4, in Trigg, 1998:212-3. This may be an over-interpretation of this text.

As the Spirit actualises the mediatorial function of the Son, and leads beyond himself to the Father's being, the discussion of Origen's relation to Platonic descriptions of the divine *beyond* the realm of Being perhaps finds its proper place in his attempt to distinguish the surpassing transcendence of the Father even from the Son and Spirit, and the divine life which they share. Conventionally, but persistingly, this subordination has been cast as provoking Arius and/or Arianism,²⁴⁰ but Origen uses $\text{ϩ} \text{ϰ} \text{ε} \text{ὸ} \text{ϰ}$ particularly of the Father after New Testament practice, describing the divinity of the Logos without the definite article (Crouzel, 1989:181-2). $\text{̀} \text{ϰ} \text{ε} \text{ὸ} \text{ϰ}$ indicates God in himself, the generating Father who is the basis of divine Being; criticism of Origen conceiving of God *primarily* as creator is thus ill-conceived.²⁴¹ The Son and Spirit are the divine persons *ad extra*,²⁴² together the means of connecting the Father who is the ground of being with the creation and similar in effect to Irenaeus's description of Son and Spirit as the two "hands" of God in the created realm.²⁴³ This context is also the setting for Origen's occasional use of *creature* with regard to the incarnate Son.

So in CC, the emphasis upon the transcendence of God the Father undermines the attack upon Origen as casting God in terms only of creator: Origen is guilty of

²⁴⁰ 'Origen... tried to elaborate a theological system starting from Greek philosophy. This application of the *logos* concept in this context led to the crisis of Arianism, which compelled the Church to revise the concept radically' J. D. Zizioulas, 1997: 74. Notwithstanding the question of whether Origen was a systematizer, this reveals a somewhat conventional Orthodox prejudice against Origen. Zizioulas elsewhere tries to describe Origen generously (*ibid.*, p. 16), but casts Origen (with the apologists) as incapable of achieving a 'synthesis between the idea of truth as being and of truth as history' (*ibid.*, p.78). However, this is no-where Origen's intended outcome. It does not appear that Origen *was* concerned with establishing such a synthesis categorically, but with the task of theological exploration.

²⁴¹ Cf. Zizioulas, 1997:75: 'Despite his doctrine of *creatio ex nihilo*, Origen connected the idea of God so closely with that of creation that he came to speak of eternal creation, arguing that God would not be eternally omnipotent with no object on which to exercise his power [*De Princ.* I: 1,4]. God thus becomes eternally a creator, and the link between the *logos* of God and the *logoi* of creation thus comes to be organic and unbreakable, as in the Greek idea of truth.'

²⁴² Crouzel, 1989:201. The Spirit is, therefore, neither a Son nor a Creature like other material creatures, but eternal, deriving his existence from the Father and Son.

²⁴³ Lawson, 1948:122-128, "The doctrine of 'The Two Hands of God' represents immediate action by the whole Godhead, and consequently equality between the Son and the Spirit."

experiment and exploration, and for all his anti-Gnostic and anti-Marcionite arguments, asserts that Christian theology is not naïvely anthropomorphic in its perception of the Creator:

Not one of us says that God participates in shape or colour. Nor does He partake of movement... Moreover, God does not even participate in being.²⁴⁴

... we affirm that the God of the universe is mind, or that He transcends mind and being (½ ἡ πῶς κεῖνα νοῦ καὶ οὐσ...aj), and is simple and invisible and incorporeal, we would maintain that God is not comprehended by any being other than that made in the image of that mind.²⁴⁵

God is eternally creative – just as he is eternally Father: so Origen feels driven to construe an eternal creation on Scriptural evidence. He applies *creatio ex nihilo* to material creation, but not to the spiritual reality.²⁴⁶ It will be partly the loss of the notion of eternal generation of the soul and eternal “spiritual” creation through the application of *creatio ex nihilo* that characterizes the Arian controversy.

God’s response even to sin in Origen is creative rather than dualistic: even after the fall of souls, God responds consistently with his creative, loving and redemptive character,²⁴⁷ but these passages intimate that God is not to be

²⁴⁴ *Contra Celsum*, VI. 64, Chadwick, 1980:379. For a discussion of the sources of this and the following texts, see P. Widdicombe, 2000:36-46.

²⁴⁵ *Contra Celsum* VII. 38, Chadwick, 1980:435. Cf. also VII. 46.

²⁴⁶ Unlike, for example, Evagrius of Pontus’s protology.

²⁴⁷ Crouzel (1989:190, 215) demonstrates how deeply anti-dualistic this emphasis is, contradicting Gnostic dualism and the distinction between the Old and New Testament God after Marcion. Cp. Lyman, 1993:52-55, 56, 57.

construed *merely* or even primarily as Creator, (*contra* Zizioulas). Widdicombe argues explicitly:

[Origen] has two purposes in the passages: first, a defensive intention of ensuring that Christians do not become labelled with promoting the notion of a corporeal God...; and second, a positive intention of establishing that the knowledge of God revealed through the Logos is definitive. In his polemic against Celsus, he is arguing that however high a notion of God Greek philosophy puts forward, the Christian conception is higher. In effect, he is indulging in a species of metaphysical one-upmanship (2000:38).

We have observed the emphasis in Origen of the necessity not to worship human work of hand or brain, and his extension of idolatry to theological constructs. This is a rule Origen obeys in his own theology, which makes him such a shibboleth to those who seek categorical or systematic *method* in theology. His refusal to rest or remain upon secure theological ground, draws the accusation that the adamant dynamism in Origen's theology exalts his own intellectual interest over the *Regula Fidei*. Crouzel's thoroughgoing defence of Origen does much to explain the *theological* basis of his approach: the dynamic, complex understanding of the living God is matched by a multi-dimensional understanding of humanity and the cosmos. Origen will not exchange the living God for a two-dimensional caricature. God is present to creation himself in the Son and the Spirit, and Scripture is a means whereby God accommodates himself to deficient human understanding in order to transform it and lead it, by its pedagogy, to glory. Scripture is opened up by Christ and the Holy Spirit so that it enlightens Christians with ever richer fare:

We now ask God to assist us through Christ in the Holy Spirit to open up the mystical sense hidden as a treasure in the text...²⁴⁸

Origen is so convinced of the infinite ascent of the soul to the divine in Christ, that he is unwilling to rest in theological constructs, no matter how intellectually satisfying. In the *PA*, he describes the Son and the Spirit leading home the saint by continually preparing the soul to receive divine life, and his energies are directed to facilitating this divine pedagogy, participating in

the work of wisdom to instruct and train them, and lead them on to perfection, by the strengthening and unceasing sanctification of the Holy Spirit, through which alone they can receive God.²⁴⁹

A reading of Origen's theology in the *CC* highlights the *wound* of a radical disjunction of all things from God, demonstrating that Origen constructs an environment where an ecology of theological explorations interact with doctrines mutually moderating and interpenetrating one another. Origen's cosmology, determined by its systematic ontological disconnection from God, exerts an immense influence in the whole picture of his thought. Origen's theodicy, whilst having significant parallels with Gnostic cosmogony (particularly in terms of its accounting for the radical instability of created existence by a *pre-temporal* fall) is also a description of salvation related to creation before the Christological controversies more clearly focus such discussion in the *nature* of Christ. Irenaeus constructs divinization as the resolution to the corruption caused by the fall²⁵⁰ in the realm of creation. Origen's concern is at once more subtle and more complex.

²⁴⁸ *Comm. in Joh.* I: XV, (89), in Trigg, 1998:120.

²⁴⁹ *Peri Archon* I.3.8. Cf. M. Edwards, 1998a:17. Cf. Trigg, 2001:27-52.

²⁵⁰ See Lyman, 1993: 61-2.

CC demonstrates a wariness of explicitly speaking about creation and the relation of the spiritual to the material, most probably because Origen is aware that his tentative exploratory style may be read in a literal or categorical sense. He explains his reluctance thus:

We do not want the truth about the way in which souls became bound to a body (though not by reincarnation) to be cast before an uneducated audience, nor that holy things should be given to the dogs... It is enough to give an account of the doctrines which are obscurely set forth under the guise of a story by following the course of it, that those who have the ability may work out the meaning of the passage for themselves.²⁵¹

Two passages are significant indicators of how Scripture alludes to the mystery of the creation and the fall, and the nature of intelligible creation to make such a fall possible. In a most oblique reference to the plain of Shinar,²⁵² Origen alludes to creatures turning from the rising Eastern light and attending to those things alien to that primal beatific vision. Shinar, as Philo²⁵³ had pointed out before him, resembles the Hebrew words for tooth and shake, and is thus reckoned an allusion to the story of the confusion of human language at Babel.²⁵⁴ The confusion of human languages in the Babel story in Genesis, is, however, far less pressing for Origen than the scandal of a project of building a tower to heaven in a vain attempt to laying hold of the spiritual with the physical:

²⁵¹ *Contra Celsum* V: 30, Chadwick, 1980:287.

²⁵² *Contra Celsum* V: 30, Chadwick, 1980:287: Gen. 10:10; 11:2; 14:1.

²⁵³ Chadwick connects the text with Philo, *De Conf. Ling.* 68, and observes that 'the derivation is based on the Hebrew *shēn* = tooth, *na'ar* = shake'.

²⁵⁴ Gen. 11.

Then they desire to collect material things and to join what cannot naturally be joined to heaven, in order that by means of material things they may conspire against immaterial things, saying: “Come, let us make bricks and burn them with fire” [conspiring to]... reach to heaven.²⁵⁵

The curiosity of this example is constituted by its obliqueness: the reference is less to Genesis than an etymological tradition present in Philo. Origen transmits an allegorical intimation that humanity lost its focus upon the everlasting light, and so was confused and became materialistic, even building a city of brick believing it to be heavenly. This exegesis echoes Origen’s view of a rational or spiritual creation preceding material existence.²⁵⁶ The Spiritual creation has its roots in eternity and is intended to enjoy the sublime vision of God forever, though it still depends eternally upon the mysterious will of God the creator. The spiritual, or intelligible creation has, as its intended purpose, engagement with the divine,²⁵⁷ but is not *ἁπομόνιστος* with God. Aspects of Origen’s thought which will gain most notoriety later – the fall of the *logos*... and subordination of the *Logos* – actually work together in his thought to ensure that the spiritual creation is radically distinct from God, and contingent in a way that the *Logos* and Holy Spirit are not. The *Logos* and Spirit are distinguishable, though, in a way that unambiguous use of *ἁπομόνιστος* at this stage would preclude. The rational creatures, endued with

²⁵⁵ *Contra Celsum* V: 30, Chadwick, 1980:287.

²⁵⁶ Edwards, 2002:89 “It was not perverse in Henri Crouzel to tax Origen with ‘excessive literalism’ [1989:258-9]; Bishop Gore did not fall into paradox when he wrote that Origen’s heterodoxies ‘were mainly due to an overscrupulous literalism in the interpretation of Holy Scripture’ [Gore, 1907:114]. There is no better illustration of this remark than Origen’s reasoning that, since there are two accounts of the creation of humanity in the first two chapters of Genesis, humanity must have been created twice.” Though of course the Alexandrian Jewish tradition from Philo made sense of the two creation narratives in this style centuries before Origen.

²⁵⁷ Lyman, 1993: 58. ‘God as good and active, therefore, does not radiate goodness or rationality impersonally, but intentionally creates a free world to share divine life’.

freedom are always subject to change and instability, otherwise the pre-temporal “fall” would not have taken place.²⁵⁸ This breach of communion has profound ontological effects, but it is fundamentally different from Gnosis’ tragic degradation. The material creation, created out of nothing by God, is not a prison, and rather than ensnaring the soul, is, rather, the creative response of God in providing a pedagogical means of restoration. The intelligible creation, because it was truly loved and known by God, is endowed with freedom. The possibility of participation in the divine as a created element of intelligible creation develops the apologetic motif of LÒgoj spšrmatikoj. The groaning of intelligible creation when embodied in the physical universe indicates a yearning to recover its lost place. Human experience is one of estrangement, but the material context encourages change and the free return to God, a longing fanned into a flame by experiences in material existence. Origen’s comments, developed from his reading of the Genesis narrative, reveal the significance of physical creation:

the man who was cast out of the garden with the woman was clothed with ‘coats of skins’ (Gen. 3:21), which God made for those who had sinned on account of the transgression of mankind, [this] has a certain secret and mysterious meaning, superior to the Platonic doctrine of the descent of the soul which loses its wings and is carried hither ‘until it finds some firm resting place’ (Plato, *Phaedrus* 246 b,c).²⁵⁹

²⁵⁸ Cf. Crouzel 1989:181, who rejects conventional accusations that Origen’s prompt and perspective here is Platonic rather than “biblical”, arguing that Origen strategically maintains that the spiritual creation is radically distinct from God, and contingent in a way that the Logos and Holy Spirit are not.

²⁵⁹ *Contra Celsum* IV:41, Chadwick, 1980:217. Chadwick refers to the tradition of interpreting the clothing with skin as physical embodiment and restriction in Clement of Alexandria *Strom.* III.95.2,

The embodied experience of creatures contributes to the longing for redemption. Origen describes this in terms of both connection to and correspondence with true Being, beyond the world of becoming, and a life marked by spiritual or intelligible characteristics (log...koi), signifying, indeed, unity with the eternal Logos. The fall of humanity assumes fundamental significance, compatible to that in Gnostic cosmology, yet without the latter's dualism. Origen's cosmology attempts to account for the ontological gulf in terms of sin. To secure intelligible creation's existence, creatures must remain in communion with the divine nature of the creator. Their true being thus transcends themselves, lying beyond their own grasp. This construction is not inaccurately described as "Platonic",²⁶⁰ not least because the foundation for this *schema* is an understanding of creation created *ex nihilo*. Origen is also wrestling with the mystery of intelligible existence's destiny to share the true divine being, because this transcendental ontology is in some way the creature's *true* identity. Origen focuses on the centrality of creation as the key for understanding the goodness and freedom of God, the incarnation is the extension of divine mercy into the realm of material creation prompted by divine love, something irreconcilable with readings of Origen primarily as "Platonist",²⁶¹ as is the significance of historical and material experience upon the identity of the spiritual creature:

The body, which in Platonism remains at best the luggage of the itinerant soul, is for Origen the condition of our historical integrity as persons. (Edwards, 2002:76).

Excerpt. ex Theod. 55.1. Methodius asserted that this Gnostic tradition was Origen's reading (*De Resurr.* 1.4.2; 1.23.3).

²⁶⁰ E.g., Edwards, 1998a:1.

²⁶¹ Edwards, 1998a:13.

Celsus's *Alēthēs Logos* in its ridicule of Jews for inconsistency in their theology prompted Origen to a defence of Jewish theology of creation. Celsus claimed that the Jews "worship the heaven and the angels in it" whilst refusing to acknowledge that any of the whole's parts are divine.²⁶² Origen explores this misrepresentation or confusion of Jewish theology with pagan cosmogony,²⁶³ arguing that aspects of the cosmos are no-where viewed as divine in the Jewish tradition, nor is the true God to be construed as the composite whole.²⁶⁴ Divinity is not to be understood in terms of origination, but ontology: here is the centre of confusion about divine nature and the creation. Origen patiently reiterates that the Jewish-Christian cosmology is not pantheist, nor panentheist, but explains that creation as the arena where God's freedom in being personally present to creation is made possible, most significantly in the incarnation of the Logos. The Son's relation to the Father is ontologically different from that of creation's relation to God: no hypostatic or ontological continuity is allowed in the case of creation, created, as it was, out of nothing. Although Origen generally avoids using *Ἐμοούσιος* of the Son²⁶⁵ in order to emphasise the magnitude of the Father's transcendence even to the Son and the Spirit, it would appear that Origen probably did use the term albeit in an analogical, occasional and explorative way²⁶⁶ in order to express that the Son, unlike the cosmos, abides in the very substance of divinity.

²⁶² *Contra Celsum* V:6; Chadwick, 1980:267.

²⁶³ *Contra Celsum* V:7; Chadwick, 1980:268.

²⁶⁴ *Contra Celsum* I:23; Chadwick, 1980:23.

²⁶⁵ Cf. R. P. C. Hanson, 1983: 53-70; Edwards, 1998:658-670.

²⁶⁶ Three places in the Rufinus' *Apology* preserved in Latin in Rufinus, *MPG XVII* pp.580-81, refined and explored in Edwards 1998:658-670, who restores the text of Pamphilus into Greek, and offers this translation: "I think it now sufficiently demonstrated, and indeed obvious, that he declares him to be the Son of God, born from [so not part of or co-ordinate with] the substance of God – that is, [to use his own word] *homoousios*, which means [simply] of the same nature as the Father, not a creature, not adopted, but by nature his true Son, having come to be from the Father himself." *Ibid.*, 665.

Despite accusations of subordinationism, Origen's Christology is striking for its depiction of the eternal and divine aspect: his divine nature is equal to the Father (*PA* 1.2, Görgemanns & Karpp, 1976:122-157), *contra* Arian chant, there was not a time when the Logos was not (*Commentary on Hebrews* 1.8, Kannengiesser, 2004a:74). The primary Christological datum appears to be the Logos's divinity, who in the economy takes human nature:

Primo illud nos scire oportet, quod alia es in Christo deitatis eius natura, quod est unigenitus filius patris, et alia humana natura, quam in novissimis temporibus pro dispensatione suscepit. (*PA*1.2.1, Görgemanns & Karpp, 1976:122).

Origen's Christology thus far described however begs the question of how human is the Son, what is the status and purpose of the "humana natura" appropriated in the Christian dispensation? If the Logos is radically unlike all creation, yet distinct from the Father, how is the humanity or creatureliness accounted for? Here it is clear that the account of two creations is more than merely a literalist following of the Genesis accounts, even if it stems from there. Origen weaves a Christology which takes full account of a created nature by postulating that the perfect intelligible creature, the soul of Jesus, did not fall but remained in communion and loving harmony with God.

Given that, on account of the faculty of freewill, each of the souls was subject to variety and diversity, so that one burned with a fiercer love, another with a weaker and more unstable love towards its maker, that soul, of which Christ said that 'no-one takes away my soul from me' [John 10:18], inseparably and indissolubly adhering to

him from the beginning of creation (*ab initio creaturae*) and thereafter... was made with him at the outset 'one spirit'.²⁶⁷

This perfect soul co-operates with the divine Logos and is united for the economy of the incarnation. This eternal unity is dependent upon Origen's account of two creations, but it gives a meaningful role for the created nature of Jesus co-operating with the Logos *ab initio*, and accounts for the sinlessness of the Son. In that aspect at least, here is a sophisticated insight into two natures participating freely in redemption. The human soul is not overwhelmed by the divine Logos, but sustained in perfect life. This soul united with the Logos perfectly fulfils divine redemptive – the very cooperation being a model of complete salvation respecting human freedom:

Volens igitur filius dei pro salute humani generis apparere hominibus et inter homines conversari, suscepit non solum corpus humanum, ut quidam putant, sed et animam, nostrarum quidem animarum similem per naturam, propositio vero et virtute similem sibi et talem, qualis omnes voluntates et dispensations verbi ac sapientiae indeclinabiliter posset implere. (*PA* 4.4.4, Görgemanns & Karrp, 1976:792).

Christ is Mediator because in himself he is a unity of divine and creature: the Logos and the human nature together make Jesus Christ: "anima cum verbo dei Christus efficitur" (*PA* 2.6.4, Görgemanns & Karrp, 1976:364).

The context of this achievement is – retrospectively – judged to be a Hellenistic insertion into proper explication of the person and work of Christ. But it is, also,

²⁶⁷ *PA* 2.6.4. Koetschau, 1899:142, Edwards, 2002:94.

nearer to aspects of primitive Christianity than Nicene “readings” of Christology might allow:

Everything that primitive Christianity has to say about the pre-existent saviour is compounded with some reference to his humanity, or else the glorification of his humanity and ours. The object of John’s prologue is to show that the incarnation of the Word is no new tale but the prerogation of a speech that commenced in the morning when God said ‘Let there be light’... The manhood of the Saviour was an indefeasible element of devotion for a Church in which the cult of Christ as God had supervened upon the acknowledgement of the crucified Jesus as its risen Lord (Edwards, 2002:71).²⁶⁸

Moreover, Origen – with typical sophistry – indicates that the humanity of the incarnate Christ advances both understanding and salvation. Edwards accounts for Origen’s referral to the incarnate Jesus Christ as the fulfilment and epistemic guide to Scripture as indicative of Origen’s failure to distinguish clearly “between the cosmological Christ and the Christ of Nazareth” (2002:134).²⁶⁹ But he observes that

In his *Homilies on Leviticus*... his goal is to discern the Spirit behind the veil of sacrifice, it is not the celestial Logos, but the tangible and

²⁶⁸ Cf Kannengiesser, who rightly attributes Origen’s theology to a biblically-informed “metaphysical imagination characteristic of a genuinely Alexandrian mind-set”: “From childhood Origen knew that divine Wisdom was carrying the whole universe before all times, as in a womb... In that mysterious preexistence of God’s creation, a terrible drama had occurred, clearly mentioned by sacred writers (Isa. 14:12; Luke 10:18). Enough for Origen’s inquisitive commitment to the Bible... [who] saw in the wake of the massive expulsion of angels from heaven... how the tarnished human souls were also doomed to fall.” 2004a:76.

²⁶⁹ Though Edwards does acknowledge that this failure to distinguish is probably Origen’s choice rather than his oversight, 2002:134.

audible one, the God-man of the evangelists, furnishes the hermeneutic key... (citing *Hom Lev* 5.2). There can be no doubt that the one who is invoked here is the Word who became incarnate, and thereby caused his own handiwork, the visible text of Scripture, to disclose the latent truth that was concealed from 'those before us'.

Origen's allegorical application of Jesus Christ's injunction to eat flesh and drink blood may not literally be carried out, but should be fulfilled spiritually. Here Origen's emphasis is less on the Eucharist than on digesting the words of Scripture,²⁷⁰ which he views as transmitting the reality of Christ to such a degree that Dawson (1997) styles it the embodiment of Christ. Scripture has a centrality, but it is not "mediatorial" in any affective sense. Scripture's value lies in its divine source and purpose of teaching souls the truth. This is done in history by Christ through Scripture. It is a conventional criticism of Origen that his relegation of material existence leaves no place for theological "history" (Hanson, 1960:286-287). His accusations that for Origen history is predicated to spirituality is exposed as both inaccurate and anachronistic by Edwards (2002:150-151), who concludes, contrariwise, that "[t]he signature of God, in Origen's thought, is history" (*ibid.* 152). The significance of the Christ event is extended through history beyond the life and teaching of Jesus in the flesh by the Spirit, and Scripture (and the assumed humanity in the economy) has a central role in divine pedagogy. Indeed, we find a different role for creation and history than in Irenaeus, but it is a distortion of the subtlety of Origen to depict him as a spiritual, universalist mystic. In his way, Christology also has central place, but in an ontologically-oriented perspective.

²⁷⁰ Cf *On the Pasch* 33:1-2, 18-30; Edwards, 2002:148.

1:6 Conclusions: Arguments, Assumptions and unresolved Conflicts

Unlike the pagan religions – and the Hellenistic mysteries in particular – which sought salvation in escape from time and history through myths leading to extratemporal experiences, Christian spirituality, under the influence of the scriptural mentality, was from the beginning focused on history. Unlike the Greek and pagan religions of that time, the church's outlook was not cosmological but historical; it was based not on the observance of nature (seasons, cyclical movement of stars, etc.) but on events. Creation, far from being eternal and “divine,” was an event with a beginning. Its existence was contingent and constantly dependent on the will of God. Humanity's relation with God did not pass through nature but through obedience to the will of God, a fact that gave to Christian spirituality an ethical character (“doing the truth”) and a strongly personalist dimension: it was through personal relationships that the human person's union with God was realized (Zizioulas 1986:23).

This chapter has, however, moderated such a view. The eschatological dynamic of primitive Christianity was not accompanied universally by a rigorous view of *creatio ex nihilo*. Zizioulas' analysis sits uneasily with the common philosophical assumptions that are interwoven with Scripture in (despite Irenaeus's assertions) diverse theological constructs. These approaches, represented by Justin,

Irenaeus and Origen here, have different emphases and interests, so much so that it would be difficult to identify a singular, consistent approach to Christological mediation. Though there is a change of gear between speaking about Christ as the soteriological mediator of the will and salvation of God (the Father), and cosmological Mediation necessary in creation, the fluidity and diversity are striking. The Alexandrian crisis around Alexander, Arius and Athanasius will require a Christological method that is at once more specific in its method, and precluding of this diversity. Athanasius, especially, will explore this in a way that impacts upon Trinitarian theology, and closes many of the options from Origen's Alexandrian inheritance.

Wessell (2004) argues that the transposition of former conflicts is a rhetorical device by which protagonists sought to cast themselves in the *personae* of established saints – with their opponents as heretics. Whilst this is the case, there is, also, the fact that Christological controversy highlights similar issues, and key notions are bolstered or threatened in the process. Thus far we have observed how the notion of the Logos as mediator had two distinct – if overlapping – functions, namely: a soteriological mediator of the will or salvation of God (construed primarily in terms consistent with a theology of history, witness Irenaeus); and a philosophically-orientated cosmological mediation of the Logos (or Sophia) cast in Christian mould in Origen, and more syncretistically in Gnosis. The paradigms – soteriological and ontological – emerge from different historical contexts as distinct theological approaches.

This introductory chapter has provided the necessary background to allow an evaluation of the influences upon Athanasius's Christological vision of divine being

and created nature being held in Christ in such a way that illustrates the possibilities of Christological description in terms of ontological relation *and* differentiation. Athanasius's Christology does not achieve an easy synthesis of Alexandrian concerns and Irenaean method, but it does indicate something of the extent of his paradigm shift in Christological method by transforming Arius's clumsy application of *creatio ex nihilo* to arguments about the Son's being. In an important sense, despite the clear differences, Athanasius seems to have identified the applicability of Irenaeus's anti-Gnostic arguments to his opponents:

In *Contra Arianos* 2:70, Athanasius seems to rely on another important Irenaean christological text, *AH* III,18,7, in which Irenaeus argues that the denial of the genuine flesh of Christ is inconsistent with the logic of redemption. While making no mention of Irenaeus, the Alexandrian here does refer to the Valentinians, making the point that while the Arian position seems to be quite different from that of the Valentinians, it amounts to the same result. While the Valentinians denied the genuine flesh, the Arians deny the genuine divinity; in ostensibly opposite ways, they are thus equally guilty of destroying the immediate unity between God and the flesh which is the essential content of redemption (Anatolios, 2001:472).

This chapter has uncovered *theological* examples and motivations that are helpful in understanding *why* Athanasius framed Christology in the way he did. The remainder of this dissertation seeks to demonstrate that (for good and ill), Athanasius's theology of the incarnate Logos within a Trinitarian framework removes Logos theology from the shadow of the theological giant Origen, and

establishes a method which, whilst consonant with many elements of NT and primitive Christological foundations, has more systematic consistency which could not be ignored by fourth-century contemporaries from miaphysite or diaphysite camps (the taxonomy of Lienhard, 1999).

It is to Athanasius as this focusing lens that we may now turn.

PART TWO

**THE CHRISTOCENTRIC RELATION OF
COSMOLOGY AND SOTERIOLOGY IN
ATHANASIUS OF ALEXANDRIA, AND THE
STRUGGLE FOR AN AUTHORITATIVE
CHRISTOLOGICAL LANGUAGE**

CHAPTER 2

THE CHRISTOLOGICAL RELATION OF GOD AND HUMANITY IN ATHANASIUS OF ALEXANDRIA'S *CONTRA GENTES / DE INCARNATIONE*

2:1 Introduction

This chapter explores the Christology of the early Athanasius by focusing upon his depiction of the relation of human and divine natures in the *Contra Gentes / De Incarnatione* (hereafter *CG-DI*). This provides a starting place to observe Athanasius's distinctive usage of the doctrine of creation in the Alexandrian theological context. This tradition, for all its implied dualism, emphasised elements of *continuity* between some aspects of the world and God.²⁷¹ It is not the purpose of this chapter to conclude whether it was Athanasius or Arius who radically interjected the theme of discontinuity into the commonly held assumption of late antique Platonic frameworks. It is clear, nonetheless, that it is a vitally significant theological priority that both share – a more fundamental agreement than is often acknowledged.²⁷²

This exploration of Athanasius's theological, cosmological and anthropological priorities in *CG-DI* shows that his ontological re-working of the relation between God and creation owes much both to Alexandrian and Irenaean traditions.

²⁷¹ Hamilton, 1977:ii.

²⁷² On the development of Alexandrian theology in the fourth century see Charles Kannengiesser, 1991. On the nomenclature of late or middle Platonism, an attempt is made to follow the terminology of Armstrong, 1980:85-87, equating with Middle Platonism in Dillon, 1977, and Stead, 1994:54-75, who correctly emphasises the place of Philo in what is often classed as Middle Platonism. This is developed in Edwards, 2002, into a blasting exposé of the (over)use of the term.

Athanasius shares with Irenaeus a conviction that God is directly present to creation. He also develops typically Alexandrian ontological and hermeneutical concerns in *CG-DI*.

Despite scholarly variance in dating the tract

By common consent the earliest of [Athanasius' works]... must be the *Contra Gentes et De Incarnatione* (Hanson, 1988:417).²⁷³

An interpretation of *CG-DI* as an early work will enable a more chronologically nuanced view of the development of Athanasius's Christology than is allowed for example in the systematic readings of Torrance (1988). Taking a probable date for the tract in the mid-330s, a Christological analysis at this point will contrast with the *Contra Arianos* and later epistles. It will be possible, then, to make tentative conclusions about *CG-DI*'s place in Athanasius's thought, and this is the primary aim of this chapter.

2:2 Integrity, Authorship and date

From Jerome onwards, the treatise *Against the Pagans*, the second book of which is often called *Treatise on the Incarnation of the Word and his*

²⁷³ Hanson rejects the traditional early date because "very few young men in their twenties wrote theological works (any more than they do today), and it would be difficult to explain a silence of nearly twenty years between his first work and the next. At one point in the work he says that he does not have theological books readily at hand, and at another he remarks that the Roman senate decrees 'that some emperors shall be regarded as gods quite recently, and perhaps even up to now.' (*Contra Gentes* 9.50)" Hanson is correct in noting that this does not suit a period ruled over by a pagan emperor. He notes the dependence of the work on the *Theophany* of Eusebius of Caesarea, giving a *terminus post quem* of 335. Hanson places the work in the first exile around 335/6.

manifestation in the flesh, has attribution to Athanasius.²⁷⁴ Dräseke (1893:251-315) challenged Athanasian authorship of *CG-DI* on the basis of a discernible conflated scholarly rhetoric, the influence of Greek philosophy, in stark contrast to other “authentic” Athanasian works, and the absence of any reference to Arianism or the Nicene faith. Dräseke attributed *CG-DI* to the Antiochene Eusebius of Emesa - whom Camelot (1977:10) calls semi-Arian. Thus *CG-DI* would be a pseudepigraphal work, constructed to give Athanasian weight to an Antiochene position. The celebrated Antiochene, Theodoret of Cyrus, indeed makes much of *CG-DI* in the Florilegia of his *Eranistes*, quoting Athanasius 30 times, in the most part accurately and always approvingly, wishing to claim Athanasius's approval for an Antiochene theological perspective. However, though many of these quotations are from *CG-DI*, Theodoret also cites *Ad Epictetum*, *De sententia Dionysii*, *Sermo maior de fide*, *Oratio II contra Arianos*, *ad Adelphium*, *De incarnatione et contra Arianos*.²⁷⁵ Though two of these, the *Sermo maior de fide* and *De incarnatione et contra Arianos* are spurious, to assume that just because these texts were used by the *Antiochene* champion a generation later all are suspect is insufficient evidence upon which to distrust *CG-DI*.²⁷⁶

²⁷⁴ Cp. the introduction to the Camelot's text, 1977:9.

²⁷⁵ See Ettliger's helpful index of patristic citations in Theodoret's *Eranistes*, (1975:9-23). Theodoret cites the spurious works *Sermo maior de fide* and *De incarnatione contra Arianos* as Athanasian, as most, if not all of his contemporaries did.

²⁷⁶ Thomson (1971:277), draws attention in a footnote to the ending of *DI* as indeed being open to Arian interpretation, i.e.: “[all those things which have been prepared] for those who live in virtue and love God the Father, in Jesus Christ our Lord, through whom and with whom, to the Father with the Son himself, in the Holy Spirit, be honour and glory...”. Thomson translates the *ka* after *ϕgapîse tŌn QeŌn ka* Patšra, but the sense seems more epexegetical, echoing other familiar examples of quasi-liturgical phrases (e.g., 2 Cor 13:14), and may be best left untranslated, as a liturgical, conventional homiletical conclusion (Cf. *De Decretis Nicaenae Synodi* 32, *ad Serapionem* iv.7 & 23. See Thomson, 1971:277, Baumstark, 1953:77, and Brightman, 1900:92,108).

Moreover, Dräseke's remains a lone voice in the wilderness, countered *in fortissimo* harmony by, among others, Stülcken (1899:10), Camelot (1977), Thomson (1971), *et al.*, including the celebratedly iconoclastic Charles Kannengiesser (1973). The almost universal consensus, is that "l'authenticité athanasienne de notre traité ne fait plus de doute."²⁷⁷

Yet if the authorship is as uncontentious as it now appears to be the case, the date (and therefore in many ways the theological significance) of *CG-DI* remains problematic. There seems to be an emerging consensus that the work was probably written in the Trier exile of 335-337,²⁷⁸ though it is possible that a later date is to be preferred.

Bernard de Montfaucon (1698), basing his text on the Parisian MS *Seguerianus* dated the work around 318.²⁷⁹ Archibald Robinson (1891), in a prolegomena to selections of Athanasius in translation follows Montfaucon. Central arguments for an early date for *CG-DI* is the absence of any reference to Arius, and a perceived youthfulness of style in the text:

historiennes et ...editeurs de saint Athanase voient dans ce double traité une oeuvre de jeunesse de l'auteur. (Camelot, 1977:110.)

²⁷⁷ Camelot, 1977:10, citing Roldanus, 1968:374: "L'inauthenticité a été réfutée de manière définitive depuis des années déjà".

²⁷⁸ Anatolios, 1998:26-9, opts [p.29] for "a date after Athanasius's ascendancy to the episcopacy and before his exile to Trier (between 328 and 335)". This corresponds with Petterson, 1982:1039; and Barnes, 1993:13, preferring 325-328 as an apprentice proof work to establish his theological credentials for his new province.

²⁷⁹ So in the *MPG* which used Montfaucon's work, this early date is given, *PG* 25,1.

The chief problem with this dating, before the Arian conflict of 325, is that *CG-DI* was written perhaps only five years after the date of Athanasius' probable boy-baptism, making the author maybe less than 20 years old.

Paradoxically, whilst a perceived immaturity or brittleness in argumentation is the very thing that de Montfaucon and Robinson cite (together with an *argumentum e silencio* regarding the Arians) to urge this early date, the sophistication of the tract renders this dating impossible for other scholars. (Hanson, 1988:417, cf. Petterson, 1982). The Christology might be seen to be problematic concerning the humanity of Christ, and there is little reference to the Spirit. It might seem to be advantageous to explain this away by Athanasius's youth, but that seems too easy a solution to escape from more difficult implications of his Christology even as late as the 330s. The weight of the significance of an *argumentum e silencio* with regard to Arius is also dubious. Neither does Athanasius refer to the Melitian schism. Loofs (1889) notes that in his Festal letters, it is not until 335 that Athanasius mentions Arius. Kannengiesser (1973) maintains that Athanasius's silence on that matter is deliberate, but nonetheless reads *DI 24* - on Christ's intention to maintain his Church as a whole - as a critique of Arius:

So neither did he undergo the death of John by being beheaded, nor like Isaiah was he sawn asunder, in order that he might keep his body intact and whole in death, and that there be no pretext for those who wish to divide the Church.

By itself this remains a somewhat insubstantial hook upon which to hang his thesis. The citation about Christ's death is a clear contradiction of those who would divide the Church, but this is not limited to an Arian context. If anything, it makes *more* sense in the context of the Melitian schism, with its parallel priesthood and sacraments, than in the Arian controversy, whose followers Athanasius saw not as bruised schismatics having undergone imperial persecution, but out-and-out heretics. Nonetheless, Kannengiesser's argument that the Trier exile, when Athanasius was without his books, is a more likely context for *CG-DI*, leading him to date it between 335 and 337 (1964:91-100); Thomson (1971) accepts a similar chronology.

Stronger evidence for a *terminus post quem* of the work is an alleged demonstrable dependence on Eusebius's *Theophaneia*.²⁸⁰ The aged and learned Eusebius is unlikely to have been dependent upon the work of a precocious Alexandrian deacon, so any established dependency would probably secure the date as post *Theophaneia*. Wallace-Hadrill, however, notes that the dating of *Theophaneia* in the Eusebian canon is itself contentious; it may be the case that both texts emerge from Irenaeus of Lyons's *Epideixis* (Behr, 1997). Bienert (1989:402-419) urges that *CG-DI* is an anti-Eusebeian reading of *Epideixis* against a subordinationist interpretation offered by Eusebius, which was open to Arian assent.²⁸¹ Anatolios (2001:463-4) offers a pleasing synthesis:

I suggest that while the *Contra Gentes - De Incarnatione* shows strong continuity in perspective and clear textual parallels with

²⁸⁰ Cf. the discussion in D.S. Wallace-Hadrill, 1960.

²⁸¹ Cf. Mühlenberg, E., 1974:215-230.

Irenaeus's *Epideixis* in particular, it nevertheless tends to play on Irenaeus's themes in the distinctly Alexandrian and Origenian style which favours an epistemological approach and which aims to construct an intelligible Christian gnosis. Such an epistemological perspective was adopted also by Eusebius of Caesarea, within a markedly subordinationist theology, and Athanasius's use of Irenaeus in this treatise seems to coincide with the project of offering a corrective to Eusebius. In his later, explicitly anti-Arian writings... this epistemological perspective is largely left behind.

Martin (1996) shows²⁸² that at Alexander's death there were thirty-five Melitian bishops; by 325, though nine were reconciled, there were at least eighteen active continuing Melitian bishops and churches. Some remained opponents of Athanasius at the Council of Tyre (summer 335), so there is no reason to believe that Melitian integrity quickly dissipated. *DI* 24 may thus allude to the Melitian schism. The Melitian party had a real contender, in the form of John Arcaph, to replace the deposed Athanasius as Patriarch of Alexandria, had not Constantine also banished him, making way for George. Athanasius's friendship with Antony and Pachomius was ultimately decisive in winning popular support from the Melitians.²⁸³

On the basis of *DI* 24 alone, the work could theoretically date from later exiles in friendly Egyptian / Coptic monasteries (as late as 357ce) but this does not account for significant differences in both method and content in this treatise from

²⁸² Annick Martin, 1996:310f.

²⁸³ Frend, 1984.

later works. A *Sitz im Leben* in the period of George's supplanting of Athanasius, though possible, does not fit the style of the tractate in comparison with contemporary Athanasian texts, thus remaining unlikely conjecture. The argument that the text is early because it is not rabidly anti-Arian is not convincing. Whatever the date of *CG-DI*, Arius may not be mentioned by name, but there is in the content of *CG-DI* an unmistakable theme of the divinity of the Logos on almost every page, which repeatedly counters the foundation of Arian thought.²⁸⁴

Whilst Athanasius's dependence upon Eusebius's *Theophaneia* (or *In Praise of Constantine* [LC])²⁸⁵, (rather than Eusebius' upon Athanasius) remains likely, this does not settle the issues of dates unambiguously. Nordberg's (1961a:262-266) redating,²⁸⁶ places *CG-DI* in the reign of Julian the Apostate. An early date in this period, 361-363, corresponds with the time when Athanasius was exiled from his see - prior to 21 February 362 - or in the early part of the fourth exile, 363-3. A date between 361 and 362, when George was the "official" metropolitan, might give good reason for the serious apologetic work of *CG-DI*. It is not a work aimed merely at promoting Athanasius's political case, but reasserts what he viewed as orthodox Christianity in the time of an apostate administration. Against this though is the fact that the *content* of the tractate remains far too Christologically-focused contrasting with the theological priorities that had emerged by then.

²⁸⁴ Indeed if it is as early as Montfaucon claimed, the Christology of the piece might be seen to have *provoked* Arius to his Christological reaction. No-one may find within *CG-DI* the theme ἡν ἰσχυρὸν ἐστὶν τὸ θεῶν.

²⁸⁵ Cf Hamilton, 1977:72 comparing LC 11:13 with CG 36, notes parallels in terms of concepts, vocabulary and rhetorical form, concluding that Athanasius is probably dependent upon Eusebius.

²⁸⁶ Nordberg argues that there was *direct* influence of Eusebius on *CG-DI*, not to be accounted for by a common inheritance of the Origenist tradition.

Despite the absence of some Trinitarian themes of the later fourth century, *CG-DI* displays a Christological precision, presenting both a cogent picture of cosmology and anthropology cohering in Christian theology. Athanasius presents his argument, re-constructing a by-now archaic Origenistic Alexandrian position²⁸⁷ into a new description of the relation of God to creation. Whatever the date of composition and the place of Melitian or "Arian" contexts, *CG-DI* most likely emerged after 330 (on the external evidence of *Theophania*), with a date of around 335 being most likely. A date of around 361, during George's episcopate though fitting some allusions in the text, dovetails less well into contemporary theology and Christology.²⁸⁸

Even if *CG-DI* is not the work of Athanasius the teenage proto-theologian, or even perhaps his first work, it remains appropriate to consider it at length because of its authenticity and subject-matter and its witness in the first half of the fourth century to the Christological relation of divine and created natures. *CG-DI* directly addresses the issue of the relation of the divine and humanity in terms of the theme of creation out of nothing, thus insisting that human kinship with God is on the basis of divine gift alone. *CG-DI* therefore marks a distinctively new phase in theology, namely a *Christological* use of the doctrine of creation, accounting for the incarnation as God's re-establishment of stability lost at the fall. In contrast to Platonic philosophical understandings, and to Gnostic soteriology, there is here no *a priori* claim of the soul upon the divine in terms of

²⁸⁷ See above, 1.5.

²⁸⁸ Cf. Beatrice, 1990:159-177. who insists that *CG-DI* is a mature work, not from Athanasius's adolescence (ie, *not* 318-325), neither from the Trier exile, but – arguing through a comparison of themes, especially those of anti-pagan and anti-heretical rhetoric –that *CG-DI* is contemporary with *Vita Antonii*, so between 357 and 362. Martin, 1996, accepts this as the strongest argument.

a shared substance. It is to that narrative and Athanasius's Christological explication of this theme that we now turn.

2:3 Christology and mediation: Fall, salvation & Human nature in CG-DI

Athanasius has a clear *schema* undergirding CG-DI, which is proper to outline here before examining the function and nature of the Logos in this treatise, as this context impacts not only upon Athanasius' s understanding of the Logos, but also of salvation as *qeopo...hsij*, and the ways in which any possible "natural" mediation is excluded by the use of *creatio ex nihilo*. Human *yuc»* and *noàj* pertain to created existence (so Irenaeus, *contra* Origen), and have no mediatorial function between humanity and divine being:

Athanasius rejects *any* divine hierarchy. There is nothing between God and creation which can be called divine. Those who speak of a divine being who is not equal to the Father are guilty of idolatry. Therefore he accuses Arians and Greeks of idolatry. There is a clear distinction between what is divine and what is human. This gulf can only be overcome by God, therefore the Son must be God to the same degree as the Father. (Meijering, 1968:130.)

The means whereby Athanasius holds this line is by reference to the Genesis narrative and the prime place of creation, making it his own "aetiological narrative" (Hamilton, 1977:iv) accounting for the origins of the world. Creation's stability is rooted in divine activity, and human dignity in God's gracious

goodness. Moreover this narrative background is the source of a new Christological dynamic: for Athanasius, the incarnation fulfils and re-sets the stability of creation upon the Creator's explicit will. The *relationship* between Father and Son, and the *identity* - or nature - of the Son thus move centre stage in the argument.

Athanasius's outline of his understanding of creation and the fall and redemption thus forms the necessary background for his exposition of the person and work of Christ. In *CG*, Athanasius weaves a thesis that knowledge of God need not be taught: humans need no alien or obscure hermeneutic to understand the fundamental indebtedness of humanity to the divine. Creatureliness is the basis of a natural orientation of humanity to God. In contrast to Gnostic ontology or Platonic notions of intellectual correspondence with the divine, Athanasius consistently maintains that creation exhibits the marks of a rational and good creator (Demiurge); revealing him even in its systematic incompleteness and interdependence.²⁸⁹

Athanasius further explores human nature and creation in terms of an adapted Genesis paradise narrative, straddling the approach of Irenaeus with the concerns of Origen and the Alexandrian tradition. This makes for a distinctive psycho-spiritual and individual perspective. Nowhere does Athanasius lengthily expound Genesis 1 and 2 in *CG-DI*, but he alludes to the stories with some psychological sophistication as a sort of constant background archetype. His

²⁸⁹ So *CG* 1, where the arguments follow both from the *competitiveness* of parts of creation (prohibiting pantheism), and the *management* of each component as revealing the work and purpose of the Logos, so *CG* 29, 39. Note the classic Irenaeian themes presented here in a different pattern.

“figurative” (tropikîj) paradise²⁹⁰ is taken to be an experiential one.²⁹¹ The human soul is created with the capacity, need and freedom to contemplate God, without whom it deteriorates. But the soul is vulnerable to distraction by things closer to its own created nature than God. Athanasius develops an anthropological-theological significance of *creatio ex nihilo* which will require Christological resolution. The body and its senses become the channel for the abdication of humanity’s true calling and nature. Unlike Irenaeus’s treatment of this common early Christian anti-idolatry motif (where God remains present to creation in its physicality), Athanasius pitches corporeality *against* the contemplation of God. The root of human alienation, of sin and idolatry is humanity’s turning “away from intelligible reality, and beginning to consider themselves”²⁹² - this self-contemplation being focused in the physical body. There are clear parallels here with Origen, but for Athanasius, self-reference causes a cascade downwards for the soul, as the noāj has abandoned its proper shepherding role in the human being. Self-interest exposes the soul’s preference for its own good over divine truth, and accounts for its subsequent decline and diminution. Humanity’s dignity, substance, time and energy are wasted because the soul thus becomes imprisoned by addictions and pleasures close to hand, leading to defilement and the forgetting of God.²⁹³ Athanasius’s allusions to the creation story throughout, using the Genesis narrative as a point of theological reference allow him to hold together the goodness of God and his creation, whilst accounting also for the dislocation of creation through sin. Athanasius’s understanding of Adam and

²⁹⁰ Ð ægioj MwāsÁj tropikîj par£deison çnÒmasen CG 2.

²⁹¹ For a sophisticated rendering of the psychological dimension of human freedom in Origen’s thought cf. Lekkas, 2001.

²⁹² CG 3: Óqen tîn m□n nohtîn øpest»san ~autîn tÕn noàn, ~autoÝj d□ katanoie«n ½rxanto.

²⁹³ CG 3.

Eve's shame is that this is an inevitable consequence of their contemplation of themselves, relishing their own bodies rather than God.

There is a sense of immediacy and tragedy as Athanasius paints this picture, rather than it being merely a stylised motif. Athanasius's rhetorical skills are apparent here as he tells the story of the fall with pathos, grief and freshness. Human beings have lost their true nature in their free abandonment of the communion with God for which they were created and whose image they bear. The fall of humanity, thus understood is a synthetic cluster of notions in Athanasius's thought. There is the motif of human fragmentation through having a nature and a body now with *conflicting* desires. This leads to a brittle possessive psychology rooted in fear of further diminishment. Associated with this, as the background cause is an ultimate fear of death as the return to non-being, from which humanity came.²⁹⁴ Yet, for all this fear, the soul pursues paths of self-gratification in panic, leading to sin in all its forms, from petty injustice to murder.

The fall is thus painted as a tumbling of the soul into *unreality*. Evil is unreality invented by the conceits of the fallen human will; it is aimless energy, disordered passion.²⁹⁵ Athanasius describes the deathly power of sin²⁹⁶ arguing that in the fall, the proper governing principle, the soul under the governance of the mind, *noaj*, is hijacked by members of the body into sin. The natural order of movement

²⁹⁴ *Creatio ex nihilo* has an important role in the anthropology of Athanasius and is a serious part of his theology of creation, differentiating ultimately the Son as an uncreated being, sharing the nature of the Father from all other contingent beings. This is powerful, and considered, anti-Arian polemic, and is distanced from its place in the Gnostic controversies which May (1994) urges is its original source.

²⁹⁵ CG 4.

²⁹⁶ CG 5.

to communion with God as creation's destiny and purpose is thus reversed.

Godliness is thus conceived as being directed aright by the *noāj* to contemplate God. Athanasius redeploys Plato's vivid charioteer image²⁹⁷ to convey a sense of waste and danger:

it is as if a charioteer, mounting in the stadium, were to disregard the goal to which he was supposed to drive, and turning away from it, were simply to drive his horses as hard as he could.²⁹⁸

Paradoxically, evil – though non-being – is nevertheless described as the power of driven aimlessness, rooted in human consent to chaos. Part of *human being's* reality, it may only be tackled from the inside - in the incarnation.²⁹⁹ Athanasius sets up an answer to the implied question of why the incarnation was necessary. This rhetorical construct demonstrates admirably Athanasius's apologetic ability, but that is not our prime concern here. The significance to this dissertation is that Athanasius's manoeuvre leads him to deny that evil may be conceived of as an entity or reality in itself, ἡ ἐπιπέσει καὶ κατὰ τὴν αὐτῶν ἐπινοίαν.³⁰⁰ Such a doctrine would undermine his insistence on *creatio ex nihilo*, because either God would have had to have created and willed evil³⁰¹ - which Athanasius will not countenance - or evil would have come into existence without his willing it. Then God would not be completely the creator of all things. But creation and Creator

²⁹⁷ Plato, e.g., Phaedrus 246f, *et al.* in Hamilton and Cairns, 1991:493f.

²⁹⁸ CG 5.

²⁹⁹ Making virtue a possibility, not only in knowing God, but in such demonstrations of the power of Christ in his teaching "persuading his disciples to put aside brutality", replacing fear, suspicion and aggression with trust in the "truth planted in their minds" thus making Christians dwell in peace with virginity and celibacy a possible virtue and demonstration of the truth. *DI* 51.

³⁰⁰ CG 6.

³⁰¹ After the example of, e.g., Isaiah 45.7.

remain good; the cosmos is not the work of an evil Demiurge, rather it is ruled consistently by God's providence. If the material world were otherwise, he asks, what would be the evidence for God at all?³⁰² The Creator is authentically known by his works, and evil is not among those things. Evil is an act of the deluded and fallen human will, which insists

like someone who closes his eyes when the sun is shining, and all the earth is illuminated by its light, who yet imagines darkness, which does not exist, and then wonders about missing his way as if he were in the dark.³⁰³

This description and account of evil locates it as connected intimately to the given freedom which creation enjoys. Athanasius does not explore the issue of the necessary possibility of evil in a free creation explicitly, but turns to attack idols and idolatry. The gods of the pagan world are evil because they are, similarly, nothing. They do not exist in reality. Here Athanasius applies well-established Jewish-Christian rhetoric against idolatry, dismissing also pagan emperors whom others have promoted to divinity, asking who may *make* gods.³⁰⁴ As familiar as this motif is, it here has a dynamism established by this locating of the argument in the theological significance of God being creator of all things out of nothing.

³⁰² CG 7.

³⁰³ CG 7.

³⁰⁴ The ridicule poured upon the idea of "making" a god might possibly be a thinly veiled attack upon Christologies where the Son is "made" in the beginning of God's works, though this is an *argumentum e silencio*. Rather the more obvious stupidity of idolatry is heightened as it is obviously just a creature who has "made" a divinity.

The process of pagan *apotheosis* is exposed by Athanasius as a mockery to true theology, because those who are called gods, and those who proclaim them as such, will alike die.³⁰⁵ The gods of pagan mythology are, if the poetry and mythology is in any sense *true*, clearly worse than the basest of human beings:

Others have extended their impiety to the point of deifying and worshipping the excuse for their inventions and wickedness - pleasure and desire. Such are Eros and Aphrodite of Paphos.³⁰⁶

Pagan divinities' actions, reflected in popular cultic legends and the poets, prove, Athanasius argues, the a-logic of paganism as simply dressing human desire in divine clothing, projecting it as divine. He disdainfully rejects the notion that either the material handiwork of a creature or the intellectual work of poetry or myth can be divine. Both derive from a creature, made out of nothing: and *ex nihilo, nihil fac.*³⁰⁷ There would be more sense, Athanasius argues *ad hominem*, in deifying the inventors of the arts. It is in this dismissive sense that Athanasius introduces the deification motif that will reappear and reach its crescendo at *DI* 54.3. This context is an important factor in understanding Athanasius's description of salvation as *qeopo...hsij*. Attacking the assumption that works or skills deify (*qeopoioàsi*),³⁰⁸ Athanasius explores what true deification might be, so that he can re-introduce this theme later in the work. The skill of the human being is

³⁰⁵ This is an Irenaeus concern and argument that mortality is the consequence of the fall from communion with God, and an abandonment of the sure stability of his will.

³⁰⁶ *CG* 9.

³⁰⁷ The dynamic in Athanasius's argument in *CG-DI* is clearly applicable to an anti-Arian argument: an attack upon a Christology where the Son is said to be "out of nothing". The puzzle remains why Athanasius is not explicit in his connection: perhaps by providing a dogmatic context, he trusts that Arius's error will be self-evident.

³⁰⁸ *CG* 18.

constitutive both of its very creatureliness, and a sign of the divine will that made it. Human beings retain the image of the divine and, as creatures, themselves signify the Creator's nature and purpose. The human being thus has a pivotal place in creation, and through the incarnation will become the locus for divinization and the reconciliation of creation to Creator. As the apex of creatureliness, humans are depicted as having the potential for participation on God's terms with the divine nature. Athanasius may be seen here to be claiming for all human beings the place allotted to the Son in early Arian soteriology.³⁰⁹ Sin, as a breach of participation, prevents any mediation between creation and Creator, but Athanasius does not construe this *ontologically* for human beings in *CG-DI*. Human beings are not the meeting place of divine and human natures as if they had a divine soul, even if they were made in the *image* of God uniquely among creatures. Humanity retains the *possibility* of participation only if the breach is bridged. Though this has been read as if it reflected a hopeful view of human nature even after the fall,³¹⁰ the fact that humanity has a *created* being means that it cannot, of itself, breach the gulf. The scandal of idolatry, thus underestimates human destiny, the nub of its error is:

It is wrong to exalt (protim´n) the signs over the signified (t' shma...nonta toà shmainomšnou).³¹¹

To conceive of divine nature in terms of materiality is as abhorrent to Athanasius as it is naïve. Organs and a body indicate a nature involved in decay and

³⁰⁹ E.g , *contra* the reconstruction of by Gregg and Groh, 1981.

³¹⁰ Petterson, 1995, 1998.

³¹¹ CG 21.

change. In a passage which is as powerful in anti-anthropomorphic invective as it is anti-pagan, Athanasius asserts

God is incorporeal (ϕσέματοj), and incorruptible (ἄφqartoj), and immortal (ϕq£natoj), lacking nothing whatsoever.³¹²

Paganism's diversity is construed as a lack of coherence or harmony of thought: powerful evidence against its veracity for Athanasius. It is the product of aimless human minds expressing party or national loyalty or plain self-interest, turning divine nature into a pretext for war and division, because what pagans call God is merely self-projection.³¹³ Athanasius berates the phenomenon of localized divinities in the Antique world as examples of anthropological and sociological disharmony, asserting that they have nothing directly to do with the question of the divine nature.³¹⁴

Pondering the *power* of evil, in an argument reminiscent of Gnostic diminutions of creation as itself the product of a creature,³¹⁵ Athanasius maintains that the worship of human creatures' creation causes not only gross immorality,³¹⁶ but all civic ills. Demons are a powerful motif in Athanasius's *Life of Anthony* (hereafter *de Vit. Ant.*), but although he refers to them here, in his argument they appear to be destructive powerful *fantasies* which thrive in the falsehood of darkness.

Young argues that

³¹² CG 22.

³¹³ CG 23.

³¹⁴ CG 24.

³¹⁵ As the abortive creation of Sophia for example in select *NH* texts.

³¹⁶ He rehearses the familiar OT anti-idolatry motifs, especially human sacrifice and male temple prostitution as most grotesque among them.

This definition of evil must be interpreted in the light of the philosophical tradition of the Platonists, for whom non-Being has some sort of ontological status. There were degrees of being depending on a thing's participation in True Being; Good was identified with True Being, so inevitably evil belonged to the opposite end of the ontological scale (Young, 1979:198).

Despite a rigorous refutation by Petterson (1990:94-95), Young correctly identifies Athanasius's estimate of evil, particularly in *de Vit. Ant*, even though the polemic and rhetoric of *CG-DI*, seems more powerful if understood as a non-thing, merely "a corruption and deterioration of what is created"(Petterson, 1990:95). In *CG*, creation is not enslaved by demons, though humanity's dislocation from God is accounted for after the Genesis narrative, because of it being enslaved to a falsehood of its own making. This is why it is false and evil - it cannot have any ontological stability, as the creation of a creature. This argument will find expression in Athanasius's anti-Arian literature, where he again connects Christology with cosmological stability.

This is not to say that Athanasius neglects to account for evil or demons in his view of the world. Indeed, the teachings of Christ "shine more clearly than the sun... the power of the cross having filled the whole world."³¹⁷

³¹⁷ This passage may be used to argue for a later date for the tractate - perhaps in the reign of Julian, recalling as it does the vision of the late Emperor. This seems rather strained, though, as Athanasius certainly did not share the adoration Eusebius displays for Constantine! There is also perhaps here a subliminal defence of the scandal of the public crucifixion of the Logos, explicitly addressed as an element of divine pedagogy in *DI* 24; 43-44, as the open display of God's goodness and power.

This discussion of *CG* celebrates the philosophical achievement of Athanasius, but that needs balancing with a fiery, almost superstitious discussion of evil in his writing. Athanasius's consideration of the power of the cross in *CG* is far more than shorthand for the universal presence of Christian faith in the world, or even a reference to Constantine's revelation commanding him to conquer in that sign. "The power of the Cross" has almost the place of a powerful amulet against evil, as it is for the Logos a trophy of his victory over death itself.³¹⁸ The sign of Christ's death for Athanasius has a power to drive away all the powers of demons, proving them dead and impotent. "At the sign of the cross, all magic ceases, witchcraft is proven void, and irrational desires cease."³¹⁹

"The cross" is thus Athanasius's shorthand for the crucifixion and its significance. It was at once a public episode apparently caused by the abuse of human freedom, but at the same time within the divine purposes, the means whereby the Logos visibly stretched out both arms to embrace both Jew and gentile.³²⁰ By the sign of God's redemptive love in the cross, Greek gods are repulsed and exposed.³²¹ Thus whilst Athanasius's emphasis appears less sophisticated here, it is rooted in, and relevant to, the soteriological and devotional popular Christian experience, perhaps especially poignant in the spirituality of desert monks. It is unlikely Athanasius is being deliberately ambiguous or pragmatic – he seems to hold both views, despite their surface incompatibility.

³¹⁸ *DI* 24.

³¹⁹ *DI* 24; cp. *DI* 55.

³²⁰ *DI* 25ff.

³²¹ *DI* 54. One might expect "by the power of the Spirit...", but the Spirit is conspicuous by his absence in *CG-DI*.

Creation, then, is a constant key witness both against its own divinity and for that of its maker through its hierarchy and order. In contrast to the confusion of idolatry and evil, Athanasius argues that creation bears the marks of God, as it is an inter-connected and inter-dependent whole, pointing, by this organic mutuality and integrity to a single creator. It is significant that here Athanasius does not contrast God as “creator” with a superior notion of divinity where God is “Father”, as can be perceived in the polemical anti-Arian literature and which Torrance (1997) characterises as central to Athanasius’s theology. That distinction does not work in *CG-DI*: indeed the argument works in this double tractate because there is *no* distinction between the concepts. So cosmology is pivotal in the Christological descriptions here. Clearly, however, God is not to be conceived in pantheistic terms: he remains incorporeal, invisible and untouchable,³²² there is a fundamental ontological distinction between God’s nature and all else: but there is no discernable division between God as Father and God as Creator. Rather than marking a pre-Arian *Sitz im Leben*, *CG-DI* thus marks a different rhetoric from the later Athanasius. Conflict and change in the world, with its individually incompatible entities of, for example, summer, autumn, winter, and spring prove that each or all cannot be God. Holistically construed, however, they can be understood as obedient elements in a providential, changing whole. Athanasius thus shifts to a more sophisticated estimate of creation. If it bears God’s imprint in its organic order, the differentiation and ambiguity of creation is also a strong argument against its own divinity. The worship or deification of the created realm derives from a distorted knowledge of God and is a deviation from the truth:

³²² CG 29: e., gar ð Qeōj φsèmatōj ἰστί, καὶ φòratoj καὶ ἤyaustoj tí fÚsei.

their worship and deification (qeopoi...a) is not the beginning of piety (eÙsebe...aj), but of godlessness and impiety...³²³

True knowledge of God corresponds with human nature so that through the Logos of the Father, there is natural access to God and proper worship, leading to the subsequent deification of human creatures because only when they are in Christ are they rooted in the stability of communion with the divine.³²⁴ Human nature thus appears to retain a direct access to God, not outside itself but, citing Deuteronomy 30:14, from within: “The word of faith is within your heart.”³²⁵

It is not necessary to speculate about a late Stoic lÒgoj spšrmatikoj as undergirding Athanasius’s thought here. Athanasius’s point is that it is a natural dimension of the human creature to rise to contemplate God, even if the fall makes that more or less only a theoretical possibility. Athanasius, writing in the light of the incarnation, has that “more excellent way” in mind, but there is apologetic mileage in his reasoning here. Athanasius’s main point is to underscore polemically that the rejection of God for the pleasures of life is the cause of great loss, even though within each remains the image of the Logos. “Each man’s soul (yuc»n) and the mind within it (ka^ tÒn ™n aÙtí noàn)”³²⁶ is a path to authentic knowledge of God. Even in the context of trying to make it clear that the root of sin lays in human choice, and continuing in sin the result of human weakness and stubbornness, Athanasius clearly maintains that the soul has access to God. When confronted by the Logos in the words and works of

³²³ CG 29.

³²⁴ CG 30.

³²⁵ CG 30.

³²⁶ *Ibid.*

Jesus, the soul and mind are unambiguously refreshed and restored. This is not automatic, as Bouyer and others have argued,³²⁷ but still requires a human response (Petterson, 1990:35-73).³²⁸ Yet for Athanasius this is *primarily* a powerful work of the Logos: itself a theophany.

Though a creature, the human soul differs in nature from the oÙs...a of other creatures. It is rational, and it governs the other senses of the human body, as the governing mind or will of an artist plays harmonies on an instrument. The body is an Ôrganon of this reasoning faculty, construed as that inner power which is not limited to the body and which has been created with a capacity to remain in communion with God eternally. Athanasius demonstrates the soul's ontological superiority over the body, in that even when earthbound, the human being can contemplate (qewreκ) the heavens. The soul belongs above bodily distractions,³²⁹ and even despite sin, it has the possibility of turning and rising to the divine, a consequence of the soul being made in the *imago Dei*.³³⁰ When pure and without distraction, the soul can

³²⁷ Through participation in the Church, we participate in Christ argued Bouyer, 1943: "Saint Athanase n'a pas à opter entre incarnation "collective" et incarnation "individuelle", entre un Verbe fait humanité et le Verbe fait homme, parce que Jésus est l'humanité, précisons: cette humanité nouvelle dont il est le *Second Adam*, c'est à dire, l'église, n'étant pas deux mais un, Athanase les envisage toujours, sans confusion, certes, mais separation non plus." Cf. Petterson, 1990: "Christ has not taken a collective human nature, but an individual one though this does not exclude the fact that incarnation has a collective aspect." Young (1979:214) plants Athanasius firmly in the earth of middle-Platonism: "Humanity ascended to heaven in Christ, who was no mere substitute for men, but the perfect "Platonic" Form of mankind in which men could participate and be incorporated through his Spirit. God accepts him, not in place of us, but because he sees us in him, and accepts us through him. By being sÚsswmoi with him, we are transformed e,,j ¥ndra tšleion. The presence of the Logos in tÔ φnqrèpinon purified it, sanctified it and made it fit to be offered to the Father as a new and perfect creature."

³²⁸ Petterson (1990) argues that Christ is not properly understood as being to Athanasius a conception "of human nature, after the manner of Platonic realism, as a concrete idea or universal in which all individual men participate. From this point of view, when the Word assumed it and suffused it with his divinity, the divinising force would be communicate to all mankind, and the incarnation would in effect be the redemption." Cf. Kelly, 1968:378.

³²⁹ CG 33.

³³⁰ Gen1.26 as expounded in CG 34.

contemplate (qewre<) as in a mirror (æj™n katÒptrù), the Word, the image of the Father (t¾n e„kÒna toà PatrŒj tŒn LŒgon).³³¹

Athanasius acknowledges the difficulty of this for the soul through the external disturbances caused by a nature not directed aright. The abuse of freedom may stand at the beginning of this process, but if it were to be steered aright, if the noàj could be restored to its proper place of government, then the soul would again contemplate God and recover its true nature. Athanasius thus prepares his reader for the incarnation of the Logos, and the subsequent restoration of the noàj – or perhaps even the *replacement* of the noàj by the Logos himself (as Apollinarius will notoriously construe the Economy) – which refreshes each person's power so that they may be restored. Here is a development of Origen's ontological soteriology within the familiar Alexandrian Christological framework with both soteriological and epistemological concerns. Athanasius's contribution here will find more explicit reflection in the Cyrilline – Nestorian conflicts a century later. Central to Athanasius's thesis is the soul's saving participation again in God as a consequence of the incarnation of the Logos being extended to Christians' participation in the divine nature.³³²

Most significantly, the theme of the meaning of order in creation should not be seen as Athanasius drawing back from any *Christocentric* themes, but rather a

³³¹ CG 34 Athanasius uses the image of a clean mirror several times in CG, here, and in chapters 8 and 2. Thomson (1971) emphasises the cleanliness of the soul, which whilst being part of the image is less significant than Athanasius's point that the soul can capture the image of the Logos.

³³² Contrast Gregg and Groh (1981) on soteriology as Arius's concern against Athanasius; see Keating (2000) for a full discussion of the means of this reconnection in the Alexandrian tradition.

Christological application of *creatio ex nihilo*, which he will explicate more fully later in *CG-DI*. The dynamic of his argument works because he constantly interweaves Christology and creation together whilst recognizing their distinctive features as a way to depict the paradox of the Incarnation, in a manner which might be described as contrapuntal.³³³

Returning to the witness of creation to the Creator, from *CG 29* onwards Athanasius argues that the separate elements of creation point to an external single will, acting upon them from a powerful transcendent position.³³⁴ This will is the Divine Purpose, the Logos, who majestically orders opposing forces creatively. Creation thus naturally communicates the being of its Creator. It is this self-transcending dimension of creation's nature that makes it more appropriate to speak of creation's *pedagogical* rather than *mediatorial* role, revealing to humanity the One mediator, who has made and governs all things. The cosmos is also the pattern of the body's proper relationship to the soul. Disorder and chaos are indicative of anarchy, but the singular will of the Creator is reflected in his works.³³⁵ After the paradigm of a harmonious Creation, the human being, body and soul

is essentially good. The body is not denigrated, even by implication in *Contra Gentes* where Louth describes Athanasius as 'the young Origenist'.³³⁶

³³³ *CG 41*, and throughout *DI*.

³³⁴ *CG 29ff*.

³³⁵ *CG 39*.

³³⁶ Petterson, 1990: 9, quoting Louth, 1981:77: "The soul has fallen from the level of the *nous* to the level of the *psyche* - in straight Origenist fashion - and, as *psyche*, it is involved in the body. The soul can achieve union with God again by means of contemplation. Indeed, in his account of

For Athanasius, the nature of God and the nature of creation are intimately connected. Irenaeus maintained a similar picture of God's presence to his creatures through creation, and, ironically, Origen's concern to depict an authentically Christian view of creation motivated him to ontological speculation about the nature of the human soul and the degrees of creaturely nature. But in Athanasius we begin to see what will become a characteristic mark of post-Nicene theology, where the unity of God is expressed not in Eusebian terminology, but as a depiction of the unity of Father and Son. Yet it is the place of *creation* that drives Athanasius's Christological dynamic here. In contrast to Paganism, he describes the Christian faith as εὐσεβῆσιν ἀληθῆσιν, ³³⁷ the all-holy God's good intent and nature is expressed and exercised by his Logos, the "supreme steersman" of creation. ³³⁸

Athanasius's use of themes gleaned from the Genesis narratives (*creation - fall - sustaining providence*) as the foundation for his cosmology and anthropology clears the ground for the argument to move to his assertion that salvation is dependent upon the incarnation of the Logos. Using the currency of Platonic language and imagery, to explicate the significance he perceives in these Biblical themes, Athanasius engages seriously and critically with contemporary

this, Athanasius is more Origenist than Origen, for the emphasis Origen puts on the soul's reliance on God's mercy in its return to God is lacking." If our dating of *CG-DI* is correct, this would make the picture of Athanasius as an Origenist in his youth alone something of an oversimplification.

³³⁷ εὐσεβῆσιν ἀληθῆσιν in relation to Arianism.

³³⁸ CG 40.

conventional discourse. Hanson maintains that Athanasius remains faithful to the Alexandrian Biblical tradition in this presentation:³³⁹

H. J. Sieben observes that for Athanasius the burden or central message (*skopos*) of Scripture is indeed a mystery, but it is not (as it is to Origen) a mystery hidden under a veil, requiring de-coding by allegory... Athanasius approaches the central theological problem of his day from a soteriological, not from a cosmological, viewpoint. He removed altogether the problem raised and apparently solved by borrowing from Middle Platonism, viz. how God or the Supreme Reality can come into contact with the world, with transitory, human affairs, at all. He refused to use the pre-existent Christ as a convenient philosophical device... All created things, he stoutly maintains, can bear the direct hand of God; a mediator in this sense was unnecessary (Hanson, 1988:422-423).³⁴⁰

It is true that Athanasius does not connect the Logos with an immanent, seminal seed, or anything pertaining the created world – he nowhere calls him *Noaj*. The Logos is, however,

the sole and individual (*†dioj d□ ka^ mÒnoj*) Word of God the good Father.³⁴¹

³³⁹ This, too, may be a strong argument for an early provenance of the double tractate.

³⁴⁰ Quoting Sieben, 1971:195,214.

³⁴¹ CG 40.

The cosmology of *CG* is the means whereby Athanasius presents Christology “from above”; the Logos sets the earth resting on nothing, yet sustains all by his immense will and power. Though Hanson (1988:448) caricatures Athanasius’s view of Christ’s assumed body as a “space-suit” Christology, it is more appropriate to describe Athanasius’s Christology as cosmological soteriology. For Athanasius, history is the paced providence of God in time, seen in the narratives of the creation and fall of humanity. This drama consists of creaturely interaction with God, whose faithfulness in nurturing fallen humanity at an appropriate time (sending law and prophets), overflows when ultimately he becomes incarnate. This divine self-expression and interaction with humanity is obviously Christocentric rather than text-centred: the divine Word is not “composed of syllables (sugke...menoj ἡμῶν σουλάβην)”,³⁴² but is the express image of the Father.³⁴³ This divine Word of the Father is for Athanasius the foundation for a proper understanding of human nature. The Logos is the sole connection between God and creation. There is no remnant of a continuum between divine and human natures in the *Ôntoj* of the human soul in Athanasius’s conceptuality. This is clearly evident in his description of the human *noàj*, both in his anthropological and Christological discussion.³⁴⁴ The Logos, the image of the Father, the template for humanity, is uncompounded, only-begotten and eternal. Humanity, through its fall, has withdrawn from divine stability and descended into the instability inherent in its creatureliness. Without being held by a psyche which contemplates the Logos, humanity returns to the nothing from which it was made.

³⁴² *CG* 41.

³⁴³ *toà ἑαυτοῦ Πατρὸς ἡμῶν ἐκ τῆς οὐρανόθεν ἐκπεσόντων, cf. Col.1.15.*

³⁴⁴ This finds extreme expression in Apollinarius, whose theological explorations is a touchstone of miaphostatic heterodoxy in Christological and Trinitarian arguments until and beyond 451. However it is evident that Athanasius in *CG-DI* and Apollinarius share a perceived negative estimation of human *noàj*.

Yet the Logos continues to exercise universal authority throughout all creation. All principles of creativity and order derive from him as the Wisdom of God holding the universe as a musician meaningfully plays a lyre. There is a hint that the Logos will yet resolve and redeem the fallen human condition in *CG*. This is possible only because the Logos shares the Father's own nature; he is no work or creature, but a partaker of divine οὐς...α. He remains unmoved with the Father, but by his will and intrinsic being moves everything as seems good to the Father, the Logos is the unmoved Mover.³⁴⁵ The locus of the Logos's being and his nature is eternity, even when if located in the temporal realm:

by the same command He links and orders everything together according to its individual nature,... all at once.³⁴⁶

The Logos shares all attributes of divine being. The *modus operandi* of his governance is from eternity. Athanasius describes this not as a continual occupation of the space-time continuum - a Λòγοj spšrmatikoj - but from the point of the eternal nature and being of God the Father. This has an effect upon Athanasius's Christology, to the extent that it may appear docetic (or "space-suit") at first glance. Certainly, Apollinarius is commonly understood to interpret Athanasius's understanding of the assumed humanity thus in his insistence upon the Logos's real identity or personality with the Father (albeit in divine flesh), so that he does not engage in each twist and tussle of history as a temporal

³⁴⁵ CG 42: αὐτῶj μὲν φκ...nhtoj mšnwn par| tū Patr..., p£nta d□ kinîn tí ~autoà sust£sei, æj ᾗn >kaston tū ~autoà Patr̂ dokí.

³⁴⁶ CG 42.

participant, but remains transcendent, impassible, ordering by the power of his very nature and will all that is.³⁴⁷

But this is an only part of what is happening in the text: Athanasius draws together the first part of *CG-DI* by weaving his argument back and forth from the order of creation pointing to the activity and purpose of God, to the reality of the Logos at the centre of the Father's being and upon whom creation depends, a truly divine Logos. The writer therefore connects the Logos's ontology with cosmology, not in terms of a (middle- or neo-) Platonic hierarchy of being – requiring mediation and governance – but pivoted upon the Fatherhood of God, and the relationship of Father to Son. This is powerful ammunition against Arius and his followers. His argument, however, will draw Arian fire because it is innovative and distorting of the monotheism of the Scriptural tradition and some expressions of the Christian tradition hitherto. Athanasius will have to defend (and adapt) his description of the model of relationship between Father and Logos in the *CA* (see chapter 3, below). But he urges that the Logos reveals the Mind of God faithfully and completely: he *is* his Wisdom, *being* the full self-disclosure of the Father. This emphasis upon the primacy of relationship between Father and Logos may reflect the influence of his direct predecessor, Alexander:

The Son is begotten of God's nature and is without beginning (ἄρκοι) like the Father, and without any interval between him and the Father. Creatures, on the other hand, are freely brought into being from non-being, by the will of God and have an absolute

³⁴⁷ Paradoxically for Apollinarius, the motif of blending must thus remain external, concrete or "docetic", a pragmatic accommodation for the economy – so the criticism that Apollinarius ontologically diminishes the divine and human natures does not seem to fit.

beginning... The crucial point here is the distinction between the generation of the Son by the nature (fÚsei) of God, and the creation of the world by the will (boul»sei / qel»sei) of God (Torrance, 1997:84)³⁴⁸

We have observed that Torrance points out that in *CA* a recurrent theme is that God is primarily described and understood as Father rather than as Creator. Through the most part of *CG-DI*, Athanasius describes God as Creator, with a consistent Christological and ontological priority that manages also to focus always on the eternal relationship of Father and Logos. So Torrance's polarised description of Athanasius's theology where "for God, to create is secondary, and to beget is primary"³⁴⁹ is too rough-hewn to describe the early Athanasius of *CG-DI*, where the emphasis depicts a much closer relationship between creation and ontology than Torrance allows.

The Logos and the Father create together, so Athanasius's use of Gen.1.26, where God says "let us make" (poi»swmen), here is no mere regal plural, but God communicating his will (qel»sei) to his own Sophia, the Logos. Here Athanasius, in another powerful anti-Arian argument, outlaws any Christology which alienates the Logos from the Father's identity, or limits any identity to participation, or unity of mission or purpose (oÙ kat! metoc»n), where common task orientation of God and the Logos unites them. A solid *ontological* foundation in Athanasius's depiction of the relation of Father and Logos undergirds the text, and is far more substantial than external similarity or even a shared property

³⁴⁸ Citing the Epistle of Alexander from Theodoret's *Ecclesiastical History* 1.3, and Athanasius, *CA*, 3.59-62.

³⁴⁹ *CA* 2.2: Torrance, 1997:87.

which might still allow the Logos to be a creature of the Father. Athanasius defines the Logos as absolute Wisdom in himself – i.e., in God’s self – the Word himself is God’s own self:

αὐτοσοφ...α, αὐτὸλογος, αὐτοδύναμις, „d...a toà Patròj ἑστίν:
αὐτοφῆς, αὐτοἀληθής, αὐτοδικαίος ἑνὴν, αὐτοκράτης, καὶ μὴ ἔχων καὶ
καρὰ καὶ ὄψαγμα καὶ ἐκίνησιν.³⁵⁰

Athanasius unequivocally unites the Logos’s identity with the nature, will and being of the Father: the Logos’s work is indistinguishable from that of the Father – he *is* the Father’s own will. This is the climax of the first part of the double tractate, *CG* seems curtailed in its ending at this point, but *DI* picks up the themes immediately in a similarly bold apologetic, expressing Christian faith in a sophisticated dialectical framework,³⁵¹ which though not biblical in a cultic or linguistic sense, is one which Hanson nevertheless describes as being

entirely consonant with Scripture. Athanasius is often wholly astray on the details of the Bible; but he has a remarkably firm grip, indeed in view of his career one might say the grip of a bull-dog, on its main message.³⁵²

³⁵⁰ “But absolute Wisdom [or Wisdom in himself], absolute word, himself the Father’s own power, absolute light, absolute truth, absolute justice, absolute virtue, express image, expression and ikon” of the Father. *CG* 46.

³⁵¹ *DI* 2-32.

³⁵² Hanson, 1988:424.

After a curtailed refutation of Jewish³⁵³ and “Hellenic”³⁵⁴ objections to the incarnation, Athanasius rejoices at Christianity’s triumph throughout the whole world, with the concomitant true deification of humanity in Christ.³⁵⁵ *DI* is therefore comparable to a triumphant, almost symphonic resolution of discordant themes portrayed evocatively in *CG*. Both dimensions are deeply related to each other, needing each other not merely for balance but for the achievement of an artistic resolution and nuanced contrapuntal Christology pitching divine ontology and creation together in a close but creative style.

With such a divine emphasis concerning the Logos’s identity, the question of mediation does not need addressing for Athanasius *vis-à-vis* the Father.

Athanasius placed any mediating action of the Son not within the Godhead, but in his becoming incarnate. What is the human nature and identity of this God-made-man? It is proper here to ponder how Athanasius in this early tractate proposes to resolve the divine identity of the Logos with the assumed human nature of the incarnate Christ, not least because succeeding Christological debate will claim to be a faithful exposition of Athanasian orthodoxy.

³⁵³ *DI* 33-40.

³⁵⁴ *DI* 41-50.

³⁵⁵ *DI* 51-end.

2.4: The Incarnate Logos and Mediation: Δι; τ... σÚ QeÕj íν ¥nqrwpoj gšgonaj?

The Logos theology of CG presents Athanasius with a *prima facie* difficulty in articulating the significance of the incarnate nature(s) of the Logos. *DI* 1-18 establishes the logic of his understanding of the incarnation: God's creativity and goodness continually prompt him to care for and renew his image in human beings. The climax of this love is the incarnation of the Logos, which redeems the whole of human existence through his living a real life in a creaturely manner. Athanasius describes this as the Logos himself teaching the human soul, stopping the power of sin by living a sinless life, and offering that life sacrificially. The Logos formed his own body as the instrument with which to make these purposes known, offering it as a ransom (ϕnt...yucon) for all. Athanasius's defence of the dignity of the Logos incarnate reveals that he really does not believe that the Logos is doing something of a lower status than befits the Father's dignity: the Logos is in no way degraded in the process. Any apparent degradation (τί nomizomšnh ~autoà eÙtele...v) is in fact all within his control and sovereignty. He retains his true nature, incorporeal, appearing through the mercy and goodness of the Father in order to teach and save.³⁵⁶ In a notorious but not altogether inappropriate simile, to which we have already alluded, Hanson describes Athanasius's understanding as

a 'Space-suit Christology'. Just as the astronaut, in order to operate in a part of the universe where there is no air and where he has to experience weightlessness, puts on an elaborate space-suit which

³⁵⁶ Consistent with *Contra Arianos* 2, 14: The Logos was not trapped or limited by his assumed body, instead it was the freeing of all humanity.

enables him to act in this new, unfamiliar environment, so the Logos put on a body which enabled him to behave as a human being among human beings. But his relation to his body is no closer than that of an astronaut to his space suit.³⁵⁷

The Logos belongs in the divine being of the Father, in eternity – but Hanson here overemphasises the picture, underestimating Athanasius’s closeness to Irenaeus in construing the immediate presence of God to creation in a manner far less dualistic than Origen’s contrast between spiritual and physical being. The cost of this interesting simile is that it misses the function of the doctrine of *creation’s* facilitation of Athanasius’s Christology. The Alexandrian patriarch makes it clear that the world is *no* unfamiliar environment for the Logos in *CG-DI*. Petterson (1990:3) rightly recognizes this, arguing that:

the asomatic God was not alien from his somatic creation; indeed, because of the continuous dependency of the creation upon the Creator, God could, Athanasius maintained, be seen in and through a body. ... ‘the Logos of God, who is God, wills at all times and in all places and in all things to work the mystery of his incarnation.’³⁵⁸

Yet the assumed physical body remains the arena in which the Logos truly dwelt in order to protect and guide the creation he himself made. It is appropriate that only the Creator could restore incorruption to the creature, hence his entry into

³⁵⁷ Hanson, 1988:448.

³⁵⁸ Quoting Maximus the Confessor, in Peacocke, 1979:298.

our realm (εἰς τὴν ἑμμετρῆσαν σάρκα) ³⁵⁹ of human flesh. But this is not achieved at the price of a false dualism: Athanasius explicitly insists (as in *CG*) that this does not imply that the Logos was previously distant. The incarnation is primarily a manifestation (ἡ ἐπιφανεία) of the Logos' constant presence to creation from the beginning, ³⁶⁰ visibly because of the gravity of the danger facing humanity. Perfectly consistently with this positive evaluation of creation, Athanasius describes the Logos as then taking a body not alien (οὐκ ἐλλοτρίον) to our own, ³⁶¹ forming that body in the Blessed Virgin, as a temple and ὄργανον through which he might be known. This has been understood as implying that Athanasius's Christ knew no soul or νοῦν of its own. Grillmeier however rightly warns that care should be taken in fixing later Christological clarifications upon this term, where it becomes used as a "soteriological concept which presupposes a prior classification of christological anthropology for its full understanding". ³⁶² When Athanasius reflects upon the significance of the death of Christ, he gives a candid insight into his estimate of Christ's human being. The Word can not die, he is immortal: his taking a body which was mortal, to participate in his divinity, suffices death's claims upon all humanity. The relation between the Word and the body is that of the νοῦν as conceived in *CG* to the psyche and body. The identity of Christ for Athanasius (unlike Origen) is properly the Logos. If there were another human identity or psyche in Christ then his schema tumbles – this gives us a significant clue to the dynamism of Apollinarius and Cyril's Christological arguments and their claims upon Athanasius. The sacrifice required and offered in the ransom of Christ's death is not an innocent human sacrifice - something

³⁵⁹ *DI* 7.

³⁶⁰ Cf. Anatolios [1999] whose reading of *CG-DI* at this point clearly elucidates the connections between Athanasius and Irenaean thought.

³⁶¹ *DI* 8.

³⁶² Grillmeier, 1975:317ff.

Athanasius deplures and reviles in *CG* - but the powerful Logos “reforming all men’s estate by his own power... none other except God the Word incarnate”.³⁶³

For Athanasius, the incarnation is thus a glorious theophany in the flesh of the didactic Lord who died to rescue the human condition. The fact that he formed his own flesh in Mary is not described in terms of a unique blending of God and man. Human nature is conveyed by Mary to the Logos in the incarnation, but, united with him, it does not remain a vulnerable humanity. There was no chance of Jesus dying *in utero* or in infancy. The prime notion of the sovereignty and immutability of the Logos presents Athanasius with obvious difficulties concerning the authentic humanity of the incarnate Christ. Everything is didactic, nothing left to chance: the three days in hell,³⁶⁴ and the stretching out of arms on the cross,³⁶⁵ are the Logos’s will. He is not enclosed in his body, but manifest through it,³⁶⁶ he did not suffer in birth, as he was the one who animated and sanctified the body. Though for Athanasius Christ’s body is real, not a fantasy, the incarnation is not an abstention from cosmic governance, but the Logos taking and animating a real body. Athanasius does not ponder here where the *locus* of the Logos’s identity is, but, consistent with *CG-DI*, he depicts the Logos as remaining in the bosom of the Father and continuing to control the universe.³⁶⁷ The Logos assumes the position of the *noaj* in Christ, controlling the body, just as humanity’s own *noaj* was originally intended and empowered to do. This divine initiative enables humanity to ascend again to the contemplation of God. His particular, assumed humanity is the tool by which the Logos leads all to the divine. The actions of Christ (especially the casting out of demons and

³⁶³ *DI* 10.

³⁶⁴ *DI* 26.

³⁶⁵ *DI* 25.

³⁶⁶ *DI* 17.

³⁶⁷ Cp. *DI* 17.

healing of the diseased) are epiphanic. All demonstrate that here is the Logos fashioning creation afresh. The incarnate nature of the Logos remains the enfleshed divinity. The Logos is neither dependent upon creation, nor an accidental participant in it. He depicts the Logos's *divinity* as being completely in control in the incarnate Christ, to the exclusion of considering the significance of the humanity independent of the Logos. In contrast to Origen, there is clear correlation with Apollinarius and Cyril here, who will embellish this Athanasian theme that *by itself* the obedient pattern of the humanity of Christ is a soteriologically insufficient Christology. For Athanasius, the whole – what Cyril will call the Union – is most significant. Apollinarius will develop this explicitly into an insistence upon a blending in Christ, if there is to be a unity of personhood and any real humanity other than the fleshly body of the Logos. Such argumentation will provoke Antiochene perspectives to insistence upon *both* this heavenly reality *and* a historical man, expressed in the tradition from a much-despised “two Christs” caricature of Paul of Samosata to sophisticated paradox in Theodoret's *Eranistes*. Though Cyril will connect such concerns with Arius in his rhetoric, this is not merely an Arian concern, but a major theological development, which offended much received Christological tradition, prompting Eusebius (as the Conservative Churchman *par excellence*) to resist Athanasius's depiction as innovative. If the Logos did not partake of creation, did Christ truly eat, or did he have food of which the disciples knew nothing? In terms of mediation there appears to be in *CG-DI* a one-way flow. “He took of none of the body's attributes, but rather himself sanctified the body.”³⁶⁸ The Logos, as the true *noāj* of the body of Jesus, communicates himself to all in communion with

³⁶⁸ *DI* 43.

him: “for we have the mind of Christ.” Humanity’s *noāj* proved insufficient, and after the breach of disobedience, proves incapable of steering humanity to participate in divine communion. Instead, the Logos’s very self proved victorious and is available, through the victory of Christ, to humanity afresh. Humanity is given a divine *noāj*, because of the well-known dialectic described by Athanasius’s in terms of divinization:

AÙtÕj g|r ™nhnqrèphsen, †na 1meçj qeopoihqîmen.³⁶⁹

In *CG-DI*, Athanasius’s concern is to paint enfleshed triumphant divine power rather than to discuss the means of mediation. Mediation for him is primarily communication of divine purpose through the gift of a divine renewing power, evident in the words, healing actions, suffering, death and resurrection of Christ. Salvation becomes a higher ontological state for humanity because of the Logos’s incarnate involvement than even the paradisaical contemplation of God before the Fall. Humanity now has in the divine Logos a stable *noāj* and guide, enabling participation in the divine nature of the Logos in Christ.³⁷⁰

Kannengiesser argues³⁷¹ that for Athanasius, before the fall, the ideal Adam had no independent soul, as his mind was fixed on God. In Athanasius’s (and the Alexandrian tradition’s) *schema* after Origen, Kannengiesser argues that souls became existent only when they turned from the contemplation of God and were

³⁶⁹ *DI* 54.

³⁷⁰ Cp Roldanus, 1968:111: “Selon Athanase, dans la recréation il n’est pas donné moins à l’homme, mais au contraire plus que dans la création primitive à l’Image. Cela ressort d’un passage apologétique de *DI*, où l’on trouve une comparaison entre la recréation et la première création. Athanase commente l’objection selon laquelle, pour le rétablissement de l’homme, il n’était pas nécessaire que le Verbe lui-même s’incarnât, puisqu’il aurait pu accomplir cette recréation en donnant un ordre, comme ce fut la cas dans la création primitive.”

³⁷¹ Kannengiesser, 1991:108.

subject to the passions of the body's senses. Restored in Christ, Athanasius sees the Christian as conformed to the Saviour in knowing no will or mind save that of God in Christ: so there is no place for an independent *noàj* or *yuc»* in the Incarnate Logos in Athanasius's depiction. Against this, Arius (reflecting Origen's concern before him) insists that salvation consists of the humanity's *participation* in the divine as humanity, rather than as something transformed or lost to the divine. Such a picture of salvation would endanger the divinity of God and the unique nature of humanity, so Gregg and Groh's description of Arius's thought being driven by a contrasting view of salvation to that of Athanasius.³⁷²

2.5: Conclusions: Some problematic implications of Athanasius's Christology in *CG-DI*.

Although it is an anachronistic distinction in terms of Athanasius, the account of the fall in *CG-DI* is depicted primarily in realistic and psychological terms rather than as primarily "historical".³⁷³ Athanasius asserts that it is possible for the human soul to return to God.³⁷⁴ Louth's description of humanity's lot in *CG-DI* is "a very pessimistic view" where repentance itself would not be strong enough to release the ensnared soul. Athanasius does not conceive of salvation as the release of an enslaved soul to autonomy, but participation in the divinity of Christ, and by this participation, attaining an ontological stability. Petterson urges that in *CG* Athanasius:

³⁷² Gregg and Groh's description (1981) of Arian thought as driven by a contrasting view of salvation to Athanasius is consonant with Athanasius's emphasis here.

³⁷³ So Louth 1974:116.

³⁷⁴ *CG* 30-34.

stresses the doctrines of creation and revelation, and of mankind's contemplation and appreciation of God... [whereas *DI*] emphasises the doctrines of incarnation and redemption. For Athanasius, there is, comparatively speaking, little to separate the doctrines of creation and revelation, and of incarnation and salvation, because he affirms the 'noetic' in man. An individual is contemplative, ...being a part of being truly human; indeed even the unlettered Antony contemplates. Contemplation is seen as a form of reconciliation and not the means to reconciliation; so the tendency to drive a wedge between nature and grace, and to present the Logos incarnate as the antithesis of nature, rather than as nature's completion and meaning is ever to be resisted.³⁷⁵

This chapter has provided a reading of *CG-DI* which has attempted to be chronologically attentive to Athanasius's nuanced Christology. Too strong a contrast between Father and Creator is an inappropriate description of Athanasius at this point, for we have seen that he holds the two together, consistently refusing an ontological / economic theological division. This consistency will be a hallmark of Athanasius's Christological development (and, subsequently, his pneumatology, though that is not the subject of this thesis). The cost of Athanasius's description is perceived by Arius, and subsequently many within the dyohypostatic theological tradition, as too high: to that evaluation we now turn.

³⁷⁵ Petterson, 1990:17.

CHAPTER THREE

ARIAN READINGS OF “NICENE” CHRISTOLOGY AND ATHANASIUS’S ELUCIDATIONS IN THE *CONTRA ARIANOS*

*The descriptive vocabulary... is forged in a particular context of investigation where there is agreement on matters such as what constitutes evidence, what are genuine arguments, what counts as a fact, ... and while claims may be genuinely referential, this does not mean that they escape from this contextuality... [S]peakers use words according to established patterns of investigation and interest... which are bound by shared assumptions, interests, and traditions of interpretation, and share a descriptive vocabulary.*³⁷⁶

3.1 Introduction: the task of this chapter and its location in this study

The decades of Christian self-definition between the councils of Nicaea and Chalcedon are foundational because the overarching grammar and vocabulary of Christian theology was being wrestled-over, and emerging from this violent labour throughout the empire. This period determined the vernacular conceptuality of the Christian community in its life, ethics and liturgy. Credal rehearsals of the *Regula Fidei* became regularly repeated grammatical-liturgical restatements of this framework. Nicaea’s centrality though can obviously, and anachronistically, be overstated. It was not the case that, when promulgated in 325, every Eucharist throughout the whole world imposed the Nicene formulation upon every simple

³⁷⁶ Soskice, 1988:149-150.

worshipper.³⁷⁷ However, the struggle to establish what constituted authentic and authoritative evidence, and the creation of a universally accepted doctrinal-linguistic lens, or framework for faith, which determined what were legitimate paths of Christian theology and spirituality, was a vital and all-engaging one for Arius³⁷⁸ and his opponents.

In this chapter, the *theological* significance of the mediation of divine nature (or divine will) will be used to read the Christological conflict between Athanasius and Arius. This shows that the conflict between them is best understood as their mutual attempts to exclude the other's model of theological thinking and thereby to establish their own determinative Christian "totalizing discourse"³⁷⁹ for doctrinal language. The conflict, though hung upon Christological exegesis of Scripture, reveals that both Arius and Athanasius are concerned to establish an authoritative doctrinal framework for Christology. How that theological divergence is most appropriately described is addressed in this chapter through an exploration of the place of mediation in each system.

³⁷⁷ Lienhard, 1999:33: "The Council of Nicaea did not enjoy any singular authority until several decades after it was held. For example, when Athanasius mentioned the Council of Nicaea in *Or c Arianos* I 6, which Sieben dates in 339, the council was not, for Athanasius, an authority in the sense of a positive norm for faith. Athanasius first defended the word *homoousion* in *De decretis* 20, composed between 345 and 355. In *De Synodis*, written in 359, what is authoritative is not a fixed formula but the acceptance of a tradition as such, that is, the Fathers together. Only in the *Epistula ad Iovianum imperatorem* (363) is Nicaea correct for Athanasius not only because it is apostolic but also because it is the universal, ecumenical faith and hence the divine faith of the Church catholic. Writers in the two or three decades after Nicaea make no appeal to its creed as uniquely authoritative or to the term *homoousion* as a touchstone of orthodoxy. Its greatest influence was a negative one: more than a few creeds and authors accepted its anathemas as an adequate definition of the heresy to be rejected and regularly quote them as an assurance of their own orthodoxy."

³⁷⁸ Hanson explores early "Arian" theologies 1988:3-123; Anatolios's chronology to 322 (1998:134-5) is accepted for the purposes of this dissertation.

³⁷⁹ Cameron, 1994, uses this phrase with the particular reference to the whole of the Empire's conceptuality, education and language. It is used here less ambitiously to refer to an *authorized* theological envisioning of God and creation.

The battles between Arius and his opponents, and between Athanasius and his opponents (whom he describes as “Arians”), are explored in order to establish that a holistic theological interpretation of the conflict is the most satisfying.³⁸⁰ The careful exegetical methodology of Simonetti³⁸¹ exposes and creatively hones the theological priority, properly *critically* pioneered by Elliger in 1931.³⁸² This method takes more seriously the theological motivation and dynamism than political readings allow, taking seriously the fact that the protagonists took the theology extremely seriously. Attempts to describe the conflict otherwise, be they political³⁸³ or soteriological-ethical³⁸⁴ fail to do this. Williams (2001:6-8) warns against the tendency of using theological priority as a veil to construct readings built upon “a foundation of complacent bigotry and historical fantasy” in his evaluation of the great nineteenth-century Arius scholars, including Newman and Harnack.³⁸⁵ Newman characterizes Arius’s theology as a religion of protest, rather than a faithful quest to assent with integrity. Arius thus has a popularist advantage over

³⁸⁰ For a thorough statement of the *status quaestionis* see Williams, 1987:1-29 and 2001:247-267. He demonstrates that Arius and “Arianism” become, even among sophisticated theologians, short-hand terms for a radically “other” theological position from that of the speaker [1987:2]. Williams’ family tree of Arius scholarship is helpful in describing various *thematic* slants upon Arius, and their influence in succeeding generations of scholarship.

³⁸¹ Simonetti, 1971:317-330 disposes of views of Arius which are “Antiochene” or “literalist”. Cf. Young, 1997, chapter 2.

³⁸² Elliger, 1931:244-251 argued that there had been a failure in scholarship to recognize that the demonized images of Arius painted by his opponents had been unwittingly transmitted by subsequent scholarship. More significantly for our thesis, Elliger recognized that the conflict was not merely *Christological* but *theological*: being an attempt to clarify the doctrine of God and his relation to the world. So Williams, 1987:12-13, 1977; and Stead, 1994:166-168 who reviews Arius’s use of οὐσ...α in his resistance of Ἐμooὐσιοj.

³⁸³ For a thorough *political* reading, see Barnes, 1993. A political perspective is evident in Lyman, 1993a, 1993b. Brakke, 1998, maps the pragmatism of Athanasius’s ecclesiology and Antony’s place in that through Athanasius’s political acumen.

³⁸⁴ Mönnich, 1950:378-412. Gregg & Groh, 1981:1 “the chronicling of the creaturely limitations of their redeemer” was “the pin which swung ... [this] christological door”, developed under the header “The Son: One of Many Brothers” *ibid.* 43-76.

³⁸⁵ Anatolios, 1998, 229, 93. Despite enormous differences, Harnack exactly follows Newman in identifying a blend of undefined Aristotelian syllogisms and Lucian’s transmission of the theological emphasis of Paul of Samosata suggesting a synthesis of Antiochene and Origenistic concerns in Arius’s theology.

Athanasius's attempt to tool his "grammar of assent".³⁸⁶ true though this may be, it underestimates the serious theological concern of Arius, which a study focused upon the notion of mediation in this chapter will attempt to extrapolate.

This chapter begins with an evaluation of Arius's theological priorities before examining Athanasius's theological engagement with what he construes to be the "Arian" theological model in the CA. We shall see that it is the desire of both Arius and Athanasius to establish a single authoritative, language for theology, promoting, by its method and system, their specific theological and exegetical priorities, simultaneously excluding those of their opponents. Scholarly debate about the political or soteriological dimensions of the conflict are discussed in this context.³⁸⁷ The impetus to establish an accepted tradition of interpretation is uppermost in the exegetical *method* of Athanasius. Despite the paucity of primary texts of Arius (together with the unhappy fact that they are transmitted out of context with a deliberate desire to expose the author as heterodox from the authentic faith community by his enemies), this theological concern can be also

³⁸⁶ "It is obvious that in every contest, the assailant, as such, has the advantage of the party assailed; and that, not merely from the recommendation which novelty gives to his cause in the eyes of bystanders, but also from the greater facility in the nature of things, of finding, than of solving objections, whatever be the question in dispute. Accordingly, the skill of a disputant mainly consists in securing an offensive position, fastening on the weaker points of his adversary's case, and then not relaxing his hold till the latter sinks under his impetuosity, without having the opportunity to display the strength of his own cause, and to bring it to bear upon his opponent... This was the artifice to which Arianism owed its first successes." Newman, 1871:26.

³⁸⁷ Contrast Gregg and Groh's *political* interpretation of Athanasius's claiming of Antony in *De Vita*, with Arian understandings in this schematic form [adapted from Gregg and Groh, 1981:131-160]:

"Arian" theology	Athanasius's theology
<i>Antony and the ascetical tradition promotes a Christology rooted in</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a similarly <i>heroic</i> redeemer divinized by his virtuous will 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an understanding of the Saviour's immutable divinity
<i>where the Church is</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the locus for the transmission of wisdom by a <i>qualified teacher</i> [even better, a Biblical exegete, = Arius] 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a divinely formed body with a divinely <i>given episcopal authority</i> so that only the episcopally authorized sacramental life can protect the church authentically

discerned in Arius's emphasis upon the theological significance of the created nature³⁸⁸ of the Logos. For Arius, "literalism" *per se* is not central, (be that attributed to a "Jewish",³⁸⁹ "Samosatene Adoptionist",³⁹⁰ "Antiochene",³⁹¹ or "Alexandrian"³⁹² context), but a monotheistic, transcendental biblicist *method* in theology is.³⁹³ This used sacred texts in an "oracular", even popularist way, rather than in the enterprise of finding appropriate means to express the centrality and

³⁸⁸ This differs from a theological anthropology which is a priority of Antiochene theologians. The significance of the proto-creature's *progression* is more important in Arius's *schema* than the "humanity" of Christ, which does not appear to be reflected upon. The issue for Arius, which Athanasius engages with extensively, remains a theological-ontological one. Athanasius produced *CG-DI* as a counter-soteriology to such an approach, properly treating anthropology [*qua* created] theologically.

³⁸⁹ Newman, 1871. Newman is "not at his best here" by Williams (2001:4), but Newman's concern with the development of a *Christian* rhetoric, though expressed unfortunately, may reflect a different *methodology* - or even exegetical tradition - which interprets the text of Scripture as "oracular" - and fragmentary - rather than the authoritative history of revelation which is appropriated through a systematic comprehension of the whole by the *regula fidei* or Creeds. Cf. Young, 1997:9-28.

³⁹⁰ Newman, 1871:37. Newman also allocated much of Arius's method to Paul of Samosata, arguing that the *Alexandrian* context was alien to Arius's approach. Cf. Trigg, 1998:63: "In the sphere of doctrine, we have already noted the way Origen lays crucial foundations for the definition of doctrine of the Trinity and of the person of Christ. He also provided a way to relate divine grace to human free will that proved congenial to the Greek theological tradition, a congeniality that accounts for the preservation of many of his writings on the subject. ... Origen distinguished himself from the Platonic tradition by insisting on the necessity of God's grace if human beings are to become like God. Origen just as firmly defended human moral responsibility. Refuting philosophers and astrologers who would argue that human actions are pre-determined, he made a convincing case that God's foreknowledge does not predetermine human actions and that God's providence fully respects human free will." These similarities between Origen's and Arius's concerns are unseen by Newman. Adolf von Harnack believed Arius' theological method to be the hybrid offspring of the unlikely union of Paul of Samosata and Origen, Williams, 2001: 6-8.

³⁹¹ Lietzmann, 1961:107, is over-simplistic in his summary of this traditional assignation: "Arius was not a person of minor importance, but one well-known in the theological world. He was of special importance for Alexandria, because he had not been brought up in the indigenous tradition, but had come from the school at Antioch, which was diametrically opposed to it. In this latter city, a presbyter held in high repute, Lucian by name, had laboured as a teacher until his martyrdom in AD 306. A considerable number of students were drawn to him, and these in the course of time, occupied the most eminent dioceses in the east; these men felt united in faithful fellowship by the memory of their teacher. Arius belonged to this circle, and as he had only given expression in accentuated form to Antiochene points of view, he might well reckon on support from his fellow students who sat under Lucian. Nor was he mistaken. Eusebius, bishop of Nicomedia, which had lately become the royal residence, took his side, and asked the other friends to write in support".

³⁹² Wiles, 1962:339-347.

³⁹³ A *muqologe(n)* according to Torrance, 1997:37: "There was another side to Origen's approach, however, which provided this 'theologising' (*qeologe(n)*) with safeguards against a fanciful 'mythologising' (*muqologe(n)*), and with a normative frame of faith and devotion which could help to keep knowledge of God in the centre of the life and living tradition of 'the Great Church'.

significances of the nature of the relation between Jesus Christ and God the Father.³⁹⁴

There is a danger in a primarily theological reading which can follow too closely Athanasius's analysis of the conflict,³⁹⁵ or even, more acutely, in making Athanasius's theology a necessity.³⁹⁶ Gwatkin's assertion that the essence of the conflict was less to do with Christology than about correctly constructing the relation between God and the world,³⁹⁷ is not far from our thesis. Any claim, though, is limited to a conviction that Athanasius seems to be prompted into a theological use of the doctrine of *creatio ex nihilo* by the crisis. Embarking upon this process of establishing theological method develops into his powerful sacramental theology with the incarnation in central place. This resolves the epistemological and cosmological "gap" - or *cwismÒj* - which his theological application of *creatio ex nihilo* imposed upon his opponent's theology. Athanasius's priority is not explaining the relation of God with the world, but constructing the most appropriate model for describing God. If Arius did not make Athanasius

³⁹⁴ "The controversial teaching of Arius, as Alexander, the Patriarch of Alexandria soon realised, made it indubitably clear that the decisive issue for saving faith was the nature of the relation between Jesus Christ the incarnate Son and God the Father. How, then, must the Church think of that relation?... what must be said about the nature of that relation in order to safeguard from misunderstanding and distortion all that it stands for in the Gospel? It was in answer to such questions that the Nicene fathers formulated their confession of faith: '... ðmooÚsioj ...'. Moreover they attached to the Creed a canon to the effect that the Catholic Church anathematizes 'those who say "There was when he was not", and "Before being begotten he was not", and that "He came into existence out of nothing"...' All these statements of the Nicene Council were subjected to severe testing in face of prolonged criticism in the fourth century, which served to deepen and confirm the convictions of the Church..." (Torrance, 1997:116). Simonetti, 1971: 317-330 and 1975:80-83, disposes of views of Arius which are "Antiochene" or "literalist". "Literalist" is to be avoided not least because of its pejorative overtones, but Arius's approach to Scripture can be described in part as "oracular."

³⁹⁵ CA 1.

³⁹⁶ Gwatkin, 1900, 1906.

³⁹⁷ Gwatkin, 1900: 8.

“necessary,” he did provoke his distinctive theological contributions to Christian theology.³⁹⁸

A discussion of mediation approaches the edifice of salvation and Christian theology holistically (with soteriological, ecclesiastical and ascetical dimensions). In Christology it becomes a differentiating cipher, focusing the cluster of fourth-century conflicts. Analysis of mediation in the competing theological models of Arius and Athanasius allows a more attentive description of each system and the conflict.

Conventional descriptions of the fourth-century conflict as “Arian” *versus* “Nicene” is so commonplace that, despite the distortion of these terms, they are difficult to avoid, and accordingly appear in this dissertation. They are inadequate not least because “Arian” is Athanasius’s coinage, deliberately minted to connect later fourth-century theologians whom he was opposing, to this arch-heretic. It is generally accepted that Arius’s *actual* (rather than perceived) role in the fourth-century conflicts was minor.³⁹⁹ Moreover, “Nicene” is not shorthand for “orthodox” even in Athanasius’s writings until the mid 360s. The only occurrence of ἘμooÚsioj before *De Synodis* is CA I.8.1: Vinzent (1996:377ff) insists that this usage derives from CA IV – a work probably by Apollinarius. Lienhard (1999:33) similarly rejects descriptions of the conflict as Alexandrian vs. Antiochene or

³⁹⁸ Athanasius would maintain that there is nothing innovative in his theology. Even the use of non-biblical terminology at Nicaea is to preserve the διέnoia or whole sense of Scripture and the catholic faith.

³⁹⁹ Lienhard, 1999:33. Athanasius demonstrates the effectiveness of the dictum that what actually was the case in history is far less significant than what was believed to be the case.

Eusebian vs. Arian,⁴⁰⁰ so a description of two competing *theological* traditions is necessary.

Lienhard (1999) offers the useful taxonomy of *dyohypostatic* (for the so-called “Arian” tradition) and *miahypostatic* (for the tradition espoused by Athanasius and Marcellus). Both theological methods are concerned to preserve the unity of God. The dyohypostatic model does so by drawing a line of distinction between God proper (“the Father”, or, often in Arius, the “Monad”) and the Logos. The Logos is a second God, leaving the “Beyond all being God” sublimely transcendent. The miahypostatic model insists on one shared ὁὐς...α of Father and Son, preserving divine unity, and maintaining the priority of the divine nature and initiative in salvation. This description reinforces the centrality of Christological mediation to each model, and it will be adopted here despite the case that there inevitably remains generalization and simplification in describing an *emergent* thought-world which continued to use terms like ὁὐς...α , ὁπὸσταςij and φύσιςij without generally agreed definitions until Chalcedon.

Lienhard ascribes the Christological significance of mediation primarily to the dyohypostatic model. He identifies that for Arius, God can only be described in negative terms, (ἄναρκοj , ὄγσῆ[n]ῆτοj *k.t.l.*), so mediation of the Logos is the purpose for which he was “made”. But his suggestion that miahypostatic theology has no place for mediation is not substantiated. Athanasius reclaims mediation by his consistent application of *creatio ex nihilo*, expelling any residual theological-cosmological assumption of a ladder or chain of being.⁴⁰¹ Mediation is thus the act

⁴⁰⁰ Though he accepts that the description of the theology attributed by Athanasius to Arius is more properly *historically* described as “Eusebian”, *ibid.* 34.

⁴⁰¹ “These authors [Arius and the dyohypostatic theological spokespersons] think habitually, or pre-reflectively, in terms of the Greek notion of the great chain of being, a way of trying to

of bridging this ontological gulf, less than having a sense of ontological overlap in a hierarchy of being. Lienhard's identification of miahypostatic theology's emphasis upon the incarnation and its soteriological significance leads him to argue that mediation is therefore less significant in this tradition. Though it is *different* in a model where salvation is construed as the assumption of $\epsilon\acute{\nu}\alpha\gamma\gamma\omega\lambda\omicron\upsilon\sigma$ into the divine nature through Christ, mediation remains central to Athanasius and miahypostatic theology. The notion of mediation in dyohypostatic Christology emphasizes the mediation of God's will. In Arius, divine wisdom is taught by the created Logos, who sums up and harmoniously projects creation's diversity back to the transcendent Monad. The discussion of mediation within a miahypostatic framework allows Athanasius to expound the significance of ontological mediation of *divine nature* in Christ, opening up vistas of meaning for the Christian tradition's texts and linguistic description, pushing that theology along Trinitarian lines.

Both Arius and Athanasius stress the *received* nature of their competing theological models. Both expound diverse Christologies from common authorized texts: dyohypostatic opponents of Athanasius urge that Nicaea's $\delta\mu\omicron\upsilon\acute{\upsilon}\sigma\iota\omicron\varsigma$ is an aberration from Scriptural witness; whilst he argues that miahypostatic interpretation of the *Regula Fidei* is necessary to maintain the whole of Christian truth. The concept of mediation thus exposes theological exegesis to be vital and central. Both Arius and Athanasius, therefore, look to the tradition to unpack the meaning of mediation in their systems, and both believe themselves to be guarding the deposit of faith. Central to the Arian conflict is this schematization of

understand the whole of reality by situating each existent in a ranked and ordered scale, with God himself at the top and brute matter at the bottom. They do not make any clear distinction between the uncreated and the created as the two primary or ultimate categories of being." Lienhard, 1999:41.

Christian faith. This chapter will use mediation in Arius and Athanasius to explore the theological nub of the conflict.

3:2 Arius in reported speech

The notion of the Logos as *mediator* is central to the Arian controversy. Arius's treatment of the subject prompts the development of a sustained response of miaphyostatic "orthodox" theology and cosmology. But there is a critical issue to be established, namely whether *any* picture of Arius based upon a fragmentary selection of his "own words" is not necessarily a distorting one.⁴⁰² This material has been carefully selected to undermine Arius's argument, hence this section critically contextualizes readings of Arius in reported speech. Arius's writing remains available solely because it forms part of Athanasius's carefully woven anti-Arius polemic, or Epiphanius's theory of heresy.⁴⁰³ "Pro-Nicene" transmission of Arius is intended to convey diminishing connections and significances, which Arius would not own. It is, rather, a measure of the astute politics and keen theological analyses of Athanasius that he managed to achieve a thorough, specific and

⁴⁰² Cf. Barnes 1993:14-15, "Can the term 'Arianism' legitimately be used at all for historical analysis, given its demonstrable origin as a derogatory party label? And if the term 'Arianism' is used, should it be defined as the distinctive theology of Arius himself, or does anyone count who considered that Arius' views lay within the permissible range of views which the church could tolerate, whether or not he himself shared them? No fourth-century thinker who is normally regarded as 'Arian' or 'Neo-Arian' would ever have applied the term to himself. The label was a term of abuse: Athanasius and his allies habitually employed a broad definition which turned all their enemies into 'Arians'."

⁴⁰³ Epiphanius [c310-402] whilst conveying dissenting traditions, is prone to present distorted pictures of those traditions by creating interconnection alien to the described tradition's self-understanding. His picture of Arius in *Panarion* echoes (and is probably dependent upon) Athanasius's works, especially *CA I & II*. These were probably written c 339 during his second exile in Rome, during George's appointment as patriarch (Anatolios, 1998:87). Athanasian authorship of *CA III* is disputed by Kannengiesser, 1983:405-416; but defended by Stead, 1985:227. Athanasius's *de Decr.* is his most careful promotion of the significance of the Nicene Council, whose *Ἐμμοῦσιος* was unknown by Hilary, cf. Ayres, 2004a. The Cypriot Epiphanius shared his nation's commitment to Nicaea, for whom Athanasius was a hero: "Cyprus was decidedly pro-Nicene, and not the less so because of its struggle to free itself from the jurisdiction of the bishops of Antioch, whose devotion to the Creed of Nicaea, since the downfall of Eustathius [= deposed by Eusebius and others at the Council of Antioch, 341, on charges of Sabellianism] had been held to be doubtful." Amidon, 1990:i. From the manner in which Epiphanius's texts follow Athanasius's works in "clusters", it is likely that Epiphanius is dependent upon Athanasius's critique and transmission of texts.

targeted refutation of dyohypostatic Christology through the twists of the fourth century.⁴⁰⁴ Stead (1978) notes that if this material cannot be considered as the nearest to primary data that we have on Arius – there **is** nothing more.⁴⁰⁵ Although Stead’s 1978 paper⁴⁰⁶ offering a metricated version of the *Thalia* has been challenged,⁴⁰⁷ the fragments from Arius’s *Thalia* in CA 1.5 (hereafter *Thalia A*) and *De Synodis* 15 (hereafter *Thalia S*) are the most reliable quotations of the original to be had.⁴⁰⁸ For comment on *Ep. ad Aeg.* 12, see Post-script after Bibliography.

Arius, after failing to correct what he saw to be Alexander’s heresy, responded by a campaign of publicity detailing the outrage he felt at being disciplined by his bishop for daring to hold the true dyohypostatic faith. Part of that campaign appears to have been a tour of the East, initiated, no doubt, by epistles, alerting bishops whose “natural” conception of Christian faith was a dyohypostatic model of theology. Of these the Epistle to Eusebius of Nicomedia is transmitted by Epiphanius, who also transmits a more conciliatory attempt to convince his own bishop that he is indeed right. Athanasius’s transmission of parts of the *Thalia* is less a presentation of a banquet than a careful selection of *hors d’oeuvres* representing elements of dyohypostatic theology that he finds most objectionable.

⁴⁰⁴ It is not unreasonable to infer from Athanasius’s determination in CA (especially II), and from Epiphanius’s lengthy textual notes, that both wanted to describe Arius and Arian theologies closely. Athanasius’s determination to wound Arian theology by every means, not least his attempt to answer Arian textual arguments not with counter-texts but, rather, by wrestling with each text in the light of what he saw to be the whole picture of revelation, shows that he wanted to ensure that he conveyed the most detailed refutation in order to be most damaging to his opponents.

⁴⁰⁵ An understanding of the complexity of the *genres* of description and counter-description, sometimes called “heresiology” is needed to bridge the apparent methodological *impasse*. Descriptions of anti-dyohypostatic models of theology must proceed attentively and ethically through a selection of primary material where Arius’s theological priorities are “exposed” rather than described. It cannot but be influenced by a series of pictures or impressions of Arius highly charged in the rhetoric of heresiology. Cf. Lyman, 1993b: 45-64.

⁴⁰⁶ Stead, 1978:20-52.

⁴⁰⁷ Both the reconstruction and reading has been questioned (particularly *vis-à-vis* the identification of so-called “Sotadean” metre) by West, 1982:99-105.

⁴⁰⁸ Williams, 2001:17.

Thus Arius's epistles will be analysed theologically, before a theological account given of the fragments of the *Thalia*.

3:2:1 The Epistle of Arius to Eusebius [Epiphanius *Panarion* 69.6.1-7]

Arius appeals in his affliction to his "true co-Lucianist" Eusebius of Nicomedia, succinctly relating his theological disagreements with his bishop in this vivid statement of case:

we do not agree with Alexander when he says publicly: *always God, always Son; the Father together, the Son together; the Son exists with God.*⁴⁰⁹

This objection is against both the *content* and the *publicity* of Alexander's pronouncement that the Son is of the same οὐσῶσα with the Father.⁴¹⁰ Arius reminds Eusebius that a host of his colleagues⁴¹¹ condemned any theology that describes the divine nature in terms of emanation or confusion (i.e., Arius's description of miahypostatic theology), and that God (the Father) does indeed precede the Son. The literary-dogmatic *effect* of Arius's sustained use of selected

⁴⁰⁹ *Panarion* 69.7.3. This communicates Arius's genius for a vivid popularization and politicization of the quest for a determinative model of Christian language which so provoked Athanasius, who caricatures this as his opponent's "flippancy, effeminate in tune and nature" in Sotadean metre. Cp CA I. 4,5.

⁴¹⁰ Confirming the possibility that Arius held an exegetical teaching role in the Alexandrian Church, as Theodoret indicates. He appears to see it his duty to correct Alexander's error and excess. The struggle that follows is based upon counter-text and counter-exegesis, which reflects the significance of scriptural exegesis in Arius's method and motivation.

⁴¹¹ Eusebius of Caesarea, Theodotus of Laodicea, Paulinus of Tyre, Athanasius of Anazarbus, Gregory of Beirut, Aetius of Lydda *et al.*

New Testament terms in the defence of a rigid dyohypostatic subordinationism echoes a populist biblicism, which differs significantly from Origen's subtlety.⁴¹²

This appeal is interesting in its use of language which consistently says "God" when one might suppose the use of "Father," yet which has close enough affinities to the Origenist tradition and to synoptic language to be able to claim to be the traditional and authentic theological expression of the catholic church. Arius's epistle betrays the extent to which the author does not conceive of God essentially in a *trinitarian* manner. The possibility - and popularity - of this dyohypostatic trajectory reflects the fact that the orthodox trinitarian linguistic which was eventually to be established as the only Christian theological description, was problematic, representing as it did a means of speaking about God which many felt to be innovative and incompatible with the tradition.

Arius contrasts what he believes to be Alexander's anti-Biblical heresy, with his axioms of faith, namely that:

[1] the Son is not unbegotten or a part of the Unbegotten in any way [as that would be to confuse the *persons* of Father and Son];

[2] the Son is not from any substrata of divine nature [which would introduce a note of inevitability into the incarnation, so that it may be construed as a mechanistically-determined event, rather than an act of divine will and grace];

⁴¹² A point not missed by Newman, 1871: 4-5, 7, 27-28, who accounts for it by the influence of Paul of Samosata [Eusebius *HE*, vii, 30].

[3] the Son came into existence *by the will and decision of God before times and before ages*;

[4] the Son is in “the only-begotten God” only in so far as the overarching *dyohypostatic* theological system allows;

[5] so, while the Son is permitted to share in the unchangeable characteristic of begotten divinity,

[6] *before* he was begotten or created the Son *was not*.

This is tooled in such a way as to protect God’s [= “the Father’s”] nature, from change, diminution, or any “natural” descriptions which imply pre-determinism or ontological inevitability. The Son must be the free product of the Father’s will and purpose, rather than be the inevitable expression of who God is. The place of divine will in the Son’s nature is thus a powerful theme of Arius’s theology, because only this can overcome the gulf between created and eternal being. But rather than identifying the Son **as** the Father’s will and purpose, Arius asserts instead that the Son must correspond to God’s will and free desire. There is, then, a gulf with the Son on the created side, yet Arius does not appear fully to grasp its significance. Instead, Arius continues his appeal, outlining that it is because his theology is based upon orthodox, universally understood (dyohypostatic) tenets, that he is unjustly persecuted. He portrays himself as teaching the traditional truth that the Son has a beginning, whilst God is without beginning.⁴¹³

The key thrust of this epistle, then, is that Arius and his followers are persecuted because they assert that the Son has a temporal beginning, in contradistinction to

⁴¹³ *Panarion* 69.6.2-7.

the divine which is without beginning. This is, to Arius, plain sense, but produces a radical subordinationism and differentiation of Father and Son which offers a one-sided solution to Christological mediation caused by *creatio ex nihilo* which he identifies.

3.2.2: The Epistle of Arius to Alexander of Alexandria [Epiphanius *Panarion* 69.7.2-8.5]

Epiphanius comments that Arius's "continuous stream of poisonous blasphemies" is continued in his superficially conciliatory *Epistle to Alexander*, where Arius defines himself and his teaching over against other heresies. Unlike Valentinus, Mani, Sabellius or Hieracas,⁴¹⁵ Arius takes his lead from "the law and the prophets and the New Testament."⁴¹⁶ From the outset, Arius claims Scripture as the ground of his theological authority. Arius's concern to establish that his framing of the authentic way of envisioning faith against alien forms of expression is evident in his equation of miathypostatic Christology with Sabellian thought. In contrast to this perception, Arius identifies himself with the Law, Prophets and Apostles. If Athanasius is perceived to be guilty of transferring "the original historical conflict between Arius and Alexander... into a mythic and eternal confrontation of error and truth"⁴¹⁷ here is that self-same process of connecting "truthful" models of faith over against false prophets and heretics. This "location" of method is an important

⁴¹⁴ Grillmeier, 1975:219.

⁴¹⁵ *Panarion* 69.7.5.

⁴¹⁶ *Panarion* 69.7.3.

⁴¹⁷ Lyman, 1993b:54.

rhetorical dimension of the conflict,⁴¹⁸ attempting to construct a single theological language amid uncertainty and confusion.

Another dimension is also a significant clue to Arius's concerns. In this slightly more conciliatory epistle⁴¹⁹ Arius explains in this *public* *œkqesij p...stewj*⁴²⁰ to Alexander the tenets of his faith slightly differently:

[1] the one God [= Father] is alone unbegotten, alone eternal, alone without beginning, alone true, alone immortal, alone wise and alone good, alone master, alone judge...

[2] this God begot the Son *before eternal times* to make all things:

[3] the begetting was authentic [not docetic];

[4] the begetting was not an emanation [identified as Valentinian];

[5] the begotten was *not*, therefore, co-essential or a part of the Father [a position identified as Manichaeian];

[6] the begetting of the Son in no manner divided the Monad into a Son-Father [how Arius understands the heresy of Sabellius];

[7] but the Son was created by God's will before times and ages. The voluntary election of the Father to create the Son as a mediator in creation, in order to make all other things, attests to the Father's

⁴¹⁸ Cf. Wessell, 2004.

⁴¹⁹ Young, 1983:59: "The representation of Alexander's views is rather different from that given in his earlier appeal to Eusebius, but this is surely no more than should be expected in the circumstances."

⁴²⁰ Young, 1983:59, a public letter outlining his position.

genuine goodness. The Son is worthy of appropriate exaltation magnifying both the Father's grace and the Son's honour.

[8] The three hypostases of Father, Son and Holy Spirit appear to be described, but it is noteworthy that there follow descriptions only of the Father and the Son⁴²¹ as [a] God is the cause of all things, alone and without beginning; and [b] the Son is begotten by the Father outside of time, but *was not* before his creation; is not eternal, co-eternal nor co-unbegotten, as this would posit two ingenerate principles.⁴²²

Some points here require immediate comment. Firstly, Arius's theology is (from Epiphanius's point of view) profoundly untrinitarian because of its dyohypostatic basis. Yet Arius's assumptions about divine nature are serious, perhaps even *necessary* provocations to Alexander and Athanasius to provide clearer trinitarian description, and to relate a truly trinitarian model to the miahypostatic theological tradition.

Secondly, there is a striking certainty about Arius's application of attributes directly to the Monad – whom he is seeking to protect from physical connection with creation. This is not missed by Athanasius, who charges Arius with impious arrogance. Indeed, Athanasius exhibits more caution in his theological method, attempting as it does to weave *creatio ex nihilo* into a miahypostatic Christology. The confidence present in Athanasius's method springs from his insistence upon

⁴²¹ Possibly through Epiphanius's editing, but more likely because this theological conflict is focused as a Christological controversy through mediation and is not construed as a pneumatological issue. The conflict at this stage remains focused upon the relation of the Father and the Son to each other and to creation.

⁴²² *Panarion* 69.8.1-4.

the ontological connection of Father and Son in the incarnation, but respects the divine mystery. Epiphanius describes as *mania* Arius's obsession with protecting God from any change,⁴²³ but it is Athanasius who notes the irony that Arius's surety ultimately reduces God to an idea.⁴²⁴

Thirdly, Arius's theology has Monist tones. Whilst biblicist in its terminology, this conveys echoes of the popular philosophical and cosmological environment with its concerns about the prime ingenerate principle and its relation to multiform creation. Arius is motivated to protect divine transcendence from mutation or emanation or the Sabellian error. This has at least as much *biblical* influence as widely held Platonic metaphysical and cosmological assumptions:

the crisis was brought about by a combination of this cosmological doctrine of God with the biblical doctrine of creation.⁴²⁵

The irony is that whilst it would appear that Arius seeks to maintain a model of divine activity where God is freed to will and to draw creatures into his restoring grace without the determinism of divine ontology necessarily driving independent of divine *will*, there is a significant element of Arius's Christology which

reduced the act of salvation to the reversion of the many to the One. Thus history as God's activity was almost eliminated. Under the influence of the biblical concept of history the return of the many was perhaps identified as an education on the part of God or as the

⁴²³ E.g., *Panarion* 69.31.1.

⁴²⁴ Athanasius *Decr* 18; *Ad Episc. Aeg.* 4, Cp Anatolios, 1998:96-100.

⁴²⁵ Grillmeier, 1975:229; cf. May, 1994; Young, 1991:139-151.

divine reconstitution of all things. But essentially that return was more like a natural process than a constant operation of God.⁴²⁶

Athanasius's counter claim is that Arius (in his dyohypostatic model) has in effect two *Logoi*. Arius's conception of divinity in terms of an absolute transcendental Monism does not sufficient soteriological weight to the theme of mediation in a created Logos. In contrast, Athanasius's (miahypostatic) method concretely connects the mind, will or purpose of the Father with the Logos. So there follows a textual war, with Arius's pivotal use of Proverbs 8.22 and other texts to posit a hypostasized but, more significantly, *created* Logos whose task of relating the One and the many is an *ontological* impossibility according to Athanasius's critique.

3.2.3: *Thalia A* [Athanasius CA I. 5] Please refer to post-script, p. 398.

Athanasius begins his presentation of Arius's theology with a peculiar seven-lined stanza from Arius's *Thalia* [hereafter *Thalia A*]. It seems to reveal little if anything about Arius's theology, but chosen, no doubt, because it reads as self-obsessed self-promotion. Athanasius depicts Arius as an inadequate mediocrity – despite this, there is also in these lines an indication of Arius's self-understanding, ecclesiology, and theological priorities.

The lines, firstly, place Arius in the “faith of the elect (TMklektîn) of God.” Arius is anxious to stress that his doctrine and teaching is not innovative, but the consistent faith of those whom God declares to be wise, who persist in the careful discipline

⁴²⁶ Studer, 1993:17.

of study under the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit.⁴²⁷ Arius claims this eclectic tradition, the “narrow way” of discipline, demonstrating something of an élitist ecclesiology. Arius places himself in the tradition of the faithful and wise, in order to identify his teachings in a context more significant than his “own” opinions. This contextualizing rapidly becomes an *apologia* for his notoriety in the second part of the stanza. It is because Arius has followed “close on the heels... step by step” of the wise preservers of Christian truth that he has become universally known.⁴²⁸ This notoriety is expressed as Arius’s suffering unjust persecution, and his subsequent undeserved infamy. The model of the faithful disciple suffering calumny for the sake of truth has parallels in the Psalms and the synoptic tradition,⁴²⁹ yet is related by Athanasius to indicate in Arius a smugness and whingyness - a naïve, self-obsessed and self-proclaiming personality. Athanasius’s sharpness cuts across Arius’s rhetorical intent, where the allusion to his notoriety as his suffering stands in opposition to his faithfulness to the truth. There is an effective dramatic *imbalance*: all the sufferings Arius endures, are as nothing compared to the glory of knowing God’s wisdom and knowledge:

poll! paqën - di! t³/₄n qeoà dÒxan.⁴³⁰

The joy of the unfettered wisdom and true knowledge of the faith is the enlivening key to this text. But Athanasius conveys the picture of someone, if not *contra ecclesiam*, then neutral to the structural ecclesiastical authorities in comparison with his overwhelming truth: Arius has a taste for a martyr’s identity, and a proud desire

⁴²⁷ pa...dwn | jg...wn, ÑrqotÒmwn, ægion [qeoà] pneàma labÒntwn, Stead, 1978:48.

⁴²⁸ toÚtwn kat' ÷cnoj Álqon ™gè ba...nwn ÐmodÒxwj | Ð periklutÒj, Ð poll! paqën di! t³/₄n qeoà dÒxan. Stead, 1978:48.

⁴²⁹ E.g., Mt. 5:10-11 and parallels.

⁴³⁰ Stead, 1978:48.

to pursue his reading of Scripture free from ecclesiastical authority or convention.⁴³¹ Athanasius achieves a depiction of Arius as one obsessed by his own self-importance. Athanasius's indubitably propagandist purposes here nevertheless exploit Arius's identification of salvation with the correct exegesis of the "message" in the divine Oracles. Scripture's truths, rather than a dogmatic-theological overview, are Arius's priority. In this he probably did share the preferences and concerns of many traditional Christians, from his co-Lucianist bishops to faithful worshippers in his Baukalis parish in Alexandria. His approach to Scripture would appear to be participatory and immediate. If the description of "literalist" is distorting, there at least appears to be an approach that views Scripture as *oracular*. We have more material to test this theory, Athanasius's second citation of the *Thalia*, to which we now turn.

3.2.4: *Thalia S* [Athanasius *de Synodis* 15]

The portion of *Thalia* which Athanasius transmits in *De Synodis* is very different in character from the self-obsessed section which he chose to introduce his *précis* of Arius's thought in *CA I*. The similarity between the two is Arius's convention of asking for "Wisdom's" leading and teaching; applied in *Thalia A* to himself, but in *Thalia S* to the Logos. This suggests an equality of being between Arius and the Logos: as both are creatures, proceeding in knowledge of God due alone to the Monad's graceful will revealing his purposes, supremely disclosed in the Logos. Theology is dependent upon this grace, but with it theology is possible and will have a more kataphatic style.

⁴³¹ On the relation of Arius to the Melitian schism cf. Leitzmann, 1961:106; Martin, 1996.

The literary structure of *Thalia S* appears to consist of a series of verses with an internal contrast in each line between the transcendent, eternal God, and how this God is revealed through the Logos in time. The effect of a series of parallelisms is to heighten a sense of the Monad's transcendent inaccessibility, and promotes the paradoxical centrality of the created Mediator:⁴³²

God himself is unexpressible, in so far any have begun to describe him;⁴³³

We declare him Unbegotten, [alone] *by him who is begotten by nature;*

We sing his praises as without beginning, *by him who has a beginning;*

We honour him as eternal, *through him who has come to be in time;* The One without beginning *set the Son to be the beginning of all to be brought forth.*⁴³⁴

This sustained juxtaposition makes theological sense of the subordination of the Son, developing a *theology* of the created Logos. Arius's method exalts the Father - as "God-in-himself" - to the point of alienation from creation. Revelation in Christ is limited to a reflexive purpose - the Logos mediates the truth of the ultimate *inaccessibility* of God in himself. Arius thus emphasizes the parity of the Logos with all created beings. The connection between all creation and the Logos through whom everything came into being is ontological: rooted in a shared created nature. Christology and anthropology are deeply connected, but theology

⁴³² Italics refer to a sustained subordinationist Christology to affect a heightened theology of God's essential transcendence.

⁴³³ Clearly this includes Christ, but it is not exclusively a reference to the Logos, hence it is not in italics. See *Thalia A* with reference to *Arius* as one of the "enlightened ones" of God's wisdom.

⁴³⁴ Stead, 1978:48-9, lines 1, 3-6.

and anthropology remain ultimately alien from each other. Arius's Logos mediates divine grace and freedom; this communication is as much of God's will as he would have us know. It is possible only because humanity shares creaturely existence with the Logos. Arius rejects any *vestigia Dei* with the Father as the foundation for either epistemology or salvation. These verses have the effect of communicating an absolutely alien, but free divine grace, maintaining God the Father as the eternal subject, the "beyond-*our*-being-God". Any basis other than an ultimate *disparity* between God the Uncreate and everything else would suggest to Arius an inappropriate "mingling". There is a rigorous and ultimate differentiation between God the Monad, the Father, and all other being. This requires the mediation of a majestic proto-creature, endued by the grace of God with the task of connecting the many to the Monad:

For there is a Triad, but the glories are not equal; their substances unmingled⁴³⁵

[O]ne is more glorious than the others - even to the boundlessness of infinity:

The Father is alien by nature from the Son.⁴³⁶

Arius's use of "Father" is again interchangeable with "Monad" and "God", referring to the ultimate mystery of God in himself.⁴³⁷ The Monad has always been, but the Dyad - the relation of God to his Logos - is necessarily derivative from the Monad in himself. The Son has no being in himself, his being, like that of every other creature, lies in the infinitely mysterious will of the Father. Trinity and incarnation,

⁴³⁵ φνεπ...miktoi ~autaϙ [e„sin] af Øpost£seij aUtĩn Stead, 1978:49, line 17.

⁴³⁶ xšnoj toà ufoà kat' oUs...an Ð pat»r Stead, 1978:49, line 19.

⁴³⁷ So in the Epistle to Alexander, 3.2.2, above.

as means of God's self-disclosure, have no eternal significance or essential reference, but function by reinforcing ultimate divine transcendence. Arius cannot allow the Logos to **be** the Reason of God, but the created product of the Wisdom of God. Thus Christology has many legitimate trajectories which should not be closed down by the imposition of a singular and innovative theological model. He insists

He is certainly to be thought of in a myriad constructs.⁴³⁸

For Arius, the gravest danger for theology is an unwarranted arrogance of anthropocentrism evident especially in Nicaea's miahypostatic model. Arius urges theological modesty, a humility borne of a recognition of the ultimate unlikeness of created and uncreated Being. His assertion of *creatio ex nihilo* in theological methodology conveys serious dyohypostatic Christological concerns. A polemical construction of Arius implies an inaccessible divine Mind *beyond the enfleshed Logos*. Christ has taught what may be known of the Father by his creatureliness. Gregg & Groh (1986) and Greer (1975) highlight the soteriological dynamic in Arius's depiction – creaturely hands of a brother's grasp are pivotal.

Athanasius must negate this spirituality of subordination to promote miahypostatic Christology. Arius allows that none greater than the Logos can be made, even by God - though the Father can reveal himself *equally truly* in other creatures. This curious elevation of the Son allows space for other creatures to share his "place" in the Father's affections, without losing their creatureliness. God is not changed by

⁴³⁸ TMpinoe<tai goàn mur...aj Ósaj TMpino...aj- | pneàma... dÚnamij, sof...a Stead, 1978:49, line 25

the incarnation, so humans - as creatures - are not ontologically distorted by salvation. The Word does not express the fulness of the Father (as a creature the Son does not know his own essence or generation other than that which the Father has revealed to him), yet no greater expression by a creature is possible.

Athanasius transmits this section, no doubt, because he wants to expose what he thinks to be a description of the Son diminishing to his honour and revealing an unbridgeable chasm in dyohypostatic theology. But to Arius essential theology is ultimately impossible. Scriptural exegesis is imperative to grasp that divine Wisdom which can be appropriated by the creature. The Son's perfect creaturely relation to the Father is the climax of revelation. God [=the Father] is not to be objectified, categorized or subject to predictable human rules of logic or linguistics. The Scriptures remain an invitation to an existential engagement with the ultimately mysterious transcendent God with, and through, the mediation of the Proto-Creature Logos.

3.3 A picture of Arius

Arius's hope of salvation, emphasizes transforming grace in faith, which corresponds the believer to Jesus Christ without transmuting creaturely nature into a (lesser) divine being. God and creature are alike protected in this understanding of salvation. Correspondence to Christ can go no further than to forge a bond of identity with him as the pre-eminent creature who restores true freedom of Sonship to all who are "in Christ". It remains impossible for a creature to bear divine nature: this would belittle and change divine nature, and is thus alien to Arius's Christian tradition. Christian perfection is correspondence to Jesus Christ, that first willed creature of the Father, to share in the Monad's voluntarist relationship with him.

This spirituality emphasises that the path of Christian perfection is to arrive at, and remain in, Jesus Christ, contemplating the ultimate mystery of God from his superlative – yet always *creaturely* – perspective. This resonates with aspects of Origen’s subordinationism and soteriology, which allowed human nature the freedom to turn aside from the vision of God even in heaven:⁴³⁹ the focus remains upon the individual created soul rather than a final transformation into divine nature. The Arian crisis is a necessary prompt for more attentive trinitarian description with regard to soteriological expression: it becomes apparent that for a miahypostatic theology to work convincingly, a theology of the *persons* of God needs fuller articulation.

There remains something attractive in Arius’s refusal to see created and uncreated being blend into a third entity which alone “allowed” correspondence to be possible. This is too mechanistic for Arius. He maintains, rather, that whatever knowledge of God is possible to humans *as creatures*, is possible only through Christ. This Christocentric subordinationism has a dialectically attractive Spirituality, which should not be overlooked in accounting for the reception of dyohypostatic Christology:

To whomsoever believes... [w]e all need to discover, through faith, that love, in the vulnerability and weakness of our bodies, makes its

⁴³⁹ Cf. Trigg, 1998:63: “In the sphere of doctrine, we have already noted the way Origen... provided a way to relate divine grace to human free will that proved congenial to the Greek theological tradition... Origen distinguished himself from the Platonic tradition by insisting on the necessity of God’s grace if human beings are to become like God. Origen just as firmly defended human moral responsibility. Refuting philosophers and astrologers who would argue that human actions are pre-determined. He made a convincing case that God’s foreknowledge does not predetermine human actions and that God’s providence fully respects human free will.”

way into us as presence-of-the-Other who makes us live because we can only consent to Him without being able to possess Him.⁴⁴⁰

Arius's reported speech, therefore witnesses to a spirituality of difference, which Williams describes as an "unbridgeable gulf between God and all else".⁴⁴¹ The lack of ontological connection between God and creation in Arian thought marks it as clearly delineating an impassable cwrismÒj between God and Creation. Athanasius's rigour in applying *creatio ex nihilo* contrapuntally intends to compound a sense of dislocation in Arius's theology. It is to Alexander and Athanasius's miahypostatic response to Arius's thought that we now turn.

3.4 Evaluations of Arius by his opponents

3.4.1 Alexander of Alexandria

Theodoret's claim that Arius was put in charge of scriptural exegesis⁴⁴² is probably not an anti-Alexandrian slight, because there is evidence to support a view that Arius's priority and expertise was scriptural exegesis. Alexander responds by rehearsing counter-texts to familiar dyohypostatic proof-texts,⁴⁴³ whilst Athanasius's strategy is to engage on his enemy's home ground, countering

⁴⁴⁰ "A quiconque croit... [n]ous avons tous besoin de découvrir, par la foi, que l'amour, dans la fragilité et la faiblesse de notre corps, creuse en nous son lieu, comme présence de l'Autre qui nous fait vivre, parce que nous ne pouvons que consentir à lui sans le posséder." Fuchs, 1982:214.

⁴⁴¹ Williams, 2001: 177.

⁴⁴² Boularand, 1972, chapter 4, cited in Young, 1983:62.

⁴⁴³ Arian favourites include Prov.8.22f, Philippians 2.9-10; Ps. 45.7,8 etc. Alexander's response as the crisis unfolded, was to respond by the counter-rehearsal of texts, especially from the Johannine corpus, see *Philarchos* [c. 321/2, Williams, 2001:324 (after Opitz)]; Athanasius's *CA*, on the other hand, dating from the second exile (c 339) is a doctrinal attack against the Arians, where something more than a balancing of texts was necessary.

traditionally subordinationist texts in context of the “focus”⁴⁴⁴ or “mind”⁴⁴⁵ of the whole Scriptural canon and *Regula Fidei*. Athanasius’s arguments often feel contrived, battling against the plain reading of the texts, but are serious attempts to counter what Athanasius insists is the reductionism of dyohypostatic readings. The differing strategies of Alexander and Athanasius will be explored, noting that whilst Alexander wishes to provide a counter-balance to what he saw as Arius’s *improper selectivity* of Scripture, Athanasius attempts to combat Arius’s *incorrect construction* of the whole sense of Scripture.

3.4.1.1 *Henos Somatos* [Epistle Catholic of Alexander]⁴⁴⁶

Henos Somatos [*Hen. Som.*] is generally acknowledged to be a “synodical report”⁴⁴⁷ bearing Alexander’s name (though signed by many more), less out of honour to his primacy than because he probably penned the encyclical. Stead (1988, 1994:170) has made a case for this being Athanasius’s earliest extant work around 318CE, but Kannengiesser (1991:400) follows Opitz’s dating of c.319CE. Williams (1987:55-59) argues for a date of around 325CE,⁴⁴⁸ “increasing the probability of this letter’s having been drafted by the hand of Athanasius as secretary to Alexander” (1987:51).

⁴⁴⁴ skopÒj. Torrance, 1997:25.

⁴⁴⁵ diÉnoia Young, 1997:29 - 45.

⁴⁴⁶ The opening Greek words of these documents are used to name these Epistles (after the practice of Williams and Stead). *Hen. Som.* refers to the “One Body” of the Church. *Philarchos*, describes “*The ambitious and avaricious will of wicked men...*” in Theodoret, *HE* 1.4 (Opitz, 1935:19-28). Theodoret’s reliability is shown in his close attention to the text in *Eranistes*’s florilegia, although there may be good political sense for a champion of the Antiochene tradition to preserve Alexander, there is little reasonable probability of his assigning the material to Alexander knowing it to be false.

⁴⁴⁷ Kannengiesser, 1991:400.

⁴⁴⁸ From the signature of Colluthus as a personal repudiation of Arius, signed in 325 when a synod of Alexandrian clergy met with their diocesan, and when Colluthus, demoted from the Episcopate but restored as a presbyter to the Alexandrian Church, makes a public show of loyalty to Alexander. Kannengiesser is unconvinced, retaining the earlier date of 319 (1991:401).

Hen. Som. claims to preserve Christian unity by informing the universal Church, *contra* Eusebius of Nicomedia, of the dangers of dyohypostatic Christology which claimed:

God was not always Father, but there was a time when God was not the Father. The Logos of God was not always, but was, rather, made from things that are not.⁴⁴⁹

Hen. Som. maintains the true God made all temporal things out of nothing, thus Arius is depicted as being gravely disrespectful of the Logos when he describing him as a created thing, unlike the Father in οὐς...α, alien and separate from him. The Logos is mutable, the Father thus remains ineffable even to his Logos. The charge is one, not of over-emphasizing the Father's transcendence, but of demeaning the Logos's nature, status, work and person.⁴⁵⁰ The encyclical exposes Arius's (and his followers) dyohypostatic theology as lawfully anathematized and duly excommunicated, on the basis of predominantly Johannine proof-texts.⁴⁵¹ *Hen. Som.* identifies the chief danger of such Christology as introducing a breach in the perfect knowledge of the Father by the Son. This would render Scripture untrue, and endanger the surety of salvation which, the Church has always proclaimed, is guaranteed by the Son's perfect knowledge of, and participation in, the Father's will.⁴⁵² The Epistle concludes with a sense of urgency and haste to expose the undercover evil, adapting, chameleon-like in its

⁴⁴⁹ *Hen. Som.* 1.

⁴⁵⁰ *Hen. Som.* 2.

⁴⁵¹ *Hen. Som.* 3: John 1.1, 14, 18; 14.9; 14.11; 10.30.

⁴⁵² *Hen. Som.* 4.

nature, but identified by the hallmark of persistence in denying the divinity of Christ.⁴⁵³

The motif of *creatio ex nihilo* here is used entirely negatively. It is applied in Arius's error, *wrongly*, to Christ. There is no exploration of the doctrinal appropriateness of *creatio ex nihilo* here: it is simply associated completely with Arius. We shall observe that this is also an assumption of *Philarch.*, but that there, the author does at least use the term in a different and more positive sense *vis à vis* creation, yet without *systematically differentiating* its usage, rather, it is used as a shorthand for Arius's error.⁴⁵⁴ However, the encyclical appears to be hastily written, urgently focused upon exposing Arius and his colleagues, without entering into a clearly worked-out cosmological or Christological alternative to dyohypostatic errors. To have done so would indeed have given space for a closer exploration of the different models of Christology proffered by Arius and Alexander, but opened up unnecessary speculative debate, perhaps in the synod. *Hen. Som.* hence is a less-discursive anathematising document. As a synodical document, it would, no doubt, have reflected the contributions of Athanasius (and others) whoever the scribe was.

3.4.1.2: *Philarchos* [Epistle of Alexander of Alexandria to Alexander of Constantinople]

Philarchos, on the other hand, is dated by Opitz (1935) as immediately prior to the Council of Nicaea (c.324) because it exhibits a more sophisticated explication of

⁴⁵³ *Hen. Som.* 5 & 6.

⁴⁵⁴ The lack of such a differentiation here might augur (against Williams) for an earlier dating.

what was to become that Council's victorious argument.⁴⁵⁵ In complete harmony with *Hen. Som.*, *Philarch.* identifies at the outset that the quintessential error of Arius is making the Logos the "equal of all."⁴⁵⁶ The reference is less to a concern which emphasized the soteriological significance *humanity* of Christ,⁴⁵⁷ than to a desire to ensure that the Logos is ontologically identified with created matter. Of prime significance here is Alexander's initial description:

they say that God made all things from things which are not - including in this even the Son of God.⁴⁵⁸

Alexander's primary charge against Arius is that he applies the doctrine of *creatio ex nihilo* to the divine Son, lumping the Logos with things which have come into being and which will pass away.⁴⁵⁹ Alexander's first argument is rhetorical: it is a *reductio ad absurdum* when pondered from the perspective of the redemptive economy. Christ is "made" the ultimate and universal Saviour simply because he was known by God to be a safe pair of hands, and proven himself a good soul

on account of the carefulness of his manners and his practice.⁴⁶⁰

Alexander argues against the application of *creatio ex nihilo*, then, when applied *directly* to the Son: this makes Jesus essentially no different from Peter or Paul or

⁴⁵⁵ Williams, 1987:59, *sed contra*, reconstructs a chronology that best fits the enigma of Colluthus, suggesting that *Philarch.* is an *earlier* exploration by Alexander dating from 321/2, prompting Eusebius Pamphilus's denial of the co-existence [*sunuparchein*] in his letter to Alexander. Williams admits that the date does little to change the overall picture of Alexander's theological understanding or its significant antithesis to Arius's theology.

⁴⁵⁶ *Philarch.* 1.

⁴⁵⁷ This is a later "Antiochene" reading, which attends theologically to the humanity of Christ. There are superficial parallels – Christ is the Captain of Salvation, the first of many brethren, etc. These motifs, among others, led Gregg and Groh (1981:43-76) to their soteriological analysis of Arianism.

⁴⁵⁸ *Philarch.* 1.

⁴⁵⁹ *Philarch.* 2. In chapter 7, Alexander groups humanity and angels together as creatures, with the ontological corollary that they make progress, move and change by virtue. Alexander insists that it is *hybris* to assume that the Logos of God likewise comprehends things in a linear manner.

⁴⁶⁰ *Philarch.* 3.

any other soul determined to will and do the good. This undermines the model of mediation Alexander offers a few chapters on, and exhibits what Newman described as the “humanistic” interest of Arian theology.⁴⁶¹ It is, Alexander argues, a grotesque irony, as it makes the Creator to be, in fact, a Creature.⁴⁶² Alexander protests that the reason followers of Arius have been led into such stupor is that their failure to recognize the genre and limits of theological language. Alexander thinks this is an important issue, underscoring, at the end of *Philarch.*, the need for humility in theology.⁴⁶³ Appealing for an admission of the limits of human reason in the face of the ultimate mystery of the incarnation,⁴⁶⁴ he argues that common sense would make one draw back from applying functions of the doctrine of $\tau\mu\chi$ οὐκ ὄντων to the Son as if to any other creature. Saying that there was when the Logos was not:

is [he says,] a mark of sheer ignorance...insist[ing] that the one who is the cause of every thing is posterior to the origin of that thing.⁴⁶⁵

So Alexander judges Arius’s argument “impious”: Athanasius uses this self-same description about his opponents’ arguments, when he believes that they are unable, through being inappropriately undifferentiated, to recognize that arguments apply in different ways according to the οὐς...α of the subject.⁴⁶⁶ Though Athanasius attempts a theology of the Son by a differentiated, apophatic

⁴⁶¹ Newman, 1833:20 on what he called the “Syrian School of Theology’s” “Judaizing tendency”, cf. judged by Williams, 1987:3-4 as not Newman’s best contribution. Newman’s language and conceptuality *vis à vis* Judaism is unacceptable to twenty-first century minds, but was common mid-nineteenth-century parlance. Certainly, Cardinal Newman’s analysis corresponds in large part to that of Alexander, and is certainly a *leitmotif* of later Alexandrian attacks upon Antiochene models of Christology.

⁴⁶² *Philarch.* 4.

⁴⁶³ *Philarch.* 4, Cp also 12.

⁴⁶⁴ *Philarch.* 5.

⁴⁶⁵ *Philarch.* 6, 9.

⁴⁶⁶ Cf. Torrance, 1997:13-46.

application of *creatio ex nihilo* in *CG-DI*, such careful theological method leads him to reiterate this concern of Alexander thus:

it would be more godly and true to signify God from the Son, and call him Father, than to name him from his works and call him Unoriginate.⁴⁶⁷

Athanasius's distinctive application of theology to divine essence requires a disciplined identification of the nature of the subject and appropriate humility. This familiar theological method has a clear Alexandrian pedigree in Origen's biblical interpretation, which Torrance (1997:36) describes thus:

Origen held that through divine inspiration, the human terms found in Holy Scripture are governed by the nature (fúsei) related to them... spiritual interpretations of the Holy Scriptures, in accordance with the spiritual nature of those realities, must involve a passage in thought from a lower level of 'bodily' or literal sense to a higher level of spiritual, mystical meaning where the truth shines in its own self-evidencing intellectual light.⁴⁶⁸

Arius and his followers were, to Alexander and Athanasius, in the dark. Athanasius attempts to reclaim the miahypostatic significance of the doctrine of *creatio ex nihilo*, reverently applied to the Son so reinforcing the *homoousion*, but Alexander reacts to Arius's critique of *Ἐμμοῦσιος* by asserting that the doctrine of *creatio ex nihilo* is wholly inappropriate to all but created existence. Athanasius, avoiding the term *Ἐμμοῦσιος*, (save in *CA* 1.8.1), launches a direct attack by applying the

⁴⁶⁷ *CA* 1.34, translation of Torrance: 1997:76.

⁴⁶⁸ Citing Origen *De Princ.* 1.1.1f; 1.3.3; 2.2.2; 2.4.4; 2.5.2; 2.7.2; 2.11.2ff; 3.5.1; 3.12.4; 4.2.1ff, 15. Cf. Trigg, 1985.

doctrine reflexively so as to reinforce the ontological divide, yet urging that even the notion of *creatio ex nihilo*, though characteristically associated with the Arian case, promotes the truth of $\text{Dmoo}\acute{\text{U}}\text{sioj}$.

Only if the Son is of the same nature as the Father can the sonship (*sic*)⁴⁶⁹ of Christians be secured: it is because the Logos is the true Son that the spirit of adoption can make Christians heirs, not to the path of human virtue, but to his divine power.⁴⁷⁰

Alexander's attack is founded upon his claim that without a grasp of the Logos's divine nature, the scandal of the cross is lost. It is only because Christ incarnate was the divine Logos that as the "proper, peculiar, natural and excellent" Son, he was delivered for those who are not so. The paradox is great as are the consequences. Only if the Logos is indeed immutable, unchanging, sinless, the eternal icon of the Father,⁴⁷¹ could the cross be a glorious scandal and not merely a human tragedy.⁴⁷²

Alexander identifies the impiety of Arius's *creatio ex nihilo* Christology, referring to it as the cause of the error,⁴⁷³ locating it as the core of the presbyter's Christological calumny. In opting for a description of the Logos as made from things which were not, Arius avoids "two unbegottens" or Sabellian modalism, but Alexander insists these are not the only alternatives. He argues that Arius's falsely dualistic Christology where *creatio ex nihilo* is applied undifferentiatedly to the Son

⁴⁶⁹ Despite the obvious sexist language, sonship is retained here, after Gals. 4 "And if a Son then an **heir**": the significant thing about a shared sonship is the shared inheritance of divine participation for Athanasius.

⁴⁷⁰ *Philarch.* 7.

⁴⁷¹ *Philarch.* 7, 9. Alexander's argues that to admit temporality and change would undermine any claim for the Logos to be "the faultless and living mirror of the Divine nature."

⁴⁷² *Philarch.* 8.

⁴⁷³ *Philarch.* 9.

is a greater folly than the miahypostatic errors which so offend Arius. Alexander caricatures Arius as offering simplistic and improper theological description undermined by a failure to grasp the magnitude of the contrast between the unbegotten God and the things created *ex nihilo: ex nihilo, nihil fac*. So Athanasius's reclaiming of the doctrine, and his sophisticated application of it to Christology in the *CG-DI* changes the association of this doctrine from being (in Alexander's shorthand) the centre of the Arian error. In *CA* Athanasius applies this doctrine to undergird an interpretation of the Incarnation consistent with $\text{Ἐμμοῦ\text{ῶ}\text{σ}\text{ι}\text{ο}\text{ῖ}\text{ς}}$ – but mentioning the term but once. Like Alexander, he arrives at a great cosmological-ontological gulf ($\text{κ}\text{ω}\text{σ}\text{μ}\text{ολ}\text{ο}\text{γ}\text{ι}\text{α}\text{-}\text{ο}\text{ν}\text{τ}\text{ολ}\text{ο}\text{γ}\text{ι}\text{α}\text{ῶ}\text{ς}$) between the eternal divine nature and creation, Alexander by avoiding the doctrine, Athanasius by a most careful application of it. Alexander writes

Between the two, holding the Middle Place is the only begotten, the Logos of Divine nature.⁴⁷⁴

This “middle Place” is the place of governance of all creation by the Logos maintaining all things in harmony: all things exist in as far as they remain in him. Such security, Athanasius explicitly argues is possible only when created reality rests ($\text{μ}\text{ε}\text{ν}\text{ε}\text{κ}\text{ῶ}\text{ν}$) in the divinity of the Logos - for Athanasius there is no *middle place*. Alexander echoes the conventional cosmologically of a Platonic mind-set of a “ladder of existence” with the Logos holding a *traditional* “linking” mediatorial significance.

Philarch. concludes with Alexander offering his version of orthodox faith and theological method, claiming apostolicity for his own theology in a quasi-credal

⁴⁷⁴ *Philarch.* 11.

form.⁴⁷⁵ The Unbegotten Father begets his only Son, not *ex nihilo*, but of himself, “not by splitting off or by emanation of distinct levels of reality (so Sabellius and Valentinus), but “in an unutterable and inexplicable fashion, since his $\text{\textcircled{O}}\text{\textcircled{p}}\text{\textcircled{O}}\text{\textcircled{t}}\text{\textcircled{a}}\text{\textcircled{s}}\text{\textcircled{i}}\text{\textcircled{j}}$ defies investigation by any entity that has come into being.”⁴⁷⁶ Being a creature is insufficient qualification to claim theological authority, argues Alexander, just as an *ex nihilo* Logos could not perfectly know the mystery of the Father’s will and being:

the form of his divine generation is not to be grasped by the natural capacities of rational beings.⁴⁷⁷

Alexander reflects with sophistication upon the Son’s eternal dependence upon the Father (after Hebrews 1.3: the effulgence of his glory and the express image of the Father’s $\text{\textcircled{O}}\text{\textcircled{p}}\text{\textcircled{O}}\text{\textcircled{t}}\text{\textcircled{a}}\text{\textcircled{s}}\text{\textcircled{i}}\text{\textcircled{j}}$) insisting that “eternity” be not confused with “unbegotten”. The eternal, divine nature is still that of self-differentiated divinity *eternally begotten* in the primordial Son.⁴⁷⁸ The appropriate response is humble recognition that human reason cannot plumb the depths of divine mystery.⁴⁷⁹ Appropriate *theological* honour of the Son is founded upon the distinction between created minds and his eternal nature, but Alexander’s cognition of the eternal generation insists upon distinction between Father and Logos. Alexander expresses this in biblical terms of limitation: “in this alone is he inferior to the Father, that he is not unbegotten.”⁴⁸⁰

Human reason lacks the ontological qualifications to engage in *essential* theology, but Alexander offers a pneumatological resolution. The Spirit, proceeding from the

⁴⁷⁵ *Philarch.* 12.

⁴⁷⁶ *Philarch.* 12, translation Williams, 1987:249.

⁴⁷⁷ *Philarch.* 12.

⁴⁷⁸ *Philarch.* 12, Williams’s translation of $\text{\textcircled{O}}\text{\textcircled{p}}\text{\textcircled{O}}\text{\textcircled{t}}\text{\textcircled{a}}$ 1987:249f.

⁴⁷⁹ “the words of the holy struggling as best they can to make the mystery clear is limited in so far as it is possible to grasp them.” *Philarch.* 12.

⁴⁸⁰ *Philarch.* 12.

divine nature, imparts holy understanding as an inaugurator, motivator and inspirer of Old Testament prophets and the teachers of the new Covenant. Williams notes

the most distinctive feature of this text... is probably its markedly apophatic character. The tension between the *eikon* theology of some passages and the insistence elsewhere on God's abiding inaccessibility to reason is no less pronounced for being very typically Alexandrian.⁴⁸¹

Whilst reflecting this theological carefulness, Athanasius, nonetheless, is not dissuaded from freshly reapplying the doctrine of *creatio ex nihilo* and applying mediation ontologically in the miahypostatic case. Athanasius anoints *creatio ex nihilo* for Christological use in a miahypostatic framework.

3.5 The *Orationes contra Arianos* of Athanasius

CA reflects Athanasius's systematic engagement with the theological implications of Arius's thought. Athanasius shares Alexander's apophatic method: without a divine *ontological* initiative, where theological language is dependent upon God's self-disclosure in Christ, it is impossible. The starting point for theology is the *reality* of the Incarnation:

The Incarnation means that God has really given himself and communicated himself in his eternal Word to mankind. It is out of that Word and in accordance with the way which that Word has taken in the Incarnation that genuine theological statements are made. They

⁴⁸¹ Williams, *Arius*, 1987:252.

are genuine statements in so far as they *derive from* that Word and *refer back* to it: that is their essential *analogic*.⁴⁸²

Athanasius's argument is that Arius's theological method is indistinguishable from *muqologeꝛn kat' TMp...noian* in contrast to an authentic *qeologeꝛn kat' di£noian*. Whilst it is superficially Scriptural, Arius actually subjects the Bible to a *priori* assertions about the nature and unknowability of God. Whilst claiming to be a scriptural exegete, Arius is in fact mythologizing Scripture and blending scriptural words with commonly held contemporary cosmological assumptions into a hybrid.

Ironically also whilst Arius seeks to describe a model of divine activity of God's freedom drawing creatures into a restoring relationship with him, not determined by divine *ontology* necessitating this, Athanasius claims that Arius

reduced the act of salvation to the reversion of the many to the One. Thus history as God's activity was almost eliminated. Under the influence of the biblical concept of history the return of the many was perhaps identified as an education on the part of God or as the divine reconstitution of all things. But essentially that return was more like a natural process than a constant operation of God, inspired by wrath and love.⁴⁸³

This section approaches Athanasius's theological method by exploring his understanding of the Logos as mediator. Mediation in dyohypostatic theological constructs provoked Christological controversy to (and beyond) Chalcedon. Arius's conservative, apparently biblicist, arguments were a popular, acceptable

⁴⁸² T. F. Torrance, 1965:36, in A. J. Torrance, 1996, 191.

⁴⁸³ Studer, 1993:17.

representation of traditional pre-Nicene subordinationism, but provocatively changed by his insistence upon the Son's creation out of nothing. Athanasius persistently criticises Arius's formulations because they have moved from the continuity in Origen's theology. Athanasius accepts the breach, but offers a contrary theological solution. *CA* has serious strategic strength. By engaging with Arius's own arguments, focused in exegesis based upon fragments of his own words, Athanasius seeks to prevent his opponents from distancing their dyohypostatic Christologies from Arius. Passages of Arius's *Thalia* are rehearsed (and followed by paraphrase in *Thalia A*), in order to demonstrate Athanasius's argument that Asterius and his contemporaries are connected to Arius and his *hybris* as their fountain-head.⁴⁸⁴

3.5.1: CA I

The starting point for Athanasius's attack on Arian thought in *CA I* illustrates his prime objective of exposing "Arian" *theological language and framework* of as inadequate. As a heretic, Arius is not connected with the life-giving truth of Christ, and as such condemned to the Godless falling back into nothing, which is the end of all creatures.⁴⁸⁵ The attraction of Arius's arguments, Athanasius admits, are

⁴⁸⁴ We shall examine *CA I and II. III & IV* appear in chapter 4 as Apollinarius's understanding of mediation in *henoprosopic* - as distinct from *miahypostatic* - theological model. The theory of Kannengiesser that *CA III* is Apollinarian is evaluated there. We accept as authentic for the purposes of this chapter Athanasian authorship for the first two discourses. Cf. Kannengiesser, 1982 and Lienhard, 1999:5 "if Athanasius and Marcellus did not meet in Tyre, they certainly met in Rome. The year or so that they spent there may have been their most important contact. In any case, the known history of Marcellus after 340 is principally the history of the relationship with Athanasius. Marcellus may have encouraged Athanasius to take up the pen against the Arians [So Tetz, 1979:337-338]. Athanasius probably wrote *Orations against the Arians I and II* in Rome in 339-340, when he and Marcellus were together there. [Theodore Zahn, over a century ago, noted that Marcellus influenced Athanasius's exegesis of Prov 8:22 in *Or c Arianos 2*, 18-82; (Zahn, 1867:118)]." Young, 1997:30 opts for a date around the 350s. Whilst not unreasonable, Lienhard (*ibid*) and Anatolios, 1998:87 convincingly establish a date of around 339, maintaining significant exegetical connections between Athanasius and Marcellus. In defence of Young, there is nothing to prevent this influence in applying Prov 8:22 to the incarnation living with Athanasius throughout his exiles.

⁴⁸⁵ *CA 1, 1, MPG 26, 12-13; 55, MPG 26, 125-127.*

superficially seductive because of a scriptural “flavour” - they are scriptural phrases, but woven, as is Satan’s wont, into a deceptive cloak, which is not the Christian language of the ancient Catholic faith.⁴⁸⁶

Christian theology, in contrast to Arius, takes the witness of Scripture and discourses with it freely under the guidance of the whole of Scripture and the Spirit.⁴⁸⁷ This reveals that Arius’s doctrine is alien to the witness of Scripture:

Scripture does not engender or allow [Arius’s doctrines]: it has been shown and shall be shown again that their doctrine is alien to the divine testimony [ϕλλὸτρια ταῦτα τῆν θε...ων λογ...ων].⁴⁸⁸

Athanasius’s comprehension of scriptural texts is thus informed by a broader rule of faith of the Church, and his theological acumen exercised in contrasting the eternity of the Son to temporality in Arius’s crass assertions that Óti Æn pote Óte oÙk Æn [Ð ufÒj], and oÙk Æn Ð ufÕj pr^n gennhqí.⁴⁸⁹ The Son, Athanasius argues, is the eternal radiance of light eternal. Stead (1994:171) comments:

the Son is eternally generated from the Father by a spiritual outflow like the sun’s radiance which implies no division or diminution. The Son is ‘proper to his substance’, *idios tēs ousias*, but a distinct expression of it; for though existing ‘in the bosom of the Father’ he can simultaneously permeate the universe and moreover inhabit the human body in which he suffered on the Cross (so *DI* 17)... The

⁴⁸⁶ E., d□ ϕgnooàntej oÙtw ceim£zontai ka^ toiaàta Battologoàsi, maqštwsan ϕpÕ tῆn Gpafῆn, Óti ka^ Ð tῆj afršseij ᵀpino»saj di£boloj diῆ tῆ/n „d...an tÁj kak...aj duswd...an kicr©tai tῆj lšxeij tῆn Grafῆn... CA 1, 8: MPG 26, 23.

⁴⁸⁷ CA 1, 9: MPG 26, 28.

⁴⁸⁸ CA 1, 10: MPG 26, 33.

⁴⁸⁹ CA 1, 11: MPG 26, 33-35.

Father's whole being and power is communicated to the Son, and through him to the world; yet we cannot say that the Son is less than, or other than, the Father. Yet they are not interchangeable, still less identical as Persons; the Father himself remains the ultimate source from which glory flows out and to which thanksgiving is returned.

The Father and the Son, then, are theological *absolutes*, whereas Arius makes both derivatives of a pre-existent Original Monad.⁴⁹⁰ Athanasius insists that the Father is the ontological origin of the Son, unlike Arius's attempts to allow a created Logos to be called "Son" and "God" by *participation* (kat' metous...an). Athanasius demands to know how a created Logos may thus "partake"?⁴⁹¹ The option is *either* participation *in another "will"* external to the transcendent Monad (who remains unattainable) - thus the Logos would not be "second" after the Father,⁴⁹² but third after this other hypostasized Will; *or* participation *by oÙs...a* in the nature or being of the Father - a complete, mutual and eternal participation and dwelling, rooted in the Father having begotten the Son.

Athanasius drives this home soteriologically. Christian life is *participation* in the life of God - in divine nature, so 2 Peter 1.4 and the witness of the tradition of faith.⁴⁹³

⁴⁹⁰ See *Thalia S*, above: "For there is a Triad, but the glories are not equal / Their substances unmingled / [O]ne is more glorious than the others - even to the boundlessness of infinity: / The Father is alien by nature from the Son."

⁴⁹¹ t...noj to...nun TMsti mštocoj; *CA I*: 15; *MPG* 26,44.

⁴⁹² On the Logos as a "second" God, see Origen *CC V*. 39: "It must be realized that by a 'second God' we mean just this: the virtue that includes all virtues, the Logos that includes every kind of reason... and we say that this virtue and Logos is uniquely associated and made one with the soul of Jesus, since he alone has been perfectly capable of the utmost participation in absolute Reason, absolute Wisdom, absolute Righteousness."

⁴⁹³ AÙtoà g'r toà ufoà metšcontej toà qeoà metšcein legÒmeqa, ka^ toàto TMstin, Ö œlegen Ð Petroj, 'Ina gšnhsqe qe...aj koinwno^ fÙsewj. *CA* 1, 16: *MPG* 26, 44-45. Cf. Origen *CC III*.28f: "from Jesus began a weaving together of the divine and human nature in order that human nature, through fellowship with what is more divine, might become divine, not only in Jesus but also in all those who, besides believing in Jesus, take up the life which he taught; the life which leads everyone who lives according to the precepts of Jesus to friendship with God and

Readers are presented with an enormous contrast: a choice between God, sublime in his transcendence, inapproachable and unknowable, between whom and the Logos there is an unbreachable gulf; and a thorough and *real* participation in the Father *through the Son* for Christians. Athanasius propounds a soteriological *theology* because the Son *mediates* that in which he participates. For Arius the Logos is the summit of creation, for Athanasius, a begotten Son offers the opportunity of a theology of divine οὐς...α. Eternal generation is his response to Arian accusations of emanation diminishing the divine οὐς...α:

οὐτε θεοῦ φησὶ ἄλλο τι πατρὸς ἕκαστου ἰσχυρῶς ἔχοντος τὸν πατέρα.⁴⁹⁴

Appropriate trinitarian theology is thus brought centre stage. Trinitarian language has to be more than metaphorical or a *theologoumenon*: it must refer to the eternal reality of God as God is: it must be realist, referential language. Only a miahypostatic theology, Athanasius argues, rooted in the full divinity of the Son properly honours the Father.⁴⁹⁵ For Athanasius, Christian theology is not the description or delineation of God *from without*, but participation in divine life through connection and participation in God's nature by dwelling in the Son who remains in the Father. So Athanasius's understanding of the place of revelation in his trinitarian theology is fundamental. Scriptural description of Father and Son renders "Maker / Creator" epithets inadequate to the incarnation as the heart of Christian faith. "Creator / creature" language is inadequate because a Christological outworking of the implications of *creatio ex nihilo* reinforces the

fellowship with him." Friendship and fellowship are less than the ontological transformation Athanasius and (later) Cyril require.

⁴⁹⁴ CA 1, 21: MPG 26, 56-7.

⁴⁹⁵ Contrast his choice of Arius's *Thalia* in *Thalia S*, above: Arius's couplets are quoted because Athanasius believes Arius's attempts to honour the Father by diminishing the Son are grotesque and unacceptable to Christian piety.

unbridgeable gulf and the impossibility of non-revealed theology.⁴⁹⁶ The Logos's role in the creation must be considered: his creaturely activity undermines a theology supposedly aware of the theological significance of ontological incompatibility. Father-Son language, consistently applied, checks a "background" Monist idea of God.

Athanasius admits that the eternal generation of the Son is not entirely to be compared with human begetting,⁴⁹⁷ but Father-Son language conveys the greater theological truth about God, more appropriately linguistically framing Christian truth than biblical words promoting a theology based on the work of God in creation, whilst remaining external to divine nature. The language of Father-Son relation opens that inner-trinitarian, personal oÙs...a dimension only in miahypostatic theology.

So Athanasius expounds the *theological* significance of miahypostatic terminology as *relational*, *essential* and indispensable to authentic speech about God. His long theological prologomena prevents the collapse of theology into a dyohypostatic emphasis upon the sovereign "will" of the Monad, without authentic participation of Father and Son, where the Christian is incapable of sharing the divine life (for this is not really the Son's). His foundation takes seriously the humanity and the divinity of the Logos in one personality, and emerges with theological weight in CA II's exposition of the incarnation.

There is, however, a problem associated with Athanasius's project of addressing favourite "Arian" proof-texts of the Logos being a creature. In contrast to divine

⁴⁹⁶ CA 1, 24: MPG 26, 60-61.

⁴⁹⁷ CA 1, 28: MPG 26, 69.

impassibility, texts which describe Jesus as weeping or thirsting are accounted for by Athanasius admitting that the incarnate Son's humanity suffered these passions, not the divine Logos. Ironically, he thus *de facto* divides the natures in a manner that Cyril, for example, will say is improper. Thus it will be Athanasius to whom the Antiochenes will appeal for ammunition against Alexandrian exegetical style. In Athanasius this is part of his application of *creatio ex nihilo* in a differentiated manner to the Son: but it will become an uncomfortable factor for Cyril who will object against such interpretation on the grounds of *communicatio idiomatum*.

After this *theological* setting in context, Athanasius wrestles favourite "Arian" texts back into an "orthodox" conceptuality by drawing out the overall movement and meaning of Scriptural witness, its *diĕnoia*. Athanasius draws texts and episodes into a primarily soteriological context: Christ was baptized not for his own need (his *oŭs*...a's sake), but for the economy of our salvation.⁴⁹⁸

Such exegesis weaves together a reading of each specific text's meaning with the broader scriptural *sense*⁴⁹⁹ thus criticizing Arius's theological vocabulary and method. For example, to call God "Unoriginate" (*ϕgšnhton*)⁵⁰⁰ is an unscriptural *word* - just as *Đmooŭsioj* is - but, unlike *Đmooŭsioj*, "Unoriginate" is alien to the *sense* of Scripture, and to true [mihypostatic] Christian theology, because it assumed that access to the divine is through the works of creation rather than the fact of ontological relation of Father and Son. A "creaturely spirituality" is something Arius holds dear - but Athanasius describes this theological preference

⁴⁹⁸ Cf. Athanasius's treatment of Philippians 2.9-10; Ps 45.7,8; Hebrews 1.4; in addition to the baptism narratives and other Synoptic episodes, etc. CA 1, 37 - 64: MPG 26, 88-145.

⁴⁹⁹ Young's description of Athanasius's exegetical method, making much of the *diĕnoia* of Scripture, relates to the *regula fidei* of the earlier church in 1994:29-45 & 9-28.

⁵⁰⁰ CA 1, 33; MPG 26, 80.

as a Greek de-personalization of God.⁵⁰¹ Athanasius thus establishes at once a Christocentric theology and a theological hermeneutic: Christ *mediates* a full and true theological understanding of the Father because he participates by nature in the Father, and dwells in the baptized, effecting a true *ontological* union between divine and created. Texts that refer to the *economy*, focused on the humanity of Christ, are located in a broader context, giving a differentiated sense to his theology of the divine Logos perfectly united with the Father and with the humanity that he formed for himself. *Context* is vital for his theological method:

For had [Arius and his followers]...known the person, the subject, and the timing of the apostolic speech [=Scripture], they would not have applied to Christ's *divine* nature things belonging to his humanity, nor committed themselves to such foolishness [leading to] such grotesque irreligion.⁵⁰²

Theodoret of Cyrus develops this – citing Athanasius as exemplar of this exegetical tradition – in his “double application” of Scripture, extrapollating the theological significance of Christ's humanity - ¹ ϕnqrwpÒthj. Here, though, Athanasius's main theological point (mutual participation of Father and Son through a shared divine *Ñus*...a) depends entirely upon the divinity of the Logos. Though Athanasius does not preclude debate about, for example, a double *ÐmooÚsioj* or a theology of the *human* nature of Christ, his context is the conflict

⁵⁰¹ ka^ oátoi m□n ϕgšnhton lšgontej, mÒnon ™k tñn œrgwn shma...nousin aÙtÒn, ka^ oÙk †sasi ka^ aÙto^ tÕn uƒÕn êsper `Ellhnej, Ð d□ Patšra lšgwn tÕn qeÕn ™k toà lÒgou shma...nei toàton. CA 1, 33: MPG 26, 80.

⁵⁰² E,, g|r ™gnèkeisan tÒ te prÒswpon ka^ tÕ pr@gma ka^ tÕn kairÕn toà ϕpostolikoà ·htoà, oÙk ¥n, t| ϕnqrèpina e,,j t³¼n qeÕthta ™klamb£nontej, tosoàton °seboàn of ¥fronej CA 1, 55: MPG 26, 124.

with dyohypostatic theologies which require a sustained and convincing theology of Christ's divinity: to this is the remainder of *CA I* addressed.

Athanasius accuses Arius of blending Greek ideas with a theology of revelation that is no further advanced than the Old Testament dispensation. The Old Covenant, mediated by angels and by Moses (creatures), perfected no-one.⁵⁰³ Death's reign brought ontological annihilation to humanity, which since the Fall was unable to remain with God. This dislocation was exposed but not resolved by the Old Testament, which remained divine revelation, but where the people of God remained creatures pondering God from the foot of the mountain, and suffering death and diminishment ("dying in death"). The contrast of this with the Christian dispensation, Athanasius argues, could not be greater:

Ἰνὸν δὲ τὸν Χριστὸν πᾶντεν ζωοποιῶμεθα.⁵⁰⁴

The real significance of the doctrine of *creatio ex nihilo* for Athanasius is that it applies to humanity but not to Christ; yet the grace of God is made plain in the Logos's acceptance of the consequences of humanity's falling back into nothing, and exchanges humanity's destiny for eternal life in himself, and full participation in the divine life he shares with the Father. A creaturely spirituality (or soteriology, as Arius prefers) is inadequate because it lacks this scope (Arius, of course, would have rejected the necessity of this construction). Humanity's creation out of nothing, allows for no ontological *vestigia Dei* in people. "Natural" ideas, assertions and assumptions about the *divine* cannot but be projection across an ontological chasm which does not allow human logic to apply directly. Athanasius insists that

⁵⁰³ Ἐν ὁμοίᾳ δὲ δι' ἑγγύλων ἡμεῖς ἐγενήθημεν, καὶ οὐδὲν ἀπέχεσθαι... ἡμεῖς. *CA 1, 59: MPG 26, 136.*

⁵⁰⁴ *CA 1, 59: MPG 26, 136.*

the *hermeneutical* or hermeneutical gap, applies to all corrupted human notions of transcendence. All theology must have an *ana-logic*, must be referred to authentic revelation of God in the Son. Arius's improper *theological* starting point leads to all subsequent errors. His application of human language – even words from Scripture without an overarching comprehension of the *diēnoia* of Scripture and essential *miahypostatic* theology – is his foundational error. Christ cannot mediate that in which he does not participate *by nature*.

3.5.2: CA II

Athanasius opens his second oration with a resumé of arguments in CA I.⁵⁰⁵ The reader is reminded that to understand the *diēnoia* of Scripture, the appropriate whole context of the Christian dispensation must be held in mind - otherwise one is tossed about on the waves of “irreligious thoughts” and opinions.⁵⁰⁶

¹ *diēnoia tīn gegrammēnwn tōstōn ũrq».*⁵⁰⁷

The mind or purpose of Scripture reveals that the Word became flesh - and the central tenets of the Christian faith are the means to understand the fullest significance of texts. Specific contexts are much less significant than this overarching theological hermeneutic, without which context, one might say, individual texts become pretexts to interpretations according to opinion, *muqologēn kat' tōp...noian* instead of *qeologēn kat' diēnoian*. Athanasius

⁵⁰⁵ I.e., that it is the *Regula Fidei* as a whole which counterbalances Arius's opinionated textual selectivity in exegetical hermeneutics; and that breach of connection between Father and Son in Arius's theology results in the loss of theological apprehension, CA II, 1 MPG 26, 147-149. Athanasius revisits his argument that texts cannot be applied Christologically *willy nilly*, without an eye to the thrust or *dianoia* of scriptural revelation. Thus they must be applied in a differentiated way, to the humanity or divinity of Christ as the overarching context dictates. Athanasius insists that any theology based on an assertion that the Son is in fact a work has a self-defeating a-logic. CA II, 2. MPG 26, 149-150.

⁵⁰⁶ CA II. 5. MPG 26, 156-157.

⁵⁰⁷ CA II. 7. MPG 26, 160.

understands the Old Testament primarily Christologically, as a fore-shadowing of the incarnation. Texts out of this context, then, should not, he argues, be used to determine Christological arguments. Alighting upon Old Testament references to priesthood, Athanasius argues that they find their fullest meaning in the mediatorial priesthood of Christ. The Logos did not “become other than himself in taking the flesh”, rather, the flesh is the priestly robe and role that Christ assumed in the economy.⁵⁰⁸ Priesthood and mediation is a very significant dimension of Athanasius’s - and thereby miaphysitic theology’s - argument, *as a function of the economy*. The Mystery of the enfleshed Logos epitomises this essential truth of his priesthood – it is epiphanic of the essential Mediation central to the hypostatic identity of Father and Son:

the putting on of a created, made body - which he can offer *for us* is the reason [Scripture] refers to his *being made*.⁵⁰⁹

“Being made” and “becoming” High Priest in the flesh and mediation are integrated functions in the essential truth of incarnation, intelligible only through the perspective of the whole framework of Christian truth. Each works only when there is ontological identification of the Son with the divine nature. Incarnation is the sole means of ontological mediation, because its whole motivation is Christ’s priestly manifestation of divine mercy *pro nobis*. The Logos has no personal need to take flesh in order to come fully into existence - *unlike* creatures:

⁵⁰⁸ CA II. 8. MPG 26, 161 – 164.

⁵⁰⁹ CA II. 8. MPG 26, 161 - 164. On Marcellus’s contribution to Athanasius’s interpretation of Prov 8.22 from the perspective of the incarnation see Zahn, 1867:118; Young 1997:37; Stead, 1994:170.

human beings are clothed in flesh *in order to be and to exist*, but the Word of God was made man in order to sanctify [all subsisting] flesh.⁵¹⁰

Mediation is evident, but construed without dyohypostatic *voluntarist* emphasis: it is here the consequence of real, ontological divine incarnation, which transformed creatures' nature and destiny *only* because the Logos was *not* a creature. The assumption of human nature to the divine is possible through the Logos' being "made" flesh, being "made" priest and mediator. This revelatory usage of "being made" remains for Athanasius within the overall *di£noia* of the incarnation.⁵¹¹ Thus he sets a detailed *Sitz im Leben* for his reading of Proverbs 8:22. Athanasius's exegesis kicks away any "ladder of existence" from the epistemological scaffolding: insisting upon the primacy of the doctrine of *creatio ex nihilo* over a hierarchy of Being. God is not simply a craftsman *par excellence*, not "maker" but absolutely Creator.⁵¹² God's Logos calls into being things that were not: he must, therefore, share the divine nature. Were the Logos merely "the first among many brethren," he would not be able to create or mediate - indeed logically there would be an infinite regress without ultimate resolution:

if creation could not endure the Logos's *divine* hand in creation, then the Logos [if he were a creature] could not endure this divine weight of glory. Were this the case, if created being could not endure to be of God's own making, there would arise the need for a mediator. The Logos – as a created being – would need a medium in his own

⁵¹⁰ CA II. 10. MPG 26, 165-168.

⁵¹¹ CA II. 15. MPG 26, 177.

⁵¹² CA II. 22. MPG 26, 192-193.

creation by God... so shall we invent a vast crowd of accumulating mediators, so that creation could not ever have come to be!⁵¹³

For Athanasius such “protective” creaturely fearfulness, though pretending to be honorific to the divine nature, is, in fact, a cosmology alien from the di£noia of Scripture. God’s participation with Creation through the Logos is not squeamish - Athanasius refers again to the metaphor of the Sun’s radiance as an image of the Son’s *divine* being mediating the essence of the Father - like the warmth and light of the Sun’s rays, so the divine Son is the *active* dimension of divine nature: God’s embodied purpose “made” flesh.

Athanasius thus moves to a sacramental / soteriological dimension. Salvation through baptism into the body of Christ is ineffectual if Christ is a creature – hence Arian baptism is invalid – as all creatures “naturally” have a created Ñus...a, there is no advantage in being united with the “senior” creature – no significant hierarchy of created being can compensate for the ultimate differentiation demonstrated between created and divine nature.⁵¹⁴ Athanasius soteriological emphasis in the remainder of *CA II* offers a “comedy” as the ontological basis of Christian salvation thus:⁵¹⁵

[1] The begotten Son

[4] might be made to share
the divine nature of the
begotten Son



[2] is *made* flesh

→ so that →

[3] created flesh

⁵¹³ *CA II*, 26 *MPG* 26, 201-204.

⁵¹⁴ *CA II*, 41 *MPG* 26, 233-236.

⁵¹⁵ *CA II*, 55-58 *MPG* 26, 261- 272.

This would not be possible were the Logos a creature, there would be no connection, there could be no repair or mediation. The *otherness* of the Logos's nature from that of creatures and his essential unity with the Father is, thus, an absolute requirement for Christian theology. Implicitly woven into the fabric of Athanasius's argument is his recognition that were the Son a creature, then he could not bring new creation to birth. This will find fullest expression in Athanasius's writings on the divinity of the Holy Spirit's role in salvation. The focus here, however, is sustained and clear, if repetitive, there is a central place for mediation in Athanasius's *miahypostatic* theology - in fact it becomes a way of pressing home the importance of the divinity of the Son in a "radiance which implies no division or diminution" (Stead, 1994:170).

3.6 Distinctive functions of mediation in conflicting Christological models

Within Arius's *dyohypostatic* theology, the mediation of the Logos is traditionally subordinationist, but nonetheless has a central cosmological-soteriological function. Mediation is of central importance, if worked-out very differently, in Athanasius's *miahypostatic* theological tradition. Any picture of Arius's theology must admit that any description after the conflicts of the fourth century are tied up with the victorious community's memory. Athanasius intends to preserve and promote the understanding of this conflict in *miahypostatic* terms.

Critiques of Athanasius as "political" (and thus bad) are as anachronistic as prejudicial views of Arius as "Other" (and thus bad). The struggle for *miahypostatic*

Christology required sustained and strong theological and ecclesiological conflict.

The Christian community's move from being a persecuted minority required sustained theological articulation as part of its responsibility – constructing a means of describing God and ecclesial life in changed circumstances.⁵¹⁶

Athanasius's engagement with Arius was not merely coping strategy but a changing strategy. Athanasius's *contra mundum* epithet reflects the degree of his commitment to creating a non-negotiable theological hermeneutic, challenging the institution of the empire to its very pinnacle where it resisted him, inevitably leading to exile and isolation. But the alternative – accepting $\Theta\mu\omicron\iota\acute{\upsilon}\sigma\iota\omicron\jmath$ as normative within theology – *dyohypostatic* in nature – was unacceptable, even if it was seen by the majority of Christians as a means of preserving dignity by avoiding conflict with an eye to unity.

Athanasius's response to dyohypostatic theological models is to project them all onto Arius, drawing a methodological connection between this heretic with whom no-one wished to be associated and those who were to come after him who propounded dyohypostatic theology. This witnesses the degree to which Arius is construed as radically other to authentic Christianity (Williams, 2001). Athanasius by attempting to establish a miahypostatic theology as the only authoritative language for the orthodox community, projects a way of looking at God and the world with a mediatorial Christocentricity. In fixing the vocabulary of the Church thus, his had to be, like Arius's, a focussed exegetical enterprise:

⁵¹⁶ “The dogmas of the quiet past are inadequate to the stormy present.” Abraham Lincoln, Annual Message to US Congress December 1, 1862, cited in Aaron Copland's second-world war composition *Lincoln Portrait* Boosey & Hawkes. Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra directed by Zubin Mehta, Decca, 1968.

There is no room for any subjective libertarianism (which is a form of bondage) where humanity becomes subject to the dictates of the alienated conceptuality and language of its culture, be it past or present. Rather, the freedom of the Church exists precisely in its responsibility before the liberating freedom of God. Dogmatic theology serves to remind the Church of this and, therefore, of the need for a propriety ... of terminology and conceptuality (A. J. Torrance, 1996:48).

Athanasius's repeated objection to Arius's theology is not merely political or ecclesiastical rhetoric, but a real objection to a linguistic framework that he judged to entrap God in an oracular-biblicist cast, motivated by commonly held dyohypostatic presuppositions. Arius's biblicist hermeneutic is a hybrid, Athanasius argues, resting on *a priori* concepts of divine freedom, making God a *function* of preconceived freedom disrespecting received piety of an overarching *Regula Fidei* or *Lex Orandi*.

Athanasius's theology urges a silent perplexity before the mystery of God in a more ontologically-constructed way than Arius's.⁵¹⁷ This is not merely conventional piety, but an authentic concern to establish a miahypostatic theological framework that coheres around the divine person of God in Christ and makes mediation *ontologically* significant.⁵¹⁸

⁵¹⁷ CA II 36, MPG 26, 224-225. Bonhoeffer cites Kierkegaard's "Be silent, for that is the absolute," asserting "Teaching about Christ begins in silence," in A. J. Torrance, 1996:49: "To acknowledge the freedom of God is to be committed to... silence not least at the methodological level".

⁵¹⁸ Cf. Young, 1997:296: "Maybe Origen's "playing" with the text became less and less viable. Maybe Arius' problem was that he failed to recognize that the old-style Christian "philosopher", such as Justin and Origen had been, could not survive the institutional consolidation that was already happening and would be reinforced by imperial patronage."

Athanasius's foundation for a systematic miahypostatic doctrinal framework will emerge to be a vibrant tradition in subsequent contexts,⁵¹⁹ his use of *creatio ex nihilo* effectively highlights the ultimate ontological unanticipatability of God in a very different manner from Arius's insistence on an *a priori* concept of freedom. In Barth's words, Athanasius's theology reinforces that "God's Word is no mere thing; it is the living, personal and free God."⁵²⁰

Arius's blend of Platonic assumptions with notions of *ultimate* transcendence from Judaism, refuses miahypostatic Christology (and *Ἐμμοῦσιος* in particular) as "unbiblical" because it subverts his *a priori* concept of divine freedom. For dyohypostatic Christology, *Ἐμμοῦσιος* identifies Father and Son in a manner incompatible with Scripture, radically relativizing the priority of the *words* of Scripture to the divine *Word* of the Father⁵²¹ not attributing theological significance to God's free initiative and human grace in Christ which Arius accepted as normative and traditional.

Traditional depictions of the Arian schema cast the Logos's role firmly as Mediator rather than Creator, so failing to bridge the Creator / creature gulf,⁵²² so in Williams's judgment (1987:6-7):

⁵¹⁹ Cf. the struggle of the German Church under Nazi administration, and Barth's method untidily described as theology "from above," which was, more accurately, an attempt to guard the "inconceivable *novum*" of Christian dogma in the systematic framework of *Church Dogmatics*. This style of Christian theology is less attractive in contemporary multi-cultural (post-)modernity, cf. Kannengiesser's reflections upon the lack of an Athanasian biography, because of a failure of most moderns to identify with his character and personality, in his paper "The task of an Athanasian biography" at the XIII International Conference on Patristic Studies, Oxford, 16-21 August 1999.

⁵²⁰ Barth, 1975:198, cf. A. J. Torrance 1996: 53.

⁵²¹ Mönlich, 1950:378-412; Gregg & Groh, 1981.

⁵²² Cf. Jenkins, 1974:34: "To be human is the gift of God. If we reflect on what this sentence can mean about the origin of being human, the process of being human and the end of being human, then we shall find in it a pointer to what Christians mean by salvation... this is what Jesus Christ enables us to believe and offers us the chance to practice - that being human has a source, a potentiality and a fulfillment which is given by God, offered by God, and secured by God.

the Son or Logos is brought in as a mediatorial figure of a straightforward Neoplatonic kind. The two disparate elements are held together by the idea that the created mediator actually advances in status as a result of the incarnation (which thus becomes part of a trajectory of glorification, not a radical humiliation); but Arius' scheme is adulterated by a *mythological* version of adoptionism (involving the Logos, not Jesus) that leaves us finally with practical polytheism, two objects of worship.⁵²³

Despite this pedigree, it is distorting to caricature Arian theology as being merely or even primarily concerned with "Hellenistic" ideas. Neither is it appropriate to omit the role of mediator in Athanasius. But the Logos as "Mediator" only makes sense for Athanasius within a rigorous miaphyostatic system, referring theology back to the revealed incarnate Logos who is of one being with the Father:

if a line of utter distinction is drawn between the being of the incarnate Son and the being of the Father, [*fn*, cf Athanasius, *De syn.*, 45] it cannot be held that there is any oneness between what the Gospel presents as the revelation of God and God himself... As Athanasius expressed it, if the Son were divided from the Father, or the Word were not eternally inherent in God, then the being of God would be quite irrational (¥logoj)- a light that does not shine (m³/₄

Therefore being human is not solely at the mercy of time, circumstances and death. We can be saved and fulfilled." The emphasis upon the gift of grace is possible where there is actual *divine* activity in Jesus Christ, otherwise Mediation is a distraction from what Jenkins identifies as the uniting vision of salvation in the Christian religion. This echoes Harnack's concerns very closely.⁵²³ Williams, 1987:6-7, citing Harnack 1901:220.

fw̄t...zwn), an infertile desert (œrhmoj), a dry fountain or just an empty pit (I£kkoj).⁵²⁴

Alan Torrance describes Arius's theology as *muqologeκn*, a groundless projection "on to the Ineffable and Unknowable at a point when intellectual honesty would require an attitude of open agnosticism."⁵²⁵ To construe the Logos as Mediator requires a careful correlation with the whole Christian tradition and the *di£noia* of Scripture - as Athanasius strives to achieve.

Athanasius's picture of Arius is one of impiety where a lack of discipline replaces reverent theological description with anthropological projection:

if one takes seriously Arius's conception of the divine being, it is hard to see how anyone could know anything about God at all. By a curious irony, on which Athanasius was not slow to remark, Arius seemed to possess a good deal of privileged information. But where had he got it from? Athanasius was in no doubt about the source: the Arians [*sic*] had fabricated this concept of divine being out of their own minds, thus making their own intellects the measure of ultimate reality and assigning to Christ, the Word made flesh, the place which their minds could make for him.⁵²⁶

⁵²⁴ T. F. Torrance, 1997:133-134, and 1965:36; A. J. Torrance, 1996:191: "in accordance with the way which that Word has taken in the incarnation that genuine theological statements are made. They are genuine... in so far as they *derive from* that Word and *refer back* to it: that is their essential ana-logic. Theological thinking is thinking of and on the ground of a given Reality... what God is to us in Jesus Christ he really is antecedently and eternally in himself - that is the analogical reference."

⁵²⁵ A. J. Torrance, 1996:192.

⁵²⁶ Heron, 1981:70; A. J. Torrance, 1996:193.

Though not couched in such contemporary theological language, Athanasius's theology can be accurately described as aiming to preserve God himself – rather than an *idea* of God – as “indissolubly subject.”⁵²⁷

The theological cost of miahypostatic theology remains the question of theological significance of Christ's humanity. Athanasius's opposition to a model which failed to allow *divine* (and, for him subsequently human) nature a theological significance, perhaps inevitably, bequeaths an ambiguous theological inheritance. Although Athanasius's differentiated application of Scripture to the two natures of Christ is compatible with Chalcedon's double Ἐμμοῦσις , Apollinarius and Marcellus (as miahypostatic and henoprosopic theologians) claim to be explicating Athanasius's theology, offering further nuanced interpretations of Christ's mediation. In the conflict between Cyril and Nestorius, again the implications of divine and human natures are theologically central: Cyril exploring the theological significance of humanity primarily through Mariology; whilst Nestorius does so Christologically on a *prosopic* plane. This long Christological trajectory is the bequest of the struggle between dyohypostatic and miahypostatic methods and Athanasius's urgent promotion of his “Nicene” model as the sole Christian framework (Ayres, 2004).

A lasting impact of this conflict is the mediatorial role Athanasius assigns to Christ's *divinity*: a function which can only be present in miahypostatic theology, where the divine nature of the Son is “the primordial condition of humanity's participative communion with God” (A. J. Torrance, 1996:194). Explicit in the *priesthood* of the divine word are both natures' participation in mediation, without

⁵²⁷ Jüngel, 1983:23; A. J. Torrance, 1996:193.

the mechanics of that cohesion being speculated over. Despite this, Athanasius's argument requires the human nature for mediation to function. Though Athanasius may beget more henoprosopic Christologies⁵²⁸ - mediation which functions by blending cannot hold the "double" ground possible in Athanasius's thesis.

Ultimately, the fourth-century conflict focused in the "Arian" literature of Athanasius is a *Kulturkampf* to establish a miahypostatic theological pattern of description as *solely* legitimate to transmit the "interests, and traditions of interpretation, and to establish this shared descriptive vocabulary as determinative" (Soskice, 1988:150).

Athanasius's insistence upon the whole of tradition, as *Regula Fidei* or διένοια of Scripture, is his sustained response to opponents' dyohypostatic method, and it will prove ultimately convincing:

the choice and interpretation of the scriptural passages was determined by a theological and philosophical premise, a particular understanding of monotheism (Grillmeier, 1975:222).

If Arius witnessed "to the unbridgable gulf between God and all else" (Williams, 1987:177), Athanasius's careful descriptions of the nature and role of the Logos mould an organic conceptuality of divine transcendence through an absolute application of *creatio ex nihilo*. God's sovereignty and unmalleability is not the "mere fact of unrelatedness,"⁵²⁹ but God's own being present to creation *in toto* in Christ.

⁵²⁸ See part 3, below.

⁵²⁹ Williams, 1987:198; Anatolios, 1998:95.

But it was dyohypostatic theological constructs - which Athanasius insisted upon connecting with Arius - that provoked the theological revision:

Arius introduced notions of time and eternity based on classical metaphysics into trinitarian thought in order to categorize divine generation. Thus the gospel narratives seemed to offer a physical and reduced image, in a platonic sense, of the essential inferiority and created nature of the Son, compared with the Father. Arius's commentaries on biblical texts are no longer available, but there is no doubt that his scholastic use of Scripture reflected a serious need for greater theological consistency in the mainstream Origenistic tradition at the turn of the fourth century (Kannengiesser, 1999:57).

Athanasius exposed that Arius's model is different from Origen's without his understanding how. Arius began to kick away steps in the Middle Platonic ladder of existence by insisting upon the ultimate impersonal transcendence of the Father. Arius's methodology is incomplete, failing to comprehend thoroughly the significance of such a move for Christology. Athanasius's response to Arius's description was to claim that dyohypostatic theology created a hybrid method, an alienated *God*, and a marooned mediator.

This chapter has explored the way in which mediation – as construed in Arius's patterns of belief – prompted Athanasius to tackle biblical hermeneutics and doctrine anew, revisiting mediation to claim its miahypostatic significance. The conflict of theological systems required the notion of mediation to develop, engaging explicitly with dyohypostatic subordinationism. The conflict would result in the lasting miahypostatic location of Christology, and the emergence of

Trinitarian theology. In this recasting, traditional “mechanistic” concepts of mediation failed to attain what they previously achieved. Mediation assumed an ontologically participatory significance, which, as well as linking two different qualities, performed another ancient but less emphasized meaning, that of interjecting and holding two natures protectively apart.⁵³⁰

It is to other nuanced miahypostatic interpretations of mediation, and Alexandrian and Antiochene readings that we now turn.

⁵³⁰ mes...thj, as one set in the midst to umpire, arbitrate and mediate, even to keep apart is developed by Cyril of Alexandria to describe the function of the Red Sea, protecting the fleeing Israelites from the host of Pharaoh in his Paschal Homilies.

PART THREE

Reception & Resistance: Athanasius's Construct as a
Contested Legacy

PART THREE

Part three of this thesis observes the *reception and development* of Athanasius's miahypostatic Christology, particularly evaluating the way it begat the Trinitarian-Christological Controversy proper (Ayres, 2004). Themes of mediation and union are lenses that focus this, highlighting difficult aspects of Athanasius's achievement. Issues of the relation between Father and Son, of what it means to refer to Father, Son and Spirit as persons, and of the place of each person in salvation, are answered differently, not only *between* mia- and dyo-hypostatic christological approaches, but also *within* the former model.

Analysing the emergence of divergent Christologies within Athanasius's theological inheritance based on the *Kata Meros Pistis* (hereafter *KMP*) leads to an appreciation of the theological vitality of Apollinarius. In Part 2, the *homoousion* doctrinal-linguistic model was styled "miahypostatic" (after Lienhard, 1999). This chapter, however, shows that this description does not hold through the controversies, even when the Son is conceived of as a distinct [and single] $\Theta\pi\acute{\omicron}\sigma\tau\acute{\alpha}\sigma\iota\varsigma$. Apollinarius's Trinitarian model is such that subsequent theologians cannot ignore. Despite almost universal distancing and condemnation, Apollinarius contributes to the development of miahypostatic Christology within an overarching Trinitarian theology, thereby contributing to a more nuanced acceptance of $\Theta\mu\omicron\omicron\acute{\upsilon}\sigma\iota\omicron\jmath$.

Apollinarius's theological experimentation is profoundly significant in a manner very different from, for example, Marcellus. Marcellus shared miahypostatic

assumptions with Apollinarius: Athanasius defensively comments that he was not far from error.⁵³¹ Marcellus's self-perception is that of an ally of Athanasius and the "miahypostatic" Christological tradition; he, like Apollinarius, is easily caricatured by Eusebius as representing the wrong-headedness of the whole miahypostatic Christological tradition. Hanson argues that at the Council of Rome in 341, Marcellus's theology was vindicated by those present because by "oversimplification they were able to see Marcellus as orthodox" (Hanson, 1993:272). The first canon of the Constantinopolitan Council gives the impression of the *via media* of Christian truth from the beginning, orthodoxy avoiding the extreme winds of heresies on either side.⁵³² This chapter explores an emerging, organic and responsive series of trajectories within the miahypostatic inheritance – analogically compatible to a series of *Goldberg variations* after Athanasius' initial Christological *ex nihilo* Aria. Apollinarius provides evidence of the development of Christological vocabulary and grammar within Christian theology.

The difficulty of describing this complex emergence is evident from the attempts of Epiphanius onwards, and remains perplexing, as the aesthetically unattractive (and perhaps misleadingly over-precise) descriptions of Leinhard used hitherto reflect. However, alternatives ("Nicene," "Arian," "orthodox," *etc.*) are more distorting.

⁵³¹ Marcellus retains elements of traditional monotheism with a revised Logos theology, revealing that his primary theological consideration – the divine unity – is not far from that of Arius: both preserve the Father's priority in the Trinity. Marcellus's experimentation is more adventurous than Arius's (or his successors), but nonetheless, shares a rejection of thorough Trinitarianism.

⁵³² In *NPNF* 14ii (1995):172.

Discussion in chapter four focuses upon Apollinarius's Christological achievements. Marcellus, against whom perhaps *KMP* was aimed⁵³³ is not considered in his own right in this thesis.⁵³⁴ Sharp theological debate between them emerges as markedly different from that between Athanasius and his "Arian" opponents, because *both* write with shared miahypostatic perspectives.⁵³⁵ Epiphanius admits that Apollinarius and Marcellus represent spectacular "home goals" for the miahypostatic camp, but accounts for it as divine truth drawing the devil's hostility: determinedly putting "his bitter poison into the most wonderful foods": the honey to which he adds this particular bitterness is the miahypostatic Christological description which Epiphanius calls "orthodoxy".⁵³⁶

⁵³³ Spoerl, 1994:545-568 & 1999: "Apollinarius strives to argue for an understanding of the Son and the Spirit's status within the Christian godhead that is simultaneously directed against the errors of Arius of Alexandria and his sympathizers and Marcellus of Ancyra and his defenders. Against Arius, Apollinarius argues for the single eternity, glory and divinity of the Trinity's members; in the course of doing so, he expresses full support for the Nicene doctrine of the Son and the Spirit's consubstantiality with the Father. Against Marcellus, then, Apollinarius argues for the real and eternal distinction of the Trinity's members. While it is possible that the *Kata Meros Pistis* may have originally been written to address solely the relationship between the Father and the Son, in its present extant state, its arguments seamlessly and organically integrate consideration of the Spirit's status within the godhead with that regarding the Son's." Spoerl suggests that the text "in its current state" is a revision of an earlier work, was written before pneumatology became a significant issue to the "Miahypostatic" cause. She interprets the two lengthy florilegia of texts which explicitly address the Spirit in a way which "interrupt[s] the flow of argument... [giving] the impression of being inserted into the text after the fact to bolster Apollinarius's points." Spoerl is probably correct, because this accounts for appearance of many sections applying to the Spirit. The document is a Christological one first which then moves along a Trinitarian path to a miahypostatic pneumatology. Mediation is effected by the Holy Spirit, this is thus an argument for his full *divinity* as it is for the Son's, after Athanasius's location of mediation as a *divine* function.

⁵³⁴ See note 538, above. For Marcellus studies see the review of literature in Lienhard, 1999:9-19.

⁵³⁵ Young (1983:191) describes Epiphanius as writing "very strongly against Apollinarius" but in the *Panarion* Epiphanius almost writes an apology for Apollinarius. He describes him as "the venerable old man, always beloved by us, by the blessed Pope Athanasius, and by all the orthodox, Apollinarius from Laodicea..." (*Panarion* 77.2.1 [H/D3.417], Amidon, 1990:339f). Apollinarius's teachings, Epiphanius suspects, were misunderstood by younger hearers (*Panarion* 77.2.3 [H/D3.417], Amidon, *ibid.*:340). Cf. Schaff 1891: 711: "Epiphanius expresses himself concerning the beginning of the controversy in these unusually lenient and respectful terms." Epiphanius's approach is evidence that Apollinarius represented an attempt to describe the relation of the humanity and divinity of the Son within a model that he shared.

⁵³⁶ *Panarion* 77.1.1 [H/D3.416]; Amidon, 1990:339.

A Trinitarian Christological reading of *KMP* will show that far from being guilty of the distortions most often attributed to him, Apollinarius attempts a serious Christology. The “dual context” of Arian heresy on the one hand and his perception of Marcellus’s destructive experiments on the other, provides the *Sitz im Leben* for his emphasis on the “one divine nature of the Incarnate Word” which Cyril weaves so centrally into his *Systematik*.⁵³⁷ Apollinarius offers much more than a mathematical resolution.⁵³⁸ Against Marcellus, numerical singularity and identification with the divine οὐς...α is the imperative aspect; against the dyohypostatic tradition, ontological identification is most important. Apollinarius’s struggle to construe Christology correctly within Athanasius’s framework demonstrates that he recognized it as *the* authentic language with which to speak of God, Christ, and creation. Theodoret, as will be shown at the end of this dissertation, from a very different perspective, also indicates this, because Athanasius maintains and shares much of the “Antiochene” concerns about the intractability of divine nature.⁵³⁹

A chief Apollinarian concern is balance between the two issues of the soteriological-Christological union with and in the Son, and his focus upon the person of the Mediator and his view of that mediation as the reconciliation of created and divine natures within the Son’s personal unity. In significantly different ways, Apollinarius and Marcellus insist upon the *divine* unity, creatively exploring ways of describing this. Consequently they provoked what is traditionally termed an “Antiochene” Christological response. Cyril of Alexandria

⁵³⁷ See chapter 5, below.

⁵³⁸ Aquinas later observes (*S Theol* I xi, 1) the distinction between a numerical singularity, “one which is a principle of number”, and ontological unity “one, which is convertible with being.”

⁵³⁹ Witness the citations of Athanasius’s work in the Florilegia of texts in *Eranistes*; chapter 6, below.

and the emergent monophysite tradition, still found Apollinarius's arguments (whether or not Cyril and the monophysites believed them to be Athanasius's words) indicative of authentic Christology.⁵⁴⁰ There is probably also a Eucharistic context for Apollinarius's language about Christ's "divine flesh", which Cyril develops more fully.⁵⁴¹

⁵⁴⁰ Raven *op cit* accuses Cyril of "dishonestly" applying the famous Apollinarian clause *m...a f'Usij toà qeòà l'Ògou sesarkwmšnh*. Young (1983), urges that Cyril believed both the motto and the work to be Athanasius's.

⁵⁴¹ Cf. Chadwick, 1951:145f.

CHAPTER FOUR

APOLLINARIUS OF LAODICEA'S HENOPROSOPIC TRINITARIAN CHRISTOLOGY

4.1 Introduction: the task of this chapter and its location in this study

This chapter observes the often immensely sophisticated discourse and yet also *apparently* disturbingly crude⁵⁴² Christological explorations of Apollinarius in his *KMP*. In particular the notion of the “soul” (or personality) of Christ, is shown to have a mediatorial function because of its *divine* identity. Though an agent for mediation in some Middle Platonic thinking, the soul in Apollinarius’s terminology is particular: *noāj* refers to an agent’s *identity* or *personality*. Apollinarius, though located within a miahypostatic Christological tradition, distances himself from miahypostatic Trinitarian models which identify one οὐς...α with one ØpÒstasij. Presenting a single οὐς...α with three prÒswpa each having their own ØpÒstasij,⁵⁴³ Apollinarius describes a thorough Trinitarian theology. In doing so, Apollinarius hones ÐmooÚsioj into an anti-Marcellan tool.

Classical interpretations of the Christological explorations of Apollinarius are restricted here to footnotes, to allow a revisioning of extant works and fragments around the themes of mediation and union. This chapter exposes diverse theological motivations and methods within a shared miahypostatic Christological approach. The reasons for the ultimate failure of the reception of attempts to

⁵⁴² Compare, for example, the notorious Fragment 113 for its striking baldness in applying the analogy of a mule as blending the οὐς...αι of she-ass and horse in one sub-species unity which participates in both species.

⁵⁴³ In *KMP*; but in the “Apollinarian” CA III & IV, the tendency is to stress a single divine ØpÒstasij. This is in the context of Christological language rather than trinitarian debate. There is clearly fluidity in the way each term is employed.

describe the mediation of Christ in terms of a noetic synthesis (Apollinarius) or an economic modalism (Marcellus) are evaluated, witnessing to the power of conservative Christological models over perceived innovative speculation. Nazianzen's chief concern has less to do with protecting the distinct contribution of Christ's humanity to salvation, than with maintaining an Origenist "sacrament of intellect" whereby the human no α of the pre-existent Jesus is re-cast as the point of mediation between God and human flesh. Gregory fights shy of Apollinarius's materiality and incarnational-sacramental theology rather than pursuing a distinct human personality of Christ. This criticism is not really concerned with mediation but with using the human mind as a filter through which the divine Mind may be the subject within a human body.

Nonetheless, even if conservative fear hampered Apollinarius's Trinitarian Christology, his failure to win universal support confirms Athanasius's achievement of establishing *both* the divine personality of Christ *and* the need to maintain mediatorial concerns which relate divine nature to humanity without reducing the divine mystery to a mechanistic "system," but remaining couched in personal and relational language. Athanasius's paradigm, urged upon the Christian world afresh at Chalcedon, does not collapse the tension of humanity and divinity into a third entity, even for the sake of the unity of the personality of Christ. But before that resolution, it is first necessary to explore in detail Apollinarius's Christology.

4.2 Trinitarian theology, mononoetic Christology and mediation in Apollinarius of Laodicea

Athanasius forged a Christological descriptive vocabulary in the crucible of immense conflict that divided Christendom, so that it was necessary to demonstrate, in sometimes plainly bizarre exegesis, that the miahypostatic language of Nicaea was the *only* framework fully consistent with the traditional faith. Athanasius thus represents a revolutionary language shift in Christian theology. This part of the study explores Apollinarius's attempted development of Christological *grammar* in the miahypostatic tradition. Apollinarius's failure should not detract from his contribution to the process of establishing "communally authoritative rules of discourse, attitude, and action" in this Christological tradition.⁵⁴⁴

The *KMP* as well as attending to these issues in its content, is, significantly a *complete* work on the subject. Fragments conveyed out of context by Apollinarius's opponents, are thus given a balance by a reading of *KMP*.

4.3 A Christological reading of *KMP*⁵⁴⁵

Apollinarius opens his systematic exposition of the Faith with an explicit indication of the perspective of his work: he is fundamentally anti-dyohypostatic:

⁵⁴⁴ cf. Ford, 1984:277.

⁵⁴⁵ Lietzmann, 1904:167-185. The translation of the text is my own; references are to the paragraph numerations in Lietzmann.

Inimical and alien to the Apostolic Confession [of faith] are those who speak of the Son as having come into being “out of nothing,” - saying of him that his beginning was his being sent forth from the Father - so, also, are those who have in mind the same concerning the Holy Spirit.⁵⁴⁶

The defining prompt of Nicaea remains the prime threat to the Church to Apollinarius, even if *Arianism* is a later socio-rhetorical construction. Apollinarius locates his argument in the context of the theological histories of the fourth-century. Apollinarius defends the *miahypostatic* language of Nicaea (i.e., *Ἐμμοῦσιος*), regardless of its possible Marcellan pedigree, as a necessary weapon in the fight against the archetypal heresy.⁵⁴⁷ The adoption of *Ἐμμοῦσιος* appears to have been a calculated risk on the part of the fathers present: with Marcellus indeed a prime mover for the term,⁵⁴⁸ impressing upon them that *Ἐμμοῦσιος* was the best strategy to counter Arian danger. Now Arian danger was universally recognized, came the time for Apollinarius to cut Marcellan

⁵⁴⁶ *KMP* 1 [paragraph markings of Lietzmann]: –Εcquistoi ka` ϕιλλῶτριoi τᾶj ϕpostolikᾶj Ἐmolog...aj oτ tῶn ufῶn τῆx oῦk ὄntwn ka` ϕpostellomḥnhj ϕrcᾶj e„nai τῆp...kthton lḡgontej tῶ patr` ka` of per` toᾶ ig...ou pneῦmatoj tῆ aῦtῆ dianooῦmenoi. Lietzmann, 1904:167. I have attempted to translate this in such a way as to avoid an impression of emanation in the term ϕpostellomḥnhj ϕrcᾶj, which the “Exoucontians” surely did not intend.

⁵⁴⁷ Cf. Wiles’s (2001) excellent monograph exploring the attraction of Arianism.

⁵⁴⁸ Cf. Barnes, 1998:47-67; especially 52: “The Marcellan claim on Nicaea seems not to have been simply a development after the fact, as though Marcellus made a claim on an event which was otherwise unconnected to his sphere of theological influence. Recent scholarship comparing the creed of the Council of Antioch, early in 325 (which promulgated doctrines favourable to Alexander and condemned Arius), with the creed of the Council of Nicaea, late in 325, has suggested that the very wording of the creed of Nicaea bears the theological finger-prints of Marcellus.” Citing Logan, 1992:444, Barnes relates that Logan argues that the creed of Constantinople “in an attempt to remove any hints of Sabellianism in the creed of Nicaea, not only replaced the Nicene wording [of ‘begotten of the Father before all ages’] with the traditional form... but equally removed the associated gloss *ek tes ousias*. The two belong together and imply, at least to Marcellus and his party, that there is one *hypostasis* or *ousia* in the Godhead.” Cf. S. Parvis, 2002, ‘Marcellus of Ancyra and the Arian Controversy: A Bishop in Context’ Unpublished PhD thesis, University of Edinburgh; & Siebt, K., 1994, *Die Theologie des Markell von Ankyra*. Berlin: de Gruyter.

connections by defining more precisely Nicaea's $\text{Ἐμμοῦσιον τὸ πατρ...}$ with explorations of the Son's eternal generation.⁵⁴⁹

The end of *KMP 1* (Lietzmann, 1904: 167) interjects as if an addition to the text the notion of the Holy Spirit's divinity. In all probability, this belongs to a later edition of *KMP*, attempting to revise earlier Christologically-focused argument to apply to the Holy Spirit, thus ensuring his divinity and a thoroughly Trinitarian resolution (Spoerl, 1999). Evidence for this includes the swinging back to Christological considerations pertinent to the "Arian" controversies after the introduction of the theme of the Holy Spirit's divinity:

most alien are those who apply to the Son [*sic*] the assertion that any divine nature is by gift, according to grace.⁵⁵⁰

Apollinarius intends to make it unmistakable that he places himself in the *miahypostatic* Christological tradition. Central to that tradition is emphasis upon the Godhead's unity. Apollinarius expounds a way of celebrating this which is not an adapted form of second century Logos theology (in the guise of models of Arius or Marcellus),⁵⁵¹ in a non-voluntarist Trinitarian manner.

⁵⁴⁹ Appendices 1 and 2 of Hanson (1988:876-877) illustrate the changes to Nicaea at 381. Constantinople adds (γεννησῆντα) $\text{πρὸ πέντων τῶν ἀένων}$, in its description of the begetting of the Son, and deletes Nicaea's $\text{ἴσους...αἰ τοῦ πατρὸς}$. These are at least as significant as the well-known anti-Marcellan addition of $\text{οὐκ ἴσους τῶν πατρὶν}$.

⁵⁵⁰ ὁμοῦσι καὶ ἐκρίθη . Lietzmann, 1904:167.

⁵⁵¹ Arius's theological model and Marcellus's have in common a concern for monotheism, though approached in different ways. Arius's *deuteros theos*, the Logos, has, as we have seen, the emphasis of creation redeemed; Hanson, 1998, describes Marcellus's opposition of Paulinus of Tyre who "called Christ 'a second God' and said that he had become God in a more human way", (*ibid.*, 45). Marcellus perceives that there is an inappropriate assertion that there are three *ousiai* in this model of theology. His response is a vigorous *miahypostatic* argument, caricatured by his opponents as Sabellian.

In this phase of explication and clarification of the term, Apollinarius and Athanasius appear to be working at the same time on the same project.⁵⁵²

Despite his closeness to (and friendship with) Athanasius, Apollinarius is either unaware of the refinements Athanasius had made in *CG-DI* to the association of *creatio ex nihilo* when applied to the Son, or chooses not to address them in his opening rhetoric.

Apollinarius still seems to use the *ex nihilo* motif as short hand for Arian error, still applying it in the manner of anti-Arian works of Alexander of Alexandria. The reasons for this may be one (or, more likely, a combination of) the following.

Firstly – and most likely – Apollinarius may simply revert to a caricaturing rhetoric, beginning his work with a miahypostatic rousing taunt. “Arius” is a construct here for the most significant error in Apollinarius’s view – the dyohypostatic Christological tradition. Arius’s insistence upon applying *creatio ex nihilo* to the Son was thus shorthand to describe this Christological tradition.

Secondly, though I am not convinced of this, this may be evidence for Apollinarius not knowing *CG-DI* either because it had not reached Laodicea, or that it may not yet have been written. If *KMP* – or a first draft of it – were written in the 350s or 360s, this would necessitate *CG-DI* being a work of Athanasius’s

⁵⁵² Barnes, 1998:48: “In the present account of the fourth-century trinitarian debates I will speak in terms of three stages in the debate...: first, the condemnation of Arius and Nicaea 325; second, the post-Nicaea assault on Marcellus; and third, the invention of Arianism.” The evidence of *KMP* is that there is a cluster of common arguments which impact upon the reclaiming of *ἘμooÚsioj* which overlap “stages” two and three. Although there are common approaches as the debate moves through the fourth century, perhaps the implication that there are clearly defined “stages” is not what Barnes wishes to convey. Apollinarius’s *KMP* would appear to reflect a transitional period where both second and third “stages” need addressing together. Apollinarius’s success in moving from the second to the third is a mark of his capacity and importance as a strong theological contributor in the debate. On Athanasius and *ἘμooÚsioj*, see Ayres, 2004a.

third exile. But it would seem strange that *ἘμooÚsioj* was still so studiously avoided in *CG-DI* were that the case, and it seems likely that *KMP* represents a later phase in the development than *CG-DI*.⁵⁵³ The prime enemies remain those who resist the miahypostatic Christological model: but now the project of using *ἘμooÚsioj* as a foundation for Trinitarian theology is underway.

So, thirdly, it seems probable that Athanasius's attempts at re-instating the doctrine of *creatio ex nihilo* appropriately to the Son had been successful after Nicaea, but now the task required was a refinement of *ἘμooÚsioj* which Athanasius, Apollinarius and others were undertaking. Apollinarius intends to rehabilitate *ἘμooÚsioj* apart from a Marcellan context. Athanasius has hitherto fought shy of relying upon this phrase over much, but in the 350s, there is a new confidence in reclaiming it. Barnes (1998:49) rehearses possible reasons why Athanasius may initially choose to do battle on the ground of *creatio ex nihilo* in *CG-DI* and *CA I*, avoiding *ἘμooÚsioj* almost completely because

Homoousios had three strikes against it. First, it had a modalist history of use, and indeed figured in a third-century conciliar condemnation of a modalist theology. Second, and not unrelatedly, in its limited use it had had materialist connotations. Third, it was no-where to be found in Scripture. The context of the Nicene use of *homoousios* added yet a fourth strike, as it were.

Apollinarius thus explicitly sets out at the beginning of *KMP* to rehabilitate *ἘμooÚsioj* without Marcellan overtones. Just as Marcellus might have been a

⁵⁵³ Unless *KMP* represents an innovation in the rehabilitation of *ἘμooÚsioj* that Athanasius does not want to risk at this point.

key figure in its introduction at 325, so Apollinarius appears to have been a key figure in revisioning it, so attracting the scorn and attacks of the anti-*homoousion* tradition, to such an extent that he (in similar vein to Nestorius the notorious victim from the Antiochene tradition years later) has to be jettisoned so that the argument can stand aside from the character and be won by the miahypostatic camp. Between 340 (the probable date of *CA I*, where *ḐmooÚsioj* is cited, perhaps after Apollinarius's *CA IV*⁵⁵⁴) and the eventual centrality of Nicaea's *ḐmooÚsioj* in Athanasius's theology, a major linguistic-cultural shift takes place.⁵⁵⁵

That Apollinarius does not re-introduce Athanasius's Christological re-working of *creatio ex nihilo* should not appear overly significant. This would introduce something which would compromise the straightforward polemics of his rhetoric at this point. *KMP* represents a phase after Athanasius's *CG-DI* as a significant part of a more widespread trend in a Trinitarian theological development.

Apollinarius soon moves to refine his *raison d'écrire*: the anti-dyohypostatic Christological tradition is not the limit of Apollinarius's self-understanding. "No less alien," he argues, are models of theology that collapse the theological significance of the persons of the Trinity into triple beings in a Monad, even if they *appear* to be part and parcel of the miahypostatic Christological camp.

Apollinarius defends the Nicene model from attacks from such as Eusebius who wished to tar the whole tradition with a Marcellan brush. *ḐmooÚsioj* properly

⁵⁵⁴ Vinzent, 1996.

⁵⁵⁵ When this was, is problematic. A dating of 350 for *de Decretis Nicaenae Synodi* would indicate a turn in the associations for Athanasius within a decade. The lack of *ḐmooÚsioj* in *CG-DI* would urge for a date before 350. The "conservative" consensus remains around 335, the Trier exile, though dates as late as 363 have been urged. See discussion above, 2:2.

construed requires that the Trinity should not be viewed merely as a metaphor or pattern of God's action accommodated to the needs of humanity's fallenness, nor an economy of God's being, but, rather, an eternal relation of three persons.⁵⁵⁶

Any so-called solution to Christological problems that failed to take Trinitarian language as realist, and not simply as metaphorical, Apollinarius insists, must be strongly resisted. Clearly writing against Marcellus (and/or his supporters), Apollinarius offers his own thesis on the Incarnation, which, he claims, is that taught for universal salvation by the Church.⁵⁵⁷

KMP argues that Christology is authentically accessible from contemplating salvation-history: yet there is, unsurprisingly, a world of difference between, for example, the soteriological method of "Arian" exegesis and *KMP*.⁵⁵⁸

Apollinarius's emphasis reflects that of Athanasius with regard to the mediatorial significance of the Incarnate Logos. His *divine* identity was brought into conjunction with humanity in the flesh (not merely located in the Mind, but in the totality of the human nature of Christ from the Blessed Virgin).⁵⁵⁹ In the union, the divine nature assumed the ability to participate in the cosmos in human fashion in order to fulfil the mystery of our salvation. This acquisition of real flesh did not distort the Logos's divine identity:

[For the divine identity of the Logos] giving himself to human flesh -
which was taken to himself from Mary, whilst he retained his own

⁵⁵⁶ φιλῶτριοὶ δὲ οὐκ ἄττον καὶ ὁ τῆν τριῆδα μακαρίων φιλῶσεων τῆν τριῆν προσέπων ὁμολογοῦντες. Lietzmann, 1904:167.

⁵⁵⁷ Ἐκκλησιαστικῶν δὲ ὁμολογῶντων καὶ κοσμοσωτηρίων π...στὴν Lietzmann, 1904:168.

⁵⁵⁸ Cf Gregg and Groh, 1981.

⁵⁵⁹ Contrast the Cappadocian critique of Apollinarius, where "Mind is mingled with mind as nearer and more closely related, and through it with flesh, being a mediator between God and carnality." Gregory of Nazianzus, *Ad Cledonium*, Meredith, 1995:113.

identity, and suffered no alteration nor deterioration of his divine *hypostasis*.⁵⁶⁰

Apollinarius is emphatic that divine identity and initiative has a prime significance. He shares later Antiochene theologians' concerns that the incarnation does not "change" the divine nature, that no mutation was consequential upon the incarnation. Rather, the incarnation is conceived of as bringing divine nature and humanity together in harmonious balance:⁵⁶¹ the *divine flesh* of Christ is united with the divine nature by the divine nature's initiative and capacity to appropriate humanity.

Already here is a clue to the context of Apollinarius's notorious phrase "holy flesh." At this point in *KMP* it is short-hand for the reality of the mysterious consequence that in the incarnation, impassable divinity is not changed, but according to (and not contradictory to) its divine capacity, the divine assumes the experiences, pains and perspectives of humanity.⁵⁶² This is a device for referring to the divine single subject of the incarnate Son. His use of "holy flesh" has traditionally been connected with a crude notion of mediation between the physical structure of the body and the "lower soul," (where *s£rx* has been

⁵⁶⁰ dÒntoj m□n ~autÕn çnqrwp...nV sark..., çn TMk Mar...aj prosel£beto, me...nantoj d□ TMn tautÒthti ka^ mhdem...an qe...an metak...nhsin mhd□ çllo...wsin Øpostant£toej *KMP* 2, Lietzmann, 1904:168.

⁵⁶¹ sunaireqšntoj d□ prÕj t³¼n kaq' Ðmo...wsin çnqrwp...nhn, este t³¼n s£rka prÕj t³¼n qeÒthta ~nwqAnai, tÁj qeÒthtoj tÕ paqhtikÕn tÁj sarkÕj TMn tí toà musthr...on plhrèsei çnVrhku...aj. Lietzmann, 1904:168.

⁵⁶² tÕ paqhtikÕn tÁj sarkÕj TMn tí toà musthr...ou plhrèsei çnVrhku...aj. Lietzmann, 1904:108. Cf. Apollinarius's argument with the attack of Gregory of Nazianzus, *Epistula* 101, *Ad Cleodionum*, *MPG* 37, 181-3: tÕ gjr çprÒshpton, çqer£peuton Ò d□ ¼nwtai tù Qeù, toàto ka^ sèzetai. Apollinarius's so-called "impersonal" solution to the Christological problem of an assumed man, (a misconstrual of assumed humanity into the Godhead in the unity of Christ's person), is countered in the so-called Athanasian Creed, in a clause traditionally perceived to be anti-Apollinarian: *One: not by conversion of the Godhead into flesh: but by taking the Manhood into God; One altogether; not by confusion of Substance: but by Unity of Person.*

construed as referring to the enlivened physical totality, but not the spiritual personality of Christ). Raven (1923) argues that the context for understanding these terms is an applied Middle-Platonic anthropology. Yet that is not consistent with Apollinarius's employment of these terms. The *identity* of the Logos incarnate, is the *divine* centre of personality for Apollinarius. There can be, for Apollinarius in *KMP*, no quasi-independent *noàj* implying that an assumed human individual: but that identity extends *because of the incarnation* to the holy totality, *t³¼n s£rx* *t³¼n jg...an*. No explicit connection is made at this point in *KMP* to the Eucharist, but participation in the divine reality of the incarnate Christ sacramentally – a connection Cyril will expand upon – is a more organic and natural reading of the text than Raven's suggested *Sitz im Leben*.⁵⁶³

The consequence of divine incarnation is the divinization of human flesh so that death cannot dissolve it. Athanasius extensively reflects upon this motif from the perspective of the Fall and its restoration in *CG-DI*.⁵⁶⁴ Here, the human being before the soul's fall is understood to possess an undistorted copy of the Logos. In the incarnation, authentic, redeemed humanity is restored and mediated to all "flesh" by his "holy flesh". The Logos's assuming of all that is distorted and moribund in humanity, himself becoming the life of Christians does not require

⁵⁶³ "Mankind is endowed with three elements in its nature. The lowest is the body or *sîma*, the material structure through which the invisible is revealed and expressed: to this term flesh (*s£rx*) is often applied, though *s£rx* is freely personified and used to denote both body and lower soul. Higher than the body but still an earthly element comes this lower soul (*yuc»*); and the term when strictly employed is always used for that which man shares with the animal creation: but where *s£rx* is used of the living body, it is natural that *yuc»* should be contrasted with it, and should signify the whole non-material part of personality – this being of course its popular meaning." Raven, 1923:198. He continues, erroneously, to accuse Apollinarius of substituting *nous* for what Raven (after Paul) thinks should be the peculiarly "Christian" element of *pneuma*: "Highest of all comes the heavenly element, which St Paul calls the spirit (*pneàma*), but which Apollinarius regularly identifies with the mind (*noàj*), and which in consequence he regards not as the special prerogative of the saints, but as belonging to all men by "nature," and as constituting the centre of personality." Raven, 1923:198-9.

⁵⁶⁴ One might go so far as to say that it is the *principal* thesis of *CG-DI* - see above, chapter 3.

separate theological significance for an assumed human component. Salvation is understood as an organic and Christocentric totality. There is dramatic balance between divine nature and the humanity in the incarnation, but, above all, a real unity achieved because of divine nature's capacity to receive flesh divinely, *i.e.*, with a constant divine identity. S£rkwsij results in the reality of the divine nature being borne by the flesh, restored in Christ into a single incarnate nature so that death cannot destroy it. In Christ - and in Christians - this gift of immortality is "holy flesh." Apollinarius reflects Athanasius's thesis in *CG-DI* (with regard to Christ), and in *de Vita* (with regard to Christians). For Apollinarius, humanity's original glory has not simply been restored. The outcome of the incarnation is the greater exaltation of humanity by incorporation of Christians into the divine nature. Salvation is rigorously understood in an ontological manner: transformation, transfiguration and the glorification that is deification. The person of Christ, in his full divinity, makes this an ontological reality for humanity, and the Spirit conveys this life and sanctification for Christians.⁵⁶⁵ Apollinarius distinguishes between the ontological reality of Christ's divinity in the Holy Trinity and the "divinity" of saints, the holy people of Christ: the latter are utterly dependent upon the former. The Son is not to be construed as a "Spirit-filled man" or one promoted to divinity, nor a second heavenly power subordinate to "God," rather God is to be known as Trinity.

For it is the case that either we have in mind in its natural glory and truth the perfect Trinity, or we will be forced to speak of a Monad

⁵⁶⁵ ECEj oân Ð pat³/₄r Ð qeÒj, eCEj ufÕj Ð lÒgoj, »n pneàma zw», ¹ jgiwsÚnh tîn Ólwn. Lietzmann, 1904:169.

and not Trinity - or... impiously become as those who worship the creature.⁵⁶⁶

Apollinarius' rigorous trinitarianism is explicated in his Christology and soteriology, countering both Modalism and Arianism by identifying both as a monotheistic conceptuality, untouched by a realist (™n fusikí dÒxV ka^ ÷lhqiní t³n Ólhn tri£da) Trinitarianism.⁵⁶⁷ The divine Spirit mediates Christ's saving work and nature by being himself divine, for it is a mark of the divine nature's freedom to be able to be "present to" creation (Anatolios, 1998). Participation in the Spirit is the pragmatic means of reckoning (nohtšon) Trinitarian mystery. Apollinarius holds together the real divinity of the persons, the Spirit in this case, with the derived capacities to participate in the Trinity's nature that are endued upon the creature in the sacraments of Baptism and Epiclesis,⁵⁶⁸ and worship. The divinely-driven incarnation results in the pouring out of the divine Spirit to remain on all flesh. The Holy Spirit's role in this undergirds the Church's sacramental life. The "holy flesh" of the Body of Christians receives the Body of Christ at the Eucharist, participating in the Son's divine flesh. Perfect divine nature is not changed, but fully revealed, as it is endowed upon the creature. The distinctiveness of Father, Son and Holy Spirit is not depicted as three differing divine beings, because the shared divine nature distinguishes the persons of the Trinity from all else. The Son, in this regard, is *unlike* the Saints, who by the

⁵⁶⁶ À g'r™n fusikí dÒxV ka^ ÷lhqiní t³n Ólhn tri£da nohtšon, À mon£da ka^ oÙkšti tri£da lšgein ÷nagkasqhsÓmeqa... ÷sebĭj tĭ kt...smata sšbousin: *KMP* 9, Lietzmann, 1904:170.

⁵⁶⁷ *KMP* 9, Lietzmann, 1904:170.

⁵⁶⁸ 1™p...klhsij in the context, here, of the use of the Holy Trinity to sanctify the creature, is ambiguous. It refers, of course, to the invocation of the name of the Holy Trinity in Christian piety, but resonates, too, with liturgical Epiclesis: the Eucharistic transfiguration of created things into the divine body and blood of Christ (and the people of Christ by the epiclesis of the Holy Spirit in the so-called "second" Eucharistic epiclesis), in Apollinarius' phrase ÷ll'™p' ĆnÒmati tÁj ĩg...aj tri£doj tÓ b£ptisma ka^ 1™p...klhsij ka^ 1latre...a, *KMP* 9, Lietzmann, 1904:170.

mediation of his divine nature through the Spirit, receive eternal nature though they are *ex nihilo*. Asserting that the basic choice in theological models is between a thorough trinitarianism or Monism - either modalistic or Arian in expression - Apollinarius offers soteriological justification for the necessity of Trinitarian theology. The miaphyostatic theological tradition is refined: already it is the case that *Ἐμμοῦσιος* has been constructed differently from the modalistic implications of Marcellus's miaphyostatic model. Apollinarius's distinctive Trinitarian theology of the persons with its emphasis upon mediation of authentic divine life counters Marcellus's temporal – and hence temporary – model of the divine Monad's accommodated self-differentiation for humanity's salvation. He recognizes that this reduces Christology to a penultimate concern because the divine unity is preserved at the cost of a Godhead who changes to meet the needs of the hour. So Apollinarius reiterates the impassability and unchangeability of divine nature in anti-Marcellan argument, urging a Trinitarian resolution.

Apollinarius continues to expound this context for the incarnation in a Trinitarian soteriology.⁵⁶⁹ Re-visiting earlier discussion of the incarnation from this Trinitarian perspective, Apollinarius more fully delineates the parameters of change in the economy. The incarnation did not mutate divine nature. Its workings, properly hidden in the mind of God, remain Mystery, but its purpose is clear. Divine nature is not changed; rather human nature is rescued from its temporal hurtling to decay and diminishment. Human nature, mutated from God's purpose in creation into the nothing from which it was created, is

⁵⁶⁹ Lietzmann, 1904:171.

connected with the divine nature after the pattern of the flesh of Christ. The love of the Father, in the incarnation of the divine Son, temporally represented by the Holy Spirit, cannot be construed as the divine nature changing. The Holy Trinity, in the person of the Son and the life of the Spirit, engages with the consequences of human sin in such a way as is completely consistent with God's purposes from eternity. Each divine Person willingly participates in the incarnation, to renew and perfect humanity.⁵⁷⁰

The Incarnate Logos neither limits the Logos's cosmological and theological functions, nor has, in addition to the divine subject, an assumed "fallen" humanity, which is fully divinized on a prosopic plane,⁵⁷¹ but is, rather, the Logos, the divine Son, properly located in the new, holy humanity of Christ's "divine flesh."

Therefore we believe that, without any change to the divine nature, the incarnation of the Word happened for the renewal of human nature... The enfleshed divinity, having become a citizen on earth (according to the Humanity)... yet filled all things [according to his own divine nature] in the [holy] flesh, completely harmonized [sugkekramšnoj = brought together, blended, composite].⁵⁷²

⁵⁷⁰ prŌj ϕnaka...nwsin tÁj ϕnqrwpŌthtoj, *KMP 11*, Lietzmann, 1904:171.

⁵⁷¹ See, chapter 5, below.

⁵⁷² [Keflaion d□ tÁj swthr...aj 1mîn 1 toà IŌgou sErkwsij.] PisteŪomen oân ϕnalloiètou menoŪshj tÁj qeŌthtoj t³⁄₄n sErkwsin toà IŌgou gegenÁsqai prŌj ϕnaka...nwsin tÁj ϕnqrwpŌthtoj... ka^ kat; tŌ ϕnqrèpinon ™p^ gÁj politeus£menoj Ð toà qeoà IŌgoj t³⁄₄n qeik³⁄₄n ™p^ p£nta parous...an Ðmo...wj diefŪlaxen, p£nta peplhrwkëj „d...wj te tí sark^ sugkekramšnoj, ka^ tîn per^ sErka paqîn ginomšnwn t³⁄₄n ϕp£qeian 1 dŪnamij e□cen t³⁄₄n ~autÁj. Lietzmann, 1904:170-1.

Sugkekramšnoj is to be understood as Apollinarius's attempt to safeguard the singular personality of Christ in the holy *ὑπόστασις*, so that *pathos* need not be attributed directly to divine nature, because the humanity and holy flesh of the Son is subsumed itself as a function of *divine* mediation. Perhaps in this "Spirit"-revision of *KMP*, Apollinarius extends the soteriological and ontological use of divine mediation to the Holy Spirit, the medium of divine, saving nature endowed upon Christians, as an argument of the Spirit's divinity. In both Christological and Pneumatological senses, mediation is, as it were, conceived of as "from above", fully consistent with Athanasian priorities of *CG-DI*: Apollinarius argues for the necessity of transforming, divine nature revealed and given by God, to be received by all humanity. But Apollinarius presses this Christologically: clearly Jesus Christ is an exception to this: because his identity and ontology is divine, he obviously does not "need" to receive derived divine life as gift. The mediator attains in his own body the particularity of human life without mutating or changing divine nature. Apollinarius excludes any perception of the incarnation as the eternal divine Logos co-existing with an "ordinary," or, more significantly, *fallen* man. The divine Logos is the *νοῦς* of Christ: he is therefore the only *real* Man, the first Adam more-than-renewed: the Last Adam, humanity's destiny, disclosed. The consequential description of "blending" will be resisted in subsequent Christology because of connections with distortion into a *tertium quid* associated with it. However, even in the notorious fragment about mules and she-asses, much quoted and now devoid of its context, the *aim* of Apollinarius (however successful or inappropriate the image) in the context of *KMP*, appears to be that of maintaining *both* the distinct properties *and* divine reality and unity in the Incarnate Word. His theology is compatible with later articulations of Nicene

Christology, e.g., “Neither confounding the Persons: nor dividing the Substance”,⁵⁷³ but Apollinarius’s absolute conviction remains that it is the humanity of the first Adam, and the last, with which the Logos is completely united henoprosopically. Apollinarius maintains, by the doctrine of *creatio ex nihilo*, that the Incarnate Word is, (again in the poetic double Christological application in the *Athanasian Creed*) “Equal to the Father, as touching his Godhead; and inferior to the Father, as touching his manhood.”⁵⁷⁴ Even that humanity which is far superior to our own fallen nature (which is hurtling back into the nothing which is its “own place,”) is created out of nothing, yet secured by the divine union, that which in Adam decayed is safe, remaining⁵⁷⁵ and held eternally in him for humanity’s salvation, an inheritance that nothing can spoil or mutate or wither.⁵⁷⁶

Apollinarius then turns to a specific anti-Sabellian polemic. With Marcellus in his sights, he considers the soteriological and Christological implications of the Holy Trinity.⁵⁷⁷ He reasserts the necessity for a *real* Trinity of three substantial⁵⁷⁸ persons:

But there are some who attend to the subject of the Holy Trinity dreadfully, arrogantly insisting that there are not three persons, instead introducing the notion of a person without *hypostasis*.⁵⁷⁹

⁵⁷³ *Quicumque vult*, BCP, 1969:65.

⁵⁷⁴ *Quicumque vult*, BCP, 1969:65.

⁵⁷⁵ On *menekn* in Athanasius see above, chapter 2.

⁵⁷⁶ Cf. 1 Pe.1:4.

⁵⁷⁷ §§13-18, 24-26; 33-35, Lietzmann, 1904:171-173, 175-176, 180-181.

⁵⁷⁸ I.e., not *ϕnupÒstaton*.

⁵⁷⁹ ...of tr...a prÒswpa oÙk eϑnai diiscurizÒmenoi, éesper ϕnupÒstaton e„sÉgontej prÒswpon KMP 13, Lietzmann, 1904:171.

Apollinarius's use of anhypostatic, here illustrates his understanding of *Ἐμμοῦσιος*: it is a term which means more than *οὐσία*... because it connects the *οὐσία*... with the persons of the Trinity.⁵⁸⁰ Here Apollinarius represents a conceptual refinement preparing for the abandonment of the use of *ὑπόστασις* to refer to the divine *οὐσία*... of the Trinity: the anhypostatic tradition is undergoing phenomenal transformation. The argument for the single *ἁποστάσις* of Christ is clearly differentiated from the fluidity of usage between *οὐσία*... and *ἁποστάσις* in *Trinitarian* description. God the Holy Trinity cannot strictly be referred to as a single hypostasis (though the divine nature is summed up in such terms in CA III & IV). Apollinarius concludes his differentiation of his position from that of a Marcellan depiction of a single *οὐσία*... shared by Father and Son. He has shown that *Ἐμμοῦσιος* does not impose a theological model of modalistic monism: *ἁποστάσις* is the means whereby Apollinarius refutes Nicaea's detractors by condemning the neo-Sabellianism traditionally associated with Marcellus's view of a Monad who, adopting to the sinful and helpless state of humanity, mutates, as it were, economically, into a Trinity, until the end, when the Son and Spirit present all things, including themselves, back to the Father. Apollinarius labours the point somewhat, but his thrust is unambiguous, three *divine* persons are truly divine - there is a single divine *οὐσία*... - hence Father, Son and Spirit are beyond passion, unaffected and undisturbed by change. Change is a characteristic of the created world, so the persons of the Trinity, are not bound by limitations of created existence or temporality. The rationale of the incarnation, then, is to

⁵⁸⁰ Lietzmann, 1904:159, suggests that *Quod unus sit Christus* was written by Apollinarius, where he argues in similar vein that it is wrong to say that there are two *hypostaseis* in Christ rather than one, as that would introduce a fourth *hypostasis* into the Godhead. Mühlenberg, 1978, denies Apollinarius's authorship, so Spoerl, 1999, where she says that this is "the closest any Apollinarian comes to saying that there are three *ὑποστάσεις* in the Trinity."

change created nature, but in no way does this diminish divine reality. Apollinarius builds upon Athanasius's argument from *creatio ex nihilo* to maintain not only the divinity of the persons of the trinity, but their unity: they have a common, uncreated nature, divine reality, which preserved eternally the divine $\text{Øp}\text{Østaseij}$ in three $\text{pr}\text{Øswpa}$. Hence it is inadequate to refer to any one $\text{pr}\text{Øswpon}$ as if the other persons are the same: their distinctiveness is theologically significant. In contrast to Arian arguments that to acknowledge the divinity of the Son diminishes the Father, Apollinarius asserts that to speak of the divinity of the persons of the Son and the Spirit, is also to acknowledge the peculiar quality („ $\text{di}\text{Øthta toà patr}\text{Øj}$) of the Father:⁵⁸¹

For if one speaks of any single *prosopon* just as if [it were] a single divinity, it is not the case that the two are in the unity [$\text{™n t}\text{ù } \tilde{n}\dots$] as one [$\text{æj } \text{›n}$].⁵⁸²

Apollinarius asserts that there is no justification for such fluidity in theological language which connects the persons of the Holy Trinity interchangeably for the sake of a mechanistic mediation. Each person of the Trinity is in complete divine union with the other, Son and Spirit participate in the fulness of the Father's divinity in complete communion, but this does not confuse the discrete activities of each. A theology of full communion between real, differentiated persons of the Holy Trinity is paramount for Apollinarius, who strives to solve the puzzle of distinct persons of the Trinity whilst maintaining the personal unity of the mediating Son through locating the Logos of the Father in the Incarnate Christ,

⁵⁸¹ *KMP* 15, Lietzmann, 1904:172.

⁵⁸² e„ d□ ka^ $\text{pr}\text{Øswpon } \text{›n}$ lšgei tij éesper ka^ t $\frac{3}{4}$ n qeØthta m...an, Ńuk œstin æj ›n t! dÚo $\text{™n t}\text{ù } \tilde{n}\dots$ *KMP* 15, Lietzmann, 1904:172.

whilst not restricting the influence of the Logos to his own body with which he is united uniquely: he reigns, as it were, over all creation, even from the agony of the Cross. Apollinarius's emphasis upon a singularity of subject in the Son communicates that he has the divine properties of the Father, as they are alike divine, whilst having different identities. The *ØpÒstasij* of "Father" must never, therefore, be short-hand for "God": even if the fullness of divine nature is begotten of the Father (in the case of the Son) or proceeds from him (in the case of the Spirit). Divine nature must not be withheld from the Son in Christological expression, neither through dyohypostatic Christological tradition, nor – in this context – by Marcellus whose theology robs the Son of any hypostatic divine being, so really restricting true divine nature to the Father:

And calling the Son God in the manner specific for the Father... let the *hypostasis* of the Father stand as the description of God, not withholding the Son from that, because his being is from God.⁵⁸³

Apollinarius insists upon a tri-hypostatic Trinity again. He also insists that the union of natures in the divine person of the Son, is permanent both in terms of his divinity and in terms of his humanity, this is possible only because of the divine personality of the Son fixing the humanity as "heavenly flesh." Humanity's salvation is thus secured. The Logos is the sole enlivening agent, because he, (with the Father and the Spirit) is truly divine. His humanity contrasts to the

⁵⁸³ ka[^] qeÕn m□n tÕn ufÕn tù „dièmati toà patrÕj kaloàntej...éste gnwrizšsqw m□n ¹ ØpÒstasij toà patrÕj tí toà qeoà proshgor...v, m¾ diatetm»sqw d□ taUthj Ð ufÕj æj ín TMk qeoà *KMP* 17, Lietzmann, 1904:173. Spoerl, 1999:fn64: "So let the *ØpÒstasij* of the Father be acknowledged by the title of 'God,' but do not let the Son be cut off from this title since He is from God."

moribund identity of undivinized men and women.⁵⁸⁴ There is thus a soteriological need for a single *divine* ØpÒstasij of the Son's divine humanity. The assumption of an "external" humanity would urge towards a "quarternity" of beings, one of which would be *creatio ex nihilo* in the godhead.⁵⁸⁵ Apollinarius resists models of an assumed man, or even an assumed "fallen" humanity is part of his Trinitarian description. His argument, to sum up, pivots upon Christological issues of mediation and participation and the henoprosopic divine personal identity of the Son in the Trinity.

Apollinarius moves to apply this refusal to confuse language about the persons of the Trinity to the person of the Holy Spirit. The Trinity's divine unity is not achieved by the synthesis (sÚnqesij) of the three persons: such a model would

⁵⁸⁴ Cf. the possibly Apollinarian *De Incarnatione Verbi Dei*, where Apollinarius's "holy flesh" or "divine flesh" finds more acceptable expression in his reflections of resurrection life: "Dead men cannot take effective action; their power of influence on others lasts only until the grave. Deeds and actions that energize others belong only to the living. Well, then, look at the facts in this case. The Saviour is working mightily among us, every day he is invisibly persuading numbers of people all over the world, both within and beyond the Greek-speaking world, to accept his faith and be obedient to his teaching. Can anyone, in the face of this, still doubt that he is risen and that he lives, or rather that he himself is the Life? Does a dead man prick the consciences of people, so that they throw all the traditions of their fathers to the winds and bow down before the teaching of Christ? If he is no longer active in the world, as he must needs be if he is dead, how is it that he makes the living to cease from their activities: the adulterer from his adultery, the murderer from murdering, the unjust from avarice, while the profane and godless man becomes religious? If he did not rise, but is still dead, how is it that he routs and persecutes and overthrows the false gods, whom unbelievers think to be alive, and the evil spirits whom they worship? For where Christ is named, idolatry is destroyed and the fraud of evil spirits is exposed; indeed, no such spirit can endure that Name, but takes to flight on sound of it. This is not the work of one who lives, not of one dead; and, more than that, it is the work of God." The divine personality as the Life of humanity fits *KMP*. Cf. Norris, 1996:43, citing Newman's edition of Athanasius's *Select Treatises*, 1869-81, of Christ's resurrection: [he] "was raised again and justified by the Spirit; and what was wrought in him is repeated in us who are his brethren, and the complement and ratification of his work... The divine life which raised him, flowed over and availed unto our rising again from sin and condemnation. It wrought a change in his sacred manhood, which became spiritual, without his ceasing to be man, and was in a wonderful way imparted to us as a new-creating, transforming power in our hearts."

⁵⁸⁵ Apollinarius accepts the reception of humanity's created being into the Godhead in the Son *soteriologically*, but resists it as an appropriate Christological explanation of the incarnation: an assumption misses the point *ontologically*. The reality of the Trinity for Apollinarius is threatened by this – for it would merely be an economic modification of monotheism *à la* Marcellus. Apollinarius insists upon hypostatic distinction within the Godhead in three real but completely divine prÒswpa.

be partative and imperfect (mšroj g|r ʔpan ʔtelej).⁵⁸⁶ Apollinarius observes divine order in the Trinity, the Father is styled *ϕrc»* of the Son, and not his brother, and the Spirit is the Spirit of God, but this mysterious procession and relationship does not undermine the divine reality of the three *prÒswpa*. The persons of the Trinity have both a *koinwn...a* and a unity: there are not three Gods, nor three Lords, nor three divine *oÙs...ai*, but one divine nature.⁵⁸⁷ The Father's unique, distinct and eternal *prÒswpon* shares a single, divine *oÙs...a*, with the Son and the Spirit. Divinity assumes flesh accordingly, not assuming a particular soul or person. Christ's Logos is his own Logos, his own *noàj*. The *oÙs...a* of the Holy Trinity does not subsist in created things, without enduing a divine reality. Redeemed life consists of sanctification to complete communion, *koinwn...a*, with the divine Trinity, where humanity is glorified and transfigured by the divine splendour.

In *KMP* 18 (Lietzmann, 1904:173) Apollinarius offers a creedal summation of his argument, which gives a more textured context to understand the meaning of the “holy flesh” of the Incarnate Word. He echoes Athanasius's fundamental distinction between the Holy Trinity and everything else, a distinction both temporal and eternal because God is constant (Marcellus's adapting monotheism is again condemned). By the Holy Union and the mediating work of the Holy Spirit – perceived primarily in terms of sanctifying, continuing, then the work of the Son – anything in being has relation and communion with the Holy Trinity.

⁵⁸⁶ *KMP* 18, Lietzmann, 1904:173.

⁵⁸⁷ *ϕn£tirrhtwj koinwn...an ka^ ˘nÒthta œconta, kaq' ¿n oÜ te qeÒthtej trej oÜte kuriÒthtej oÜte jgiÒthtej, ϕll' ϕlhqij, tîn triîn prosèpwn menÒtwn beba...wj, tîn triîn t¼n ›nwsin Ðmologhtšon. Lietzmann, 1904:175. Cp the “Athanasian Creed”: “Alia est enim persona Patris, alia Filii; alia Spiritus Sancti. Sed Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sancti una est divinitas: æqualis gloria, coæterna majestas” Cf. *BCP*, 1965:65.*

Created by the Father's will through the Logos, redeemed in accordance with these eternal purposes by the Incarnate Word, and sanctified and preserved by the divine presence – the work of the divine Spirit – the creature is sanctified. The Son's taking human flesh and reality from the Blessed Virgin in the union, remains imperative: it is not lost or laid aside after the Ascension. So, Apollinarius argues, Christians worship the whole Logos incarnate, the heavenly flesh of whom is united with the divine nature in the single $\rho\acute{o}\sigma\omega\pi\omicron\nu$ of the Son never to be disentangled, not even at the eschatological re-presentation of all things to the Father.⁵⁸⁸ Not only shall the Son's kingdom have no end, his $\rho\acute{o}\sigma\omega\pi\omicron\nu$ and $\emptyset\pi\acute{o}\sigma\tau\acute{\alpha}\sigma\iota\varsigma$ is eternal. This divinized humanity that is worshipped as part of the mystery: there is a "Singularity of worship" of the Son. Cyril will make more explicit some of the consequences of the lack of a fully divine understanding of the person of Christ at the Eucharistic consumption of the flesh and blood of Christ: it would not be possible to worship a created centre of existence, that would be idolatry; and the Eucharist cannibalism.⁵⁸⁹

Another soteriologically-driven argument appears to have been added in this section.⁵⁹⁰ Just as the true divine nature of the Son was mediated by the Holy Spirit upon the Blessed Virgin Mary, so, if the salvation and sanctification of Christians is to be secure, then the Holy Spirit must be fully divine. Otherwise, there is no assurance of God's abiding presence among things which, created out of nothing and returning to nothing, need to be united to, and in communion

⁵⁸⁸ Lietzmann, 1904:176-7. Cf. the Constantinopolitan addition to the Creed of Nicaea: $\omicron\acute{\alpha}\ \tau\acute{\alpha}\ \beta\alpha\sigma\iota\lambda\epsilon\ \dots\ \alpha\ \nu\acute{\omicron}\ \kappa\ \alpha\epsilon\sigma\tau\alpha\iota\ \tau\acute{\sigma}\lambda\omicron\ \nu$ - the Son's kingdom, like the Son's $\emptyset\pi\acute{o}\sigma\tau\acute{\alpha}\sigma\iota\varsigma$, "will know no end".

⁵⁸⁹ See below, chapter 5.

⁵⁹⁰ Interrupting the course of Christologically-focused Trinitarian theology here, Lietzmann, 1914:167.

with, divine life if they are to remain. Apollinarius applies this particular soteriological concern to the question of the full divinity of the Spirit.

The only alternatives Apollinarius offers other than his own Trinitarian theology, is his construct of “Arianism” or a Marcellan model. Apollinarius is committed to Trinitarianism so that there cannot be two *active loci* of personality in the Son: that would distort divine nature’s immutability. Salvation is cast solely in terms of fallen humanity being assumed and divinized by the humiliation of the Logos in the incarnation and passion, and by his glorious resurrection with its overflowing consequences. Apollinarius construes this salvation *ontologically*. This soteriological motivation is a very different model than that urged by Gregg and Groh (1981) to describe Arius’s motivation. Apollinarius does not refer to salvation on the creature’s terms, rather its assumption and divinization after the manner of the holy union. Apollinarius’s soteriological emphasis proceeds from his argument that as the divine Word put on the garment of our flesh in the Mystery, so we must put on the divine nature, the resurrection life, given to us by him to enter the marriage banquet of the lamb.⁵⁹¹ The Son *mediates* only in as much as he *endows* his prevailing divine nature upon all flesh in the manner of his incarnation. The Spirit continues this mediation: the most significant fact of Christian salvation is that the Union works for the renewal of all humanity.⁵⁹²

Passion and Crucifixion have a theological significance only because of the union: it is redeemed from being another meaningless tragedy in the world of

⁵⁹¹ The danger here is that it can be misconstrued to imply that the Son put on humanity as if it were a costume. But Apollinarius is at pains to argue for the hypostatic union through the real humanity of the Son from Mary.

⁵⁹² prŌj ϕnaka...nwsin tÁj ϕnqrwpŌthtoj. Cp *KMP* 36, Lietzmann, 1904:181.

created existence, because the divinized humanity of the Incarnate Word, enables the faithful to

confess the suffering of the Lord, according to the flesh.⁵⁹³

Christ's heavenly flesh thus has a mediating function as it is the means whereby human suffering is known by the divine Son, and the means whereby, through enduring suffering, powerless matter, created *ex nihilo*, is endowed with divine power. Apollinarius attempts to hold together essential theology with the drama of salvation at every point. He explicitly attempts to subvert other models of faith which emphasize a human linked with God, an ἄνθρωπον θεὸν συναψῆντα.⁵⁹⁴

Rather than a model of conjunction or juxtaposition of two natures with (according to Apollinarius) two centres of personality, the nature of the σῆρκωσις is the Trinity's effecting divinisation of all flesh without mutation. The Incarnate Word has a unity of purpose and personality, not two discrete identities or personalities. The centre of the Incarnate Logos's identity, the νοῦς, acts and directs the body divinely. The Incarnate God retains his own energy, οὐς...α, and unconquerable νοῦς, to lead home the people of God without diminution or fear of loss:

For God, incarnate in humanity's flesh, retains his own energy, [his] mind unconquerable by fleshly natures and passions, so capable of

⁵⁹³ *KMP* 29, Lietzmann, 1904:178.

⁵⁹⁴ Lietzmann, 1904:178.

leading the flesh and the promptings of the flesh divinely and
sinlessly.⁵⁹⁵

Apollinarius's *leitmotif* makes sense of his refusal of a human *noàj*: the untransfigured, undivinized humanity (*qua* created and fallen humanity) has no place TMn tí qe...v doxolog...v. The centre of the Christian truth for Apollinarius is salvation construed as the sanctification of human life by its being endowed with the divine nature of the Son and the energy:

the Word of God was made man for our salvation in order that we might receive the likeness of the Heavenly [One]; and be made divine after the likeness of him who is *truly* Son of God by nature (kat| fÚsin).⁵⁹⁶

Apollinarius insists upon ontological distinction of the divinity of the Son and the endowed, graceful divinity (by his passion and through the Spirit) upon those who are in Christ. Apollinarius does not expound how there are “grades” as it were of divine nature, but the distinction is present in *KMP*. The absolute, real and unmutated divine nature of the Incarnate Logos, by the power of that hypostatic union, extends to all flesh, and remains in perfect communion with humanity in Christ.⁵⁹⁷

⁵⁹⁵ *noàj* ϕ»ttthtoj ên tîn fucikîn ka[^] sarkikîn paqhm£twⁿ *KMP* 30, Lietzmann, 1904:178.

⁵⁹⁶ ¹me:j g£r famen ¥nqrwpon gegenÁsqai tÔn toà qeoà IÒgon prÔj swthr...an ¹mîn, †na t¼n Ðmo...wsin toà TMpouran...ou l£bwmen ka[^] qeopoihqîmen prÔj ÐmoiÒthta toà kat| fÚsin ϕlhqinoà ufoà toà qeoà, kat| s£rka d□ ufoà ϕnqrèpou kur...ou ¹mîn 'lhoà Cristoà. *KMP* 31, Lietzmann, 1904:179.

⁵⁹⁷ Cf. Wolfson's strained argument (1956:440), determined to demonstrate the logical inadequacies of Apollinarius's Christology: “while the body and the Logos in Jesus form one nature by reason of the lack of a rational soul in the body... the body with its irrational soul is still something distinct from the Logos, inasmuch as in its union with the Logos it is not completely

Apollinarius provides another résumé at paragraph 32 in Lietzmann's text,⁵⁹⁸ before advancing his theological theme. The Son and Spirit are both self-subsistent, existing co-eternally in divine communion with the Father,⁵⁹⁹ neither are created by an *external* will of the Father.⁶⁰⁰ the Logos *is* the noàj of the Father, and the Spirit his life. The incarnation of the Son enables a theology of double ÐmooÚsioj to emerge.⁶⁰¹ Here, however, is not the point for Apollinarius to interrupt his discourse by a lengthy exploration of double ÐmooÚsioj: there is more dynamic to be described in his particular treatment of Trinitarian soteriology. The unity *and* the eternal tri-personality of the persons of the Trinity are not simply that of appearance (an Anti-Marcellan thrust), nor merely a hermeneutical device, nor something achieved by the human Son's participation with the divine (perhaps an attack upon a semi-Arian Christological construction) but the ontological foundation of Christian salvation. `OmooÚsioj is fundamental in Apollinarius's Trinitarian model, because, as we have observed in Athanasius, the fundamental cosmological-theological differentiation is between divine and created life, and the fullest significance of salvation is the transformation of human beings into the life of God in Christ. Only the notion of ÐmooÚsioj can

destroyed... or completely changed into the Logos." Wolfson ignores the essential-soteriological nuances of Apollinarius in his application of a Philonic-Origenistic critique of Apollinarius's fragments. Cf. Hanson, 1993:60, on his suggestion that Arius's thought was fed by Philo (because Philo taught two *Logoi*, and that one was created *ex nihilo*): "But then, Wolfson was obsessed to an excessive degree with the influence of Philo on the Fathers; Philo's *Logos*-doctrine is confused and obscure; he does not make the same division between the *Logos* and God as did the Arians." So Lorentz, 1980:103-106.

⁵⁹⁸ *KMP* 32, Lietzmann, 1904:179f.

⁵⁹⁹ zînta ka^ Øfestîta ka^ TMnergon, œe^ sunÒnta tù patr... *KMP* 32, Lietzmann, 1904:180.

⁶⁰⁰ oÙ poi»sei tí TMk boul»sewj, Lietzmann, 1904:180.

⁶⁰¹ Meredith, 1995:103: "On the whole it can be said that the central aim of all parties was to steer some sort of middle course between the position of Arius on the one hand and Marcellus of Ancyra on the other. This means that though all agreed that Arius had been wrong, if he meant that the Son was not co-eternal with the Father, Marcellus was no less wrong in denying any real and eternal distinction between the Father and the Son. Cappadocian theology is an attempt to interpret the central term *homoousios* in such a way as to insist on the full deity of the Son and of his eternal distinction from the Father."

permit the soteriological gates to burst open.⁶⁰² Salvation is the giving of divine life.⁶⁰³ This divine life, when appropriated by the creature,⁶⁰⁴ is transmitted by mediation of Son and Spirit. Their ontologically divine $\text{Øp}\text{Østaseij}$ remain the means by which this divine nature is lavished upon the creature. Humanity's share in divine life is by grace, through the Son's divinity, in a Christocentric-Pneumaticocentric manner.

Apollinarius's approach is bold, but the fact that he needs to rehabilitate $\text{Ømoo}\text{Úsioj}$ confirms a Marcellan environment for this term in its anti-Arius use.⁶⁰⁵ The Son made his home in the world⁶⁰⁶ in the incarnation by the Holy Spirit, resulting in sanctification. The Son's incarnation and the Holy Spirit's coming are

⁶⁰² Lietzmann, 1904:177. The sanctifying role of the Holy Spirit conveys the nature of the Trinity to the creature that it may "remain". Apollinarius fixes all this upon the reality and differentiation of the divine persons.

⁶⁰³ Cyril further develops this in Trinitarian style: the Son gives his divine life for the life of the world, the Spirit enables the creature to appropriate this divine life. Keating, 2000, urges that construing "a narrative of redemption" in Cyril *solely* in the light of the Eucharist is distortive. (*contra* Chadwick, 1951). Such a construction, he argues, limits the concept of participation to the sacramental union of Christian to Christ in the Eucharist, whereas this is not the primary means of indwelling in Cyrilline texts - either numerically or functionally. Rather, pneumatic indwelling is central to Cyril.

⁶⁰⁴ Keating, 2000:4 fn.10: "The verb, 'to appropriate', can mean 'to make over to any as his own', or 'to take for one's own' (*The Oxford Shorter English Dictionary*, vol I. Oxford: Clarendon, 1973, p. 94). The title of this study intentionally plays off an equivocal use of 'appropriate' in order to indicate Christ's active gift of divine life *to* us, and the active reception of this divine life *by* us. The term should not be understood, however, in a technical philosophical sense, according to which our 'appropriation' of divine life would imply that the divine life becomes 'proper' to our human nature. For Cyril, our share in the divine life is always 'by grace', and not 'by nature.'" On the meaning of *theosis/theopoiesis*, see Russell, 1988, who examines the use and significance of this as markedly "Alexandrian" in Clement, Origen, Athanasius, Apollinarius & Didymus the Blind (1988:221-360).

⁶⁰⁵ This does not resolve the largest puzzle: which we have explored above, namely, if Arius was to be suppressed, why did the Nicaean Fathers adopt a device which could be (and appears to have been) so easily rejected as Sabellian, and which even Athanasius did not use until its rehabilitation by such theological foundations as those of Apollinarius? Hanson, 1988: 272, argues (concerning the Council of Rome): "The Western bishops made no serious attempt to analyse the complexity of the situation which faced them [ie, at the Council of Rome, 341]; they had hitherto remained on the periphery of the controversy; their traditional Monarchianism could square well enough with the little they knew of the Council of Nicaea; by an oversimplification they were able to see Marcellus as orthodox. This intervention gave those in the East who wished to change the Creed of Nicaea an opportunity; the West's vindication of the manifestly heterodox Marcellus increased the disquiet which N[icaea's] Creed, henceforth N[icaea] had already created, for N[icaea] appeared to favour the near-Sabellianism of Marcellus."

⁶⁰⁶ $\text{uf}\text{Øj} \text{ }^{\text{TM}}\text{ped}\text{Ømhse k}\text{ØsmJ} \text{ }^{\text{TM}}\text{k parqšnou labèn, } \text{¿n} \text{ }^{\text{TM}}\text{pl}\text{Ørwsen } \text{ig...ou pneÚmatoj e,j t}\text{Øn p}\text{Øntwn } \text{1m}\text{Øn } \text{igiasm}\text{Øn KMP 35, Lietzmann 1904:181.}$

together reckoned to be salvific: the incarnation is connected to Christians by the Holy Spirit so that the Son's life conveyed by the Holy Spirit, may deliver

death to death and destroy[...] death by the resurrection, which raises us all.⁶⁰⁷

The sustained, close inter-relation between the persons of Son and Spirit, as central to salvation in *KMP* is explicit here. Christian salvation *is* the life of the divine Son mediated by the Spirit. Apollinarius weaves together ontological and soteriological significances of Son and Spirit in a masterly parallelism here at what is the climax of his thesis: in the incarnation, the divine Son takes to himself our human nature (neither being transmuted in the process - made to be a partaker in fallen, sinful humanity – nor assuming a man): in the resurrection his holy flesh is endowed upon all who are in him. The Son is tightly bound in his divinity to our humanity, and thus makes his home in the world. Apollinarius continues⁶⁰⁸ (of the Son):

The One Son, both before and after the Incarnation is the same - God and [a Hu]man [being] - both as One. And God the Logos and the Man Jesus are not [to be conceived of] as separate persons [prÒswpon], but the preëxistent Son was himself made one with

⁶⁰⁷ *u fÕj tM ped»mhse kÒsmJ sErka tMk parqšnou labèn, ç n tM pl»rwsen ig...ou pneÚmatoj e,j tÕn pEntwn 'mîn igiasmÒn.] qanEtJ d□ paradoÝj t'çn sErka tÕn qEnaton œluse di| tAj çnast£sewj e,j t'çn pEntwn 'mîn çn£stasin... KMP 35, Lietzmann, 1904:181. This delivering of the flesh of death refers less in this context to Christ's own assumed body – this would make the resurrection a work of the Holy Spirit, but fits best in the context of the applied divine life to the Christian. Cyril will make this explicit in his reflections on divine indwelling as the Spirit's activity (cf. Keating, 2000).*

⁶⁰⁸ *KMP* paragraph 36, Lietzmann, 1904:181.

flesh through [™k] Mary, in order to bring into himself into complete and holy and sinless human unity, the economy [of which results in] the renewal of humanity and the salvation of the whole universe.⁶⁰⁹

Apollinarius has hitherto alluded to the paradox of the Son's humiliation. Whilst fully divine, the Son was bound with our human nature without becoming a hybrid in the process, neither being two subjects nor centres of identity.⁶¹⁰ The Union is prior, and the economy of salvation depends upon it. This is the context for this text:

The One Son, both before and after the Incarnation is the same - God and [a Hu]man [being] - both as One.⁶¹¹

Apollinarius is not referring to a preëxistent, heavenly "divine-flesh" as his opponents caricature him. He has established that the flesh is a temporal attribute, taken of the Blessed Virgin at the Incarnation. Rather, the unity referred to here is the identity, the single subject of the Incarnate, which is consistent from eternity, neither mutating nor changing.

Mediation of divine life is thus linked with the means of facilitating its appropriation. His Christology proclaims the personal unity of the incarnate

⁶⁰⁹ eEj ufÒj, ka^ prÕ tÁj sarkèsewj ka^ met| t¼n s£rkwsin Ð aÙtÒj, ¥nqrwpoj ka^ qeÒj, ~k£teron æj »n. Ka^ oÙc »teron m□n prÒswpon Ð qeÒj lÓgoj, »teron d□ ¥nqrwpoj 'lhsoàj. φll' aÙtÒj Ð proãp£rcwn ufÒj ~nwqe^j sark^ ™k Mar...aj katšsth, tšleion ka^ »gion ka^ φnam£rthton ¥nqrwpon sunist|j ~autÕn ka^ o„konomín e„j φnanšwsin φnqrwpÒthtoj ka^ kÒsmou pantÕj swt»rion. *KMP* 36, Lietzmann, 1904:181.

⁶¹⁰ In stark contrast to a literal reading of the notorious *Fragment 113*, which counters this argument, see a paraphrased translation at the end of this chapter.

⁶¹¹ eEj ufÒj, ka^ prÕ tÁj sarkèsewj ka^ met| t¼n s£rkwsin Ð aÙtÒj, ¥nqrwpoj ka^ qeÒj, ~k£teron æj »n. *KMP* 35, Lietzmann, 1904:181.

Logos, developing Athanasius's ontological counterpoint: creatures may also be recipients of divine life – to which they have no *a priori* ontological right – through the activity of the Holy Spirit. Apollinarius stresses the collaborative mediation of Son and Holy Spirit:

The Son is one Lord, even as also (is) the Spirit, who transmits [diapšmon] the Lordship of the Son to the sanctified creature.⁶¹²

He delivered death to death and destroyed death by the resurrection, which raises us all.⁶¹³

Resurrection appears as a term indicative of the substantive nature of divinized human life – the ontologically real aspect of the economy of salvation. The active *mediator* of this divine life is the Spirit, who realizes who Christ is, and what he has done, for the Christian.⁶¹⁴

Perfect also is the Holy Spirit of God, who through the Son, furnishing abundantly those adopted children of God, is living and life-imparting, Holy, and sanctifying those participating in him, not at all in the manner of an unsubstantial human breath being breathed.

⁶¹² kÚrioj eÆej Ð ufÒj, æsaÚtwj d□ kaˆ tÕ pneàma, tʒn toà ufoà kuriÒthta diapšmon e,j tʒn ĵgiazomšnhn kt...sin. *KMP* 35, Lietzmann, 1904:180-1.

⁶¹³ qan£tj d□ paradoÝj tʒn s£rka tÕn q£naton œluse di| tÁj çnast£sewj e,j tʒn p£ntwn 1mîn çn£stasin. *KMP* 35, Lietzmann, 1904:181.

⁶¹⁴ The meaning of the Virgin being “filled with the Holy Spirit for the sanctification of all.” *KMP* 35, Lietzmann, 1904:181. Two aspects features of Apollinarius's argument are significant: [1] the Holy Spirit has a necessary divinity to convey divinity to the Blessed Virgin; [2] accordingly, he must be fully divine in order to convey this life to Christians. Apollinarius continues Athanasius's nuanced application of the doctrine of *creatio ex nihilo* to Christology. The argument is ontological in the case of the incarnation of the Son, but soteriologically-focused in the case of the sanctification of Christians. In both aspects, Apollinarius connects salvation's dependence upon the authentic divinity of both Son and Spirit.

So it is that the Trinity is indeed to be worshipped, glorified and honoured and revered: the Father, who is apprehended [nooumšnou] in the Son because the Son is from him, that Son who is glorified in the Father, because he is of the Father, manifested in the Holy Spirit to those who are sanctified.⁶¹⁵

The significance of a single noetic subject to Apollinarius is given clear exposition: the single nature of the divine Son in his humanity is the means of sensible apprehension of the Father, Christians are made participators in his unique knowledge of the Father by the Spirit. A divine noàj protects the integrity of the persons of the Trinity and soteriology in his *schema*. We shall note that Cyril and the subsequent non-Chalcedonian [monophysite] tradition further develop these Christological priorities.

The Christological current in *KMP* then flows back to pneumatological concerns, concluding with a florilegium of Biblical texts which Apollinarius places as an appendix as the grounds for his Trinitarian Pneumatology.⁶¹⁶

Apollinarius's consistent approach to the singularity of subject of Christ, and his justification of this is clear in terms of essential theology and soteriological

⁶¹⁵ Τῆς λέιον δὲ καὶ τῆς πνεύματος τῆς ἐκείνου θεοῦ δι' ὑψίστου κορυφαίου ἐπιτομῆς ὑψίστου, ἐν τῷ καὶ ζωοποιῶν, ἐκείνου καὶ ἐκείνου τῆς ἐκείνου μεταλαμβάνοντων ὑψίστου, οὗτος ἐπιτομῆς ὑψίστου ὑψίστου πνεύματος ἐκείνου ἐκείνου, οὗτος ἐκείνου τῆς ἐκείνου πνεύματος ἐκείνου, οὗτος ἐκείνου τῆς ἐκείνου πνεύματος ἐκείνου, οὗτος ἐκείνου τῆς ἐκείνου πνεύματος ἐκείνου, οὗτος ἐκείνου τῆς ἐκείνου πνεύματος ἐκείνου, οὗτος ἐκείνου τῆς ἐκείνου πνεύματος ἐκείνου, οὗτος ἐκείνου τῆς ἐκείνου πνεύματος ἐκείνου, οὗτος ἐκείνου τῆς ἐκείνου πνεύματος ἐκείνου, οὗτος ἐκείνου τῆς ἐκείνου πνεύματος ἐκείνου. *KMP*, Lietzmann, 1904:181-2.

⁶¹⁶ See footnotes in Lietzmann, 1904:182-194. Apollinarius cites [in this order] 2 Cor. 13.13; 2 Cor. 1.21,22; 2 Cor. 3.15-18; 2 Cor. 4.4-5; 2 Cor. 6.6,4; 2 Cor. 6.6-7; 1 Cor. 3.16-17; 1 Cor. 6.11; 1 Cor. 6.19; 1 Cor. 7.40; 1 Cor. 10.4; 1 Cor. 12.3-13; [strongly alludes to Gal. 1.8-9]; Hebr. 2.3-4; and Hebr. 3.7-11. These cited texts establish, for Apollinarius, the divinity of the Holy Spirit, and if the text as Lietzmann transmits it is a 2nd ["Spirit"] edition of *KMP*, this selection most certainly belongs to that edition.

motives. His use of *ἁμοούσιος* non-modalistically witnesses antipathy against attempted moderations of economic Trinitarianism accommodating essentially Monadic conceptions. His emphatic rehabilitation of this term effectively distances from it from Marcellus. Apollinarius develops Athanasius's application of *creatio ex nihilo* with *ἁμοούσιος* reinforcing the Alexandrian's emphasis upon the cosmological dualism between created things and eternal divine nature. He, additionally, applies *ἁμοούσιος* to the Holy Spirit, who mediates the divine nature of the Son. In *De Unione* Apollinarius attends carefully to the significance of the humanity of the incarnate Son, again applying *ἁμοούσιος* theologically to both the divine nature and to the Son's *ἁμοούσιος* with humanity. It remains to evaluate whether this miahypostatic concern is consistent with other works by Apollinarius, *de Unione* and other fragments. The chapter will conclude with an attempted reading of the notorious fragment in the light of this context.

4.4: Apollinarius's *De Unione* and *Fragments* through the lens of *KMP*

Apollinarius's *De Unione* is, if anything more explicit about the soteriological significance of *ἁμοούσιος* than *KMP*. Here Apollinarius introduces the double homoousion to establish that the ultimate cosmological differentiation of created and non-created being, the *χωρισμός* between divine and human nature characteristic of Athanasius's thought, is only resolved in the incarnation.⁶¹⁷

Thus he is both coessential with God in the invisible Spirit (the flesh being comprehended in the title because it has been united to that

⁶¹⁷ Lietzmann, 1904:189.

which is coessential with God), and again coessential with men (the Godhead being comprehended with the body because it has been united to what is coessential with us). And the nature of the flesh is not altered by its union with what is coessential with God and by its participation in the title of *homoousios*, even as the nature of the Godhead is not changed by its participation of a human body and by bearing the name of a flesh coessential with us.⁶¹⁸

As in *KMP* neither nature is distorted, but humanity is, rather, endowed with its ultimate destiny: the nature of the Son. The oft-quoted accusation that Apollinarius used a model of blending which reduced each oÙs...a to a third entity in the Holy Union is clearly far from this text also, and misconstrues the central thesis of both texts. This requires a critical evaluation of the provenance and context of the scandalous texts: if they are his, an evaluation of the *purpose* of those particular similes is required. *De Unione* confirms the methodological importance of taking *KMP* as the hermeneutical key to a reading of Apollinarius.

4.5: Towards Trinitarianism: the place of mediation and the refinement of “miahypostatic” theology

In this chapter we have observed how the issue of mediation is handled by Apollinarius against Marcellus. Athanasius’s thought is developed in Apollinarius against what is a creative and provocative model of adapted Logos theology in a miahypostatic mould in Marcellus. Apollinarius thus offers a constant critique of Marcellan theology, and hones the *miahypostatic* Christological tradition, into a

⁶¹⁸ Lietzmann, 1904:188; Translation of Norris, 1980:105.

thoroughly Trinitarian model, clarifying the use of *ØpÒstasij* in a way that subsequent Councils will use as normative. A reading of Apollinarius's theology which takes the complete text of *KMP* as the primary source, illustrates his substantive agreement with later exponents of the Alexandrian tradition, especially Cyril. Moreover, Apollinarius's theology is compatible with a radical reading of *CG-DI* as outlined above: because there the *divine* identity of the incarnate Son is so theologically significant that Athanasius has to refine it in his anti-Arian tractates.

Apollinarius's connection of the unity of the Son's personality with soteriology is a development of Athanasius's insistence upon soteriological remaining in the Son, replacing a Platonic *Middle Place* in the cosmologies of traditionalists like Eusebius. Apollinarius roots Trinitarian thinking in the incarnation, and miahypostatic Christology in the context of tri-hypostatic, homoousian theology. His promotion of the notion of Athanasius's construction of mediation reflects his awareness of the weakness in miahypostatic neglect of the theological significance of Christ's humanity. Apollinarius shares the Christological approach of *DI*: the Logos replaces the image of the Logos. A particular reading of transformative mediation is a significant dynamic in both.

Furthermore, Apollinarius recognizes some of the difficulties for conventional anthropology and soteriology which Athanasius's emphasis upon the Incarnation reinforces. *Infinitus fit finitus, et finitum fit infinitum*. But the *Infinitus* is not distorted in the becoming *finitus*; and the *finitum* is made *infinitum* in a way which always preserves Athanasius's absolute ontological distinction of eternal Son and

created sons who, by grace, receive divinity through the Spirit. Athanasius's theology which wrestled ontologically with the Christological assumption of humanity into divine reality leads Apollinarius to a Trinitarian theology emphatic of the full divinity of the Holy Spirit:

the Church is the Spirit-bearing body of Christ, [and] ... the Holy Ghost really dwells in the Church and maintains its life... [T]o say that the Holy Ghost is the life or the soul of the Church is, if one is doing anything more than employing a picturesque metaphor, to say that God is really communicating himself to men, that the Church consists of deified humanity. For the Holy Ghost is God himself... the Church is the Spirit-bearing body [which is]... another way of saying that the principle of unity of the Holy Trinity and the principle of the Church's unity are identical, for the [reality]... of both is the Holy Ghost (Mascall, 1965:9).

In Apollinarius, Athanasius's concern for a communion-creating mediation located in the Son, is extended to the Spirit. The motive is soteriological, the method ontological. The Spirit's mediation conveys divine nature upon humanity in a manner far exceeding humanity's aboriginal state. The divine Spirit conveys and mediates his divine life to those in Christ. Mediation is the task of the third person of the Trinity, who communicates Christ's achievement in the Church. Christology is perhaps for the first time set in a thoroughly Trinitarian context in

KMP. Apollinarius argues that this leaves no place for a counter Logos,⁶¹⁹ a persisting assumed human *noàj*, in Christ. His full humanity consists in his being the Logos of God: anthropology is thus significantly expanded as Cyril will explicate. Apollinarius is unconcerned about the assumption of a (singular, actual) man in order that one particular nature can be restored in the union. Rather, he emphasizes the Holy Trinity's divinizing of all human life. To construe this as "impersonal" is to miss his soteriological / ontological emphasis. Apollinarius breaks free from Origen's model in an authentically Trinitarian manner, insisting that a human *noàj* other than the Logos of God in the incarnate Christ would confuse his person, and diminish his humanity. It is not *fully* human to be *one fallen* human. Full humanity consists of communion with God – it is the possession only of the first Adam before the Fall, and the gift of the last Adam in the incarnation. Apollinarius's Christ offers a proleptic new humanity which more than merely restoring the fallen, transforms it into his divine life. The drama of *DI* 54's *aÙtÕj g|r™nhnqrèphsen, †na 1mexj qeopoihqîmen* is given full explication in Apollinarius. The Spirit's role is fully integrated as the agent of this *qeopo...hsij* establishing his full divinity.

⁶¹⁹ I am using this in a "plain sense", i.e., not in a technical manner like Bonhoeffer, 1974:29, who uses Anti-Logos as a Christological foundation. His methodology begins with humanity's perception of its own Logos and counters this with Christ the true Logos: "Man's ultimate presupposition lies in his human Logos ... What if somewhere the claim is raised that this human Logos is superceded, judged, dead? What happens if a counter-Logos appears which refuses to be classified? A Logos which annihilates the first? What if the proclamation goes out that the old order has been dissolved, that it is out of date? First of all the human Logos repeats its old question. How is such a claim possible?... It forestalls the claim by negating itself and at the same time asserting that this negation is a necessary development of its own being. This is the ultimate deceit and the ultimate power of the Logos. This is what Hegel did in his philosophy. The reaction of the Logos under the attack of the Anti-Logos is no narrow-minded repudiation of the other Logos, as in the Enlightenment, but the great insight into its power of self-negation. Self-negation, however, means self-affirmation... But what if the Anti-Logos ... no longer appears in history as an idea, but as the Word incarnate, there is no longer any possibility of incorporating him into the order of man's own Logos." Bonhoeffer's case here is not far from Apollinarius's. The incarnation is about the divine Logos encountering, entering in the flesh the human Logos, but not to be juxtaposed with it, but rather, by the holy union, to redeem it. This transcendent new Adam thus becomes the new centre of human existence.

In addition to these *particular* developments, Apollinarius's use of $\text{\textcircled{O}}\text{\textcircled{S}}\text{\textcircled{I}}\text{\textcircled{J}}$ and $\text{\textcircled{P}}\text{\textcircled{S}}\text{\textcircled{W}}\text{\textcircled{P}}\text{\textcircled{O}}\text{\textcircled{N}}$ in his Christological explorations represent a quantum shift in theology, and positive and negative reactions emerge against them.

Apollinarius's Christological exploration of mediation set boundaries for later theology; his Christological use of $\text{\textcircled{U}}\text{\textcircled{S}}\text{\textcircled{A}}$, $\text{\textcircled{O}}\text{\textcircled{U}}\text{\textcircled{S}}\text{\textcircled{A}}$, $\text{\textcircled{P}}\text{\textcircled{O}}\text{\textcircled{S}}\text{\textcircled{T}}\text{\textcircled{A}}\text{\textcircled{S}}\text{\textcircled{I}}\text{\textcircled{J}}$, $\text{\textcircled{P}}\text{\textcircled{R}}\text{\textcircled{O}}\text{\textcircled{S}}\text{\textcircled{W}}\text{\textcircled{P}}\text{\textcircled{O}}\text{\textcircled{N}}$ and $\text{\textcircled{F}}\text{\textcircled{U}}\text{\textcircled{S}}\text{\textcircled{I}}\text{\textcircled{J}}$ contributed significantly to their future roles in Christological discourse, and application of these epithets pushed a more general re-definition of these terms which were previously much looser, often interchangeable, descriptions.⁶²⁰

Apollinarius's contribution to the grammar and content of Christian dogmatics is significant. *KMP* defends miahypostatic Christology against dyohypostatic readings, and redefines $\text{\textcircled{D}}\text{\textcircled{M}}\text{\textcircled{O}}\text{\textcircled{O}}\text{\textcircled{U}}\text{\textcircled{S}}\text{\textcircled{I}}\text{\textcircled{O}}\text{\textcircled{J}}$ against what he perceives to be Marcellus's deficient usage. Marcellus was the *bête noire* of conservatives like Eusebius and dyohypostatic theologians – an example of why miahypostatic Christology inevitably led to Sabellianism. His labours in *KMP* refute Marcellus, and thereby those who would use him to dismiss Nicaea's $\text{\textcircled{D}}\text{\textcircled{M}}\text{\textcircled{O}}\text{\textcircled{O}}\text{\textcircled{U}}\text{\textcircled{S}}\text{\textcircled{I}}\text{\textcircled{O}}\text{\textcircled{J}}$. Marcellus's attempt to marry miahypostatic Christology with Logos theologies of the second century cannot resist becoming quasi-Arian or Modalistic Monism. The contribution of Apollinarius as a developer of Athanasius's thought in *CG-DI* has evaded proper recognition.

In subsequent chapters of this thesis, Apollinarius's significance is unavoidable. Developing Athanasius's insistence upon the proper recognition of humanity's

⁶²⁰ See chapter 5, below, for a discussion of the change of meaning in Christological terms in Cyril and Nestorius.

creatio ex nihilo, he urges an ontological resolution of soteriology which cannot be ignored, and which must be set in Trinitarian context.⁶²¹

⁶²¹ Raven (1923) acknowledges there is but a hair's breadth between Apollinarius and Athanasius, but thereby misses the significance of the developments in Apollinarius's theology from a common miaphyostatic source. McGuckin's 1994 robust defence of Cyril of Alexandria comes close to a participatory exegesis of Apollinarius, yet, in his desire to promote Cyril, under-emphasises the parallels. Wolfson offers precise philosophical definitions of "union" (1956:385), after Dräseke, 1892, but relies too much upon out-of-context fragments representing Apollinarian - rather than Apollinarius's - thought. Despite Wolfson's stated aim to do for the Church Fathers what he had tried to do in his work on Philo ("to build up, out of suggestions, a systematic structure of his thought and also to piece together, out of allusions and implications, the story of its growth" 1956:iii), his attempt with Apollinarius stretches his material too far. Wolfson wishes to demonstrate how "the relation of certain teachings of Greek philosophy to the revealed truths of both the Jewish and Christian Scripture resulted similarly in a recasting of Christian beliefs in the form of a philosophy and thereby also producing a Christian version of Greek philosophy." [*ibid.*: vi]. The result, although helpful in general delineation of an emergent Christian Philosophical tradition is unhelpful in its analysis of Apollinarius's contribution [1956:433-451]. He misses the significance of the mystery of the union distinctively participating in the fullness of divine nature, fitting humanity to bear that glory by the persistence of the "divine flesh." Instead, in the manner of Apollinarius's contemporary critics, he uses both aspects against him: "From these nine passages it may be gathered that, while the body and the Logos in Jesus form one nature by reason of the lack of a rational soul in the body [citing *De Fide et incarnatione*, 7, Lietzmann, 1904:199; *De Unione*, 5, Lietzmann, 1904:187; *Fragment* 107, Lietzmann, 1904:232;], the body with its irrational soul is distinct from the Logos, inasmuch as in its union with the Logos it is not completely destroyed (*sic*) [citing *Fragments* 127, 128, Lietzmann, 1904:238; *Fragment* 129, Lietzmann, 1904:239; *Fragment* 134, Lietzmann, 1904:239-240] or completely changed into the Logos [*de Fide et Incarnatione*, 7, Lietzmann, 1904:199]." Wolfson misses the functions of, for example, the promise of the reality of union with divine life whilst distinguishing between the essential divinity of the Son and the endowed divinity to those in the Son. His argument appears to be based fragments from Apollinarius which do not reflect the subtleties or nuances of his arguments. Cf. Bethune-Baker (1954:240-241) cites the works of Apollinarius, commenting: "None of these writings, however, shew any of the peculiar theories known as Apollinarian." He responds to the publication of Lietzmann [*ibid.*, 433f] thus: "It appears to be questionable whether Apollinarius really conceived of the Logos as the archetype of all human souls". Apollinarius did conceive of the single divine nature of the incarnate Word as restoring and divinizing fallen humanity. Schaff, 1891: 709-711 acknowledges that Apollinarius "was the first to apply the results of the Trinitarian discussions of the Nicene age to Christology, and to introduce the long Christological controversies. He was the first to call the attention of the Church to the physical and pneumatic side of the humnaity of Christ, and by contradiction brought out the doctrine of a reasonable human soul in him more clearly and definitely than it had before been conceived." His error, accounted for by the best intentions, was "zeal for the true deity of Christ, and his fear of a double personality, he fell into the error of denying his integral humanity" making "Christ a middle being between God and man, in whom, as it were, one part divine and two parts human were fused in the unity of a new nature." This is not Apollinarius's intent. The holy union of real humanity (the *nous* of the Logos) and complete human existence (*sarx* and *soma*) should not be contrived thus. The humanity is *real* for him because it is not fallen and decaying. The model of divine Logos sustaining that which is created *ex nihilo* has soteriological priority. J. G. Davies's [1966:266] judgement has characteristic brevity, though he misses the Anti-Marcellan prompt: "Apollinare, che divenne vescovo di Laodicea nel 361 nel pervenire alla sua posizione fu influenzato da tre fattori: il suo antiarianismo, la sua opposizione alla christologia antiochena di Diodoro di Tarso, e la sua interpretazione «traducianista» dell'origine dell'anima individuale." Humanity for Apollinarius, irrespective of the soul's origin, was fallen: sin was a part of humanity's psychological / ontological reality. Otherwise, Athanasius's theological foundation for the incarnation would be irrelevant.

Cappadocian critiques of Apollinarius assert that *noàj* still has a mediating function, re-presenting in a refined form Origen's argument for the sacrament of intellect:

Mind is mingled with mind as nearer and more closely related, and *through it* with flesh, being a mediator between God and carnality.⁶²²

Gregory is less concerned with re-instating human mediation here than insisting that a human *noàj* has the specific function of protecting the divine nature from carnal existence - less a mediatorial concern than protecting divinity from degradation. There is a sincere soteriological aspect to the Cappadocians' concern, because in their Origenistic anthropology, humanity is located in the *noàj*, for that is where Gregory (like Origen before him and contemporary Cappadocians) locate the human subject. But it is not sufficient to caricature Apollinarius's estimate of "human nature by definition *depraved*" [my italics] as, for example, Frend maintains.⁶²³

⁶²² Gregory of Nazianzus, *Ad Cledonium*, transl. in Meredith, 1995. He connects Gregory of Nazianzus's critique of Apollinarius with Origen's belief that the human mind is the "point of juncture between God and the body" [*Peri Archon*, 2.6.3]. The Cappadocian objection may better be understood as an objection to Apollinarius's perceived materiality in the "divine flesh."

⁶²³ Frend, 1984:634. Frend's close analysis is built upon the fragments, so underestimates that the most salient issue is that the life of humanity is restored by the union in the incarnate Logos. Frend recognizes the "veuve" and brilliance of Apollinarius, yet rejects his Christology on soteriological grounds: "To assert belief in a Christ who lacked an essential part of human nature, namely the human mind, destroyed community between Savior and saved." Frend's description of humanity in Apollinarius as "depraved" inappropriately suggests puritanicalism in Apollinarius's thought. Cyril of Alexandria will later strive to expound in his defence of "the one incarnate nature of the Word" and in his biblical exegesis (especially of the baptism narratives) a theme harmonious with Apollinarius, who is concerned with the single subject of the Incarnate Word, and his offering of his whole self to the Father. Fallen humanity with its moribundity has been, as it were, nailed to the feet of Christ. The mystery of the union is that in the death of our humanity is the means of divine life by that sacrifice. This is participated in at the Eucharist. The in-dwelling of the Holy Spirit, humanity assumed by the Logos is exchanged for the Life-giving real unfallen, divine Humanity of the Son: "divine flesh". Frend's accusation of the collapse of *koinonia* between

Raven's exploration of Apollinarius had a significant impact, in popular reviews at least, upon assessments of the subject of this chapter. This study has shown through a textual reassessment of Apollinarius via the complete *KMP* as a hermeneutic, that far from being trapped by a "concrete" Greek conceiving of humanity in terms of οὐσία, (Raven's transmission of Nazianzen's critique of "chemical and physical metaphors") Apollinarius addresses the issue of Christian salvation in a characteristically Alexandrian framework of γενομένης, but, more significantly, in a thorough Trinitarian conceptuality.⁶²⁴ This is indeed the *locus* of

Christ and his people is the very opposite of Apollinarius's emphasis. Frend arrives at this critique through Epiphanius, [*Panarion*, 77.24]. But (as Frend acknowledges, 1984:649 fn.102) this accusation attacks the views of Vitalis, "the Apollinarian bishop of Antioch." It is both an infringement against natural justice to impute someone on the grounds of his disciple's development if it cannot be demonstrated that this is a necessary consequence of the teacher's method. It is improper to envisage Apollinarius intending such a picture.

⁶²⁴ On human *ousia* in chemical or concrete terms, see Raven, 1923:273ff. Wickham 1983:203 identifies what may be the source of Raven's judgment upon Apollinarius noting (in the context of Cyril of Alexandria) "The Platonic universal was not *concrete*, (that was *Hegel's* notion)". On the nineteenth century background to the nature of humanity in Christ (focused on Harnack) see Keating, 2000:46-53. Cf. the helpful, if lengthy, footnote on "Union" in von Balthasar, 1989:58f fn. 1, re-emphasizing the peculiarly "Christian" function of mediation in the debate: 'Before approaching a Christian solution of the question [of the relation of our being aware of oneness with God and difference in essence and the possibility of - and nature of - ontological change], one could perhaps precede it with a pre-Christian, general consideration of human nature, which the Greek Fathers have repeatedly used in order to cast a little light on the trinitarian and Christological-ecclesial mystery. How, then, can we posit the unity of human nature, since this nature always only exists in various persons? The unity is perfect; each man is 100 per cent human, including the mentally ill and the amputee. Every man has the exact same bodily structure, which is the obvious prerequisite for a human medicine. In addition, each has basically the same structure of soul, which permits a valid general psychology; nevertheless, men are individually and for one another opposed entities. This so struck a Greek like Gregory of Nyssa that he believed he could take the human unity of nature and diversity of persons as a valid image of the Trinity. This was taken amiss by theologians because the unity of human nature would be one "abstracted" from individuals, while in God it would necessarily have to be understood "concretely", since we would otherwise posit three opposing Gods. This is, of course, correct, but it does not apply to Gregory's concept of nature or to that of other Greek Fathers for whom Christ's Incarnation as such affects all human nature (sanctifying and "divinizing" it). In speaking of human nature, Gregory of Nyssa likes to use the image of the "dough" (*phyrama*) that as a whole is "thoroughly leavened" by Christ; or that of a river that, from Adam and Eve as its origin, flows on by a generative fruitfulness through all generations, not in a mere "conceptual" continuity but in a real or physical one. Here it is not so much a matter of conveying Platonic thoughts ("ideal unity") as those of the Stoics, according to which the Logos is spiritual as well as material. When we read in Is. 58.7, "Clothe the naked, and do not despise *your flesh*", we understand the Greek Fathers' view better. By this they do not deny that the personal spirit of each one comes from God. We can by all means understand this natural aspect of the

Raven's assessment of Apollinarius's "scholar's passion for truth and the Saint's confidence in righteousness... [a] noble... product of Greek Christendom" (Raven, 1923:151) and the arena in which Apollinarius's lucidity "opened up and surveyed new tracts of country" (Raven, 1923:150).

In conclusion to this Athanasian reading of Apollinarius, a paraphrase of his notorious *Fragment 113* is offered as an attempt to establish him as a serious exegete of Athanasius, moderating the starkness of that attributed him by Justinian in *Contra Monophysita*. Out-of-context as this fragment is, if it is really from the hand of Apollinarius, it would seem dissonant from *KMP*, were its aim not to be more than an attempt to employ an analogy of organic unity which somehow fully and actively participates in divine and human life.

Mediators bring together things of likeness and of difference in one bonded-together unity. Just as in a mule there is the likeness both of an ass and of a horse; as in grey skin there is - in its own way - white and black; and as in spring is, as it were, a mist where there is working - in their own ways - things of winter and things of summer. A mediator has neither half of each nature in which it participates, nor *discretely* both, but the furthest points, out of which it is, are evenly distributed, married together into a unity. In such way is the mediation [mesÒthj] of God and man in Christ; certainly, to be sure,

relationship between substance and person as an initial and indispensable foreshadowing of that which - throughout all the consideration of the trinitarian and Christological mystery - will lead to understanding of the mystical body of Christ and to the many mysterious aspects of the "communion of saints". Without this Christian theological mediation, the thought would indeed remain pre-Christian, insofar as emphasis on the physical unity of human nature hinders full understanding for the uniqueness and dignity of man, as becomes evident from the pagan and nontrinitarian monotheistic religions and again from post-Jewish and post-Christian atheistic communism and analogous ("Western") human ideologies.'

neither simply and entirely a whole man, neither God alone, but a mingling [m...xij] (Lietzmann, 1904:234).

The dramatic climax of the Christological controversy will further illustrate the process of Christological clarification, illustrating the failure of proponents of a once-distinctive and shared (what might then have been termed) “mia-hypostatic” theology to agree upon an appropriate Christological vocabulary, and it is to that embittered and personal clash between Cyril of Alexandria and Nestorius, half a century later, which we now turn.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE CONSTRUCTION OF FIFTH-CENTURY CHRISTOLOGICAL CONTROVERSIES IN FOURTH-CENTURY TERMS.

In the Eastern Orthodox tradition, St. Cyril (Patriarch of Alexandria, AD 412-444) is most closely related to St. Athanasius (Patriarch of Alexandria, AD 328-373).... St. Athanasius is the “canon” (St. Basil) and St. Cyril the “seal” (St. Anastasios Sinaites) of Christian Orthodoxy. The reason for this is that both together have worked decisively for the defense of basic and fundamental truths of Orthodox Christianity. St. Athanasius fought for the doctrine of the divinity of Christ, which was questioned by heretics on account of the incarnation. St. Cyril built on the Athanasian foundation and clarified the doctrine of the Incarnation and especially the humanity of Christ. [Dragas, 2004:ix].

5.1: Introduction

Dragas’s connection of Athanasius and Cyril, despite being couched in hagiographical Orthodox convention, is confirmed by recent scholarship of a very different style. Wessel’s 2004 study of Cyril’s rhetoric in his conflicts with Nestorius urges that his victory largely depended upon his self-identification with Athanasius (and his enemy with Arius) rather than political *nous* or theological erudition:

By the seventh century, Cyril was considered to be one of the greatest church fathers of Eastern Christianity, while Nestorius emerged as second only to Arius, the quintessential heretic of the Eastern Church.... Athanasius’s interpretative method has been to imagine the broader intent and scope (σκοπὸς)⁶²⁵ of Christian faith as providing the context for correct interpretation. When Cyril borrowed this method, he thus understood it to mean that difficult words and phrases should be interpreted according to the truth of the Christian message that the creed of Nicaea preserved and that the creedal formulations of his early episcopacy contained, and not according to the literal words of the scriptural text (Wessel, 2004:11; 299).

This chapter explores the place of Athanasius of Alexandria in the Christological controversies between Alexandria and Antioch building up to the Council of Chalcedon. This “triangulates” an understanding of his significance – assessing him in both miaphostatic and dyohypostatic Christological models in the fifth century. The study will explore material after the polemical correspondence which led to Nestorius’s condemnation,⁶²⁶ especially focusing upon Cyril’s *Christological Dialogues*,⁶²⁷ *Against those who are Unwilling to Confess that the Holy Virgin is Theotokos* (hereafter, *AUCT*)⁶²⁸ and the Nestorian *Heracleides*.⁶²⁹ An examination of Cyril’s construction of conventional dialogues and the rhetoric

⁶²⁵ So Torrance, 1997; *contra* Young, 1997 who shows that Athanasius’s predominant notion is the *dianoia* or mind of Scripture.

⁶²⁶ Wickham, 1983.

⁶²⁷ de Durand, 1964.

⁶²⁸ Dragas, 2004.

⁶²⁹ Nau, 1910; Driver & Hodgson, 1925.

developed between writer and reader in *Heracleides* leads to an identification of an explicit *theological* continuity between both fifth-century antagonists and Athanasius (*contra* Wessel, 2004), and illustrates the role of Christ's humanity to both parties. It also elucidates a significant difference in style between Cyril and Nestorius with regard to citations of Athanasius and others in their argument. Where Cyril asserts continuity, and demonstrates many parallels and allusions, Nestorius quotes and cites Athanasius to demonstrate his claim for Christological authenticity.

The impact of Athanasius of Alexandria upon both is clear, though perhaps surprising in terms of their mutual antipathy. Briefly stated, we shall observe that Cyril often follows textual clusters that Athanasius has used and imports significant theological vocabulary from, for example *Contra Arianos* II.67,⁶³⁰ whereas Nestorius's style is to cite a specific text and turn it in his argument. In Cyril's discussion of redemption as recapitulation in a way that cannot reasonably be accounted for merely by fidelity to Pauline texts alone, an Athanasian influence has been identified:

Car notre Rédemption est essentiellement pour S Cyrille une «récapitulation». Il fait de ce dernier terme un emploi sans commune mesure avec les us de son prédécesseur et maître, S. Athanase (De Durand, 1964:90).

⁶³⁰ PG 26.289 B.

The connections between Athanasius of Alexandria and Cyril extend far beyond their holding, in different centuries, the same patriarchal see. Russell (2000:4-5) and Wessel (2004:64-65, 128-129) detail the familial relationship between Athanasius and Cyril's uncle and mother, and evidence their common approach to conflict resolution. In the Christological controversies with Nestorius, Cyril acts with the confidence of one accustomed to holding the authorized Athanasian tradition as a right, most especially in his attack upon Nestorius, this new Arius. McGuckin (1994:15-16, 2004a) describes the later Cyrilline *Dialogues* as a re-presentation of Athanasius' *Contra Arianos*. Daley observes that, for this reason,

Cyril's reflections on the Trinity, despite their length and intricacy, seem to most modern scholars derivative and uninteresting, even doctrinally anti-climatic, because they show a closer kinship with the theology of his Alexandrian predecessors Athanasius and Didymus than with the now-classic formulations of the Cappadocians and Constantinople I. (2003:113f).

Lebon also draws attention to Athanasius being claimed and read in different theological ways by the Antiochene tradition:

C'est un fait reconnu par tous que les Antiochiens et les Alexandrins (du temps du Cyrille) pouvaient se réclamer dans une certaine mesure des doctrines peu systematisées et unifiées et des formules peu étudiées de la christologie du grand alexandrin [=Athanasie] (1935:746).

Lebon specifically argues that the notion of the appropriation of humanity, and divine dwelling with us, a strict unity of person in the flesh and the distinction of idiomatic expression rather than double attribution of Scripture represent a common “concretement chez Athanase” (de Durand, 1964:16fn).

In exploring the complex relationship between Cyril and his predecessor Athanasius, it is also necessary to indulge Nestorian texts with as much “critical appreciation” as that lavished upon his Alexandrian nemesis in recent scholarship.⁶³¹ In the collection of Nestorian texts prior to the discovery of the *Book of Heracleides*, Athanasius does not appear to be cited nor mentioned in the Nestorian corpus – though the reasons for this must be critically evaluated. Substantive claims upon Athanasius, however, are made by the author of *Heracleides*. Whether Nestorius had time to reflect upon the political sense of claiming Athanasius in his exile – thus weaving him into the *Liber Heracleides* – or whether Athanasian allusions undergirded Nestorian thought all along, with references “cut” by antagonistic collectors of Nestorian texts in orthodox propaganda, there is one unavoidable conclusion. A claim upon Athanasius was a highly desirable strategy in the fifth-century conflict, but was by no means restricted to the Alexandrian tradition (*contra* Wessel, 2004). Indeed, Nestorius’s “use” of Athanasius applies not only to claims of doctrinal continuity with him but extends to identification with his treatment in the world. Both hold not only the same faith but shared the same fate of calumny and exile (Driver & Hodgson, 1925:130; 377).

⁶³¹ See below, note especially the influence of McGuckin (1994, 2004); Wickham’s introduction to Cyril in his 1983 introduction to selected correspondence, and Weinandy & Keating (2003).

This chapter traces Athanasius's influence, weighing how the adoption of an Athanasian pedigree for each perspective might apply to both protagonists. But at the outset, the most significant point is evident: Athanasius is recognized as a "seal" of Orthodox Christology to both parties.

5.2: Readings of the conflict and literary review

Both [Cyril and Nestorius] have their admirers, who usually assume, with the championship of one of the two, an intense dislike for the other. (Anastos, 1962:119).

McGuckin's detailed picture of Ephesus I (1994:1-125) dispenses idealistic notions about the emergence of orthodoxy.⁶³² His study is marked by a refusal to pander to contemporary assumptions that Christian truth emerges through anachronistic expectations of "liberal ecumenism" (1994:9).

McGuckin's attentive introduction and translation of key Cyrilline texts is marked by a tendency to be his advocate at every turn; consequently, prosecuting Nestorius' motives and work in a manner that stretches the evidence unevenly.⁶³³ McGuckin rejects judgements of Cyril that caricature him as having

⁶³² The bias towards Cyril is at least explicit and uncontested by McGuckin, but it does not do equal justice, nor show a equal latitude in approaching Nestorius so as to demonstrate parity to the Constantinopolitan's corpus. See Young's review (1983: 213-229) for balance, which distils the minutiae of detail and intricacies of events into an overall analysis of the period and its literature.

⁶³³ McGuckin, (2003:205-236) continues this style in his contribution to a selection of critical – if revisionist - essays all of which appear remarkably positive towards Cyril.

a Christology of Iōgoj - s£rx as betraying a “sclerosis of the imagination” (2003:205). Party to recent scholarly revision in assessing Cyril is Louth’s (2004) argument that Cyril’s negative reputation in Victorian England lay with Charles Kingsley’s 1853 novel about the murder of Hypatia by a mob at his instigation (also Russell, 2000:63). Louth argues that this accounts for Cyril’s transformation from a great articulating Father of the Church into “a sinister figure, cruel and unscrupulous” (Louth, 2004:353). Russell (2000, 2003) argues that the discovery of Nestorius’s *apologia* at the beginning of the twentieth century also contributed to a pro-Nestorian revision of opinion, citing (among others) the sympathetic scholarship of Bethune Baker (1908), Loofs (1914), Prestige (1954) and Anastos (1962). In addition, it must be admitted that scholarly trends of the twentieth century focusing on the historical Jesus make Antiochene theological methods more popular. Recent interpreters have described the character of the argument between Cyril and Nestorius diversely. McGuckin’s 1994 study – like much of Weinandy and Keating’s 2003 collection – gives primacy to *theological* provocation of Cyril by Nestorius. Others admit that politics had an enormous, possibly paramount role to play in the controversies (witness Bethune-Baker (1908), Scipioni (1956), Anastos (1962), and – partly – Russell (2000)); or politics fuelled by, among other things, a real theological concern (Young (1983)⁶³⁴, Wickham (1983)), whilst, as observed above, Wessel (2004) provides a rhetorical hermeneutic.

Any residual twentieth-century indulgent empathy towards Nestorius is attacked in Weinandy and Keating’s (2003) collection of essays. Presenting a rigorous

⁶³⁴ Young 2003:55-74 moves towards a more exegetically-focused reading – where concerns to demonstrate the continuities of redemption – fall – restoration drive theological axioms which find expression around the term qeotōkoj.

defence of Cyril, the collection fails to be as indulgent towards Nestorian texts.⁶³⁵ Weinandy's essay in the collection claims that any reading of Chalcedon other than a Cyrilline one is to misunderstand it (2003:43). Weinandy ignores substantive agreement of that Council with *Nestorian* Christological axioms. Chalcedon's synthetic weaving of Christological emphases preserved the tensions made explicit in the debates, but was esteemed by his Alexandrian successors – not entirely unreasonably – as a betrayal and refutation of Cyril's theological emphases.⁶³⁶ The shift to a more nuanced appreciation of Cyril's perspectives is underpinned in a close textual manner by Young's essay in the collection (2003: 55-74) focusing upon Cyril's exegesis *before* the Christological controversies, where she shows that Cyril exhibits a typological regenerative understanding of salvation. This, she argues, sheds light upon his passion for *qetòkoj* in the controversy and accounts for the energy with which he focuses his theological commitment to the "union". Boulnois, (1994; 2003:75-111) connects *qetòkoj* arguments with a rigorous Trinitarian schema that Cyril defends as part of the Alexandrian inheritance in a study that also confirms the need for a continual reappraisal of Marcellus.⁶³⁷ Nonetheless, if caricatures of Cyril distorted an appreciation of his Christological significance, so there is a *prima facie* case that a similar style of review of Nestorius' theological perspective with critical appreciation is required. This chapter, as far as feasible within an assessment of the Christological controversy in terms of Athanasius's

⁶³⁵ Weinandy, 2003:23-54, claims that his defence of Cyril is less a defence of a figure than that of the incarnation itself (*ibid.*,54).

⁶³⁶ Russell, 2000:223: "The popular verdict [upon Chalcedon]... was that it had exonerated Nestorius".

⁶³⁷ Cf Lienhard, 2001:108: 'Once the authenticity of the *Fourth Oration* is denied (as it now universally is), then evidence that Athanasius rejected Marcellus evanesces. Not only that, but other evidence can then be reinterpreted: evidence that Athanasius remained in communion with Marcellus, and also in theological sympathy with him.' Cf. Lienhard, 1987:415-437.

impassible in himself as God, never experienced and know suffering and death as man *in a human manner*. In an unqualified manner one can say that, as man, the Son of God had experiences he never had before because he never existed as man before – not the least of which are suffering and death. This is what, for Cyril, a proper understanding of the Incarnation requires and affirms, and this is what the communication of idioms so remarkably, clearly and even scandalously safeguards, advocates, and confesses. The eternal, almighty, all perfect, unchangeable, and impassible divine Son... actually experienced, as a weak human being, the full reality of human suffering and death. What was an infamy to the Docetists, to Arius and to Nestorius was for Cyril and the subsequent Christian tradition the glory and grandeur of the Gospel (Weinandy, 2003:53).

Cyril is cast here as the sole authentic exponent of the incarnation. He certainly distrusted human nature's "natural" capacity to plumb the theological depths, and the capacity of the divine nature without the union to reach, know and remedy humanity's wound. But the conflict may be read as an attempt, from very different starting points, to address the same fundamental issues in their actual Christologies, namely:

The two thinkers were completely at cross-purposes. Their tragic misunderstandings blinded each to the deep value of the facts

which the opposite school was primarily eager to secure and enforce. (Prestige, 1954:143).

The personal antagonism between the two finds expression in intrusions in the other's see. Nestorius heard nothing but Apollinarius's error in Cyril's use of language and imagery; Cyril could not or would not fail to see a double personality in Nestorius' Christ.⁶⁴⁰ In the stand-off at Ephesus I, the Emperor Theodosius interpreted events politically. Confining both parties in the heat of summer, and confirming both parties' mutual anathemas and excommunications, indicates not only his desire for a speedy resolution, but exasperation with the conflict and the characters.⁶⁴¹

The picture of Cyril as a stubbornly politicized man,⁶⁴² with whom it was unwise to express an opinion about religion or politics, adept at bankrolling the court to achieve influence (Louth, 2004:353-357), emerges: even Wickham, who deems sympathy for Nestorius a waste of energy, admits:

It will always have been unwise, and sometimes even physically dangerous to meet Cyril as an opponent (1983:xvii).

Nestorius's objections in *Heracleides* are not mere whining (*contra* McGuckin, 2004a): they express justified outrage at Cyril's distortion of his argument,

⁶⁴⁰ McGuckin, 1994:173: "This was certainly Cyril's consistent and sustained reaction to everything he read in Nestorius."

⁶⁴¹ For details, see McGuckin, 1994:69-103.

⁶⁴² Witness, for example, *To Acacius of Melitene*, in Wickham, 1983:60-61. "If a letter allegedly written by me be brought by anybody implying that I have changed my mind about what we did at Ephesus, this, too, should be treated with derision; for we are, through our Saviour's grace, sound in mind and have not wondered away from true reasoning."

ignoring central Christological texts and unethical behaviour. It will be shown below that Nestorius produces textual evidence from Athanasius to show that this is the case.

It was the use of the term *qeÒtokoj* which forms the majority of evidence cited against Nestorius in his synodical deposition.⁶⁴³ It was perhaps Nestorius's most profound political misjudgement to underestimate the power of popular piety surrounding this term (McGuckin, 1994:128), and this is exploited in his condemnation. Cyril mocked Nestorius's theological precision as pedantic, prissy and ultimately heretical with the syllogism:

If Mary is not, strictly speaking, *Theotokos*
then her Son is not, strictly speaking *Theos*. (McGuckin, 1994:28).

Through effective rhetoric, Cyril convinced the Council at Ephesus - as he himself probably believed - that Christ was, in Nestorius's *schema*, in the end simply an inspired man.⁶⁴⁴

Yet despite the unedifying context, of each representing to the other all that is wrong with the Church, and brutally fighting it out in public come what may, the subtlety, and beauty, of the theological and Christological insights on both sides towers above the antagonism of their authors, and to an examination of this we now turn.

⁶⁴³ McGuckin, 1994:369-378 admits that the texts in this florilegium are unlikely to be over-concerned with not distorting Nestorius's context or meaning.

⁶⁴⁴ Wickham, 1983:xx; McGuckin, 1994:31 - "a new Paul of Samosata".

5:4 Claims upon Athanasius of Alexandria in the Christological Controversy

Critical texts of Cyril are available,⁶⁴⁵ but without Syriac expertise, Nestorius is less accessible. The *Acta Conciliorum Oecumenicorum* [ACO] contains many of the texts collected by Cyril for the Council of Ephesus, but these amount to the prosecution's case, reflecting aspects of Nestorius' work which he felt to be most dangerous and most readily refuted:

a collection which Nestorius complained was misleading in the way it took sentences out of context and interpreted them in the most damaging way possible (McGuckin, 1994:128).

The fourteenth-century Nestorian bishop Ebed Jesus of Nisibis lists Nestorius' complete works as a *Liturgy*; a *Tragedy*; the *Book of Heracleides*; *Letter to Cosmas*; a book of *Letters* and a collection of *Sermons and Discourses* (McGuckin, 1994:127). To this ancient bibliography McGuckin adds *First Apology*, the *Hypomnemata*,⁶⁴⁶ and fragments of *Theopaschites*.⁶⁴⁷ Loofs's 1905 compilation was overtaken by the discovery of a possible sixth-century Syriac translation of the book of Heracleides just months later. A mistranslation renders

⁶⁴⁵ Five of his works are produced in the CERF edition of «L'Institute des «Sources Chrétiennes»; i.e., the first books of *Contre Julien* [322]; *Deux dialogues christologiques* [97]; *Dialogues sur la Trinité* [231; 237 and 246 in the series]. McGuckin (2004) has translated many texts, Wickham (1983) has produced critical texts and translations of some of Cyril's letters in the *Oxford Early Christian Texts* series. An important text of the *UCT* by Dragas (2004), with an introduction convincingly demonstrating Cyril's authorship, has added to this. T. Hibert Bindley (1899) provides the texts of three epistles with translation, *The Oecumenical Documents of the Faith*, revised by F. W. Green, London, 1950: *Second Epistle to Nestorius*; *Third Epistle to Nestorius*, "The Twelve Articles"; *To John of Antioch* in an old but helpful compendium of documents.

⁶⁴⁶ Preserved by the monophysite Severus of Antioch.

⁶⁴⁷ Nestorius's refutation of Cyril's Anathemas.

the Syriac for tÒmoj⁶⁴⁸ or pragmateα⁶⁴⁹ as “Market place”, leading to the attractive - if misleading - translation of the title as the *Bazaar of Heracleides*.⁶⁵⁰ Abramowski (1963) employed textual-critical methods that lead her to argue that many significant questions remain about work’s integrity. Scipioni (1956) has more regard for its integrity and is followed by Anastos (1962) and, with critical reservations, Grillmeier (1975).

Until the emergence of *Heracleides*, fragments of Nestorius compared very unfavourably in volume and contextual integrity with preserved Cyrilline texts. An entirely negative view of Nestorius is moderated by *Heracleides*: he at least appears to prefer exile and notoriety to re-opening the controversy and risk the settlement of which he approved because of association with his name.⁶⁵¹

5.4.1: Athanasius in the polemical correspondence and Nestorian Fragments

Nestorius does not appear to claim Athanasius in the fragments collected by his opponents (or followers) and arranged critically by Loofs (1905). This is either because Nestorius did not refer to Athanasius at this point for some reason, or – more likely – that the texts lack a contextual integrity, and it was not in the

⁶⁴⁸ McGuckin, 1994:126.

⁶⁴⁹ Young, 1983:232; Nau, 1910:1, fn 1: “pragmate...a Ce mot signifié à la fois «étude ou traité», et «commerce»; le syriaque traduit ce dernier sens”. Cf. Loofs, 1905:65, 224.

⁶⁵⁰ Driver and Hodgson, 1925:xii. The Syriac text was published ed. P Bedjan as *T^e gurta d^e Heroclidus d^e men Damsoq* in Paris 15 years earlier, together with a French translation by Nau, 1910.

⁶⁵¹ Young, 1983:279, quoting Nau (1910) in translation “but as for Nestorius, let him be anathema; only let men speak of God as I pray for them that they may speak.” Greer, 1975:320, finds Cyril the most sympathetic character without fawning hagiography: “The dour honesty and stubborn inflexibility of Nestorius command respect, particularly as he was willing to suffer for his principles and beliefs. Yet Nestorius, though a majestic figure, does not, finally, seem to me an attractive one.”

interest of Nestorius's detractors to provide a patristic *florilegium* in his defence. This would seem the most reasonable explanation, and otherwise an account must be given of why, in the *Liber Heraclides* Athanasius is quite central to the text and Nestorius's theological argument – though this may be a response to Cyril's *AUCT*. It is this centrality, and not merely a superficial connection, that makes it most likely, on balance, that Nestorius's Christology always claimed an Athanasian pedigree – though the period of exile may have enabled Nestorius to focus on the political sense of connecting his theological priorities to those of Athanasius.

In the polemical correspondence, Cyril's third Letter to Nestorius contains an equivalence to the notorious pseudo-Athanasian (Apollinarian) citation of *m...a fÚsij toà IÒgou sesarkwmšnh*.⁶⁵² Cyril's style is reflected in that he does not attribute it to Athanasius but authoritatively owns and promulges the faith with staggering confidence. He insists that Scripture is properly interpreted not by postulating two Sons, but by a single incarnate subject which is the Logos:

Øpost£sei mi' tí toà IÒgou sesarkwmšnh (Wickham, 1983:24).

The fact remains that there is no evidence that either party explicitly cited Athanasius textually at this point. This may be a dimension of Orthodox doctrinal methodology after Theodoret, but it would seem to help Cyril's case to have cited Athanasius had he wished to depict his opponent as the new Arius (Wessel, 2004).

⁶⁵² Cf. Apollinarius, *Ad Jovinianum* 1.

5.4.2: Athanasius in Cyril's *De Incarnatione - De Recta Fide* and *Quod Unus Sit Christus*

In these two important Christological Dialogues, Cyril's familiar method is again evident. He emphasizes the centrality of divine *mystery* as a brake to Christological arrogance and speculation (de Durand, 1964:81f). The redemptive action of God in Christ is effective because it is mediated in the assumed humanity's *flesh* in the union (de Durand, 1964:85), echoing the soteriological ontology of Athanasius's *CG-DI. De Incarnatione – De Recta Fidei (DI/DRF)* emphasizes the centrality of the incarnation, and seeks to protect its import by anti-Apollinarian polemic where he implicitly addresses the weakness inherent in monophysitic Christology, that is a tendency to docetism (de Durand, 1964:101). Properly construed the incarnation is not divine ontological degradation. Cyril expounds Phil 2:5-17 in *Quod Unus Sit Christus (=Quod Unus)* 719b-720c (de Durand, 1964:318-323) – the Word appropriates a body with all its weakness and moribundity, but is not moderated by that action – thus skating on very thin ice in terms of a docetic humanity:

“Wsp̄er ḡr̄ oÙk̄ ÷n̄ kekop...aken̄ aÙt̄Ōj̄ ú 1̄ p̄sā dÚnamij, oÙd' ÷n̄ eþ̄rhtō pein̄Ásai, trof̄¼̄ ka^̄ zw̄¼̄ t̄in̄ Ólwn̄ Øp̄Ércwn̄ aÙt̄Ōj̄, m̄¼̄ oÙc̄ prooikeiws̄Émenoj̄ s̄imā t̄Ō̄ pein̄Án̄ te ka^̄ kopi©n̄ pefuk̄Ōj̄.”⁶⁵³

The incarnation took place to divinize humanity not to enfeeble the divinity. This understanding of *k̄šnwsij* has much in common with Athanasius's explication of the same issue of divine degradation in *Vita Antonii* 74 (MPG 26, 945B-C). He

⁶⁵³ *Quod Unus* 719e (de Durand 1964:320).

promotes Athanasius's reading of 1 Pe.3:19 in *DI/DRF* 693b (de Durand, 1964:234) where even death is not "suffered" by the Logos, but appropriated as a tool by which Christ can preach to the dead. Death is part of the continuum of the Logos's embodiment, the divine union even in death allows the body to mediate divine life to humanity at its most hopeless. *Flesh* for Cyril in these *Dialogues* then is the mediatorial means of the real power of the Logos's life which is divine.

La divinité du Christ agirait alors directement sur nos âmes comme son corps sur nos corps (de Durand, 1964:112).

De Durand notes other parallels and similarities between Cyril and Athanasius, but nowhere are there quotations or citations offered; but *Ad Epictetum 2* (*MPG* 26, 1052C-1053A) and Athanasius's defence of the immutability of God in *CA* 1.36 (*MPG* 26, 85B-88B) draws his comment. De Durand argues that Cyril raids *CA* 1-3 at many points "pour garnir son arsenal" (1964:16), but – as noted elsewhere – some

expressions, que S. Cyrille croyait de S. Athanase, mais qui étaient en fait d'Apollinaire ou de son école (1964:24).

There is a similar oscillation between the divine image residual in post-fall humanity, between an image destroyed and an image disfigured, that is found in Athanasius, representing the transmission of earlier readings rather than a synthesis (de Durand, 1964:89). But of greatest significance is the close rapport and claiming of Athanasian authority without there being examples in the texts of evidence of where there is continuity and identity of argument. No doubt Cyril

was convinced that he continued Athanasius's Christological *di£noia*, but it is his generality of approach rather than detailed textual citation that is striking.

5.4.3: Athanasius in Cyril's *Against those Unwilling to Confess that the Holy Virgin is Theotokos (AUCT)*

De Durand's excursus (1964:522-524) quickly identified this as being located early in the Christological controversy, but dismissed Cyrilline authorship.

Dragas's recent text (2004) is prefaced by a line-by-line counter argument, urging its authenticity, but agreeing upon an early date. The brief text examines the Christological heresy (1-11, Dragas 2004:4-27), then explores Orthodox reading of Scripture – in particular four Christologically problematic texts⁶⁵⁴ - before asserting the validity of *qeotÒkoj*.

Cyril's method, particularly in the central section is interesting and compatible in general terms with that of Athanasius and the arguments in *CA*. He insists on contextual exegesis – looking at texts which on a surface level are incompatible with *miahypostatic* Christology in the context of the verses before and after them (chapters 12, 13, or in a broader authorial context, so 14). Cyril aims to undermine the humanizers, but has to manipulate each text with varied methods to establish a real meaning counter to its plain presentation. The result is an argument that clearly requires an ontologically divine foundation of the incarnate Christ – rejecting graceful participation as subordinationist (25, Dragas, 2004:62-63). In the final part of the treatise, the infancy narratives and baptism narratives are cited to establish Mary as *qeotÒkoj*: why did John the Baptist object to

⁶⁵⁴ 1 Tim. 2:5; Jn.8:40; 1 Cor. 2:8; Acts 2:22.

baptizing Christ, Cyril asks, if he were merely a man at that point? (28, Dragas, 2004:68).

Yet again, for all that is common between Cyril and Athanasius, there is no quotation or citation in the treatise. The treatise, if it is authentic, would appear to be an early précis of anti-Antiochene arguments which prompts Nestorius to respond by restating his case, echoing his condemnation as a heretic, but explicitly locating his argument in his reading of Athanasius in the *Heracleides*.

5.4.4: Athanasius in the Nestorian *Heracleides*

Attention has been drawn to critical questions about the authenticity of *Heracleides*. It is accepted in this chapter as probably authentic, but representing an articulate defence of Nestorian Christology whoever penned it: a deliberate defence of Nestorius using evidence from Patristic sources. In this sense it is already very different from Cyril's work providing evidence of citations of Athanasius in its argument.

Heracleides counters the arguments in Cyril's *AUCT* pretty systematically, with Sophronius voicing Cyril's accusations (chapter 51ff, Driver & Hodgson, 1925:43f). Cyril had argued that the "latest" heresy divides Christ (*AUCT* 2, Dragas, 2004:5), who is really God and Man (*AUCT* 3, Dragas, 2004:7), he is not a mere man like the saints (*AUCT* 4-5, Dragas, 2004:9-11), but God become man (*AUCT* 6 & 13, Dragas, 2004:12-14; 32-33). Nestorius counters arguments that his Christology leaves ultimately an inspired man (Driver & Hodgson, 1925:42-45), differentiating his language from that of Arians and other heretics

(*ibid.*, 9f), and offering definitions of his Christological language to clarify his position (*ibid.*, 13-28).

Moreover, *Heracleides* paints Cyril as unethical in his depiction and motivation in the controversy, and the simplest way of showing that he is in error is to cite the great Christological authority, Athanasius, *verbatim*.

Thus after book Two's lengthy location of Nestorius as orthodox, and painful reflection of his circumstances, he identifies his plight with that of Athanasius at the calumny of his unjust deposition (Driver & Hodgson, 1925:130). It is not merely the plight that Nestorius can claim, however, but the Christological arguments. In his assertion that the incarnation is real, and that Christ is truly human and divine, he challenges his readers to obey Athanasius, citing *Ad Epictetum 7* concluding with a phrase which he will turn in further discussion:

Human therefore is that which issued from Mary, according to the Divine Scriptures and truly it belongs to our Saviour (Driver & Hodgson, 1925:192; 193; 205; 227; 256; 261; 262; 333).

The author elegantly argues that his preferred Christological title, *Cristotòkoj*, is therefore Athanasian – and as far as can be discerned from Nau and Driver & Hodgson's translations of the Syriac, it appears close to Athanasius's text.

The author reveals his "reading" of Athanasius as providing a foundation for the sense of dyohypostatic Christology. Another Athanasian gloss (Driver &

Hodgson, 1925:221) shows he shares the Athanasian insight that the incarnation works by the communion of different properties:

God the Word and the body in which he was and whose [properties] he made his own in order that those of the one might become the other's and those of the other the one's.

Nestorius has identified that Athanasius's Christology works by both natures being different and maintaining their aspects after the union in order that salvation may be effected for all.

The *Heracleides* therefore provides not only a legitimate reading of Athanasius's theology, but citations and quotations which are missing in Cyril.

5.5 οὐς...α, φύσις and ὁμοστασίς

The nature of God is acknowledged by both Cyril and Nestorius as impassible, mysterious, immutable⁶⁵⁵ even though a great deal of projecting of distorted theologies takes place in the polemics. Cyril accuses Nestorius of introducing a fourth member of the Trinity by his insistence on Christ having two natures - both of which are worthy of worship. This, for Cyril, is blasphemous idolatry of a *creature*. He sees the humanity of Jesus, in strict Nestorian terminology, as merely human and only associated with divinity. This changes the nature of God as revealed in Christian tradition. Nestorius does not allow God to be God in the second person of the Trinity because of his *a priori* assumption about divinity.

⁶⁵⁵ Notwithstanding Weindandy, 2003:52-53, *et al.*

There is no union in the Son and the significance of the incarnation is thus missed:

For they followed up their single condemnation of one man for such profane nonsense [= Nestorius] with an attack not just on an individual but on the whole heretical chicanery (if I may so express it) which they have manufactured against the Church's truly religious doctrines, by maintaining two Sons, by sundering the indivisible and indicting heaven and earth on a charge of man-worship - heaven *and* earth, for the holy multitude of higher spirits joins us in worship of the Lord Jesus Christ.⁶⁵⁶

Despite Weinandy's arguments (2003:52-53), Cyril is clear that to preserve the transcendence of divine nature is central to the Antiochene concern. But this study has revealed the way in which humanity acts as a cipher in Cyril to mediate the divine power and reality of the Incarnate Son.

Unsurprisingly, the immutability and impassibility of divine nature is Nestorius's theological objection to Cyril's Christology and anthropology. M...xij removed the reality of the Logos' divinity and humanity, producing a hybrid as inappropriate of worship as Cyril's creature:

For you confess that Christ was constituted one nature [m...a fÚsij] from the incorporeal and the body, and was a single natural

⁶⁵⁶ *On the Creed*, Wickham, 1983:99-101. Cp. *To Eulogius*, *ibid.*:65-7.

hypostasis of the divine enfleshment [qeosarkèsewj]. But to say this is a confusion of the two natures, a confusion which deprives the natures of their own relative hypostases by confusing them with one another.⁶⁵⁷

Nestorius, in the extract from *Theopaschites*, reveals that his objections against hypostatic union is rooted in a strictly physical, almost biological conceptuality:

a single natural hypostasis of the divine enfleshment [qeosarkèsewj]...is a confusion of the two natures, a confusion which deprives the natures of their own relative hypostases by confusing them with one another.⁶⁵⁸

Nestorius cannot but see Apollinarianism in Cyril's phrase Øpost£sei mi' tí toà IÒgou sesarkwmšní,⁶⁵⁹ but Cyril understands the terms ØpÒstasij and oÙs...a as interchangeable:

Thus there is only one nature [m...a fÚsij] of the Word - or ØpÒstasij if you like - and that is the Word himself.⁶⁶⁰

Nestorius argues that if the ›nwsij results in one nature as Cyril maintains, then this creates a third entity: which smacks of Arianism, a mediating hybrid sharing elements of, but not the *whole natures* of, its progenitors and the core of the

⁶⁵⁷ *Theopaschites*, in Severus of Antioch, *Contra. Gramm.* 2.32: McGuckin, 1994:150.

⁶⁵⁸ *Theopaschites*, preserved in Severus of Antioch, *Contra. Gramm.* 2.32, translated by Lebon, CSCO 112, p192; McGuckin, 1994:150.

⁶⁵⁹ Wickham 1983:24; 62 fn3; McGuckin, 1994:85, 207-8.

⁶⁶⁰ *Defence of the Anathemas against the Orientals*, MPG 76.401 in McGuckin, 1994:209.

Apollinarian error. For Nestorius, this makes soteriological mediation impossible. Cyril's Christology of a single natural hypostatic union, Nestorius believes, *displaces* humanity by divine enfleshment:

a confusion which deprives the natures [fÚseij] of their own respective hypostases by confounding them with one another.⁶⁶¹

Greer expounds the conflict arguing that Ñus...a, fÚsij, and ØpÒstasij are all aspects of the concrete reality of a subject for Nestorius, in contrast to an illusion or notion. Unless all three cohere, then the subject is incomplete. An incomplete nature "needs" a natural union with another nature in order to exist. Hence talk of natural "hypostatic union" is alien to him because it conjures notions of symbiosis:

given the axiomatic assumption of an absolute distinction between God and man, none of the terms discussed thus far are capable of being used of the union between God and man in Christ... since all three terms have a direct relationship to the entity itself, there is no way that God and man can be united (Greer, 1975:313f).

Nestorius's attempt to find a language to do so – namely a *prosopic* unity – evokes a furious response in Cyril. For Cyril, ØpÒstasij, in the main, approximates with "individuality". Hence, Nestorius's objections provide all the

⁶⁶¹ *Heracleides*, Driver and Hodgson, 1925:55-57; Nau, 1910:35-36.

evidence Cyril needs to convince him that his opponent holds a Christological position of two Sons.

There is a significant theological difference between Cyril and the Antiochenes here, namely a reluctance on Cyril's part, to overstep the bounds of human legitimacy in prying into the mechanics of the incarnation. Nestorius, however, exhibits an analytical attentiveness that Cyril views as inappropriate and impious. McGuckin explains it as Cyril's preference for language that reflects and celebrates the mystery of the incarnation. Certainly, Cyril rejects theological terminology as unhelpful where it purports to probe the mechanics of how the natures are united. Nestorius, though, like Theodoret, is happier to explore theology proper and to pose metaphysical puzzles. Prosopic union is an attempt to describe how distinct natures can be united in the person of Christ. Nestorius is not explicit about *how* he understands and uses the terms *Ñus...a*, *fÚsij*, and *ØpÒstasij*.⁶⁶² Cyril's defenders claim that his language has a preference for paradox which acknowledges the fluidity of language, whilst Nestorius is plain inconsistent.

Where the Christological disagreement focused on Cyril's insistence on a single subject in Christ, the problem was to a large degree rooted in the limitations of human language when faced with a conundrum. Cyril preferred to expose the inadequacies of human language: the incarnation takes root in humanity, but *merely* human language cannot plumb its depth. From the human perspective,

⁶⁶² Contrast Theodoret's opening remarks in *Eranistes*, where he clearly defines his terms, and the distinctions made in his *Expositio Recta Fidei*. See Young, 1983:275ff. Theodoret was further on in the debate, by which time it had become clear that there was significant difficulty rooted in terminological confusion. Perhaps Theodoret was also the clearer and more subtle theologian.

God suffered by means of the incarnation and a sign of the power of *qeo...hsij* which it affected. For Cyril the paradox of “God’s swaddling bands” was more wonderful than mere explanation, which had all the excitement and power of explaining a joke or a pun or a picture. Cyril prefers to state the truth in a supra-logical way to remind the faithful of the penultimacy of all philosophical and linguistic constructs in the face of sublime Mystery. Nestorius’s explorations and indeed the solution of prosopic union effected disdain in Cyril because they were full of *Ûbrij*.⁶⁶³ However, it was vital to the reunion process that Cyril had to come to an agreement with the Antiochenes about what the terms *oÛs...a*, *fÛsij* and *ØpÛstasij* meant. Between them, McGuckin and Anastos draw up a *schema* of what each term meant to Cyril and Nestorius before the rapprochement which came with Nestorius’s deposition:

McGuckin⁶⁶⁴ argues that Cyril’s usage was thus:

<i>ousia</i>	Essence, substance being, genus, nature
<i>physis</i>	Nature, “the make-up of a thing”
<i>hypostasis</i>	Concrete reality of a thing: its underlying essence
<i>prosopon</i>	observable character, defining properties, manifestation of reality, Superficial sense, with its ancient meaning of a mask.

Anastos⁶⁶⁵ claims that the terms were understood by Nestorius in this way:

⁶⁶³ “because of his theory of the elements that made up the person of Jesus Christ”, Anastos *op. cit.* 123.

⁶⁶⁴ McGuckin, 1994:138.

<i>Usia (sic)</i>	Each existing thing's indispensable underlying factor from which it derives life. The invisible inmost being in itself.
<i>physis & hypostasis</i>	Totality of qualities which give it its individual nature and character.
<i>Prosopon</i>	[= Cyril's hypostasis] reveals the <i>usia</i> and <i>physis</i> .

Greer argues that Nestorius fuses the meanings of *Ńus...a*, *fÚsij*, and *ØpÒstasij*, overlapping them to the extent that they cohere around a central notion establishing the reality of a thing rather than its idea or an illusion.

The *ousia* of a thing, while materially identical with its *physis*, has the formal meaning of the “substantial content or specific essence” of a nature. By the same token nature refers to a physical entity. Furthermore, Nestorius distinguishes between “complete” and “incomplete” natures. Incomplete natures cannot exist of themselves, but require a natural union with another nature before they are able to exist. For example, the human soul and the human body are incomplete natures; only when the natural union of body and soul has taken place may they exist. Complete natures, on the other hand, exist by themselves. A complete nature is materially identical with an *hypostasis*.⁶⁶⁶

⁶⁶⁵ Anastos, 1962:123.

⁶⁶⁶ Greer, 1975:313, adopts Scipioni, 1956, slightly here.

ŌŪs...a and fŪsij have to be whole and distinct for Nestorius, hence his insistence upon the ōŪs...a and fŪsij being “alien to one another”.⁶⁶⁷

For Cyril, talk of prosopic union was superficial; for Nestorius, hypostatic union was a biological blending and thus distortion. To further complexify matters, language is also fluid and illusive in the way Nestorius used his key term prŌswpon and whether he spoke of one prŌswpon or two prŌswpa in Christ. Nestorius appeared to use the term in more than one way, which Cyril exposed triumphantly. There are two approximations of usage – a general sense of the external manifestation of distinctive qualities or natures of the Son – an adjectival usage, where prŌswpon means *quality*; and a more specific sense where PrŌswpon equates to “person” and is a noun.⁶⁶⁸

McGuckin notes that

⁶⁶⁷ *Heracleides*, Driver and Hodgson, 1925:298f.

⁶⁶⁸ Anastos cites fifteen sections in *Heracleides* where Nestorius maintains that the union of the two natures are one prŌswpon, Jesus Christ (Anastos, 1962:128) In three places Nestorius denies that there are two prŌswpa *proper*, so the incarnation should not be conceived of as a union of prŌswpa, that would be to hold that there are two Sons: “[the human Jesus] received his prŌswpon as something created, in such wise as not originally to be man but at the same time Man-God by the incarnation [™nanqrèphsij] of God (*ibid*). “Christ is a term that applies to both the impassible and the passible natures in a single prŌswpon. (*Nestorius’s Reply to Cyril’s Second letter*, translation of McGuckin, 1994:365). However, even in *Heracleides*, Nestorius writes of two prŌswpa, and in seven passages a “union of the prŌswpa”. Where he does use this phrase, Anastos points out that he immediately always modifies the meaning by saying that the two prŌswpa, or union of prŌswpa, “took the place of the prŌswpon.” (Anastos, 1962:129). Anastos helpfully posits a way out of the confusion by maintaining two usages of prŌswpon: sense A, where it means the visible manhood, the totality of Jesus’s nature, his human individuality and uniqueness; and sense B, where it is “an approximate equivalent of our word person.” (*ibid.*, 131). Sense A is the more ancient sense of the word, following the Nicene period where the terms ņus...a, fŪsij, and Øpost£sij were closer to each other than in Cyril’s use of them, in as much as they shared the undergirding concept of linkedness as fundamental to the identity of the whole “prŌswpon.” So for Nestorius, in the one PrŌswpon, Jesus Christ, [sense B, not two Sons] the divine and human prŌswpa are united [sense A, nearer the terms ņus...a or fŪsij]. Anastos’s clarity in outlining these uses is helpful. He admits that his “analysis is a legitimate summary of Nestorius’ Christology, which he himself, however, never presents systematically (Anastos, *ibid.*, 132).

Nestorius' christological argument is only supported by a highly complex hermeneutic that demands a sharp degree of precision in its usage. The question of how many ordinary bishops of the fifth century, let alone the common people, would ever be able to follow him was not something that seemed to have worried him greatly... This intellectual abstraction from the realities of the world (if not to say downright arrogance) was to prove his political downfall. (1994:158).

But both patriarchs worked with Christological "umbrella constructs", using language in different ways deliberately, and, as it suited neither Cyril nor Nestorius to commit themselves to open resolution, there was *impasse*.

It is appropriate at this point to raise the question of how Athanasius used the three terms, and how, if at all, adherence to Athanasius's usage may have coloured the discussion. Müller, 1952, provides exhaustive citations of the terms in the Athanasian corpus, and the scattering of usage is of serious interest.

ὄν...α is used to represent "reality" in *Epist. Afr.* 4 (MPG 26.1036B) in a sense that Lampe (1968:980) suggests derives from Origen (*de Oratione* 27). In *CG* 9, 27, (Müller, 1952:1049-1052) οὗ...α has a general meaning, namely "that which is," whilst in *CG* 2, 35, 39, 46; *DI* 18, & 20 it approximates more obviously to essence in a manner compatible with later usage. Most citations of this type are in *CA* (see Müller, 1952:1049). Athanasius's usage is thus compatible with both Cyril and Nestorius.

ϕύσις mostly approximates to “nature”, and, again, is mostly a technical term in the CA, where it is used to emphasize the divine nature of the Son (Müller, 1952:1553-1559). It stretches beyond the general term of οὐσία because of a sense of the intimate qualities of a thing. Again Athanasius’s usage is consonant with that of both Cyril and Nestorius.

ὑπόστασις is where Cyril and Nestorius disagree. Müller (1952:1509-1510) is particularly helpful here. In relation to the Trinity, Athanasius uses the term in the sense of “person” when writing to the Antiochenes (*Tom. Ad Antioch. 5, MPG 26:801*) – there are three persons in this context. It is hardly surprising then, that the Antiochene Nestorius takes this as the primary meaning of ὑπόστασις – Athanasius, after all, uses it in this sense. Hence Nestorius believes that Cyril has abandoned Athanasius’s Christological and Trinitarian argument at this point. However, the case is more complex, because in the CA (especially CA 3), and *De Decretis* (25-7 *MPG 25:461-465*) it is used to emphasize the unity of natures of Father and Son in the singular. In an anti-Arian context it seems interchangeable with οὐσία. It is indeed probable that Athanasius’s dual usage fuels later Christological controversy, when both feel back for Athanasius to undergird their argument, and should Cyril have been as attentive to texts as Nestorius, both would have found corroborating evidence. Athanasius here begets and reflects *both* miahypostatic *and* dyohypostatic conceptuality.

πρόσωπον represents the presentation of the person, denoting identity, where the Son is the Father’s πρόσωπον (CA 1:38; *MPG 26:92*). This term carries with it

something representational – hence, perhaps, Cyril’s suspicion of it when applied Christologically to the union. But in Anastos’s identification of the use of *pròswpon* in Nestorius, he is nearer to Athanasius than Cyril will allow. Thus Athanasius has influenced not only the arguments but the vocabulary. Whether Cyril knows this or not it is not clear. He does not attempt the mammoth task which Athanasius undertook of arguing that to protect Athanasius’s argument, the *diēnoia* of his thought, new vocabulary is necessary. This is partly because he preferred the path of caricatured attack (Wessel, 2004), and partly because admitting that Nestorius had a legitimate claim to Athanasian use of language would undermine his casting of himself as Athanasius and his opponent as the new Arius. There is also the fact that in his anti-Arian literature Athanasius uses *Øpòstasij* in a way which Cyril will follow, whereas in the *Tom. Ad Antioch.* the usage is in line with Nestorius’s. This Athanasian inheritance may prove more useful a taxonomy and explanation of the conflict than conventional short-hand of *Iògoj-s£rx* versus *Iògoj-¥nqrwpoj* Christological emphasis.⁶⁶⁹

For both patriarchs, Christology must be the meeting place of God and humanity, divine and human being or nature. Nestorius held as axiomatic and irreducible two natures in communion - *sun£feia* - held in eternal integrity, assenting a graceful commitment to the other, allowing only a *derived communicatio idiomatum* between the two natures because both in a single harmony were the subject of the incarnate Son. In this scheme there are two background *pròswpa*

⁶⁶⁹ McGuckin goes too far when he refers to the traditional description as “a pseudo-category of patristic analysis which has been strictly avoided in this present study, as something that if artificially imposed on the subject in hand, quite anachronistically, and which distorts the context of the ancient debate more than it informs it.” 1994:206. Compare the number of times *s£rx* and *¥nqrwpoj* are juxtaposed in Theodoret’s dialogue *Eranistes*, and note who initiates each usage and defends the same. This would indicate at least that Theodoret understood this usage to reflect appropriately something of each tradition’s Christological usage.

but one *Pròswpon*, Jesus Christ. Graceful assent is the basis for unity, called by Anastos *prosopic union* and by McGuckin “associative difference”. This means of union guarantees for Nestorius the central concern that the humanity and divinity meet, are mediated in the single *Pròswpon* or Personality of Christ. Mediation, for Nestorius, would be prohibited if the natures mingled.

Yet for Cyril, Nestorius’s model of graceful unity still requires two subjects at every stage and throughout the *sun£feia*. “Background essences” [*pròswpa* in Nestorius’s language] will not do. If the union is based upon the free and loving wills of the divine and human natures, then there are two subjects in Christ in any *willed sun£feia* or *Prosopic union*. Cyril hears Nestorius to be saying that there are two centres of identity having to concur in the economy. But a real, human-divine unity, for Cyril alone safeguards Christology as the arena where divinity and humanity meet and the natures of each are mediated to the other in Christ. Far from a “mere” graceful assent - which remains ultimately for Cyril merely external and voluntarist – a task-orientated alliance – hypostatic union is the model of Christian salvation, and perfects and mediates it: baptism and Eucharist are physical sacramental assurances of it.

Cyril is unambiguous that the divine nature *personally* is the subject of the union. He sees this as marking the beginning of the process of *qeopo...hsij* for all who share human nature and are in Christ.⁶⁷⁰ The divinizing of the human condition is

⁶⁷⁰ Cf. the robust defence of Athanasius from an interpretation which sees salvation as in some way automatic through the mystery of the Incarnation by Petterson, 1990. His ethical emphasis begs questions, his anti-universalism and rejection of neo-Platonic models of participation goes too far, I think, for the evidence, especially in his argument with Bouyer. The most powerful contribution in this book is from p85ff, where Petterson looks at the body as mediator.

understood in a characteristically Alexandrian way. This is reinforced through the *organic*, direct *communicatio idiomatum* in hypostatic union:

When he became like us, even though he always remained what he was, he did not deprecate our condition. No - for the sake of the economy he accepted, along with the limitations of the manhood, all those things which pertain to the human condition, and he regarded nothing therein as unworthy of his personal glory or nature: for yet, and even so, he is God and Lord of all.⁶⁷¹

Conflict around the appellation *qeÒtokoj*⁶⁷² is described as the quintessential synopsis of the controversy:

Nestorius seemed to be insisting, by such a rigid scheme of language rules... [a weakening of] the sense of paradox which language-crossing evoked, the paradox which enshrined the church's sense of the single-subjectivity of Christ (McGuckin, 1994:154).

Nestorius's "pastoral agenda" which led him to promote *CristÒtokoj* was immediately understood as an attack on *qeÒtokoj* terminology, which was a term in CA III to describe Mary. It may thus have an "Apollinarian" *Sitz im Leben*

⁶⁷¹ Cyril, *Explanation of the Twelve Anathemas*, explanation 2, par. 9. Cp. Explanation 10 par. 27. McGuckin, 1994:285.

⁶⁷² This was not only a cause for conflict with the Alexandrians; it was perhaps the chief stumbling block against Nestorius's acceptance in Constantinople, and - significantly - in Ephesus. In Ephesus the cult of the Blessed Virgin Mother had displaced, both in terms of identity and economy, that of Diana.

though no-where in the Athanasian corpus does the *term* *CristÒtokoj* appear.⁶⁷³ Nestorius does, however, attempt an Athanasian manoeuvre, claiming that its use ensures the proper mind of Scripture is protected. Nestorius allows *ϕnqrwpÒtokoj* because that too, as part of the picture, has clear *soteriological* significance. *CristÒtokoj*, Nestorius's preferred term is his attempt to preserve the union so important to the Alexandrians. 'AnqrwpÒtokoj as a title also allows the perspective that Mary is the bearer not only of Christ's humanity but the one who was to renew all humanity: bearing all humanity. For Cyril this was secured by the paradox of God's swaddling bands (McGuckin 1994:215). His miahypostatic vision smacked of - and indeed was built upon⁶⁷⁴ - Apollinarian texts as Nestorius heard it.⁶⁷⁵

The phrase "one incarnate nature of God the Word" had been devised by Apollinarius, who had put it forward in the statement of faith he had sent to the Emperor Jovian in 363. (Russell, 2003: 240)

An important factor remains Athanasius's role in the creation of a miahypostatic Christological tradition. Apollinarius's claims on Athanasius's *CG-DI* are not distorting: Apollinarius appears to have believed himself to be promoting the Athanasian tradition, even Athanasius himself, in his *apologia* to the Emperor. Such a factor may account for Cyril's conviction that Athanasius – in some of the expressions in *DI*, above (chapter 2) – indubitably implies a divine subject "taking

⁶⁷³ Cf., however, Nestorius's claim on *Ad Epictetum* 7, above (5.4.4).

⁶⁷⁴ *Ad Jov.* 1: Lietzmann, 1904:251.

⁶⁷⁵ Cp. Young, 1983:259. McGuckin's excuse of the text is not convincing 1994:85. Regardless of such orthodox defence, the fact remains that Apollinarian language was a very powerful motivation for Cyril's thought.

for himself a body” in the incarnation. Cyril echoes this in *AUCT* 22 (Dragas, 2004:54):

E,, to...nun Qeoà aĀema tŌ aĀema lšgetai, dÁlon æj QeŌj
Ān sĒrka perike...menoj.

Nestorius’s objection to the unlettered use of *qeŌtokoj* is rooted in his concern that in a relentless single-subject Christology, divine nature is subjected to passibility, and salvation is endangered, and the pattern of divine exchange in the incarnation which Athanasius, for example in more nuanced expressions expounds, would be lost.

Compare the dynamics in Athanasius’ dictum which are built upon two natures not being blended

“A g|r tŌ ϕnqrèpinon œpace toà logou
†na 1mej tÁj toà logoà qeŌthtoj metasceκn dunhqèmen⁶⁷⁶

with Nestorius:

Christ undertook the person of the indebted nature; and through it as a son of Adam, He restored what was owed. It was proper that the one who should loose the debt should be taken from the race of the one who had once contracted it.⁶⁷⁷

⁶⁷⁶ *MPG* 292, Ettliger, 1975:235 l.10-11 = Ep. *Ad Epictetum* 6, *MPG* 26.1060C.

⁶⁷⁷ Loofs, 1905:255; Greer, 1975:311.

Language that implied that Mary is the Mother of the Divine nature disturbs the soteriological / Christological resolution for Nestorius. He abhors the possible misconceptions that qeÒtokoj language can convey. His vivid rejection of it, and perceived ridicule of devotion, proved politically fatal, being, according to Marius Mercator, responsible for the defection of Theodotus of Ancyra and Acacius of Beroea when he said that he refused to acknowledge as God an infant of two or three months old.

Cyril's furious hyperbole, rejoiced in the mystery of "the swaddling bands of God"⁶⁷⁸ – arguing that if the two-year old was not God incarnate then neither was, by oÙs...a, the one who died and rose again.

Nestorius was happy to *call* Mary qeÒtokoj, but his overwhelming concern was to protect the two oÙs...ai of divine and human nature in tact. Hence his laboured point that the title was honorific. She bore the wonderful sunafe...a of natures in the one PrÒswpon. She did not nurture or bring God to birth.⁶⁷⁹ Cyril saw this refutation as unnecessary. Antiochene theology was a "purely mental consideration of the mind's eye."⁶⁸⁰ God was never conceived of as being brought to birth by Mary in the Christian tradition. The synodical deposition focused clearly on the question of qeÒtokoj, and leads from this into a caricature of Nestorius's Christology as being at core one of Two Sons.

⁶⁷⁸ McGuckin, 1994:65.

⁶⁷⁹ McGuckin sketches Nestorius' puritanical morality as the driving force behind his resisting language that would lead the ignorant into pagan imagery, like Isis bearing Horus, or Hercules being a suffering, anthropomorphic God on Mount Aetna [1994:192] Cp. Wickham, 1983:xxxii "Whatever he is like, he is not like Aphrodite wounded with a hero's spear and shrieking with pain (Iliad 5.335f). That was pagan myth".

⁶⁸⁰ *I Succensus*, 7, Wickham, *op. cit.*, p 77.

Nestorius was less able at communicating on a popular level than metaphysical speculation. Cyril failed to allow Nestorius's preferred Christological title for Mary, *Cristòtokoj*, as celebrating the union of two natures in *sunafesusa*. Nestorius intended to proclaim, through this title, the mediation and integrity of both humanity and divinity in a prosopic unity – the very thing Cyril meant by hypostatic union. Cyril's popularism drowns the subtlety of Nestorius's argument from being heard.

The analogies both parties use are also problematic. Cyril in several places uses an image of a material subject alight with fire as an analogy of the two natures in Christ. Wood alight, enflamed yet not destroyed, at the moment fire takes, remains both wooden and radiant with flames. Hence the material physical humanity of Jesus is enlivened, transformed by the divine nature which saves all who are in him by the process of divinization. "The image is itself a fragile one," McGuckin admits (1994:197) "for fire actually does consume and changes even destroys, its original combustible material." But Cyril avoids Nestorius's preferred analogy of the burning bush, because

the fire in this case did not touch the Bush, and can hardly be said to have provided the concept of dynamic inter-penetration he was looking for (McGuckin, 1994:197-8).

Transformative as Cyril's imagery might be, it ultimately reduces the absolute essences of both divinity and humanity, hence Nestorius's preference for the *biblical* image of the burning bush:

But is there no distinction in the union when those which have been united therein remain without confusion, like the bush in the fire and the fire in the bush?... Dost thou understand "severance of natures" according to the meaning of "natures", and as "without confusion", yet without there being any "suspicion" of a limitation of the natures in thy mind, as when the fire was united with the bush and the bush with the fire, and they were not confused. Thus thou shewest them to be without limitation and without difference...The bush became fire and fire the bush; yet severally they were bush and fire, not two bushes nor yet two fires, for both were in the fire and both in the bush (Bethune-Baker, 1908:179,183).

Nestorius veers to the opposite pole in maintaining two integrities, and echoes use of the burning bush in the Athanasian corpus, CA III:14:

ka^ ð toà IÒgou çkoÚwn o'den, Óti toà patrÕj çkoÚei: æj ka^ tù çpaug£smati ð kataugazÒmenoj o„den, Óti ka^ ØpÕ 'l...ou fwt...zetai. (CA III.14.6, Tetz, Wyrwa, Metzler & Savvidis, 2000:323).

God the Logos, and the man in whom he came to be, are not numerically two, for the prosopon [i.e., Prosopon, Persona] of both was one in dignity and honour, worshipped by all creation, and in no way and at no time ever divided by difference of purpose or will (Loofs, 1905:224; McGuckin, 1994: 164).

Christ is indivisible in that he is Christ, but he is two-fold in that he is both God and man... We do not acknowledge two Christs... but one and the same who has been seen in created and uncreated nature (Loofs, 1905:280; McGuckin, 1994:165).

For Cyril, this is idolatry, but it can claim an ideological heritage in Athanasius's careful application of *creatio ex nihilo* to Christology: Nestorius can be read as preserving his assertion that the humanity of Jesus is created, real, and uses CA I & II to prove his point. Cyril prefers to allow Mariology to carry this truth, not least because it is thereby more "pious," and reaches for CA III & IV (believing them to be Athanasian). Nestorius's pleading that human nature is divinized in Jesus, by being held in eternal relationship with the fullness of divine nature in prosopic union or *sunafe*...a does not convince Cyril. Cyril will not allow the *humanity* of Jesus to be our end: after all, like Athanasius his predecessor, Cyril looked to salvation to be something more than the restoration of the *image* of God in humanity.⁶⁸¹

⁶⁸¹ Hence his rejection of tautologous views of salvation as the restoration in humanity not an image of an image [i.e., Adam restored, himself only the image of the Logos, who is the real image of the Father] in his *Doctrinal Questions and Answers*, 4, Wickham, 1983:196-197. "It is being said that we are not God's image but an image of an image".

Divine immutability, and the issue of the suffering of the divine Logos is also a source of conflict. The worry of passible divinity fuelled the Antiochene tradition's exegetical hermeneutics, and the passible elements in the gospels - where Jesus hungers, thirsts, cries, sweats, experiences fear and pain are attributed by Nestorius and Theodoret not to the human Son [as if there are two Sons] but to the human aspect [quality or Pròswpon] in the one Son Jesus Christ. Nestorius objects to the theopaschitism into which he believed to Cyril to have fallen. The options for assessing Cyril open to Nestorius were either theopaschitism - which destroyed divinity in his understanding - or that Jesus only appeared to suffer, docetically. Nestorius himself allowed

the divinity [to] make[...] use of the prosopon of the humanity and the humanity that of the divinity (Driver & Hodgson, 1925:240).

Cyril, however, emphasizes:

He who alone was more worthy than all others laid down his life for the sake of all, and for a short time, in an economy, allowed death to pull down his flesh. But then, as life, he destroyed death, refusing to suffer anything contrary to his own nature, and he did this so that corruption should be weakened in the bodies of all, and so that the domination of death should be destroyed.⁶⁸²

⁶⁸² *Letter to the Monks of Egypt* 25, McGuckin, 1994:260.

Whilst ontologically soteriological, Cyril finds himself having to respond to Nestorius's (not unreasonable) accusations of Theopaschitism, His *Letter to Acacius of Melitene* identifies Cyril closely with this theology of a suffering divine nature - which caused alarm and consternation to, among others, the Emperor Theodosius.

for the Godhead which assumed the slave's form in no way shunned all these things which belonged to it, in order that through each... it might remove the barriers to salvation and bestow on us a benefit worthy of so great a self-limitation... I will not forbear telling what he endured for me! Impassable he did not cease from being, but he united himself to the passible and thus took on sufferings on my behalf (Wickham, 1983:34-35).

Cyril rejects the possibility of only the body suffering - for as a human being is body and soul, so there is real, organic unity on an ontological level between divine and human natures in Christ:

The objection is yet another attack upon those who say "one incarnate nature of the God the Son", and trying to prove this affirmation idle, they pig-headedly argue for the existence of two natures... But take a normal human body, we recognize two natures [fÚseij] one that of the soul, a second that of the body. We divide them, though, merely in thought, accepting the difference as simply residing in intellectual differentiation or intuition... The "two" are no

more, and the single living being is constituted complete by the pair of them (Wickham, 1983:90-93).

Sunafe...a is insufficient for Cyril. For him the reality of God experiencing suffering and humanity's receiving divinization without postulating a pròswpon on which the two natures exist together is core:

We reject the term sunafe...a as being insufficient to signify the union... but the Word of God, hypostatically united to the flesh (*Quod Unus* 733b, de Durand, 1964:363, McGuckin, 1994:213).

The incarnation is meaningless for Cyril unless the reality of humanity and the human condition is taken directly by God to himself in the act of kšnwsij. (Wickham, 1983: 106-109). In this regard, Nestorius can be properly said to hold an orthodox position – claiming Athanasius's depictions of the state of humanity and its Christological resolution to undergird his ontological – soteriological concerns.

5:6 “Enwsij and sun£feia

In Athanasius's schema in *CG-DI* primordial communion with God preserved human life. The incarnation ontologically prevents human being from falling back into chaos because there is a lasting union of humanity and the divine in Christ, which restores and even exceeds the stability of the beginning. Cyril's insistence upon the significance of ›nwsij – because the union is rooted in this Christological foundation for salvation – is a consistent mark of his work. But Cyril has moved,

even *before* the crisis, from Athanasius's depiction of salvation as divinization preferring instead to attribute participation in the divine sacramentally and by the work of the Holy Spirit in perfecting humanity still (Keating, 2000; Young, 2003). He thus avoids overemphasizing Christology as the setting for sanctification, and juxtaposes the Holy Spirit with human being in the life of the Christian through a more sacramental theology than Athanasius articulated.

Cyril's movement from an Athanasian position exposes him to Nestorius's accusations that he has abandoned his predecessor in favour of Apollinarius, but Cyril succeeds in protecting himself throughout the conflict in a manner that Nestorius cannot achieve. His response is a refusal to justify himself from the text of Athanasius, but claiming authoritative continuity, castigating Nestorius as the new Arius. Cyril thus exhibits a significantly developed model from *CG-DI*, along the lines of the Serapion correspondence and the emerging view of the Spirit as Ἐμὸοῦσιος with the Father and the Son. Whilst Cyril extends Athanasian thought into a more thorough trinitarian framework, it is also the case that he has laid aside aspects of Athanasian thought which were central to the young Athanasius as the dynamics of participation require both natures to participate in the incarnation for human deification (Kolp, 1982:1018-1023).

A glance at Athanasius's use of the terms *sun£feia* and *›nwsij* may again account for each being convinced that their term was an appropriate Christological description.

Athanasius's use of *sun£feia* (as *coniunctio*) is applied to marriage in the *Contra Apollinarem*,⁶⁸³ the harmony and peace of the Church in *de Synodis*⁶⁸⁴ and theologically to indicate the intimate communion between Father and Son in *de Sententia Dionysii*.⁶⁸⁵

Of d□ oÙk £sasin, Óti m»te øphllotr...wtai pat¾r ufoà Î pat»r,
prokatartikŒn g£r ™sti tÁj sunafe...aj tŒ Œnoma...

In *de Synodis* 26.ix⁶⁸⁶ Athanasius asserts that there is no space, or distance allowed in the harmonic conjunction between Father and Son. Athanasius's sense here echoes Cyril, but his language is that of Nestorius.

The use of ›nwsij in the Athanasian corpus is a more directly Christological term, rather than proceeding from the analogy of marriage and ecclesial harmony to unity of Father and Son. It is, however, problematic because it appears (Müller, 1952:498) predominantly in *CA IV*, which is now identified as "Apollinarian". So *MPG* 516C3 (where it is a term equated with ™nanqrèphsij), 517A12; B2; 520C5; 524B10; 15; C14 (where the soteriological significance is drawn out) are all from a context which Cyril believed to be Athanasian, but which in fact are Apollinarian. That is not to say that Cyril was the new Apollinarius, he had moved on in a Trinitarian direction, but it accounts for Nestorius's concern, and witnesses to the latter's careful Christological attention, and his conservatism.

⁶⁸³ *MPG* 1097C11.

⁶⁸⁴ *MPG* 720B4.

⁶⁸⁵ *MPG* 504D1, Opitz, 1936:58.

⁶⁸⁶ *MPG* 733B4; Opitz, 1941:253.

Thus not only do both reach back to the Athanasian corpus to justify language appropriate to God's being and the nature of the union, they both find corroborating evidence in that corpus for their own positions. Athanasius may not have been responsible for their development of his ideas, but he was the figure to whom both reached and upon whom both had a legitimate claim.

5:7 Conclusions: Athanasius and Apollinarius in the arguments of Cyril and Nestorius

The early Young (1983:259) argued that, "surprisingly enough" it is Cyril's conscientious conservatism to his Alexandrian tradition which "is the key to [his]... innovations." It was, she argues, his dependency upon Apollinarian texts, all attributed to safe sources, especially Athanasius, but all of which were forgeries, that led Cyril to his Christological development. She maintained that Cyril's rejection of Apollinarianism is superficial, and that there is no *theological* significance allowed to Christ's humanity on these grounds. She backed Norris's proposed solution as most insightful, in that Cyril is really searching for a theology which makes the Logos (rather than the Son) both divine and human. Despite her nuanced revision (2003), this chapter has demonstrated that whilst both reached for Athanasius to justify their Christological priorities and prejudices, and the Athanasian corpus can be seen to undergird both parties' arguments. Cyril's emphasis on *ἰσῆς* for example, closely follows the Apollinarian CA IV.

In CA I & II, it has been observed above that Athanasius's strategy for countering Arian claims that the Logos may not be essentially divine because of texts which apply suffering, change or lack to the incarnate Son as referring to the humanity, not to the divine Son *in toto*. Athanasius's strategy is *de facto* to employ a hermeneutical device which divides the natures in the incarnate Son. Thus in these authentic Athanasian texts, he gives a model to Nestorius and other Antiochenes to differentiate texts which apply to the humanity, and those which apply to the divine nature. What was part of Athanasius's strategy against Arian tendencies has been described in part 2 of this thesis as a differentiated application of *creatio ex nihilo* to Christology: not without good reason does Nestorius claim to be continuing this *Athanasian* application to Christology while Cyril obscures it.

There is an irony in that Cyril's major divergence from Athanasius comes from his following texts that he believed to be Athanasius's (especially CA III & IV). But we can also see pneumatological developments as consistent with the later Athanasius. Living in the fluid Alexandrian theological tradition enables Cyril to move soteriology and Christian sanctification out of a strictly Christological context to a trinitarian one.

A fully divine Spirit can communicate the divine nature in a more pastorally active way, refilling the Christian with divine grace through the Sacraments and communicating his own nature. The Spirit recapitulates Christ's saving work in the temporal life of Christians. The humanity of Christians is thus cherished and preserved and brought into the stable participation with the divine in a different

way from Nestorius, who at once represents a model more faithful to the letter of Athanasius if less able to justice to his later works on the Spirit.

Athanasius admits

We are allowed to know the Son in the Father because the whole being of the Son [sÚmpan tÕ eĒnai] is proper to the Father's whole being... they show the unity of the Godhead and the oneness of the being [t³⁄n tautÒthta tÁj QeÒthtoj t³⁄n d□ ~nÒthta tÁj oÙs...aj de...xV]. [But] they are two, for the Father is Father and is not also Son, and the Son is Son and is not also Father; but the nature is one and all that is the Father's is the Son's... The Son and the Father are in propriety and peculiarity of nature and in the identity of the one Godhead... The fullness of the Father's Godhead is the being of the Son, and the Son is whole God [tÕ pl»rwma tÁj toà PatrÕj QeÒthtÒj ™sti tÕ e□nai toà Ufoà, ka^ Óloj QeÒj ™stin Ð UfÒj.] (CA 3.4-5f, T F Torrance, 1997:304)

This chapter has shown different ways in which both Cyril and Nestorius constructed aspects of Athanasius's perceived Christological arguments and developed them in opposite directions. Cyril seeking to emulate his predecessor:

Il a certainement desire passionnément toute sa vie de ressembler à St. Athanase (de Durand, 1964:32)

whilst Nestorius shows signs of really wanting to pursue and explicate carefully the theological language and ideas of Athanasius.

Theodoret of Cyrus will provide a yet more inclusive and systematic reading of Athanasius, and to him we now turn.

CHAPTER SIX

THEODORET OF CYRUS: CLAIMING ATHANASIUS FOR ANTIOCH

6.1: Introduction

Theodoret of Cyrus's ⁶⁸⁷ series of dialogues, *Eranistes*,⁶⁸⁸ enables a fifth-century evaluation of the impact of Athanasius's Christology and the reception of his theological achievements from an Antiochene theological viewpoint. Written over a century after the beginning of the Nicene-Arian controversies, and providing an Antiochene apologia to the long and embittered Christological conflict between Alexandrian and Antiochene theological emphases, *Eranistes* provides valuable fifth century assessments of fourth century Christology. The way in which Athanasius and his opponents were viewed a century later, by an exponent of Alexandria's "rival" theological tradition, indicates the extent to which Athanasius's Christological foundations have become a universal foundation of orthodox thought.

In this evaluation, an introduction to the purpose and genre of *Eranistes* precedes an exploration of Theodoret's Christology with particular reference to the rôle of *creatio ex nihilo* in his understanding. An examination of Theodoret's handling of the issue of mediation as a Christological function follows, before an assessment of Athanasius's Christology (as Theodoret constructs it) in the dialogues. This demonstrates that the centre of Theodoret's Christology depends

⁶⁸⁷ c393-457/466. 457/8 is the traditional one for Theodoret's death - so *NPNF* ii.3. For a full review, see Ettliger, 1975:3.

⁶⁸⁸ The text used is that of Ettliger (1975), and references are to his page and line numbers, preceded by the Migne [*MPG*] reference.

upon the theological achievements of Athanasius. *Eranistes* is a mid-fifth century witness to the reception of both the texts and the developing Christological trajectories which Athanasius engendered.

6.2: The purpose and genre of *Eranistes*

Theodoret's *Eranistes*, provides his evaluation of the conflict in which he was engaged in the form of dramatic dialogues. Their style is a sustained Christological debate where profound differences are expressed. The characters in the dialogues are the hero, Orthodoxos, Theodoret's spokesman for the Antiochene cause, and Eranistes, the "carpet bagger", an *apocrisiarius* of the Alexandrian tradition.

The first dialogue focuses upon the question of how the Alexandrian tradition has come to deal with divine immutability so lightly in its characteristic emphasis upon $\phi\pi\alpha\kappa\acute{\iota}\eta\ \alpha\epsilon\pi\alpha\kappa\epsilon\eta$ ("he suffered without suffering") in the so-called *passionless passion* Christology.⁶⁸⁹ Orthodoxos prefaces the debate by asking:

How do you now bring forward these words of the gospel, that is, "the Word became flesh," and attribute to them a turning point [trop \approx n] to the unchangeable nature? [τὸ ϕ τρ $\acute{\sigma}$ ptJ ... fÚsei;]⁶⁹⁰

This provides the basis for a discussion around John 1.14. The second dialogue builds upon these first arguments which establish that divine nature is

⁶⁸⁹ Young, 1983:283.

⁶⁹⁰ MPG 36; Ettliger, 1975:66, lines 14-15.

unconfounded, and that Christ necessarily has two natures without mingling or transformation as *theological* foundations:

God became incarnate not by being changed into flesh, but by taking perfect human nature.⁶⁹¹

The third dialogue explores the significance of the function of divine impassability [ϕπαq»j], as proper justification for two continuing active natures in the incarnation.

The dialogues are followed by a syllogistic epilogue, outlining the arguments establishing the immutability of the Logos.⁶⁹²

Eranistes's significance, however, is not merely as a commentary on the fifth century arguments in which Theodoret was embroiled, but illustrative of a process in theology which constructs arguments upon cited patristic texts, appended to each dialogue as florilegia of other theologians' writings. This clarity answers definitively the accusation (common in Cyril) that the Antiochene tradition is impious inquisitiveness.⁶⁹³ This appeal to an authoritative apostolic tradition as well as Scripture, and, indeed, as the key to authentic interpretation of Scripture is evident from the outset of the first dialogue. Orthodoxos has to entice Eranistes to engage with him - he initially refuses to consider the incarnation theologically, convinced that investigation is unnecessary because he

⁶⁹¹ οὐκ εἰς σάρκα τραπε...j, φιλ' φnqrwpe...an fÚsin tele...an labèn. *MPG* 220; Ettliger, 1975:189 lines 2-3.

⁶⁹² *MPG* 319-336; Ettliger, 1975:254-265.

⁶⁹³ See chapter 5, above.

(representing the Alexandrian tradition) “exactly holds the truth”.⁶⁹⁴ Orthodoxos prompts his opponent to consider the footsteps of apostles and saints,⁶⁹⁵ clearly indicating Theodoret’s answer to Alexandrian charges of inquisitiveness, appealing to such as Athanasius as universal authorities.

In the florilegia⁶⁹⁶ of authorities after each dialogue, there are thirty citations from Athanasius⁶⁹⁷ and thirty-two from Apollinarius.⁶⁹⁸ In the dialogues, Theodoret distinguishes between viewpoints of Apollinarius and developments of subsequent Apollinarian writers,⁶⁹⁹ just as he discriminates between Athanasius and his Alexandrian successors⁷⁰⁰ Cyril and Dioscorus. This attentiveness,

⁶⁹⁴ ϕ kribij gar tAj ϕ lhqe...aj τ m cÒmeqa. MPG 32, Ettliger, 1975:63, lines 7-8.

⁶⁹⁵ MPG 32, Ettliger, 1975:63, lines 17-19.

⁶⁹⁶ See M. Richard, in Grilleier and Bacht, 1962:721-48 for the background to the genre and its importance in doctrinal controversy. Ettliger, 1975:23-35, discusses the Florilegia after each of the Dialogues.

⁶⁹⁷ Ettliger, 1975:9; 11; 14-15; 20-21, for each citation of Athanasius in *Eranistes*. Theodoret draws from the *Epistula ad Epictetum*; *De Sententia Dionysii*; *Sermo maior de fide*; *Oratio II contra Arianos*; *Epistula ad Adelphium*; *De Incarnatione et Contra Arianos*; *De Incarnatione*. He regards all of these as authentic documents from Athanasius’s hand. *Sermo maior de fide* and *De incarnatione contra Arianos* are now generally judged to be spurious. Dragas, 1985, argues that Athanasius is the author of *Contra Apollinarem*. Theodoret omits any reference to this work. For an assessment of Dragas see Hanson 1988:645ff.

⁶⁹⁸ Ettliger, 1975:12-13; 18-19; 23 has full citations. Theodoret quotes from Apollinarius’ “chief work”, $t[\]$ kat! keflaion b...blion, as well as kat! mšroj p...stij. These form the basis of the textual reconstructions of Leitzmann, 1904; de Riedmatten, 1962:203-212.

⁶⁹⁹ Concerning the impassibility of the Logos’ divinity in *Dialogue I*, Theodoret argues that even Apollinarius did not promote such folly as his followers now appear to be holding. *Eranistes*, Dialogue I MPG 104, Ettliger, 1975:110: 'IdoÝ to...nun mem£qhkaj, æj oÙ mÒnon of profÁtai ka^ ϕ pÒstoloi, ka^ of met' aÙtoÝj ceirotonhqšntej tAj o„koumšnhj did£skaloi, ϕ ll! ka^ Apolin£rioj, Ð toÝj a fretikoÝj suggr£yaj, ka^ t repton Ðmologex tÒn qeÕn lÒgon, ka^ oÙk e„j s£rka aÙtÒn tetr£fqai fhs...n, ϕ ll! s£rka ϕ feilhfstai. See Dialogue III, florilegium 46f, MPG 300, Ettliger, 1975:46, where the followers of Apollinarius are said to surpassing the captain of their heresy in impiety. Though hardly a defence or promotion of Apollinarius in any way, it echoes the contradictory work of Epiphanius of Salamis, who attempted to demonstrate that in heresy, error is multiplied as it fragments, making pure doctrine increasingly distant.

⁷⁰⁰ Peter II succeeded Athanasius as Patriarch of Alexandria [373-381]. Peter’s successors were Timothy [Patriarch 381-385] and Theophilus [385-412]. Cyril was Theophilus’s nephew, and is often portrayed as managing his patriarchate with something of his uncle’s outrageous managerial style (though contrast Wessel, 2004:74-111). On Cyril’s death in 444, Dioscorus was appointed to the See, who continued the Alexandrian tradition of political interference across the East, but his was without the saving grace of Cyril’s theological erudition. It is perhaps in response to this “beggar” or “carpet bagger” that *Eranistes* was written. Frend, 1984:765.

together with generally accurate citations,⁷⁰¹ reveal that Theodoret is an astute and careful scholar and fair witness of key issues.

The *form* of *Eranistes*, recording as it does the engagement, conflict, and the rehearsal of the area of argument between the characters, illustrates the way in which the texts reproduced in the florilegia are being interpreted and applied in the fifth century, reflecting a method of citation and correlation and an exegetical struggle to establish Christological authenticity.

Theodoret's florilegia, besides being in the main accurate, reflect his desire to establish an agreed grammatical-linguistic process in Christological debate consistent with what he styles the "whole apostolic rule" (Ósoi tŃn çpostolikŃn kanŃna).⁷⁰² Rooting truth in ancient authorities and eschewing innovation or originality is, of course, well-known not only in Christian orthodoxy, but a familiar late-Antique convention. In *Eranistes*, though, this is not merely a somewhat dishonest device to avoid the impression of innovation. Theodoret, achieves something more ethically sophisticated than this, conveying that his model of doing Christology is a process of conversation in the light of authoritative traditions. The Antiochene hero, Orthodoxos, strives to keep consistent with them in his Christology. Theodoret's drawing together of divergent strands of

⁷⁰¹ Ettliger, 1975:23-54 discusses errors and their significance. He regards Theodoret's method and accuracy to be generally scholarly. Evidence includes attentiveness to detail in arguments of those with whom he disagrees, in order to engage fully with the truth. Note the encouragement in Orthodoxos' farewell discourse to Eranistes to drink of *all* that is wholesome and sweet, *even amid bitter herbs*, but with care to avoid the poisonous. In the vast majority of the florilegia, there is a textual accuracy and a seeking on Theodoret's part to view the quotation in context.

⁷⁰² MPG 154, Ettliger, 1975:143. Cf. his attractive and humorous concluding exhortation, buzzing among the "fair flowers of these illustrious fathers" [ka^ tŃn paneuf»mwn patšrwn] MPG 317; Ettliger, 1975:253. Cp also, at the outset of the first dialogue, both characters agree that the quarrel is in order to agree upon and abide by "the apostolic doctrine in its purity." MPG 32; Ettliger, 1975:63 'Ameinon mŃn Ân sumfwne«n 1mŃj ka^ tš¼n çpostolikš¼n didaskal...an fulŃttein çk»raton.

Christology is not simply cramming all sorts into an amalgam of texts. Rather, from these diverse examples, Theodoret attempts to plot a clear trajectory; emphasising particularly Athanasius's authority. Athanasius's presence is not mere convention or political astuteness: he is cited as a defender of, and protagonist for, orthodoxy. Apollinarius is exposed as a distorter of the truth both in an exploration of his Christology in *Dialogue II*, and subsequent textual evidence in the florilegia. Yet even here, Theodoret deals carefully with his sources, attempting to reconstruct and critically engage with Christological standpoints different from his own. Such reconstruction of an opponent's ground without deliberate distortion is rare. Theodoret resists caricaturing all of the Alexandrian tradition's subjection of the Logos's divine nature to passibility as "Apollinarian", even though he considers this to be the prime error of Cyril, Dioscorus, Eutyches and their supporters. Theodoret is clear that their treatment of divine nature mutates the Son and prohibits union by creating a third entity, instead of mediating two natures. Nonetheless, he does not caricature this as "Apollinarian," instead portraying a discrete picture of Apollinarius's theology distinguished from subsequent "decay" among his followers. Against them, even Apollinarius himself is used as a witness for orthodoxy.⁷⁰³

Eranistes reflects Theodoret's desire to analyse and connect Christology with a living developing tradition with Athanasius a significant authority. *Eranistes*, therefore, evidences the desire to establish authoritative methodology in Christology. This fifth century development of a process which in earlier generations had provoked the formation of the New Testament Canon, became

⁷⁰³ Note, again though, his final exhortation as an indication and justification for this method in his theology.

focused in saintly authorities who stood in this Apostolic tradition.⁷⁰⁴ Ettliger notes that ‘*Eranistes* represents the high point in Theodoret’s opposition to Cyril’ of Alexandria,⁷⁰⁵ yet there is an unavoidable sense of Athanasius’s *personal* authority in *Eranistes*. Athanasius is the brightest star of the Alexandrian Church (Ð fanÒtatoj tÁj 'Alexandršwn ™kklhs...aj fwst»r')⁷⁰⁶ with the exasperated implication that the current Alexandrian horizon was particularly benighted. Nonetheless, Theodoret’s appeal to Athanasius illustrates that his reception and authority, far from being restricted to the Alexandrian tradition, became a canon for Christology.

Eranistes, written in the heady environment before Chalcedon, reflects the vital *theological* objections to some models of divine-human mediation in the fÚsij, ØpÒstasij and s≤rx of Christ. In opposing Cyril, *Eranistes* uses some consequences and implications of Athanasius’s and Apollinarius’s anti-Arian arguments a century before.

Theodoret is thus a significant witness in illustrating and assessing the lasting impact and application of Athanasius’s theological achievement in connecting the doctrine of *creatio ex nihilo* to Christology.

⁷⁰⁴ Cf. Cameron, 1991, on totalizing discourses. Her inaugural address of the XIII International Conference on Patristic Studies, Oxford 16-21 August 1999, “On Naming: the Trouble with Heresy” described the obsession of heresiologists to expose heresies not as eccentric errors but part of a wider scheme of distortion. This is why, for example, Epiphanius is anxious to make all manner of links between groups that did not accept an emerging authoritative discourse. She argued that full-blown persecution of heretics was restricted to very rare carefully controlled occasional outbursts. The arena of conflict was very much more the struggle for hearts and minds than an organized inquisition. Theodoret is interesting evidence representing the next stage of a claim on the truth by the Christian community. It is no longer just the canon of authoritative revelation in establishing which New Testament books were to be included; the claim is now made on the authority of Christian exegesis and theology in the Fathers. See Cameron, 2003:471-492.

⁷⁰⁵ Ettliger, 1975:3.

⁷⁰⁶ Preface to Florilegium 1, *MPG* 76; Ettliger, 1975:91 line 19.

6.3 Christology in Theodoret's *Eranistes*

Eranistes's clarity and pertinency establishes Theodoret as a competent communicator of complex theological ideas and arguments.⁷⁰⁷ *Eranistes*'s strongly-worded arguments against Cyril of Alexandria and his successor Dioscorus⁷⁰⁸ provides a powerful didactic tool for adherents of the Antiochene School in the conflict.

If *Eranistes* witnesses to Theodoret's theological ability, it also explains the urgency of his opponents' desire to condemn and silence him. By being confined in Cyrus, Theodoret could neither attend nor sway the second Council of Ephesus in 449, (the "robber synod"). His forthright response to Cyril's *Anathemas* was, no doubt, politically disastrous in the short-term, resulting in a sojourn in the wilderness and a long-term polemical caricature of him as Nestorian.⁷⁰⁹

⁷⁰⁷ See, for example, the way he compares Øpostasij with oÙsia at the beginning of *Dialogue I*. *MPG* 33f; Ettliger, 1975:64, line 6ff.

⁷⁰⁸ The depiction of Dioscorus as "mad, bad and dangerous to know" is commonplace, e.g., Cerbelaud 1989:13: "Si le prédécesseur de Cyrille apparaissait comme un personnage peu sympathique, son successeur a laissé le souvenir d'un véritable forban. Corrompu, violent, ambitieux, il indispose même ses éventuels sympathisants, tant par les scandales de sa vie privée que par son manque total de sens théologique"; Frend, 1984:763, argues that this reputation took some time to develop. Theodoret congratulated him on his reason and modesty, [Letter X] Domnus of Antioch and Pope Leo greeted him affectionately and looked forward to a different model of Patriarch from Cyril. Frend accounts Dioscorus reputation as Alexandrian ecclesiastical ambition. This certainly seems to be the common theme of his political allegiances at the various councils. Perhaps something of the vehemence of his rejection which lives on in anti-Dioscoran polemic can be understood as a cathartic means for the bishops who had gone along with the manoeuvres at the second council of Ephesus to distance themselves from events.

⁷⁰⁹ There are parallels with Nestorius' thought. Some scholarship is very near to acquitting Nestorius of grotesque heresy - see the summary and discussion in F M Young, *op. cit.*, 1983, pp229-265, and above, chapter 5 - though Cyril is very much in the ascendancy in most recent scholarship.

Theodoret's own Christology, outlined in *Eranistes*, is clear. Unsurprisingly, the Antiochene theologian wants to secure divine impassibility as foundational. This, he argues, is the key to orthodox Christology. To admit that the incarnation (ἡ ἐνανθρώπησις or οὐκ ὁμοιωσις) meant a *modification* or an essential accommodation of divine nature in the union (ἡ ἕνωσις), would belittle and distort both divine and human natures:

If the divine Word took nothing of our nature, then the covenants which the God of all made with the patriarchs are not true, and the blessing of Judah is unprofitable, and the promise to David is a lie, and the Virgin is redundant because she contributed nothing of our nature to the Incarnate God. ... [But] he is proclaimed to have been made flesh, and teaching that he remained unchanged [ἡ ἐνανθρώπησις], the evangelist also says "and we beheld his glory - the glory as of the only begotten of the Father".⁷¹⁰

In changing both natures, God would no longer have been truly God and Christ *never* of "one substance with the Father" appertaining to his Godhead. If Christ was neither "of one substance" with the Father nor, appertaining to his humanity, "of one substance with us", then not only would theology be distorted, but humanity, remaining untouched and unassumed without ontological mediation, would remain unredeemed.

⁷¹⁰ MPG 72, 73. Ettliger, 1975:88 line 27ff, 89 line 21ff.

Antiochene theolog... prompts Theodoret to urge the soteriological consequences of correct Christology, but he does so with characteristically Athanasian ontological emphasis. Athanasius achieved this synthesis, Theodoret shows. Even if Theodoret stands in the tradition of Theodore, objecting to Christologies where mediation is collapsed into *mingling*,⁷¹¹ he approves of Athanasius's paradigm of the ontological gulf between divine and created natures and integrates it in his own method. Theodoret claims continuity with Athanasius after the first dialogue, rhetorically challenging Eranistes to judge whether this noteworthy star is an admissible witness.⁷¹² The passage from *Ad Epictetum*⁷¹³ prefigures the very wording of Orthodoxos in the dialogue:

Orthodoxos⁷¹⁴

οὐκ ε.,i s£rka trape...i,

ϥll' ϥnqrwpe...an fÚsin

tele...an labèn

Athanasius⁷¹⁵

οὐτwj οὐc Óti trape^i e.,i s£rka

ϥll' Óti s£rka Øp□r 1mîn

ϥnšlabe

The change from Athanasius's "flesh" to "complete human nature" is characteristically Antiochene. But the other characteristic theological preference (repugnance at divine passibility) is Athanasius almost *verbatim*.

Ad Epictetum's citation at the end of the first dialogue is also significant: it equates the Logos's taking of humanity's curse with his bearing the consequence of sin as a fall out of relationship with the divine nature and thus back into non-

⁷¹¹ See the discussion of Dialogue II, below.

⁷¹² *MPG* 76; Ettliger, 1975:91, line 18.

⁷¹³ *Ad Epictetum*, 8: *MPG* 26.1061D - 1064A.

⁷¹⁴ *MPG* 220; Ettliger, 1925, p189 line 2-3.

⁷¹⁵ In *Eranistes Florilegium* 1 after the first dialogue, *MPG* 76; Ettliger 1975:91, lines 24-30.

being. Athanasius's Christological anthropology is reiterated by his consistent application of *creatio ex nihilo* as to leave no ontological alternative to either *remain* (μενεῖν) in the Logos or fall into non-Being.⁷¹⁶ Devoid of divine power, the flesh is indeed the curse.

Theodoret systematically presents theological objections against locating mediation in a part or element of the person of Christ: be that a divine pneuma or Iōgoj in human flesh. Neither is the assumption of *part* of human being - in the fÚsij or ØpÒstasij of the man Jesus adequate.⁷¹⁷ Theodoret's departure from the Athanasian text indicates the Antiochene's emphasis that it is not merely the flesh which Christ assumes, but the taking of "complete human nature" that is significant.

Theodoret outlines with ease and vitality the Christologies of those who have made these errors and draws clear sketches of their consequences, working through implications of victorious arguments of the past. The tradition of equating a heresy to a genealogy of dishonour, characteristic of heresiologists, finds sophisticated expression in Theodoret. An outline to his Prologue of *Dialogue I*, links Christologies which allow only divine nature with Simon, Cerdo and

⁷¹⁶ On Johannine *remaining* in Athanasius cf. Anatolios, 1998:35-7;159.

⁷¹⁷ Athanasius's *Orationes Contra Arianos* has parallels with Irenaeus of Lyons's *Adversus Omnes Haereses* [Harnack, 1901, onwards]: Athanasius adapted Irenaeus's *biblical* methodology in contrast to Origen, developing his theology along lines of Biblical themes of redemption rather than Platonic Cosmology. Irenaeus's critique of Valentinian heresies are judged to be similar to the Arians by Athanasius, so he adapts Irenaeus's attacks as his own rhetoric. Though Athanasius never cites Irenaeus, and, unlike him, Athanasius does not say that Christ had a human soul in *Contra Arianos*: Theodoret is silent about this omission. In his *Tomus Ad Antiochonem*, 7, Athanasius is explicit that unless a human soul is assumed then our souls have no opportunity of redemption. Greer, 1975:317 argues "It will be remembered that late in his career Athanasius was forced to take a stand with regard to the Apollinarian controversy, and that he argued that one must attribute a human soul to Christ. The human soul, however, never functioned theologically in Athanasius's thought."

Marcion. Those who derive from parqšnogenesij no organic connection with human being, viewing incarnation as only a passageway of divine being, without unity (parodik³/₄n d□ taÚthn genšsqai lšgein),⁷¹⁸ are equated with Valentinus and Bardesanes. Those who call the union of divinity and humanity one nature derive from Apollinarius; whilst those who attribute suffering to the divinity of Christ are inheritors of Arius and Eunomius.⁷¹⁹

That suffering of the *divine* nature has Arian attribution requires examination. Arius's refusal to reschedule divine and human natures in the light of the Athanasius's radical distinction imposed by applying *creatio ex nihilo* Christologically confused distinct natures by retaining Platonic hermeneutic of overlap. Athanasius's Christological application of the doctrine of *creatio ex nihilo* is a powerful ally for Theodoret against Cyril's attack upon the Antiochene tradition.

In response to Alexandrian assertions of the unity of Christ, Theodoret delineates subtly the consequences of what he saw to be its damaging, uncritical piety.

Frend suggested that:

If the Cappadocians laid the foundation for the Christology of the fifth-century patriarchs of Constantinople, the real challenge to Apollinarianism was coming from a different quarter... Two Cilesian bishops, Diodore, bishop of Tarsus [flor. c. 375-90] and his disciple, Theodore, bishop of Mopsuestia [d.428] maintained forcefully the

⁷¹⁸ p£rodoj emphasises the *revelatory* rather than *essential* here, meaning "way, passage, a coming forward before an assembly to speak" without any significant union.

⁷¹⁹ Prologue to *Dialogue I*: MPG 28-29; Ettliger 1975:61-62.

reality of the two natures in Christ. Jesus was a man and was part of the created order. God was by definition, Creator, and the gulf between the two was inseparable (Frend, 1988:641).

But this is not the entire picture. Theodoret's emphasis upon two natures is clear, but he constantly claims Athanasius as one who established the theological imperative for two natures: as a profoundly influential *sequitur* of his application of *creatio ex nihilo*.

Theodoret's model of *differentiated union* argues for the importance of the Logos not becoming flesh but *taking* (labèn) flesh. It is not enfleshment (s£rkwsij) that is the mechanics of salvation, as if it made a *via media* between the two natures of divinity and humanity, but the divine initiative of the Logos's taking (labèn) flesh which is the great mystery. In terms of Christological principles, Theodoret is closer to Theodore in Alexandrian ears than he really was. The florilegia demonstrate that he is nearer Athanasius's insistence on human and divine natures than he is to the exegetical practices of Diodore and Theodore. Although he defends Nestorius against Cyril's political invasion of his See, Theodoret's *Eranistes* is emphatic that free divine initiative be appreciated. This is in contrast both to Nestorius's attempts to produce a system [prosopic union] which "allows" the presence of God to connect with human nature, and Cyril's subsuming of the humanity of Christ. Theodoret steers a different path from those with whom he is most readily identified: witnessing to his independence of mind and his theological acumen.⁷²⁰

⁷²⁰ Cf. Young, 1983:285ff on his *Preface to the Psalms*.

Ὁ Ἰὸγοῖ σῆρξ ἔσνετο does not therefore mean, for Theodoret, that divine nature was moulded or changed or that the incarnation is in any way a predictable *process*. After *Dialogue I*, the florilegia focus upon how John 1.14 has been understood by the fathers. Although Orthodoxos illustrates the Antiochene tradition's unease with Ἰὸγοῖ-σῆρξ motifs⁷²¹ and argues with clarity for a Ἰὸγοῖ-ἄνθρωπος model, the florilegia are authentic quotations, which often use Ἰὸγοῖ-σῆρξ shorthand.⁷²² Σῆρξ for Theodoret means the “name” or style which appropriates to “humanity”. He argues:

It appears to me that it is for the *soul* to lead in [the flesh's transgression]... since it uses reasoning before the body acts.⁷²³

Supporting his arguments with florilegia comparing biblical language concerning the body - or flesh - of Christ, as a sign for the whole, Theodoret argues that this refers to his whole person in the same way that people speak of the emperor being attacked if his statue or robe is defaced or destroyed.⁷²⁴ So the flesh of Christ is an icon for his whole being.

This *whole* ἄνθρωπος to which the divine Logos is united, is the reinstated, recreated εἰκὼν of God in humanity. This is possible only through the union of two unmutated and unchanged divine and human natures in the hypostatic

⁷²¹ Cf. Gelasius of Caesarea's maxim: οὐκ ἀτοῦ μεταβληθεῖς... ἡ φύσις ἑστὴν ἑαυτῆς.

⁷²² Hanson, 1988:645.

⁷²³ *Dialogue III*, MPG 225, also MPG 128-129 *et al.*

⁷²⁴ Orthodoxos cites Eusebius of Emesa, omitting a citation [MPG 249.19-251.15 (=De Arbitrio, voluntate Pauli et Domini Passione) in *Dialogue III*, Florilegium 74, MPG 315; Ettliger, 1975:250.

union. The basis of Theodoret's appeal is again to the Athanasian application of the distinction which *creatio ex nihilo* brings when applied Christologically.

In *Eranistes*, Theodoret sustains theological sophistication over Cyril's rhetoric, demonstrating that sloganized theology is a *reductio ad absurdum*. Theodoret is aware that his style appears inimical to popular devotion. He is insistent, however, that a consistent theology of God's nature, evolving from acute theological analysis, is necessary for authentic Christology and theological distinction between the persons of the Trinity.

Theodoret's energy is focused upon the theological discernment of the Mystery of God (qeolog...a) informing understanding of the nature of salvation (o,,konom...a). Treating both aspects as parts of the whole Christian faith, he does not flee complexity. Theodoret's *economic* motivation is always balanced by this holistic theological focus. Theology occurs in context of fallen reason, confused language and divergent opinions. There is not, Orthodoxos voices, any formulaic panacea to complexity – Christology is forged in responding to problems requiring clear linguistic delineation. He asks his opponent:

Answer me: would you... [apply] the same treatment [f£rmakon] to all, or to each that which is appropriate?⁷²⁵

Theology is to be worked at with fear and trembling, honed neither by pious platitudes nor bellicose rhetoric (both of which he judged to abound in Cyril and

⁷²⁵ MPG 116; Ettliger, 1975:118, lines 13-15.

Dioscorus). Christian theology explicates orthodox truth by stating it afresh in new contexts where questions and language are constantly shifting. This accurate analysis of this period has a modern style about it. Attention to Christological problems is reverence, he urges: blanket piety is helpless in establishing truth if it remains undifferentiated quietism.

To assert and speak of only Christ's divinity then, as Eranistes insists contrary to Apostolic and Patristic testimony, states only part of the mystery of the incarnation. The assertion that between Christians only the divine nature should be spoken of is exposed as belittling the paradox of the divine o„konom...a,⁷²⁶ distorting revelation and God's purposes for humanity:

Eranistes: What is hidden ought not to be delved into.

Orthodoxos: Neither should what is plainly to be discerned be altogether ignored.⁷²⁷

In refusing pious protectionism, Theodoret argues that processes of theological debate and disciplined honing that emerge from hard engagement alone brings true reconciliation of the two natures in one union. This commitment drives his appeal to the Fathers as sources in refining Christological understanding. Christian theology should be reverently rational in order to distinguish patterns of application of words to each nature in the union:

⁷²⁶ MPG 120ff; Ettliger, 1975:120ff.

⁷²⁷ MPG 39; Ettliger, 1975:67 lines 13-14.

Let us, therefore, use this reason [tù de to...nun tù logikù] with regards to our Maker and Saviour, and apply what belongs to his divinity and what to his humanity.⁷²⁸

Orthodoxos argues consistently for the immutable, unaffected and impassible divine nature in Christ through the argument's turns. Contrasting his own Christology with Apollinarius's in *Dialogue II*, he works through functions of the two natures of Christ in relation to pertinent texts and variant traditions. *Dialogue III*, for its familiarity of tone, faces in a poignant theological way the central question of the meaning of Christ's passion.⁷²⁹

Apollinarian anthropology and Christology, he argues,⁷³⁰ omits a *reasonable* soul in Christ, allowing merely the life-force common to all living creatures, without the will to make them real or distinct. He contrasts this with his own model, where the whole humanity is assumed by the truly divine nature of the Logos: Ólhn t¼n fÚsin analabîn.⁷³¹ Irenaeus maintained that the Logos assumed a *human* soul, but Athanasius, despite Irenaeus's influence,⁷³² does not unequivocally follow Irenaeus here. In *CG-DI*, this would obscure his distinction between *either* created out-of-nothing *or* the eternal divinity of the Son, which he champions.⁷³³ Elsewhere, notably the *Tom. Ad. Antiochonem*, Athanasius agrees that the Logos assumes a human soul.

⁷²⁸ MPG 236; Ettliger, 1975:199, lines 33-35.

⁷²⁹ Young, 1983:282-283.

⁷³⁰ See *Dialogue II*, MPG 116; Ettliger, 1975:118, line 1ff.

⁷³¹ MPG 108; Ettliger, 1975:113, line 27. and MPG 75, Ettliger, 1975:91 line 3.

⁷³² See above, chapter 1, and Anatolios, 2001. Papyrus evidence is that Irenaeus's work was present in Egypt by 190, i.e., in his own lifetime.

⁷³³ Athanasius gives priority to divine will and freedom, and to introduce in a semi-Origenist Alexandria the human soul of Jesus would, no doubt throw the discussion back to Origen's explorations of the perfect, unfallen pre-existent human soul of Jesus, obscuring what Athanasius wanted to focus upon: *creatio ex nihilo*.

Theodoret accepts the union, but fusion, change or influence is completely unacceptable because that undermines God's ontological stability. He defines ὁνωσις:

We preach so close a union of Godhead and of manhood as to understand one person [πρὸς ὅσω] undivided.⁷³⁴

By this, Theodoret leaves not the slightest wedge for his opponent Eranistes to drive arguments against him.

Theodoret reproduces different patterns of Christological vocabulary to justify his choice of Christological language. In the *Dialogues*, Eranistes emphasises - and his arguments naturally employ - the phraseology ἁρκεσις and ὁνωσις; Orthodoxos prefers ἴσῳ ἀναρρήσις and οὐκ ὀνομα...α.⁷³⁵ Orthodoxos however, unashamedly uses his opponent's terminology expertly. His commitment to finding authentic grammar in Christology evidences Theodoret's belief that Christological language and terminology has a central role in forming the theological logic of Christology. The skilful use of his opponent's vocabulary conforms Theodoret's skill in using others' preferred *theologoumena* to his own

⁷³⁴ MPG 252; Ettliger, 1975:209, lines 26-30. Theodoret is careful in using πρὸς ὅσω that he does so primarily in quotations from Scripture. He does not, however, echo Arius's cry for a biblicism in terminology.

⁷³⁵ Theodoret uses the term ἴσῳ ἀναρρήσις 17 times on the lips of Orthodoxos, 10 times in the Florilegia and only 4 times on the lips of Eranistes. ἁρκεσις appears 8 times on Orthodoxos' lips, 7 times in the florilegia and 6 on Eranistes'. More telling than the number in the cases both of these terms and especially in the cases of οὐκ ὀνομα...α and ὁνωσις is the fact of who introduces the term and who stands by it. Οὐκ ὀνομα...α is a term Orthodoxos espouses, and although in the debate Orthodoxos cites - just in *Dialogue II* - ὁνωσις 32 times to Eranistes's 13, this is because Eranistes keeps trying to hide under the term and Orthodoxos expounds fully what the union means. For a full list of citations see Ettliger, 1975:282; 290; 294. Although he properly quotes it in his citation of Athanasius, Orthodoxos changes Athanasius's reference of *sarx* in *Ad Epictetum*, [= Florilegium 1] to "taking a complete human nature".

advantage in his theological method, exposing opponents' inadequacy in the process.

6.4 Mediation and Christology

Theodoret devotes time to debating the question of the *means* of mediation if in the union humanity and divinity are unmixable, defining his position in relation to the attempts of others before and around him, especially Athanasius and Apollinarius. We need to explore this understanding of *mediation* in order to assess his use of Athanasius, which will illustrate the enduring significance of Athanasius's categories forged in the Arian crisis.

A key passage on the subject of the unconfounded nature of the divinity of Christ is in *Dialogue II*. After a direct clash between Orthodoxos and Eranistes concerning the names (= natures) of 'God' and 'Man' in Jesus, the argument maintains that both are necessary to bear witness to the whole truth of the nature of Christ [qeolog...a] and for the viability of salvation [o„konom...a]:

The name 'man' is the name of a nature [fÚsewj]. Not to speak the name is to deny the nature. Denial of [Christ's human] nature is a denial of the sufferings, and a denial of the sufferings is to utterly ruin [froàdein] salvation.⁷³⁶

In this enormously significant passage, Theodoret, in Orthodoxos's words, sets out the basis for the case he is to argue. It is Jesus' true humanity which allows

⁷³⁶ MPG 120; Ettliger, 1975:120, line 23ff.

communication idiomatum with the rest of the race.⁷³⁷ Eranistes' fear is that baldly to call Jesus 'man' veers to gross heresy and belittles the glory of the true person of Christ:

It is profitable to acknowledge the assumed nature but to call the Saviour... of the world 'man' is to cheapen his glory.⁷³⁸

Orthodoxos explores this glory of Christ in the debate through a series of biblical references to Jesus as a man⁷³⁹ and then rhetorically asks Eranistes if he considers himself wiser than the Apostles or even the Lord.

Eranistes's response is the familiar contemporary Alexandrian argument, expressed clearly and powerfully, without undue polemical distortion. He argues that, especially in apologetic or missionary settings, it is unnecessary first to call Christ human:

To call Christ a man is I think unnecessary - all the more when believer is in dialogue with unbeliever.⁷⁴⁰

The reasoning behind this statement - neither explicitly announced nor ridiculed - is that it is clearly obvious that Jesus was a man. That is not at issue to the orthodox, but the point of who this man is - by nature - is central.

⁷³⁷ Theodoret expounds clearly what οὗτος... a means in Dialogue I, [MPG 33, Ettliger, 1975:64] Cf. Young, 1983: 275f., on the clarity of this point in the *Expositio recta fidei*.

⁷³⁸ MPG 120; Ettliger, 1975: 120 lines 27ff.

⁷³⁹ I.e., Jn 8:40 - a loose citation, but the key term, ἄνθρωπος, is there; Ac 2:22; Ac 17:30-31.

⁷⁴⁰ MPG 120; Ettliger, 1975:121 lines 27ff.

Orthodoxos’s response is that this indeed *is* the very point at issue. Just as the Alexandrians begin with Christ’s divine nature, so Orthodoxos, as a good Antiochene, begins with what can be perceived. The significance of the divine nature is that it is mediated through the true humanity of Christ. Citing *I Tim. 2: 5-6* to prove his case: Orthodoxos argues that *mes□thj* indicates both Godhead and manhood:

EĀej qeÒj	One God,
eĀej ka^ mes□thj	and one mediator
qeoà ka^ φnqrèpwn,	of God and humanity
¥nqrwpoj CristÕj □lhsoàj	the man Christ Jesus. ⁷⁴¹

Qeoà ka^ φnqrèpwn is interpreted as epexegetical explication of the mediator’s nature, including both parties for whom he mediates.

He is called ‘mediator’ because he does not exist as God alone; for how, if he had nothing of our nature could he have mediated between us and God?⁷⁴²

“Having our nature” is vital – not mingling, but a relationship with integrity in the union. Instead of postulating a third entity (as Nestorius does in aspects of prosopic union),⁷⁴³ humanity focuses the mediatorial motif in Theodoret’s Christology. Thus it may not be relinquished in the process of coming to a full

⁷⁴¹ *MPG* 121; Ettliger, 1975:122 line 1ff: EĀej qeÒj eĀej ka^ mes□thj qeoà ka^ φnqrèpwn, ¥nqrwpoj CristÕj ‘lhsoàj.

⁷⁴² *MPG* 121f; Ettliger, 1975:122 line 5ff.

⁷⁴³ See above, chapter 6.

understanding of the person of Christ. The motivation to protect divine nature is less obsessive in Theodoret than in other examples of Antiochene Christology. Central for Theodoret is that Christ's true humanity is allowed its *mediatorial* function. Athanasius's model of a Christology moderated by *creatio ex nihilo* is developed into the tenet of necessary humanity in Theodoret's Christology. Theodoret's argument presents a prelude to the Chalcedonian couplet of dual correlation of human and divine nature:

as God, he is joined with the Father - having the same substance
 [æj qeõ] sunÁptai tù patr^ t^4n aÙt—n œcwn oÙs...an]; and as man
 he is joined with us, because from us he took the form of a
 servant.⁷⁴⁴

The act of mediation consists of Christ uniting in himself the *distinct qualities* of the nature of divinity and manhood.⁷⁴⁵

The discussion unfolds in *Eranistes*, with mediation emerging to engage with, and develop, traditional Antiochene exegetical practice of attributing aspects of texts to one or other of Christ's two natures. Applying texts in this manner is redeemed from a crude "two Sons" Christology in Nestorius by his insistence upon *communicatio idiomatum*: the Prosopic Union facilitates communication of different characteristics of the two natures. Theodoret's exploration of Christ's humanity mediating the divine nature is far from merely an exegetical device

⁷⁴⁴ MPG 122; Ettliger, 1975:122, line 7ff.

⁷⁴⁵ So: e„kÕtwj mes...thj çnÕmastai, sun£ptwn ™n ~autù t| diestíta tí ~nèsei tân fÚsewn, qeot»toj lšgw ka^ çnqrwpÒthtoj. MPG 122; Ettliger, 1975:122 lines 9-10.

protective of divine nature, but, emphasizes the reality of divine and human natures coinhering in the person of the Mediator.⁷⁴⁶ Eranistes cites Moses as an example of one who successfully mediates, through reason, piety and beseeching. Orthodoxos responds that Moses was a *type* of the truth that was to come;⁷⁴⁷ arguing that types do not need to correspond at every juncture with that which they signify. This is consistent with Athanasius's understanding that lives correspond to scriptural archetypes.⁷⁴⁸ An example is that Moses, though not of divine nature, is called by the Lord "a god" to Pharaoh.⁷⁴⁹ That to which this type refers, i.e. Christ, is *by nature*, not by analogy, divine and human.

Eranistes's obstinacy is the stylistic device in the dialogue allowing Orthodoxos to demonstrate that the Scriptures use the *incomplete* as a symbolic precursor to that which is perfectly completed in Christ.

Hebrews 6.20 and 7.1-3 assume at this point a significant rôle in the exegetical justification of Christology. The texts are applied in the argument specifically to Godhead in respect of the lack of genealogy of Melchizedek, and to the humanity of Christ according to his priestly function - hence the nature of Christ's priesthood "after the order of Melchizedek". The *humanity* is the priestly thing: the holy offering of salvation for humanity is made under this *human* function.⁷⁵⁰

⁷⁴⁶ The notion of a real coinherence is closely analogous to Trinitarian formulation. Young defends Nestorius's use of *communicatio idiomatum*, 1983:238, though her position is revised in 2003:55-74.

⁷⁴⁷ τὸ ποῦ οὐκ ἐκείνου τῆς ἀληθείας. MPG 122; Ettliger, 1975:122, line 12.

⁷⁴⁸ Ernest, 2004, identifies a pattern that shows part of Athanasius's use of Scripture is as a place where lives are measured against archetypal characters. For Athanasius the thrust of the meta-narrative is central, rather than the complex exegesis. Participation in the life of faith is expressed concretely and mundanely by the imitation of biblical characters.

⁷⁴⁹ Orthodoxos quotes Exodus 7.1. LXX = 'Ἰδοὺ δὲ δώκεν ἐπὶ τὸν Φαραὼ; MPG 122; Ettliger, 1975:122 line 15ff: 'Ἰδοὺ [ἡ γὰρ φωνή] τῆς θεοῦ ἐπὶ τὸν Φαραὼ.

⁷⁵⁰ MPG 129; Ettliger, 1975:127 line 5ff.

Melchizedek was dissimilar in many ways from Christ, human but not divine, begotten in time not eternally begotten, *despite* Scripture's paradoxical witness that he was "without father, without mother and without descent".⁷⁵¹

This text has familiar Nestorian parallels with Theodoret's Christology. Hebrews 7.3 is used, analogically, to refer to the two natures respectively and not to the union (›nwsij). Christ did not have a father according to the flesh, being "born of the Holy Virgin alone."⁷⁵² Only according to this human aspect is Christ "without father." Then comes the shift, which Theodoret's thorough two-natures Christology requires. The second part of the verse "without mother" clearly does not apply to Jesus according to the flesh. Theodoret makes the point on the lips of Orthodoxos that it is absurd to propose that the *divine nature* had a mother. Eranistes agrees. Mary is not qeÒtokoj in that she nurtured divinity, even after the union - at conception for Eranistes - because that would distort the immutable, unconfounded and impassible nature of the divine Logos, thereby annulling salvation. The parallel with Nestorius here is unavoidable. Mary is CristÒtokoj, and truly Mother through the union of the whole Christ, but not k'ita t'¼n qe...an fÚsin mhtšra.⁷⁵³ Orthodoxos explores the image of Melchizedek, battling against Eranistes's pious denial that man can be an image of God.⁷⁵⁴ Eranistes argues from a lÒgoj-s'rx perspective that humanity is not an image [e,,kèn] of God, but made in the image of God, kat' e,,kÒna qeoà ™gšneto.⁷⁵⁵ Orthodoxos insists that the ›nwsij is the mediatorial facilitator, but that it is human nature which possesses the mediatorial *function*. A single proof text, 1 Cor. 11.7 -

⁷⁵¹ Hebrews 7.3.

⁷⁵² ™k mÒnhj g'jr jg...aj ™genn»qh parqšnou. *MPG* 125; Ettliger, 1975:124 line 23.

⁷⁵³ *MPG* 125; Ettliger, 1975:124 line 26.

⁷⁵⁴ *MPG* 127; Ettliger, 1975:124-5.

⁷⁵⁵ *MPG* 127; Ettliger, 1975:124-5.

“man is the image and glory (εἰκὼν καὶ δόξα) of God”⁷⁵⁶ - is introduced to gain his opponent’s approval. This part of the argument appears to be a predominantly *Alexandrian* – rather than an Antiochene defensiveness of the “divinity” of God. Orthodoxos insists upon the presence of God to real human nature in Christ.

The force providing dynamism in this debate is that proper discrimination is necessary in theology. Theodoret labours the text here because the issue is imperative: Orthodoxos is carving into Eranistes’s naïve simplicity an awareness that theology works by analogy and approximation.⁷⁵⁷ Orthodoxos’s sophistication ultimately leads Eranistes to admit that “the image has not all the qualities of the archetype”⁷⁵⁸ yet is properly a type, but it is a tedious process and a near thing! “Enwsij, though recognized as a theological necessity and truth, is a motif to caricature Cyril’s insistence upon it in pietistically indiscriminate ways, veiling that which should be uncovered.

Another text, Col. 1.15, provides grounds for exploration of Christ as the one “who is the image of the invisible God.”⁷⁵⁹ This leads into debate about divine and human natures of Christ, demonstrating again the necessity of a precise theology of two-natures Christology. Eranistes veers to reverential generalities asserting only that the Son has all the qualities of the Father. Orthodoxos, as

⁷⁵⁶ MPG 127; Ettliger, 1975:125.

⁷⁵⁷ Eranistes’ admission that the image works as a type even though the details are not parallel in every respect - οὐ κατὰ πᾶντα, MPG 128; Ettliger, 1975:126, line 7. Eranistes is depicted as a nervous (rather than careful) theologian, wanting, for example, clear and unambiguous correspondence *in every detail* between Moses and Jesus before he would accept Moses as an archetype of Christ.

⁷⁵⁸ MPG 128; Ettliger, 1975:126.

⁷⁵⁹ “Ὁ ἴσθιν εἰκὼν τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ ἀπόεικόν αὐτοῦ. MPG 128; Ettliger, 1975:126 lines 12-13.

Athanasius had done both by applying *creatio ex nihilo* between the Godhead and creation, and establishing two natures in the Son, maintains *distinction* in the Godhead: Pat³/₄r oÙk œstin ufÒj.⁷⁶⁰

Theodoret insists upon differentiation of the persons of the Trinity whilst rejecting the assumption common to other dyohypostatic theologians who, desiring to maintain ontological distinction, insisted that differentiation meant degrees of *subordination*. Theodoret argues that theological descriptions ‘uncaused’ and ‘unbegotten’ do not and cannot apply to the *union*. But contemporary Alexandrian emphasis on the transforming power of the divine nature of Christ must not distort the differentiated natures of Father, Son and Spirit.

Eranistes maintains that the o,,konom...a allows Christians to call Jesus ‘man’: the incarnation was real; but it is not appropriate to the divine glory of the Son after the passion.⁷⁶¹ Orthodoxos counters this reticence, citing New Testament references to Christ as ‘man’⁷⁶² *after* the resurrection. Inevitably, another lengthy rhetorical deviation ensues,⁷⁶³ throughout which Orthodoxos argues that the *direction* of Scripture is vital in understanding its genre.⁷⁶⁴

⁷⁶⁰ MPG 128; Ettliger, 1975:126 line 15.

⁷⁶¹ MPG 131; Ettliger, 1975:128, lines 4ff.

⁷⁶² MPG 132; Ettliger, 1975:128, lines 9-22.

⁷⁶³ MPG 132; Ettliger, 1975: 128-9.

⁷⁶⁴ The Jews, he argues, did not doubt that Jesus was a man, nor even a good man, but according to Jn. 10:32, they sought to stone him for blasphemy - seeking to make himself God. [=MPG 133; Ettliger, 1975:130, line 8]. Eranistes delights in the course of the argument as he believes that this clearly demonstrated that Jesus wished to be called God and not man, MPG 134; Ettliger, 1975:130.

Eranistes' delight in the example from John's gospel,⁷⁶⁵ where Jesus "revealed himself to the Jews as God and not man",⁷⁶⁶ proves fleeting. The text provides clear evidence of Theodoret's powerful, sophisticated theology in his exegesis of Matthew 22:42-44.⁷⁶⁷

Theodoret argues that Christ "did not deny... but he added...". Both passages explicate both divine and human natures.⁷⁶⁸ Orthodoxos cites instances where Jesus does not reprove people for the appellation "Son of David". To Eranistes these human Christological titles are accepted by Christ because of the incarnate Lord's holy condescension and indulgence to the weakness of the ignorant. They are not proper descriptors after Ascension. The argument thus has to focus on the nature of the *risen* Christ.

Theodoret exposes an improper theological duality undergirding his opponents' approach, applying some epithets in the story but disapplying them afterwards. Orthodoxos shows Christ's human body, his scarred hands and pierced feet, proves his *reality* in the appearance narratives. The transformed human body, scars and all, is proof of resurrection, not merely the experience of a miraculous spiritual encounter. The eating of fish and preparing breakfast are human activities, whereby the disciples know Christ's divine presence. Risen humanity mediates divine glory. The risen body has supernatural power to come and go, but is no ghost.⁷⁶⁹ Christ's real humanity is transfigured with divine nature in a distinctive manner after the resurrection, but each episode in the narrative of the

⁷⁶⁵ John 10:32-33 in *MPG* 133; Ettliger, 1975:129.

⁷⁶⁶ *MPG* 133; Ettliger, 1975:129.

⁷⁶⁷ *MPG* 134; Ettliger, 1975:130.

⁷⁶⁸ *MPG* 134; Ettliger, 1975:130.

⁷⁶⁹ *MPG* 137; Ettliger, 1975:132 line 15.

incarnation, from annunciation to ascension and the giving of the Spirit, reveals to Orthodoxos, an aspect of the whole truth. Discernment is required in understanding how the whole coheres in the union, but the meta-narrative of redemption, focused in the life and ministry of the Incarnate Son, is central to Theodoret's theological and scriptural hermeneutics. To the disbelieving Jews who think Jesus guilty of blasphemy, Jesus demonstrates his *divine* nature. To the disciples after the resurrection who think they are encountering a disembodied soul or divine apparition, Christ demonstrates his *humanity*.

For Theodoret, the resurrection body *is* Christ, truly man and truly God. The resurrection body reveals the wonder of the *o„konom...a*: in the face of the destructive powers of death, the union remains intact: united with divine nature, human nature is secure. The persistence of two natures in the union is imperative, and clearly demonstrated in Christ's resurrection body. There is an aesthetic consistency in the *o„konom...a* through the life, death and resurrection of Christ here. The distinctions between natures, and the relation of human and divine natures together in the drama of salvation, are consistently evident since the union, and remain in his eternal, resurrection life.

The soteriological dimension is that humanity is united with Christ's humanity for ever: in him, without being submerged by an alien (albeit divine) nature, human destiny and salvation is assured.⁷⁷⁰ Christ's humanity has undergone pain and

⁷⁷⁰ This is an early stage of a significant soteriological trajectory in Christology. Cf. the distinguished persons of the Trinity providing a fuller understanding of human nature and salvation in the work of Karl Rahner: "This abbreviation, this code-word for God is man, that is, the Son of Man and men, who exist ultimately because the Son of Man was to exist. If God wills to be become non-God, man comes to be, that and nothing else, we might say. This of course does not mean that man is to be explained in terms of his ordinary everyday life. It means that

death. Theodoret's theological anthropology, in contrast to Cyril's, does not remove humanity from the insecurities of ontological instability, affected by context and environment, in life or theological investigation. Yet in the union of natures in Christ, a persisting divinity remains immutable, without confusion and impassible. Death has not destroyed the union nor achieved confusion. This means for Theodoret whereby that is a dynamism is shown in his insistence upon $\phi\sigma\upsilon\gamma\kappa\acute{\upsilon}\tau\omicron\iota\varsigma$. It does not

look like a sort of external counterbalance to the unity, always threatening to dissolve it again, but shows precisely how it enters into the *constitution* of the united unity as an intrinsic factor, in such a way that unity and distinction become mutually conditioning and intensifying characteristics, not competing ones.⁷⁷¹

For Theodoret, the union is the $\omicron,\kappa\omicron\nu\omicron\mu\omicron\iota\omicron$...a or $\tau\mu\nu\alpha\nu\alpha\rho\eta\phi\sigma\iota\varsigma$ of the Logos taking ($\lambda\alpha\beta\omicron\nu$) flesh.⁷⁷² Eranistes balks at this, maintaining that there is a very great distinction between $\sigma\epsilon\rho\kappa\omega\sigma\iota\varsigma$ and $\chi\omicron\nu\omega\sigma\iota\varsigma$. $\sigma\epsilon\rho\kappa\omega\sigma\iota\varsigma$ is the taking of the flesh, $\chi\omicron\nu\omega\sigma\iota\varsigma$ the combination or holding together of two distinct things. This is a turning point in the drama of the debate, building to the climax when Theodoret places the resolving concept, $\sigma\upsilon\nu\lambda\omicron\upsilon\sigma\iota\varsigma$, on Eranistes' lips.

man is brought back home to the region of the ever incomprehensible mystery. But he is such a mystery. And if God himself is man and remains so for ever, if all theology is therefore eternally an anthropology, if man is forbidden to belittle himself, because to do so would belittle God; and if this God remains the insoluble mystery, man is for ever the articulate mystery of God."1966:119-120. Clearly, *union* would have to be liberally scattered in Rahner's work to be completely acceptable to Theodoret, but the constant soteriological concern also resonates with Theodoret.

⁷⁷¹ Karl Rahner, "Christ the Mediator: One Person and Two Natures" in McCool, 1975:159.

⁷⁷² $\sigma\epsilon\rho\kappa\alpha$ gar $\text{proslab}\acute{\omicron}\nu$ $\tau\mu\nu\sigma\alpha\kappa\epsilon\eta\eta$, *MPG* 138; Ettliger, 1975:133, line 7.

Sun£feia directly links to argument about the hypostatic union and is a term commonly used by Theodore of Mopsuestia and Nestorius. It is criticized by Cyril of Alexandria as innovative and he advises that the term should never be used,⁷⁷³ though used by Leo the Great similarly to Theodoret's usage.⁷⁷⁴ Although the connotation of "combination" is one which Theodoret would clearly resist if that suggested a third reality,⁷⁷⁵ sun£feia emphasises *conjunction* here. Derivatively it refers to harmony, is a euphemism for sexual union and clearly even in its most spiritualized sense emphasises the notion of relationship or communion.⁷⁷⁶

Ironically, sun£feia, rejected by Cyril as weak and leading into error, is introduced on the lips of Eranistes. This device allows Orthodoxos to re-examine the paradox of how to speak of Christ's two natures after incarnation, but just one pre-existent divine Logos before.

At this central point, Eranistes has admitted that Christ was of two natures, but he now backtracks fearfully.⁷⁷⁷ Orthodoxos asks Eranistes whether 'of two natures' is a mingling comparable to gilded silver or the blending of silver and gold - being *purely* neither - in electron.⁷⁷⁸ Should Christ be understood to be "blended," as a toy soldier is made out of tin and lead? Theodoret's imagery is

⁷⁷³ Paratoàntai mšn tš¼n ›nwsin, sun£feia de Ńnom£zousin, Œn ¨n œcoi tucŒn ka^ ›teroj tij prŒj qšon, æj™x ŒretÁj ka^ ĩgiasmoà mononouc^ sundoŪmenoĵ... sun£ptoito d'Ÿn ka^ maqhtš¼j didask£lw. *Quod Unus sit Christus*. Pusey, VII:334, *MPG* 75:1253.

⁷⁷⁴ *In 1 Joh.5:4-8, Ep. 28 MPL* 54: 778A.

⁷⁷⁵ Cf. Nestorius's schema in *Heracleides* where he writes of a *prosopic plane or topos*, chapter 5, above.

⁷⁷⁶ Lampe, 1961:1308-1310.

⁷⁷⁷ *MPG* 140; Ettliger, 1975:134 line 5.

⁷⁷⁸ Electron is a compound or mixed residue after the smelting of Gold, see the *NPNF* 3:192, where Blomfield Jackson cites Pliny *HN* xxxiii.23 where electron is a compound of one part silver to four of gold. *MPG* 140; Ettliger, 1975:134 lines 6-7.

deliberately provocative, leaving no alternative but a judgment that *mingling* is a deviation to be rejected. Two pure things blend into impurity. Theodoret claims that this solution to the problem of mediation has more in common with Arian and Apollinarian resolutions than Athanasius's. Unless the properties of each nature are held undiminished after the union, there can be no mediation. Orthodoxos's earlier term is worth recalling: Christ does not repudiate, but *adds to*. The term rejected by Cyril, but placed innocently on Eranistes's lips is an important one, and for all its casual appearance, it is a structurally significant move in the drama of the text.

Sun£feia is a term of relationship and communion. These are concepts paramount to Theodoret's understanding of mediation in Christology. Sun£feia avoids mutation or change. The taking of flesh by that which is divine was free from change (tropÁj).⁷⁷⁹

Christ's divinity is true, remaining immutable, unconfounded and impassible. To be otherwise would run counter to the theological and cosmological foundation that Athanasius had laid in his application of *creatio ex nihilo* to Christology. True humanity is not sacrificed or distorted but co-exists sacramentally with the divine nature in perfect communion. The perfect humanity of Jesus is the renewed e„kèn of God in human being – the means of divine mediation, human salvation as it is the locus of Christ's *priestly* function. The conjunction of each nature without confusion or mutation (trop») ensures that both are preserved, held with integrity, free from danger of distortion in the union.

⁷⁷⁹ MPG 144; Ettliger, 1975:136 lines 32-33.

Theodoret's Christology does not postulate a prosopic plane of union as a locus for the union as Nestorius does. Theodoret's is an attractive expression of Antichene Christology, exhibiting powerful logic and attempting to apply the distinctions of created and divine natures to the incarnate Christ in a manner consistent with Athanasius's method. Theodoret conceives of mediation in a fundamentally different sense from the Apollinarian tradition which requires blending, and the contemporary Alexandrian tradition which, in Cyril and Dioscorus, identified salvation as divinizing participation. All of these traditions laid claim to Athanasius. It is now appropriate to evaluate the degree of Athanasius's influence upon Theodoret.

6.5: The Influence Of Athanasius In Theodoret's Christology

Athanasius's influence is claimed by Apollinarius, Cyril and Theodoret. Theodoret's *Eranistes* builds almost on patristic citation, establishing twin poles of distinction between natures at all times in the union, and their koinwn...a within that union. Theodoret upholds his Christology as Athanasian against what he considers to be inadequate Christological models. This conclusion evaluates how Theodoret saw Athanasius's position, and claimed to be an expositor of it. The question of how far Athanasius would have recognized himself in Theodoret's Christological construct, is reserved until the exploration of these Christological trajectories is complete.⁷⁸⁰

Theodoret depicts Apollinarius's followers' work to be as dangerous a heresy as that of Arius. Thus Theodoret connects them because although their

⁷⁸⁰ See the conclusion to this thesis, below.

Christological starting point is from different sides of the ontological divide of human and divine natures, he considers that they distort both natures in Christ into a third entity, a hybrid, with devastating soteriological consequences.

Theodoret reacts against the notion of blended natures as theologically irresponsible because a blended nature, the product of divinity and humanity, is a third, distinct and deviant (trop») nature. Apollinarius-inspired theological models' improper insistence that the »nwsij blends the natures actually prevents mediation in Theodoret's estimate, because the mediatorial function is Christ's humanity. The union effects salvation because it is, for Theodoret, the perfect communion of humanity and divinity.

Apollinarius's (and his followers') sublimation of the distinctly human element of Jesus' being are dismissed as creating a deviation. The irreverent image of a die-cast toy soldier of smelted tin and lead⁷⁸¹ is poignant and is applied equally to Arianism as Apollinarianism. Hanson⁷⁸² outlines some 'neo-Arian' solutions to the Christological issue of in, for example, Aetius of Coele-Syria, which echo some of the arguments used in *Eranistes*. Aetius is called (probably metaphorically) a bronze-smith, (kamineut»j) who - according to Epiphanius' *Syntagmation* - argued that God could not have taken flesh in the womb of a woman. Aetius's solution is not that natures co-existed but that there was another, lesser, derived divinity. Homoian Arianism emphasized the particular nature of the creature of the Son. These developments are not, in Theodoret's estimate, far from the consequences of Apollinarian Christology. Indeed Theodoret identified a link between Apollinarius's theology and homoian Arianism: a common failure to

⁷⁸¹ MPG 140; Ettliger, 1975:134 lines 6-7.

⁷⁸² 1988: 599ff.

grasp the significance of the ultimate distinction between divine and human natures - established by Athanasius in his consistent application of *creatio ex nihilo* to Christology.

It is also clear, amid all the distancing from Apollinarianism in its contemporary forms, that Theodoret is unpolemical enough to refrain from equating Apollinarius with his followers. At the end of each of the florilegia in the dialogues, Theodoret shows that even Apollinarius really knew that the divine nature of the Logos was immutable, unconfounded and impassible.

The relationship with Athanasius is complex. Though there is a conventional hagiography which makes claiming him politically astute, there is a good deal of Christological continuity between them. For example, in the discussion above on the rejection of trop» in the incarnation, there is clear continuity with Athanasius. In CA III,⁷⁸³ Athanasius corresponds to the universal patristic rejection of trop» as alien to divine nature. The incarnation did not bring mutation to divine nature: οὐκ ἔμειψεν τὸ θεῖον ἐν τῷ σαρκί... ἔμειψεν.

But if changes to divine nature are rejected by both Athanasius and Theodoret, there is dissonance over the place of *human* nature in divine mediation.

Athanasius emphasises the divine power of the Logos sovereign in the body of Jesus. He does not postulate the *replacement* of any part of humanity;⁷⁸⁴ it is the divine power that preserves the body. Athanasius's connection of essential and

⁷⁸³ I am attributing this to Athanasius here – even though Kannengiesser has made a strong case for Apollinarian authorship – because this is Theodoret's attribution. I.48 = MPG 26.112C.

⁷⁸⁴ Athanasius does not specify - in contrast to Irenaeus - that there is a human soul of Christ. This would undermine the unity of Christ's person, and be more than likely be misconstrued by his Arian opponents.

economic Christology understands salvation for the Christian to be a similar renewal of human nature by the divine Logos in Christ.⁷⁸⁵ Christian life is an extension of the incarnation: for Theodoret,

salvation did not mean the transformation of man into God [qeopo...hsij], nor the realization of a natural kinship between the human and the divine, but rather the union of man with God by participation, neither God nor man sacrificing their integrity, but man becoming the image of God by being made by him.⁷⁸⁶

“Participation” here is a term which correctly explicates Theodoret’s stretching beyond simple co-existence or juxtaposition in his term *sun£feia* to describe Christ’s two natures. Communion, *koinwn...a*, is interchangeable with *sun£feia* in Theodoret’s conceptuality. Quoting Athanasius, he maintains that this emphasis is of Athanasian origin:

Life does not die but gives life to the dead: the Godhead of the Word is immutable and unvarying.⁷⁸⁷

The familiar abbreviation of Athanasius’ ontological soteriology is “he became man in order that we might become divine”.⁷⁸⁸ Consequently, this soteriology of the transformation of human nature appears to fit with Cyril’s Christological priority, focusing upon one divinizing nature of the Son. It seems far from

⁷⁸⁵ Roldanus, 1968:98-124, ‘La création de l’homme à l’image de Dieu’.

⁷⁸⁶ Young, 1983:275.

⁷⁸⁷ Florilegium 28 of *Erasnistes* Dialogue III, citing Athanasius’ *Sermo Maior de Fide* [Schwarz, p22.6-19, no 62].

⁷⁸⁸ aÙtÖj g|r ™nhnqrèphsen †na 1mej qeopoihqîmen. *De Incarnatione* I. 54.

Theodoret's stress on both natures in communion in Christ as a model of humanity's eternal relationship to God in Christ.

However, we are helped by Theodoret's astuteness in choosing a less problematic ambiguous *logion* to illustrate something of the dynamic subtlety in Athanasius's thought. Florilegium 25 of Dialogue III cites a theologically explicit and sophisticated couplet to describe the scheme of Athanasius's Christological soteriology:

For the humanity of the Logos suffered
so that we might be empowered to participate in the divinity of the
Logos.

“A g' r tō̄ φnqrèpinon œpace toà l̄gou
†na 'meç tÁj toà l̄gou qeÒthtoj metasceκn dunhqèmen.⁷⁸⁹

The suffering humanity of the Logos is the mediator of humanity's being gracefully given the possibility of participating in the divine nature of the Logos.

There is, therefore, a common theological coherence between Athanasius and Theodoret, as well as differences of emphasis. Both understand qeopo...hsij as something other than assumption into the *uncreated* divine nature. It is being united with, and remaining in, the Son. Christians participate in Christ's true divine nature, but do not possess it as he does. Christians participate in the true

⁷⁸⁹ MPG 292; Ettliger, 1975:235 lines 10-11 = *Ep. Ad Epictetum* 6, MPG 26.1060C.

divine nature in Christ because of the shared human nature. For both Athanasius and Theodoret, this participation is different from “owning” as a right. To be ‘in Christ’ means humanity’s being is placed in Christ so that his humanity may act in a priestly function, and be the mediator of divine nature. Participation thus depends upon distinctions remaining within the union. Neither Athanasius nor Theodoret dilute divine nature but both re-establish the created *eikòn* into its proper place and nature. Neither envisages salvation as being sublimated into a pool of divinity. Athanasius does stress, though, the active, transforming and preserving power of *q̅eopo...hsij*, displacing everything that is human but which is not found in Christ. This is partly in consequence of the particular emphasis and dynamic that comes from his application of the doctrine of *creatio ex nihilo* in soteriology and eschatology.

The transforming power of the incarnation and its extension through baptism, Eucharist and the pneumatic indwelling in Christians, is clearly an emphasis of Cyril and Theodoret’s theological and ecclesiastical opponents. But the function of human nature as the mediator of true divine presence, thus essential to the salvation that divine nature endows, is achieved in Theodoret by both natures being held in an eternal integrity, communion or *sun£feia*. Theodoret’s questions remain an important Christological and soteriological critique of the Christology argued by Cyril and his successors, and are perhaps the fullest and most persuasive statement of Antiochene Christology.

The significance of Theodoret’s claims upon Athanasius, and the use of texts in his *Florilegia*, establish that Theodoret’s Christology is a trajectory with its roots

in Athanasius's own concerns. Most especially, it is the emphasis that Athanasius placed upon *creatio ex nihilo* in the Christological enterprise against the Arians that explains this dependence by Theodoret upon the Alexandrian hero. Athanasius's emphasis on basic ontological incompatibility between created and uncreated being gives dynamism to Theodoret's concern to maintain the two natures distinctly. Athanasius's application of *creatio ex nihilo* in the different context of the refutation of Arius's assertion that the Son is a creature, is used theologically to explicate and justify the Antiochene tradition's concerns. Like Cyril against Nestorius, Theodoret claims identification with Athanasius, not merely as a rhetorical strategy (Wessel, 2004), but ideologically.

Most significantly, the Christological discussion illustrates that there is a sophisticated shift into focusing on the Christian's participation in the divine life of the Son as salvation, however that participation is described. In the Son, humanity is related to the Father and receives the Holy Spirit. Soteriology is no longer restricted in its concern to portraying the Logos as a stage in the hierarchy of being, a connection with the beyond-being-God, but is explicitly driven by a more thoroughgoing Trinitarian concern.

7: CONCLUSIONS

TRACING THE GOD-MAN

Whence did the wondrous mystic art arise,
Of painting speech and speaking to the eyes,
That we by tracing magic lines are taught
How to embody and to colour thought? (Massey, 1763).

This dissertation has traced these “lines” of the development of Christological description, viewing the discussion through the prisms of mediation and *creatio ex nihilo*. The analogy of tracing is a helpful one in recapitulating the nature of this enquiry, and evaluating and justifying its methodology. *OED* (1989:2090 sub pages 332-335) offers a selection of meanings for *trace*, and it is appropriate at this point to review in which senses this dissertation “traces” the development and impact of religious ideas and their expression. A trace is a way or path by which anything develops: a progression or itinerary. The analysis of how theologians before Athanasius constructed Christological models, showing how mediation and creation provided a movement in these models has been considered. *Trace* meaning “a line, file or train of persons” adds the dimension of the input both of different personalities and of localized and changing contexts in this tracery. *Trace* also comes to mean a series of steps (in dancing), a distance or measure (as in Athanasius’s assertion that there is not a trace between Father and Son in the latter’s eternal procession). This dissertation shows the development of a series of steps in ideas, and explores emergent ground rules in

the Christological pericèrnsij by critically evaluating key footprints (another meaning of trace) left in the struggle between miahypostatic and dyohypostatic Christological models. A trace is also a vestige of evidence indicating a former presence, existence or action – an indication of a former context. This thesis sets Athanasius’s achievement in the context of earlier thinkers – especially Origen – who viewed the Logos in terms of a Platonic “One-Many” mediator. Mediation in this intellectual environment worked by a trace (or path) of overlapping hierarchical relationships. The dissertation has responded to a serious critique of the over-Platonizing of Origen (Edwards, 2002), but shows that even if the material creation is *ex nihilo* for Origen, he views the Spiritual creation as eternal – responding to Celsus’s critique by asserting that because God is Creator, he must always have been Creator, and not begun a process alien to his being at a certain, temporal point. I am aware of a danger in reading Origen in too anticipatory a role in this dissertation by exploring the transformation of his thought: but I have attempted to respond to modern readings of Origen rather than construct too Platonic a caricature. The result is a picture of Origen which is nearer Athanasian and Cappadocian thought than might be the case – but the abandonment of his hierarchical hermeneutical framework is nevertheless provocative in Christological developments in this dissertation. A real sense of a shift from Origen’s hierarchy should not be, and is not, obscured for all Edwards’s (2002) achievement.

A trace is also a mark or impression made upon the mind – and the provocation through Arius that this hierarchy is incompatible with a biblical cosmology establishes a gulf between God and all else. This is such an indelible mark in the

development of Christology, as this dissertation traces responses to the challenge to Christian theology of alienating God and establishing him in such monadically-construed terms. It is a ground plan of emergent responses to this assimilated feature through an analysis of what such an environmental change does to the concept of mediation in Christological formulation. It has identified and reinforced the significance of Athanasius as a figure who (with others) not only recognized changed Christological conditions, but established fundamental methods for Christian theology and was reckoned by successive generations (of both Alexandrian and Antiochene pedigrees) as pivotal in this development. His agenda establishes the divine identity of the Logos (“above” an ontological gulf, as it were), creating a new method of articulating mediation both ontologically and soteriologically. It has been shown how Athanasius develops Irenaean insights so as to enable a means of speaking of God’s immanence and ultimate transcendence in Trinitarian vocabulary. This makes Athanasius structurally centrally significant in Christianity – as is witnessed in a variety of ways which require there to be communion between divine and created natures in Christology: this finds expression in doctrinal articulation, Scriptural exegesis, emerging sacramental theology and Christian Spirituality.

The major contribution of this thesis is that this particular reading highlights the dynamic which mediation played in this development – or prefiguring what will become essential in Christianity – and it has evidenced Athanasius’s achievement as understood to be absolutely fundamental to and ultimately characteristic of orthodox Christianity. It traces this huge shift, diverse responses to it, and the enormous and sustained impact of Athanasius upon Christian

thought. In terms of particular contributions of this study, it has shown that Athanasius's impact is core to both miaphyostatic and dyohyostatic Christologies that come after him. It demonstrates the convergence and correlation of Athanasius with Apollinarius, and recognizes the mutual influence of each other's thought, and offers something of a newly nuanced reading of Apollinarius as rehabilitating *Ἐμμοῦσιος* in a non-Marcellan manner. The dissertation has also shed new Athanasian light upon the terminological confusion between Cyril and Nestorius by providing evidence that both reached to (and found) usages of technical terms in different pockets of the Athanasian corpus. In particular, Nestorius finds examples of double application of Scripture in CA I and II, where Athanasius accounts for passages of Scripture referring to Jesus's suffering, hunger or ignorance as referring to the humanity of the Incarnate Son. This falls foul of Cyril's insistence upon *communicatio idiomatum* in Orthodox theology – which he justifies by a reliance upon CA III & IV. Nestorius does thus cast himself as Athanasius, whilst Cyril depicts him as the new Arius. Nestorius has identified Athanasius's nuanced application of *creatio ex nihilo*: the gulf or *cwismōj* is held together and bridged in the person of Christ rather than lying between Father and Son (or in earlier language God and Logos). This dissertation has shown that the Antiochenes are those who continue this Christological application of *creatio ex nihilo* while Cyril obscures it.

A *trace* is a line or figure drawn or copied often through opaque paper to provide a copy, and, from this, an investigation into the origins, of, for example, a telephone call or electronic communication. This thesis has attempted to trace the development of ideas, using as lanterns the ideas of *creatio ex nihilo* and

mediation. They have provided enough light to penetrate the opaque environment and show new detail which establishes Athanasius's significance in both Orthodox and Western Christian traditions.⁷⁹⁰ My style is not that, however, of Enlightenment confidence, identifying strict cause and effect. The methodology is necessarily more artistic, requiring imagination and, at times, conjecture. The result is, however, a significant refinement to understanding the sources and significance of Athanasius's thought. If there is a major weakness with the method, it is that there is perhaps a danger of seeing Athanasius everywhere. The evidence produced and analysed here identifies a greater danger, however, that of *not* seeing him everywhere.

Tracing has highlighted Athanasius's significance in the radical restructuring of Christology and Christian vocabulary after the collapse of the influence of Platonic hierarchy in Christological expression after Arius:

If the renewal of philosophical research... needs to be undertaken in a radical fashion, it is not enough to "patch up" or complete an already existent philosophy by integrating certain current problems... it is first necessary to rediscover the starting point for philosophical research beyond this rupture (Philippe, 1999:6).

The two initial responses, of Arius and Alexander differed *toto caelo*. Arius's direct application of the doctrine to the Logos, whether or not it was "driven" by

⁷⁹⁰ It is my intention to respond to this research by engaging upon further tracing of the Christological themes in Oriental Churches, particularly Nestorian and Armenian traditions. I am grateful to Robert Thomson for suggesting this and for his pointing to characteristics of the transformation of Athanasius in *catenae* in the Armenian tradition (1965:47-69).

soteriological concern (Gregg & Groh, 1981) or a conservative biblicist monotheistic protectionism (Young, 1983) is naïve, and his Christological application of the argument undifferentiated and awkward. Alexander's response, that of ignoring this application, reveals a discomfort with the argument. His rebuttals of Arius avoided the pertinent discussion, but his forthright successor accepted the ontological premises of Arius, that there *is* an impenetrable gulf between created and divine natures, and constructions of the idea of salvation or participation in Christ upon the basis of some *a priori* ontological connection with divine being was groundless. Athanasius's development of this idea and its use *against* the soteriological Christological solutions of Arius and other dyophysite Christians is the significant thing. He does not achieve a balanced integration of traditional Alexandrian and Irenaean concerns in a smooth synthesis, but his method reflects a serious integration of ontological concerns viewed through a framework dominated by what is now understood to be Scripture's prime differentiation of all things and emphasis upon divine transcendence including a free presence to the world (Young, 1991; Anatolios, 1998; 2001). Athanasius's labours resolve what he considered to be the centre of Christological confusion by establishing a single overarching theological description, which attempted to describe closely the relation of the Father to the Son, and of divine nature's relation to created nature *in the Son*. This nuanced, "contrapuntal" application of *creatio ex nihilo* brought the concept of participation in and mediation of both ontological realities into the foreground. Singularity of *hypostasis* at this juncture refers primarily to the uniqueness of divine nature, which Father and Logos (and – ultimately – the Spirit) partake. Nicaea's use of a tainted term $\Theta\mu\omicron\upsilon\acute{\sigma}\iota\omicron\jmath$, is pragmatically chiefly avoided by Athanasius until the mid-fourth century, because

of its controversial status after Nicaea (and possibly because of previous arguments over the meaning of the term⁷⁹¹), and its association with Gnosticism (Hanson, 1988:191; Ricken, 1969:335-6) and its identification with Marcellus. In Athanasius's eventful career, two dimensions are of particular significance in this reading of the period: firstly the clarity of his ontological-soteriological reworking of Eusebius's apologetic in *CG-DI*; and his more complex and detailed exegetical engagement with dyohypostatic arguments in his anti-Arian literature.

Athanasius's achievement begets enormous conflict, however, as Part Three evaluated in detail. The linguistic conflict reflects a profound reaction to this major shift in conceiving God's relation to humanity and the nature of the soul. The concept of participating in ontologically polar opposite realms (divine and created) prompts concern and discussion about the Son's nature and argument about where to locate his personality and identity. Athanasius does not reflect upon the theological significance of the Son's whole humanity – its significance is that it is *assumed*. Apollinarius and Cyril, in subtly different styles, attempted to

⁷⁹¹ Athanasius's *de Sent. Dion* and *Letter to the African Bishops* disentangle local devotion to Dionysius of Alexandria from markedly "Arian" patterns of Christology: "it was indeed to remove this slur on his predecessor in the see of Alexandria that Athanasius wrote" *de Sent. Dion.*, Hanson, 1988:72. In *Ad Afros*, Athanasius reduces the complex dialectic of the Dionysian correspondence to a "somewhat disingenuous" endorsement of *Ἐμμοῦσιος*. (Hanson, 1988:192). Confusion is compounded because *Ἐμμοῦσιος* was explicitly refuted in the Council of Antioch when Paul of Samosata was deposed and condemned. "Athanasius is embarrassed by this argument. He... cannot deny that they damned the epithet *Ἐμμοῦσιος* as applied to the Son. His way of resolving the difficulty is to argue that Paul and the upholders of the Nicene formula in Athanasius' day used the word in different senses. The almost insoluble difficulty is to determine in what sense Paul used *Ἐμμοῦσιος*. Athanasius represents him as describing the word as unsuitable in a kind of *reductio ad absurdum*; he quotes one sentence from Paul himself: 'If Christ did not derive from man, he is therefore *homoousios* with the Father and there must be three *ousiai*; one chief and the other two deriving from it.' [*De Synodis* 45.4] A few years later Hilary attempts to meet the same argument against the use of *Ἐμμοῦσιος*, that 'our fathers, when Paul of Samosata was declared a heretic, even repudiated *homoousion*', but the reason which he gives for this repudiation is that the word to them spelt Sabellianism. He clearly believes that Paul himself approved of *Ἐμμοῦσιος* [Hilary, *de Synodis* 81, 86, 87, 88: his reason is *quia per hanc unius essentiae nuncupationem solitarium et unicum sibi esse patrem et filium praedicabat*, which, presumably, means 'because through this epithet of "of one substance" he was teaching that the Father and the Son were a single and sole individual'.(81)]" Hanson, 1988:193-4; Ayres 2004a.

explicate issues from Athanasius's silence, the latter by claims upon the Athanasian corpus – especially the third and fourth CA – now viewed as probably Apollinarian in origin. Apollinarius and Cyril accept mediation as imperative, and their miahypostatic resolutions provoke sustained reflection, opposition and clarification from representatives of dyohypostatic Christological traditions – in Nestorius and Theodoret. This has guided the selection of the characters for this thesis. I intend to revisit Marcellus – whose motivation and method I believe are less radically influenced by Athanasius – for Athanasian influence and claim, but that important endeavour properly belongs outside this thesis.

Apollinarius's theological creativity in *KMP*, and his variations on the double homoousion in *De Unione* significantly rehabilitate the centrality of ÐmooÚsioj in Christological discussion (*contra* Marcellan usage), at the cost of his reputation. Apollinarius draws hostile fury from dyohypostatic theologians at Nicaea's perceived innovations, even though he argues for a single Øpost£sij of the Son, but, (unlike Marcellus) a triple hypostasis in the Trinity.⁷⁹² Athanasius's reputation, however, benefits from this casualty for the miahypostatic cause, establishing an "Athanasian" miahypostatic model which holds in tension a view of salvation and Christian life which is redemptive in its emphasis, but which holds ontological Christological mediation as foundational. Far from being

⁷⁹² *Contra* the Egyptian *tropici* against whom Athanasius wrote *Ad Serapionem*, in the 350s-360s, and conservatives who persisted in opposing miahypostatic language, led by Eusebius, asserting that the Spirit is brought into being by the Son, $\text{›n dš ti tĩn di| toà Øioà genomšnon tugc£nei Eccles Theol iii.6.3}$, Klostermann & Hansen, 1972:164. Kelly Spoerl (1994:545-568) notes that in this section (*Eccles Theol iii.4-6*), Eusebius additionally asserts that the Spirit is superior to every intellectual being, and thus (because there is no neutral place) a fully divine member of the Trinity. The consensus of scholarship is more reticent about attributing a tri-hypostatic Trinity to Apollinarius than has been argued here, significantly cf. André de Halleux, 1984, for a distinction in Apollinarius's language between *hypostasis* and tŒ Øfest£nai , (subsistent). Though Apollinarius describes a single hypostasis of the Son, he applies this term also to the Father and the Holy Spirit to urge their distinctness and the eternity of the divine persons (against the quasi-Sabellianism of Marcellus), de Halleux, 1984:329, 345.

replaced by the notion of union as a central motif, mediation provides a distinctively *Christian* dynamic in the notion of union with the divine: Athanasius's emphasis upon union with the divine for ontological stability is thoroughly dependent upon the Incarnation. This study has shown that, despite the import of Cyril of Alexandria in the development of this Christological method, Wickham goes too far in his claim that

The patristic understanding of the Incarnation owes more to Cyril of Alexandria than to any other individual theologian. The classic picture of Christ the God-man, as it is delineated in the formulae of the Church from the Council of Chalcedon onwards... is the picture Cyril persuaded Christians was the true, the only credible, Christ [1983:xi].

Cyril represents one means of expounding the Christological significance of the paradigm shift achieved by Athanasius.

The persistence of the idea of mediation in Athanasius is pressed home by his application of *creatio ex nihilo*: the incarnation is not simply as a device for the relation - or reversion - of the One and the Many, but the foundation for his theological anthropology, Christology and ecclesiology.⁷⁹³ *Mediation* functions in this argument to emphasize the Son's ontological participation in the Father's

⁷⁹³ Cf. Young, 1991:139-151, makes a case for the primacy of Jewish and Christian emphasis on the transcendence of God rather than Platonic philosophy: "God was not subject to necessity but free, and that was a better and more biblical grounding for his transcendence and impassibility than a mere adoption of Platonic axioms. He was conceived as containing all things while not being himself contained: thus even before Plotinus, indeed in Irenaeus, the concept of his infinity began to be grasped" (1991:151).

nature. Redemption is constructed as the Son giving to Christians his own divine life. Athanasius's use of *creatio ex nihilo* attempts to establish the Son's necessary divinity. Sustained attacks upon Apollinarius, by Eusebius and others, were thinly veiled attacks upon Athanasius, who was careful to distinguish between Apollinarius and Apollinarians when distancing himself from formulations not explicitly expressed in Apollinarius's writings.

In the fifth century, though, Nestorius's approach is significantly different from the dyohypostatic reaction to Athanasius and his achievement in the previous generation. The Antiochene perspective was rhetorically depicted by Cyril as a continuation of the Arian impiety, with Nestorius especially as the new Arius, but it sought the *theological* significance of Christ's humanity, using this as a cipher to discuss mediation and soteriology. Theodoret of Cyrus especially clarifies the Antiochene tradition; and we have observed how all claimed Athanasius as core to their Christological concerns.

This trajectory has illustrated the inter-relation of ontological and soteriological concerns, their Christological focus, and the way in which Christology is the locus for reflections upon theological anthropology with the notion of mediation moderating the debate – a control which is central to the construction of acceptable Christological vocabulary and grammar in this formative period. It is Athanasius, rather than Cyril, who must have central place:

Only Augustine, if the Reformation may be allowed to count as a consequence of following to their conclusions his leading thoughts

about divine grace and human freedom, has had a comparable significance, at once religious and political, unitive and unwittingly divisive (Wickham (of Cyril), 1983:xi).

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Post script on the parallel to the *Thalia* in *Ep. Ad Aeg. 12*

In the above discussions around the texts attributed to Arius, this thesis follows the models offered by Stead (1978) and Williams (2001), not least because these attempt to steer away from the conventional antagonistic depiction of Arius and Arianism (Wiles, 2001:5). Bardy's reconstruction of fragments 17 and 18, however, from *Ad Ep. Aeg. 12* and Marcellus's *Epistle to Julius* respectively is rejected by Stead (1978:23) because of the clearly polemical nature of these texts. Yet it is significant to note that *Ep. Ad Aeg.* offers a parallel to the text in CA 1.5 up until $\zeta\nu\omicron\mu\epsilon\sigma\kappa\alpha\iota\ \mu\acute{\omicron}\nu\omicron\nu\ \sigma\omicron\phi\ \dots\ \alpha\kappa\ \dots\ \iota\acute{\omicron}\gamma\omicron\nu$. In *Ep. Ad Aeg.* the accusation follows that the Logos was made for the sake of humanity, not humanity for the sake of and by the Logos, as an example of archetypal Arian impiety:

Πᾶν τὸ φασίν, ὅτι οὐκ ἵμῶν ἐκτίσθη δι' ἡμῶν, ἀλλ' ἡμῶν δι' ἡμῶν

Newman (1833) refers to this as an authentic unpacking of the dynamics of Arius's thought driven by Athanasius's specific arguments against Arian opponents. But Lyman (1993b) rightly is reserved about the construction of Athanasius's opponents in such terms. Stead therefore rejects this reading as prejudicial on Bardy's part, and urges that this is Athanasius's own deduction which he is presenting to his opponents (1978:31). The worship of a work as God (*Ad Ep. Aeg. 13*) is reminiscent of CA 1.8; 2.43; 3.16 (Wiles, 2001:8), but I am following the argument that Athanasius is interjecting his detracting thesis into his retelling of Arian heresy at this point and therefore omitting it from the discussion,

though it may yet be shown to have a *Sitz-im-Leben* which does have an authentic Arian echo, and illustrative of soteriological priorities in dyohypostatic Christology.

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