

GEEVARGHESE CHEDIATH

**THE CHRISTOLOGY
OF
MAR BABAI THE GREAT**

**ORIENTAL INSTITUTE OF
RELIGIOUS STUDIES, KOTTAYAM, INDIA**

Geevarghese Chediath / The Christology of Mar Babai The Great

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KOTTAYAM 686 010, INDIA
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PREFACE

The Holy Spirit is working among the Churches in an amazing way and moving them closer to the unity as envisaged by Christ, "that they all may be one" (Jn 17:20). The Churches are seeking the real evangelical content of their traditions and want to go beyond formulas and terminologies. The Eastern Orthodox, Oriental Orthodox and Roman Catholic Churches have fast progressed in active ecumenical discussions.

I have ventured to traverse a field which is still untouched, but which must be brought to the Ecumenical Movements of our time. The Christology of Mar Babai the Great of the East Syrian Church represents the Christology of the "Nestorian Church", which is as relevant today as other Christologies.

In presenting this work, I am indebted to several of my teachers, benefactors and friends. I would like to make special mention of some of them. First of all my thanks are due to my Archbishop His Grace Most Rev. Benedict Mar Gregorios, the Metropolitan of Trivandrum. I am indebted to the Sacred Congregation for the Oriental Churches for generously granting me a scholarship for five years. I wish to remember the Augustinian Patristic Institute and all its professors. I am happy in a very special way to remember the director of this dissertation, Prof. Joannes Gribomont O. S. B., who was always most available, showed his genuine personal interest in my work and competently directed it all the way. I would like to thank Prof. Basilius Studer O. S. B., Prof. Victorinus Grossi O.S.A., Prof. Placid J. Podipara C.M.I., Prof. Dr. Luise Abramowski and Prof. Joseph Koikakudy for their valuable suggestions and corrections. Once again my hearty thanks to all who have helped me in the preparation of this work.

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INTRODUCTION

Here is an attempt to understand the Christology of Mar Babai the Great of the Nestorian Church in an ecumenical perspective. There are but a few studies on the life and works and especially on the Christology of Babai. No important study on Babai's Christology from an ecumenical point of view appeared. The present day Nestorians also have not presented the Christology of their notable theologian, and consequently no serious attempt was made towards an effective dialogue between the Nestorian Church and the other Churches. In the Nestorian Church of Persia, Babai alone wrote a systematic Christology and enjoys a unique position there. Even today his Christology has not come to the forefront of theological discussions and has yet to receive its due position in the one Church of Christ. The effort here is to look at Babai's Christology in his original presentation, to realize his specific contribution to the Christology of the Universal Church, and to observe how his Christology could be a point of departure for a dialogue between Christians of divergent traditions.

The Church in the Persian Empire is commonly known as the "Nestorian Church", or "the Assyrian Church". It is also called "the Persian Church," "Babylonian Church" "Seleucian Church" "the Diphysite Church in Persia," and "the East Syrian Church." The members of this Church call themselves "the Church of the East," or "the Catholic Apostolic Orthodox Church". Although they opposed the appellation, "Nestorian" in the beginning, today they do not hate it. They used East Syriac as their liturgical language.

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CHAPTER I

The Life and Works of Mar Babai The Great

Under three articles this chapter deals with the life and works of Mar Babai the Great. Since there is no adequate history on his life and works, it is necessary to present it here. The first article looks into the ancient sources which speak of Babai and his writings. The second article discusses his life and the third, his works.

Art. I. The Sources

The earliest available written document which mentions Babai is the correspondence of Mar Isoiahb III, the Catholicos (649-659).¹ Some of his letters serve as a source for the life and activities of Babai.²

The treatises of Dadiso Qatraya (+690) "On Solitude" and "Commentary on the Book of Abba Isaiah" help us to know something about the customs in the novitiate under Babai.³

1. R. DUVAL, ed. *Iso'yahb III Patriarcha, Liber Epistularum* (GSCO 11/12), Louvain 1914/1915 (= *Liber Epistularum*). The first number (e. g. 11) refers to the Syriac text; the second (e. g. 12) to the translation. This order will be followed all through this work. Cf. J. M. FIEY, *Iso'yaw le Grand. Vie du Catholicos nestorien Iso'yaw III d'Adiabene (580-659)*, in *OCP* 35 (1969), p. 305-332; 36 (1970), p. 5-46 (= *Iso'yaw le Grand*).

2. ISO'IAHB, *Liber Epistularum*, p. 2-3/8-9 (Ep. 2 written to Babai on the study of Faith); p. 13-16/15-17 (Ep. 11); p. 22-29/21 - 26 (Ep. 17); p. 238-239/172-173 (Ep. 8 as Catholicos). The first number (e. g. 2-3) refers to the Syriac text and the next (e. g. 8-9) to the version. It is the general rule followed all through this work.

3. Dadiso was a monk of Rab-Kinnare in the Qatar district of the Persian Gulf. DADISO QATRAYA, *A Treatise on Solitude*, in A. MINGANA, *Early Christian Mystics*, (Woodbrooke 1

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Another minor source is the "Anonymous Chronicle" in the "Chronica Minora", composed by a monk between 670 and 680.⁴

The "Monastic History" of Isodenah,⁵ Bishop of Basrah, gives some biographical references on Babai. Isodenah died after 849.⁶ His work is a history of all the founders of monasteries and schools in Persia or among the Arabs, and of writers on monastic life.⁷

The "Historia Monastica" or "The Book of Governors" by Thomas Bishop of Marga contains the most substantial biographical data on Babai. In chapters 7,8,27,29 and 35 of his work, this ninth century writer mentions Babai.⁸ As Isodenah, so Thomas also did not have first hand information, but he had the advantage of being in close touch with the traditions regarding Babai, because he worked in the Northern regions, where Babai carried on most of his activities.⁹ The testimony of Thomas can be accepted as a moderate presentation of the great religious leader. But in some cases where Thomas gives a theological interpretation of the events, his views must be accepted with caution.

Studies, Vol. VII), Cambridge 1934, p. 76-143 (= *On Solitude*): p. 79-80, R. DRAGUET, ed. *Commentaire du livre d'Abba Isaïe par Dadiso Qatraya (Ville s.)*, (CSCO 326/327), Louvain (1972) (= *Abba Isaïe*), p. 183/141.

4. I. GUIDI, ed. *Chronicon anonymum*, in *Chronica Minora I*, (CSCO 1/2), Louvain 1903 (= *Chronicon anonymum*), p. 23/21-22.

5. Cf. J. M. FIEY, *Ichô'dnah, Métropolitite de Basra, et son oeuvre*, in *OS* 11(1966), p. 431-450 (= *Ichô'dnah*). J. B. CHABOT, ed. *Le Livre de la Chasteté composé par Iso'denah évêque de Baçrah*, in *MAH* XVI, Paris 1896, n. 39 (= *Livre de la Chasteté*).

6. J. M. FIEY, *Ichô'dnah*, p. 432. J. S. Assemani and J. B. Chabot considered him an author of the eighth century (*BO*, III, 1, p. 194. 4; *Livre de la Chasteté*, p. 228).

7. ISODENAH, *Livre de la Chasteté*, p. 228.

8. E. A. W. BUDGE, *Historia Monastica. The Book of Governors of Thomas Bishop of Marga, A. D. 840*, 2 vols., London 1893 (= *Historia Monastica*); cf. also J. M. FIEY, *Thomas de Marga, Notule de littérature syriaque*, in *Le Museon* 78 (1965) p. 361-366.

9. Cf. *Historia Monastica*, vol. 2, p. 23.

Another useful document is the "Chronicle of Seert" or the "Nestorian History" as it is called.¹⁰ The "Nestorian History" (=ChrS) was written in praise of the leaders of the Syrian Church in the Persian Empire. It has a lot of repetition and the compiler does not seem to be critical in the selection of material. There is no clear evidence regarding the author of this history nor of the time of its composition. Since it cites Iso' Bar Nun (+828), it must be posterior to him.¹¹

A later work, "De Patriarchis Nestorianorum Commentaria" also serves as a minor source.¹² It is primarily about the Patriarchs or Catholicoi of the Nestorian Church written by Mari Ibn Suleiman in the twelfth century. Amr Ibn Matti and Sliba Ibn Yohannan made two independent resumé of the history of Mari during the fourteenth century.¹³

Finally we have the "Catalogus Librorum" by Abdiso, the Metropolitan of Soba and Armenia in the fourteenth century. In this catalogue, Abdiso relates about the writers of the Syrian Church, prior to him.¹⁴

10. *Histoire Nestorienne Inédite (Chronique de Séert)* ed. A. SCHER, J. PERIER, P. DIB, and R. Griveau, in *PO* IV, 3; V, 2 (Première Partie); VII, 2; XIII, 4 (Seconde Partie), Paris 1907-1919 (= *Histoire Nestorienne* or *ChrS*); R. DEGEN, *Zwei Miscellen zur Chronik von Séert*, in *OC* 54 (1970), Wiesbaden, p. 76-95; W. F. MACOMBER, *Further Precisions Concerning the Mosul Manuscript of the Chronicle of Séert*, in *OC* 55 (1971) p. 210-213.

11. *PO*, IV, 3, p. 6.

12. H. GISMONDI, ed. *Maris Amri et Slibae, De Patriarchis Nestorianorum Commentaria*, Romae 1899 (*De Patriarchis*), p. 52f. 30 (pars altera); tr. p. 54 (pars prima).

13. Cf. F. NAU, *Amr ibn Matta*, in *DHGE*, t. 2, 1367.

14. ABDISO, *Enumeratio librorum omnium ecclesiasticorum*, ed. by J. S. ASSEMANI, in *BO*, III, 1, Romae 1725 (= *Catalogus librorum*), p. 88-97.

Art. II. The Life of Babai

§ 1. The Early Life of Babai

Babai (551-628) was born in Bet-'Ainata¹ in Bet-Zabdai² where he received his primary education in the Persian books.³ Later he went to Nisibis to study medicine and to attend the theological school of Nisibis. He had his formation under Abraham of Bet-Rabban, the head of the School.⁴ Very little is known about Babai's school life. Isodenaah states that he became a teacher in the Xenodocheion.⁵ After some time Babai entered the monastery of Izla,⁶ newly founded by Mar Abraham of Cascar in 571.⁷ The ChrS attributes his change of career to a miracle. The legend goes that when he was reading in the

1. J. M. FIEY, *Nisibe métropole syriaque orientale et ses suffragants des origines à nos jours*, CSCO 388/Sub. 54, Louvain 1977 (=Nisibe), p. 254-255: "Bét-'Aynata au Bét-Zabdai était situé sur le Nahr Baynata qui se jette dans le Tigre entre Finik et Cizre" (p. 255). Cf. G. HOFFMANN, *Auszüge aus syrischen Akten persischer Märtyrer*, Leipzig 1880 (=Auszüge), p. 173.

2. Bet-Zabdai was a district on the western or right bank of the Tigris adjacent to Gaziret Ibn Omar. After 410, Bet-Zabdai was a suffragan See of Nisibis. The first mentioned Bishop is Mar Yohannan who participated in the Synod of 497 of Mar Babai, the Catholicos; cf. G. LEVENQ, *Beth-Zabdai*, in *DHGE*, t. 8, Paris 1935, col. 1241-1244; J. B. CHABOT, *Synodicon Orientale, ou recueil de synodes nestoriens*, Paris 1902 (=Syn. Or.), p. 67.

3. *Historie nestorienne*, II, ch. 84, p. 210-211.

4. Abraham was the head of the School of Nisibis from 527 to 569. Cf. F. NAU, ed. *La Seconde Partie de l'histoire de Barhadbesabba Arbaia*, in *PO IX*, 5, Paris 1913, p. 1-143 (=Histoire), p. 128-143.

5. ISODENAHA, *Livre de la Chasteté*, n. 39, p. 25.

6. J. M. FIEY, *Nisibe*, p. 134-159; G. HOFFMANN, *Auszüge*, p. 167-173: Mt. Izla is situated on the Southern edge of the mountain called Tur-'Abdin. There were several monasteries on Izla. The mountain was divided into two by the Perso-Roman frontier. The monasteries of the Nestorian Church were located in the Persian territory, while those of the Monophysites were in the Roman territory.

7. M. VILLER, *Abraham de Cascar ou Abraham le Grand*, in *DS*, t. 1, col. 110; ISODENAHA, *Livre de la Chasteté*, n. 14, p.

Xenodocheion, he heard a voice asking him to go to Izla.⁸ In fact, there were more obvious reasons for his transfer to the monastic community life under Abraham. In 571 Henana took charge of the school of Nisibis as director.⁹ It was precisely in that year that Abraham of Cascar founded the Great Monastery on Mt. Izla, where the Nestorian Diphysite convictions were defended, developed, and propagated. Babai might have joined the monastic community in a reaction to Henana.

Within a few years of monastic life, Babai left Izla, although the exact time of his departure is not known. It might have been after the death of Mar Abraham the Great (+588). In his home country he founded a "great monastery" and attached to it were schools for children which he initiated.¹⁰ It is not certain what kind of schools he started. Definitely he got inspiration from the school of Nisibis. However, it could not have been on the same level with that of Nisibis, especially when under Henana. Isodenah says that the monastery which Babai founded was a big establishment in Bet-Zabdal.¹¹ He guided the monastery until 604 when he was called to be the successor of Mar Dadiso in the Great Monastery of Izla. It is not known to whom he entrusted the care of his monastery and school.

§ 2. Babai as Superior of the Great Monastery of Izla

Babai's early public life coincided with the rule of Catholicoi Ezekiel (570-581), Isoiahb I (582-595), Sabariso (596-604), and Gregory I (604-608/9). His becoming the head of the monastery was in 604, the year when Gregory was elected as Catholicos.

As Abbot, Babai brought about stricter discipline in the monastery. Dadiso, his predecessor, had already reestablished

7-9; THOMAS OF MARGA, *Historia Monastica*, 2, p. 37-42; *Histoire nestorienne*, II, p. 211; J. M. FIEY, *Nisibe*, p. 144-146, with n. 74.

8. *Histoire nestorienne*, II, p. 211.

9. J. M. Fiey thinks that it is still later that Henana took the charge of the school. He says it is in 573 (*Nisibe*, p. 59).

10. ISODENAH, *Livre de la Chasteté*, n. 39, p. 25.

11. *Ibid.* n. 14, p. 8.

religious discipline. It might have irritated some who were accustomed under Abraham to live a very "simple" monastic life. Under Dadiso, some left the monastery, such as Babai of Nisibis.¹ Babai was a man of doctrine and of action, but he had to pay a high price for the reforms he tried to introduce.

From the time of Barsauma (415/20-492/5), the Bishop of Nisibis, monks and nuns could marry and this custom prevailed in the Persian Diphysite Church for some time.² Abraham of Cascar and other spiritual leaders, after their visits in the various monasteries in the Byzantine Empire, especially in Egypt, began a reform movement in Persia.³ The Great Monastery of Izla tried to reshape Persian monasticism after the pattern of the Western countries. It seems that the custom of married monks continued to exist even in the 7th century in the Persian Church. At the instigation of some of the zealots in his monastery Babai opposed the monks who lived with women in the outer cells of the monastery.

Thomas of Marga depicts this life quite colourfully. A certain monk Elijah, originally an Arab, was the instrument of clearing the monastery of married monks.⁴ In a hasty mood, Babai and others destroyed the habitations of such monks and expelled them from the monastery.⁵ Some other monks living in the inner monastery were likewise expelled, including a certain holy monk Jacob.⁶

1. *Histoire nestorienne*, II, p. 134.

2. In the Synod of Seleucia in 485 permission for monks and nuns to marry was promulgated (Cf. *BO III*, 2, p. 178-872). And at another Synod in 499, it was decided that the Catholics also could marry (*BO III*, 1, p. 430).

3. Mar Aba, the Catholicos (536-552), did not marry, and in 554 in the Synod under Joseph, the Catholicos, it was decreed that the Catholicos and Bishops should not marry (*BO III*, 2, p. 872). Although the canons of Abraham and of Dadiso do not speak about the question of marriage of monks, it is understood that their reform movement included celibacy for monks and nuns.

4. THOMAS OF MARGA, *Historia Manastica*, 2, p. 50ff.

5. *Ibid.* p. 58ff.

6. *Ibid.* p. 60.

It could also be true that the sources which supports the measures taken by Babai may be accusing some monks of incontinence.⁷ It is very difficult for us to pass a judgement on the reality, the gravity and the conditions of this incontinence, which the reformers use as a reproach to the group they tried to supplant throughout the Church's history. As was said earlier, such a foundation for the reproach is not totally improbable. It could have been the continuation of the Persian tradition or an aberration in monastic life.

The final effect of the steps taken by Babai and the reformers was a mass-exodus of the monks, not only of the unworthy ones but also of good ones who disliked the reformation and the violent temper of their superior.⁸ From what Thomas writes about the monastic settlement, being soon extended throughout the Persian Empire, it is evident that the monks who left the Great Monastery stayed on as monks and found peace elsewhere. It is interesting to note that Elijah who instigated the expulsion of monks also left with his nephew, Hananiso. Most probably, Elijah might have been reproached by other monks for his hot temper.

Dadiso Qatraya (+690) in his treatise *On Solitude* refers to the monastic life of novices under Babai. Dadiso speaks of a very deep life of prayer and special attraction for solitude. During the week-days of Lent, the monks used to live within their own cells. The monks did not visit fellow monks; Saturday evenings they came together having fasted all day, because they (novices only?) received Holy Communion on Saturday evening throughout the year. Once they came together, there was common reading, evening service, Communion, common supper and finally Vespers. The whole Saturday night was spent in prayer and in the reading of the works of Theodore and of the Fathers of the desert. The novices used to ask questions to the Fathers and received enlightenment

7. THOMAS OF MARGA, *Historia Monastica*, 2, p. 46-50; 57-58.

8. *Chronicon Anonymum*, p. 22/20; THOMAS OF MARGA, *op. cit.*, p. 62.

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from them. The weak brothers were strengthened by participating in the community activity during the week - end.⁹

Dadiso speaks of another custom in the novitiate under Babai. The novices were not obliged to recite the hymns in their cells at Compline; instead, it was enough to recite ten or more "marmiatā" (collection of Psalms), the praise, and "the Sanctus"; for the night prayer, it was enough to recite ten or more "marmiatā", the hymn, the praise, and "the sanctus"; here also only one hymn sufficed.¹⁰

Among Babai's canons for the monks, there are some of special importance: Canon 4, partially damaged, confirms the monks in the Theodorian exegetical and theological tradition. Canon 5 speaks of Saturday vigil as a preparation for Sunday. Canon 6 deals with the uninterrupted reading at table. Canon 17, it seems, was intended as a remedy to hinder such hasty deeds in the monastery as of the monk Elijah, the expulsion of many, and the general disturbance there. The canon says, "A monk shall not insult his brother before the superior, or before others; he shall not inquire about the manner of life of others".¹¹

Life in the monastery under Babai was definitely strict and in accordance with the spirit of Mar Abraham, its founder. Some could not tolerate the strictness. At the earliest opportunity, they found peace elsewhere. But the inspiration, given by the pioneers of Izla spread all over the Persian Empire and lasted for a long time.

§ 3. Babai as Visitor of the Monasteries

In 608 or 609 Gregory, the Catholicos died and the Persian King Chosroes II (590-628) did not allow the Persian

9. DADISO QATRAYA, *On Solitude*, p. 79-80.

10. IDEM, *Abba Isaie*, p. 183/141. Here is the quotation from Babai cited by Dadiso, "Recite at Compline, ten Marmiatā, or more, the praise and the Sanctus; during the night, recite ten Marmiatā or more, the hymn, the praise, and the sanctus."

11. A. VÖÖBUS, *The Rules of Babai*, in *Syriac and Arabic Documents*, Stockholm, 1960 (= *The Rules of Babai*), p. 176-184: 178. 182.

Christians to have a new Catholicos until his death. The reason of the displeasure given was that the Bishops in their Synod in 604 did not elect a candidate of the king's choice. In fact, there was more obvious reason for the prohibition.¹ According to different sources, from 608/9 till 628 Babai was the visitor of the monasteries of the Northern parts of the Persian Church, and acted as a close collaborator of Mar Aba the Archdeacon.

Mar Aba was closely associated with Sabariso I, the Catholicos (596-604), and Gregory the Catholicos (604-608/9). In the Persian Diphysite Church, the Archdeacon was in charge of the temporal goods of the church and was the second important clerical authority. Mar Aba might have encouraged Mar Babai, the Abbot of the Great Monastery of Izla, to share the responsibility with him in the absence of a common head.

Mari speaks of Babai as the co-leader of Aba²: "The church remained without a Catholicos for 17 years,³ during which time Mar Aba, the Archdeacon and Mar Babai the Great from the Coenobium of Mar Abraham administered it". Amr states almost the same thing: "Mar Aba the Archdeacon together with Mar Babai the Great administered the See. Both are remembered in the "Book of the Dead".⁴ The ChrS also connects Babai with Mar Aba the administrator:

"This saint, encouraged by several Metropolitans, and bishops, earnestly laboured to restore the affairs of the Church and to hinder the accursed heretics from harming the Christians."⁵

1. By the beginning of the seventh century, Chosroes had several plans for the conquest in the West, where he had to face either Chalcedonians or Monophysites. In such a situation, it was more expedient for him to treat all equally. Hence under the pretext of displeasure, he made an oath not to permit the election of another Catholicos during his lifetime.

2. MARI, *De Patriarchis*, p. 54.

3. *Histoire nestorienne*, II, p. 204; p. 235 speaks of 18 years.

4. AMR, *De Patriarchis*, p. 30.

5. *Histoire nestorienne*, II, p. 204; 211-212; On Aba see

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Thomas gives further details regarding the office of Babai as visitor. When there was no head in the Persian Church, three Metropolitans of the northern region agreed to make Babai, the "visitor" or the "responsible" person for the monasteries in their dioceses. The three Metropolitans were Cyriac of Nisibis, Yonadab of Adiabene, and Gabriel of Karkha de Bet-Slokh, belonging to the provinces of Hadiab, Bet-Garmai and Bet-Arbaye. They wrote, entreating him to undertake the task.⁶ Their letters must have still existed in the Great Monastery at the time of Thomas of Marga.

One would like to probe into the motives of this decision which seems to have been very exceptional. Was the absence of a Catholicos and the hostility of the king the only reasons to organize this partial monastic jurisdiction? Is it necessary to suppose the existence of internal problems in the monasteries and perhaps a theological division on Evagrian and Messalian lines? It is curious that only the three Metropolitans agree on Babai's name. Anyway Babai accepted their request and visited the monasteries.

The Messalians are presented as the first reason of the appointment.⁷ It is not unusual in such monastic documents to reserve the real reason as "last". That Messalianism was a serious problem for Babai is clear from his commentary on the Gnostic Chapters of Evagrius.⁸

A. SCHER, *Etude supplémentaire sur les Ecrivains syriens*, n. 9 in *ROC* t. XI (1906), p. 11-12.

6. THOMAS OF MARGA, *Historia Monastica*, 2, p. 90-92.

7. *Ibid.* p. 91; About the messalians, Cf. J. GRIBOMONT, *Le Dossier des origines du Messalianisme*, in *Epektasis: Mélanges patristiques offerts au Cardinal Jean Daniélou*, Paris 1972, p. 610-625; M. KMOŠKO, *Liber Graduum*, in *PS* 1, 3, Paris, 1926, CXVI-CXXXIX; A. GUILLAUMONT, *Liber Graduum*, in *DS* t. 9, fasc. LXI, Paris 1976, 749-754; PETER BAESS, *Der liber Graduum, Ein messalianisches Buch?* ie *ZDMG* (suppl. 1), 1969, p. 368-374 and the bibliographies therein. R. MURRAY, *The Features of the Earliest Christian Asceticism*, in *Christian Spirituality*, ed. P. BROOKS, London 1975, p. 63-77.

8. About the references of Babai regarding the Messalians, cf. A. GUILLAUMONT, *Le Témoignage de Babai le Grand*

Henana is presented as the second reason. The Origenism among the monks and the influence of Henana among such monks could have been the basic reason of the appointment. There were various kinds of problems among the monks, so the three Metropolitans thought it better to appoint Babai to deal with them.

Babai had to visit the monasteries in order to investigate the orthodoxy of the monks.⁹ Thomas gives some instances of Babai's visitation in some monasteries and states how gladly he was received there.¹⁰

The very special authority given to Babai by the three Metropolitans supposes that there was a strong opposition on the part of the monks and perhaps of some Abbots and their monasteries. This is clear from the question put up by Thomas in his exposition:

"If any contentious man, or anyone peaceably disposed should ask, 'Had not these great Metropolitans power to put an end to the wickedness which was springing up in their dominions, without the help of Mar Babai?...'"¹¹

In the opinion of Thomas, Babai was the most suited to do the work:

"I answer, yes, but every Metropolitan is not necessarily a doctor, neither can every doctor know how to decide all questions in dispute, nor can every doctor successfully contend against all the various false religions; one doctor has one quality, and another doctor has another. In the holy Mar Babai, however, all these various qualities are found."¹²

sur les Messaliens, in *Symposium Syriacum* 1976 (OCA 205), Rome 1978, p. 257-265.

9. Cf. THOMAS OF MARGA, *Historia Monastica*, 2, p. 90-92.

10. *Ibid.* p. 97.

11. *Ibid.* p. 93.

12. *Ibid.* p. 93.

Babai's views and actions were stronger and more thorough-going than the plans of the bishops who gave him power, and it is quite natural that he encountered criticism. His actions might have irritated some of the weak and ill disposed members of the community.

This opposition is also clear from the fact that he was absent from the delegation to the king in order to hinder the influence of the Henanians in the election of the new Catholicos after the death of Gregory. It was Giwargis, a young monk, who represented the Izla monastery. The reason for the absence of Babai, according to Thomas, was ill health! Mar Aba, the administrator also did not take part in the discussion. Both of them might have thought it proper not to appear directly before the terrible Chosroes!

There is something more about the opposition to Babai from Thomas himself. Gabriel, the Metropolitan of Karkade Bet-Slok (around 720), the successor of Gabriel who appointed Babai as visitor of the monasteries, at his old age used to come to Bet-Abe to pray. There he composed a discourse to be read at the memorial of Mar Jacob, its founder. In his discourse Gabriel, also called dancer, attacked Babai the Great and the congregation of Izla from where Jacob was expelled:

"Mad men who were exceedingly furious, envied him with the evil imagination of their mind."¹³
Thomas answers it by saying,

"Now we do not think Mar Babai was stirred up to become the cause of the going forth of many from that monastery without the will of God."¹⁴

Babai the Great had a life-long enmity with his contemporary, Babai bar Nesibnaya or Babai the Small. Babai the Small was in the great monastery under Mar Abraham. Later he left it and after much wandering, established a monastery of his own in Izla not far from the Great monastery of

13. *Ibid.* p. 246.

14. *Ibid.* p. 246-247.

Abraham. He had to face great opposition from the disciples of Babai the Great. The disciples of the latter would not receive any person into their monastery from the small monastery before he had first anathematised Babai the Small.¹⁵ The ChrS had taken it in good spirit.¹⁶ The *Anonymous Chronicle* considers it as the work of Satan to have enmity between the two. It says that both had the purity of doctrine and of predication.¹⁷

Isoiahb III as a monk in Bet-Abe wrote a letter to Mar Babai the Great and in that letter he praises the zeal of Babai.

“O most holy Father, being poor, you could reveal all those satanic deceits of corporal demons; for it seems to me that by this name are to be called the impious.”¹⁸

The *Chronicle of Seert* presents Babai as a builder, as a worker of miracles, as a preacher converting the Magi and the heretics to the orthodox faith.¹⁹ Some of these however could be legendary.

§ 4. The Last Days of Babai

In 628, in his 38th year King Chosroes II was murdered. He was defeated much earlier by Heraclius the Byzantine Emperor.¹ Thomas of Marga says that Babai died in 628, after the death of Chosroes II.² According to the *Chronicle of Seert* Babai died in the 38th year of Chosroes, at the age of 75.³ *Isodenah* says that he went to the Lord at the age of 77.⁴ It appears that Babai did not live long after his retirement

15. *Chronicon Anonymum*, p. 24/21-22.

16. *Historie nestorienne* II, p. 233.

17. *Chronicon Anonymum*, p. 24/21-22.

18. ISOIAHB, III, *Liber Epistularum*, p. 2-3/8-9 (Ep. 2).

19. *Histoire nestorienne*, II, p. 211-212.

1. V. GRUMEL, *La Chronologie*, Paris, 1958, p. 376.

2. THOMAS OF MARGA, *Historia Monastica* II, p. 115-116.

3. *Histoire nestorienne*, II, p. 212.

4. ISODENAH, *Livre de la Chasteté* n. 39, p. 25.

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in 628. If one holds that he died in 628, his birth must be in 551 or 553.⁵

Thomas writes that at the election of the new Catholicos in 628, a request was made to Babai from some circles:

“Now when a Synod had been assembled all the Fathers entreated the holy Mar Babai to be the Catholicos, but he would not accept the office at all, for he preferred to end his days in his cell in the monastery to that of becoming head of the monastery by strife.”⁶

The statement of Thomas is not clear. The first part tells of the request of all the Bishops; the second part of his rejection, both as head of the Church and of the monastery. In 628, Babai might have completely retired to his cell and not long after he might have departed from this world.

At the death of Babai Isoiahb III the then Bishop of Mossul and Nineveh wrote a letter of condolence to the monks of Izla. He names one monk, probably the superior:⁷

“To our holy Father Habiba and to the blessed Fathers and holy brothers.”

After consoling them at the demise of their superior, Isoiahb writes:

“To whom glorification of beatitudes is more agreeable than to you who fill the kingdom of heaven of the Most High? To those namely who with the order of spiritual ministry like the angels, taught the Orientals and elevated themselves to the in-

5. J. M. FIEY says that he died in between 628 and 630. Cf. *Nisibe*, p. 148.

6. THOMAS OF MARGA, *Historia Monastica*, II, p. 115-116.

7. ISOIAHB III, *Liber Epistularum*, p. 13-16/15-17; (Ep. XI) in some other Epistles also Isoiahb mentions Habiba (Ep. XIa p. 16,5/17,22; XVII: p. 22, 12/21, 35; LF: p. 100, 5/76,1); Babi wrote the LU at the request of Habiba and Narsai (LU, p. 2 17-18).

corruptible life from this carnal world; who as in pure gold fixed the image of their life in you and the excellent figure of the fear of God for your sake. (because) of their solicitude in you through their works. (Since) of these and such (others) is that leader the blessed and most holy, our Father Mar Babai. To whom among those who were once renewed in the spirit of their mind according to the commandment of the Apostle, is not worthy the admirable death of holiness at the opportune time and the rest of glorification in the future time!"⁸

In Ep. VIII Isoiabh as Catholicos calls himself 'the nephew of Abraham and Babai who have begun it the Persian Empire this institution and all holy way of the spiritual life'.⁹ In Ep. XVII, written to the monks of Izla at a time when there arose some quarrel among them, after the death of Babai, Isoiabh reminds them that they are the children of Abraham and of Babai:

"May I speak more openly. Who are the dear children of that just Abraham and the good heirs of the upright Dadiso, and the chaste disciples of the illustrious Babai, to whom everything was one and common?"¹⁰

The *Anonymous Chronicle* has only words of praise for Babai.¹¹ For Thomas, Babai was the abode of various qualities: He had

"the power of arguing against heretics, in interpreting the Sacred Scriptures, commenting upon the writings of the Fathers, and investigating matters in those which required searching out."¹²

Mar Babai the Abbot of the Great Monastery of Izla:

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8. ISOIAHB III, *Liber Epistularum*, p. 13-16/15 17 (Ep. XI).
 9. *Ibid.* p. 238-239/172 173.
 10. *Ibid.* p. 23/22.
 11. *Chronicon anonymum*, p. 23/21.
 12. THOMAS OF MARGA, *Historia Monastica*, 2, p. 93.

has to be distinguished from several others of the same name, his own contemporaries, or conationalists.¹³

Mar Babai the Great was an able administrator and monastic leader; he gave leadership to the monastic establishment at a period when the Persian Diphyaite Church was facing internal and external enemies. Though there was no Catholicos proper for the Church between 608 or 609 and 628, the Church was not lacking in learned and saintly men, Abbots as well as Bishops.

The Persian Church called him Rabba the Great. It is not sure whether this epithet was given during his life-time or posthumously, and whether the epithet comes from the monastery of Mt. Izla, which was called the Great Monastery or from Babai himself. At Izla at the same period, there were two monasteries and Babais as Abbots. Both of them died in 628. So it could be that in order to distinguish them, separate epithets were applied to the superiors: Babai Rabba and Babai bar Nesibnaya.

The manuscripts of his writings call him only Rabban Mar Babai, head of the Great Monastery of Izla or head of the congregation of the holy Mar Abraham of Mt. Izla.¹⁴ Only one minor work and the liturgical hymns call him Babai Rabba.¹⁵ Whenever the writers of the Persian Church who lived after Babai referred to him spoke of him as of "Rabba" (the Great).¹⁶

13. Cf. *Dhge*, t. 6, Paris 1932, 10-13.

14. *LU* 1, 7-8; *CE* p. 8;470; *TV* 291, 3-4; *TG* p. 221 (BRAUN); *Sahduta de Christina*, p. 201 (P. BEDJAN); *CM* p. 229 (P. KRUEGER, *Uberlieferung*).

15. X, p. 207, 1 (ABRAMOWSKI, *Nestorian Collection*); Hymns: Br. Mus. Add. 14675, fol. 161a-162a and other liturgical mss.

16. DADISO QATRAYA, *On Solitude*, p. 79-80; IDEM, *Abba Isaie*, p. 183 / 141; ISODAD, *Commentary on Mt HS* 6, p. 120; Mari (p. 30) AMR (p. 54), *Chr S* (p. 210); *Chronicum Anonymum* (p. 24); Abdiso (*BO III*, 1, p. 88).

Art. III The Works of Babai

Mar Babai was a prolific writer. Even though he was a man of numerous public involvements, he devoted his attention to writing also. The *Anonymous Chronicle* writes only in general of the "many books, disputations and interpretations", without mentioning them by name.¹

Thomas of Marga specifies the number of the works of Babai:

"And you may learn concerning all his varied learning if you will read the books which he composed; eighty and four of his works on various subjects are still preserved, and are held in honour by the holy Church."²

The ChrS speaks of "many books" and mentions some of them.³ Abdiso in his *Catalogue* counts 83.⁴ Among the 84 or 83 works referred to by Thomas of Marga and Abdiso⁵ very few have come down to us. Also some not mentioned by ChrS and Abdiso are extant and some of the other writings are known from other sources. There are at present two lists of Babai's works, which are presented here. The number in the bracket corresponds to the number in the other list and the asterisk (*) indicates that the work is extant.

Chronicle of Seert (*Histoire nestorienne*, II, p. 212-214)

1. The book against those who say that the bodies will rise again on the day of resurrection in the form of a sphere, contrary to their actual constitution
2. The book against the followers of Qusta or Phusta, known by the name Messalians

1. *Chronicon anonymum*, p. 23.

2. THOMAS OF MARGA, *Historia Monastica*, 2, p. 93.

3. *Histoire nestorienne*. II, p. 212.

4. ABDISO, *Catalogus librorum*, p. 94.

5. A Scher gives both readings in Arabic: Qusta in the text and Phusta in the margin. He selected the reading "Qusta".

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3. The book in which he narrates the virtues of Mar Abraham and several of his disciples
4. An ascetical work for the novices (8)
5. The book of Union (2) (*)
6. The book in which he refuted the letter of the heretic John of Edessa
7. The book in which he explained in brief the sentences of Mar Evagrius (3) (*)
8. An Explanation of the letter of John Hazzaya (9) ⁶
9. The book in which he refuted the heretic Moses
10. A treatise on the origin of the feast of Palm Sunday (1)
11. A Collection of testimonies from the Greek and the Syriac Orthodox Fathers
12. The book in which he refuted the sentences of Proclus, ⁷ Patriarch of Constantinople, of Aksenaya bishop of Mabboug, and of the heretic Massya
13. The book on certain Monastico-Ascetical Questions (*)
14. The book in which he refuted the writing of Justinian the Greek emperor relating to Faith
15. The book in which he refuted the sentences of the dissident monk Mark
16. The book in which he refuted the belief of the dissident Isaiah of Tahal

The Catalogue of Abdiso (BO III 1, p. 88-97)

1. On the origin of Palm Sunday (10)
2. The Book of Union (5) (*)
3. A Short exposition of the book of Centuries (7) (*)
4. A Short exposition of the book of Aba Markos (*)
5. The History of the followers of Diodore
6. On the origin of the feast of the Cross
7. The Book in which the solemnities of the sanctoral cycle are arranged
8. (The book) to the Novices (4)
9. An Explanation of the letters of Joseph Hazzaya (8) ⁸

6. The Arabic text reads 'harbaba:' A. Scher puts the punctuation in a note and reads: 'Hazaya'

7. The Arabic text reads Prubul by a spelling mistake.

8. Joseph Hazzaya lived after Babai (8th c.). It has to be read John Hazzaya (cf. *Histoire nestorienne*, II p. 213, n. 5).

10. The Canons for the monks (*)
11. A Short exposition of all the "Surta"⁹
12. The book defending Mathai Msanyana, Abraham of Nisibis and Gabriel Qatraya

Other known Works¹⁰

1. Tractatus Vaticanus (*)
2. A Small Extract (*)
3. A work refuting the commentary of Henana on the Nicæan Creed
4. A work defending the doctrinal position of the Persian Diphysite Church before the Persian King
5. The biography of Martyr Giwargis (*)
6. The martyrdom of Christina (*)
7. The biography of Dadiso from Bet-Daraje, the second Abbot of Izla
8. The biography of the priest John of Marga and Ramiso of Cascar
9. The biography of Isosabran of Karka de Bet-Slok, and of the Priest and martyr Abimelek from Qardu and of John the Arab, from Hir(t)a
10. The biography of the priest and Abbot Daniel from Babel
11. The biography of Maria, the sister of martyr Giwargis
12. The biography of Gregory, the Metropolitan of Nisibis
13. Several liturgical Hymns. (*)

Among the sixteen works in the list of ChrS, eight were written against his opponents, five are of ascetico-mystical nature; one is dogmatic, one dogmatic florilege and one liturgical.

Among the twelve works in the list of Abdiso, four are liturgical, six are ascetico-mystical, one dogmatic and one apologetic. The works written against the opponents are totally absent in the list of Abdiso.

9. Sūrtā are short biblical verses used in the liturgical services.

10. Items 7-12 are known from Babai's *Biography of Martyr Giwargis* (BABAI, *TG*, n. 1 (O.BRAUN) p. 221-222).

Only five works are common to both the lists. The ChrS might have taken the list from older manuscript traditions. Does the silence of Abdiso regarding the works against the opponents indicate that by his time (14th c.), those works became irrelevant in the passage of time and were not handed down? Or does it mean that the content of these works were incorporated in the writings of the later writers and Abdiso's collection did not have them in the original? The works absent in the list of ChrS might not have had wider circulation. The monastic and liturgical works were limited to monastic circles, while the other books against his opponents might have been available to everyone. Babai might have written several books of this nature. As visitor of monasteries, he might have encountered several "heretics" with whom he had to deal. His long period in that office had necessitated such writings. For his list Abdiso might have followed the order of the manuscripts in his library.

Combining the three lists just mentioned, we now proceed to place them in a different logical order under five headings, followed by brief explanation of each:

a. *Christology*

1. The Book of Union (= LU) (*)
2. Tractatus Vaticanus (= TV) (*)
3. The Small Extract transmitted in the "Nestorian Collection of Christological Texts" (= X) (*)
4. Dogmatic Florilege
5. Against the doctrinal positions of Proclus, Philoxenus, and Massya
6. Against Justinian
7. A Work refuting the commentary of Henana on the Nicaene Creed
8. A Work defending the doctrinal position of the Persian Diphysite Church before the Persian King

b. *Against Different Opponents*

9. The Work against those who say that the bodies will resurrect on the day of resurrection in the form of a Sphere

10. The Work against the followers of Qusta, or Phusta, known as Messlians
11. Refutation of the letter of John of Edessa
12. Refutation of the heretic Moses
13. Refutation of the dissident monk Mark
14. Refutation of Isaiah of Tahal

c. *Ascetico-Mystical Works*

15. The Commentary on the Centuries of Evagrius Ponticus (= CE) (*)
16. The Commentary on the Spiritual Law of Aba Markos (= CM) (*)
17. Canons for the Monks (= C) (*)
18. Some Useful Counsels on the Ascetical Life (= CA) (*)
19. An Explanation on the Letter (s) of John Hazzaia
20. An Ascetical Work for the Novices

d. *Hagiographical Works*

21. The Biography of Martyr Giwargis (= TG) (*)
22. The Martyrdom of Christina (*)
23. The History of the Followers of Diodore
24. The Book defending Mathai Msanyana, Abraham of Nisibis and Gabriel Qatraya
25. The Biography of Dadiso, the second Abbot of Izla.
26. The Biography of the Priest John of Marga and Ramiso of Cascar
27. The Biography of Isosabran of Karka de Bet-Slok, and of the Priest and Martyr Abimelek from Qardu and of John the Arab from Hir(t)a
28. The Biography of the Priest and Abbot Daniel from Babel
29. The Biography of Gregory, the Metropolitan of Nisibis
30. The Biography of Abraham the Great, the Founder of the Great Monastery of Izla
31. The Biography of All the Monks Who Lived and Died in the Great Monastery

e. *Liturgical Works*

32. On the Origin of Palm Sunday
33. On the Origin of the Feast of the Cross

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34. The Book on Solemnities of the Sanctoral Cycle
35. Short Exposition of all the "Surta"
36. Several Liturgical Hymns

1. The Book of Union (= LU) (*)

The Book of Union (LU) is Babai's most systematic Christological treatise and it exists in several manuscripts:

i) *Br. Mus. Or. 5441*: It is the Archetype of several mss. It was in the village of Iyel in Hakkara in the confines of Persia among the books of Mar Yonan's monastery. In 1887-88 Samuel Giamil made a copy of it for his monastery of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Alqosh. Since 1898 the Archetype is in the British museum. It is a ms. of the 14 century.¹¹ In this ms. a few fols. are missing: after fol. 109v about 40 lines; after fol. 116r about 9 fols; after f. 206v (end of LU) we do not know how many fols.¹² The ms has 206 fols (fols. Ib-206b).

ii) *Codex Alqosh 71*: It is the copy made by Giamil from the Archetype¹³, and is at present in the Patriarchal library of the Chaldean Catholic Patriarch in Bagdad. It was codex 37 of the Catalogue of A. Scher.¹⁴

iii) *Codex Syr. IX. 1b-146b* (H. Hyvernat): It is a copy of Codex Alqosh 71, made in 1889. In this copy a few pages are bound not in order. It was in the library of Professor H. Hyvernat. A. Vaschalde published an edition in 1915 from this ms. It is now in the Catholic University of America, Washington D. C. (Hyvernat Syr. IX). J. B. Chabot noticed

11. G. MARGOLIOUTH, *Descriptive list of Syriac and Karshunic Manuscripts in the British Museum Acquired Since 1873*, London, 1899 (= *Descriptive List*), p. 49; A. VASCHALDE, *Babai Magni liber de Unione*, (CSCO 79/80) Louvain 1915 (= LU), tr. p. iii-v.

12. Cf LU (CSCO 79), p. 153. 162. 288.

13. J. VOSTE, *Catalogue de la bibliothèque syro-chaldéenne du couvent de Notre-Dame des Semences près d'Alqosh* (Iraq), Rome-Paris 1929 (= *Catalogue*), p. 29-30.

14. A. SCHER, *Notice sur les mss. syriaques conservés dans la bibliothèque du couvent des Chaldéens de N. D. des Semences*, in *JA VII* (1906), p. 479-512. N. 37.

some of the pages misplaced and the study of Br. Mus. Or. 5441 permitted him to place them in the right order, just in time for the edition to come out.¹⁵

iv) *Ms. Or. Quart. 1168*, fols. 1-207 (Berlin, now in Tübingen): It was written in 1895 in Urmia. The copyist had three mss. of the work of LU before him.¹⁶ They were: (a) a ms. of about 800 years old (=1095?) from the possession of a certain priest Denha in Rustaqa. Today we do not know anything about this ms. It could be the oldest copy and the prototype of Br. Mus. Or. 5441 (b) a ms. of about 700 years old (= 1195?). It is Codex Urmia 37. In 1917 the whole library of Urmia was looted.¹⁷ (c) a ms. from the monastery of Mar Yaunan in Iyel. It is Br. Mus. Or. 5441.

This ms. 1168 was in the Preussische Staatsbibliothek in Berlin. Now it is in Tübingen.¹⁸ If Br. Mus. Or. 5441 was in Urmia at the time of the writing of ms. Berlin, then it is the oldest available ms. of LU.

v) *Mingana 209*: It was written in 1894 in Tell-Kaiphe. The work is fully vowelled and divided into five long "rishe".¹⁹ Mingana does not give further details regarding it.

vi) *Mingana 569*: fol. 1b-146b. It is a copy of Codex Alqosh 71 done in 1901.²⁰

It is generally known as the "Liber de Unione" or "The Book of Union". Its full title, however, is: "Memre dmar Babai 'al alahuta u'al 'nasuta u'al parsopa dahdayuta

15. Cf. A. VASCHALDE, *LU (CSCO 79)*, p. iii-v.

16. J. ASSFALG, *Syrische Handschriften, (Verzeichnis der orientalischen Handschriften in Deutschland, Band V)*, Wiesbaden 1963, p. 37-38. (= *Syrische Handschriften*).

17. L. ABRAMOWSKI & A. E. GOODMAN, *A Nestorian Collection of Christological Texts*, vols. 1-2, Cambridge University Press 1972 (= *Nestorian Collection*) p. ix (vol. 1). A. Vaschalde says that Codex Urmia 37 was written in 1885 in Gawar in Hakkar from a ms. of c. 600 years old. *LU* p. v.).

18. J. ASSFALG, *op. cit.* p. 36.

19. A. MINGANA, *Catalogue of the Mingana Collection of Mss. Vol. I-III*, Cambridge 1933-1939 (= *Catalogue*): vol. I, col. 441.

20. *Ibid.* col. 1080-1082.

(Tractatus Mar Babai de divinitate et humanitate et de persona unionis")²¹. This work consists of seven "Memre" (treatises), and each "memra" is subdivided into "reshe (chapters), and the numeration of chapters one to twentyone goes on to the end of Memra VI, but Memra VII has no such division, as it begins with the introductory heading to the section: "Composed as a short disputation against those who deny that the first-fruit of our race is unitively assumed by God the Word, and against those who impiously speak of natural and hypostatic union and make God subject to suffering: an epitome of all higher questions."²²

Memra I deals with the Trinity, and develops the Infinite Transcendence of God. The nature of the Supreme Godhead in Himself is very well discussed. The Second Memra speaks of the Incarnation of the Second Person of the Trinity. In the third Memra, Babai explains the nature of the union, the different heresies regarding the union, and his own opinion of them. Memre IV and V deal with the two natures in Christ. Memra VI has two chapters: chapter 20 deals with the names of Christ, the Son of God; chapter 21 explains the expressions, such as assumption, habitation, temple dress, adhesion and union. Among the 21 chapters of the six Memre, the last one, chapter twentyone, is the climax of the whole treatise.

Memra VII (= T VII) being the last, does not seem to be a continuation of the preceding Memre, but an independent addition. It must have been an independent treatise, but later added to the main work by Babai himself. The last folios of this treatise are missing; it is difficult to say how many; the work is now incomplete.²³

21. BABAI, *LU*, p. 1/1.

22. *Ibid.* p. 252/205.

23. Cf. A. VASCHALDE, *Babai, Liber de Unione*, p. III (text); p. 289/233; The discontinuation of the division into chapters is a pointer to its particular condition. The opponent is not mentioned in the last Memra, while it is so done in the first 6 Memre.

It consists of the refutations of the adversaries. There are eleven propositions of the opponents. There could have been more in its original form. These propositions need not be verbatim citations.²⁴

2. *Tractatus Vaticanus* (= TV) *

This has come down through a single ms. of the 8th century in the Vatican library (Codex Vat. Syr. 178, fol. 229-234b. 228. 236).²⁵ It comes after Babai's "Commentary on the Gnostic Chapters of Evagrius." The title of the treatise is, "A Treatise against those who say: Just as the soul and body are one qnoma, thus God the Word and man are one qnoma; by the author Rabban Mar Babai, the Archimandrite of the Great Coenobium."²⁶ This separate treatise is available since 1915 as an appendix to A. Vaschalde's edition of LU.²⁷

This small treatise has three parts, concerning the three aspects of one and the same question: The impossibility of the hypostatic union and natural union, the possibility of the

24. The following are the eleven propositions:

- 1) "The Word became flesh, and it is He Who (Huiu) was crucified and suffered and died". "He is in His nature and in His Qnoma, and not another, that there may not be two."
- 2) "God the Word, Who is incarnate, is wholly (bkuleh) dead."
- 3) "The Virgin brought forth God Incarnate." 4) "The flesh of the Word, is the same as the Qnoma and kyana of the same."
- 5) "I do not separate the assumed from the assuming, nor are there two sons, but became flesh." 6) "Just as body and soul are one qnoma man, thus God the Word and man are one kyana and one qnoma, constituted from God and body-soul."
- 7) "God sent His Son and is made from the woman."
- 8) "God incarnate is anointed (msiha)." 9) "Holy God holy Strong one, holy Immortal, who was crucified for us."
- 10) "By His Will, He was crucified and He died." 11) "You confess that you received not the body and blood of God, but the body and blood of a man". (*TV VII*, p. 252-289/205-233):

25. Cf. A. VASCHALDE, *LU*, p. v-vi (*CSCO* 79)

26. BABAI, *TV*, p. 291/235. J. S. Assemani confounded TV with LU, and A. Baumstark has reproduced this assumption (*BO. III*, 1, p. 95; A. BAUMSTARK, *Geschichte*, p. 138).

27. A. VASCHALDE, *LU* (appendix) p. 291-307 / tr. 235-247.

26 THE CHRISTOLOGY OF MAR BABAI THE GREAT

parsopic union, and the significance of the expression, 'hypostatic union' among the Fathers of antiquity.²⁸

Originally TV could have been two independent treatises. The first part is argumentative, while the second part is expository.²⁹

The Interrelation Between the LU, TV and The T VII

The LU is a well planned and well arranged work with theological and exegetical reflections. It is the culmination of the Antiochene Diphysite theological tradition. TV shows clear dependence on LU. The T VII was written after LU and TV. As Babai himself testifies, T VII is an epitome of all major questions.³⁰ Several of the discussions in LU are there in abridged form.

That TV is an epitome of some of the chapters of LU is clear from the following presentation:

LU (tr.)	TV (tr.)	
p. 93, 11-29 (ch. 10)	= p. 236, 16-29	: at death the divinity of Christ did not separate from body or soul.
p. 143, 18-25 (ch. 18)		

Ch. 17:

p. 129, 4-20		
130, 23-24		
136, 23-26	= p. 241, 39-242, 2; 243, 2-5.	discussion on qnoma.
p. 129, 21-34	= p. 242, 2-7. 19-26; 243, 5-6:	discussion on parsopa.

28. TV, p. 291-299 / 235-241; 299-305 / 241-246; 305-306 / 246-247.

29. TV, p. 291-299 / 235-241; 299-307 / 241-247.

30. T VII. p.252 / 205.

p. 130, 3-131, 10; 138, 14-15	= p. 242, 7-13:	terms applied to Trinity
131, 10-133, 15 (*)	= p. 242, 13-244, 26	: terms applied to Christ.
131, 13-18	= p. 243, 17-21	: mutual giving and taking.
132, 10-133, 7	= p. 243, 28-244, 1	: the expressions: one of the Trinity and one of the men.
133, 16-135, 13; 135, 28-137, 13	= p. 244, 27-246, 8	: examples illustrating the union.
134, 15 6	= p. 243, 11-35	: examples of fire and wood.
139, 7-8	= p. 242, 18-19	: Christ is not a mere man.
139, 9-20	= p. 244, 1-18	: oneness of parsopa.

T VII also shows dependence on LU :

LU	T VII.	
93, 11-29 (ch. 10)	= p. 211, 36-212, 2	: at death divinity is not separate from body and soul.
143, 18-25 (ch. 18)		
107, 12ff. (ch. 12)	= p. 225, 22ff.	: discussion on unction.
123, 18ff. (ch. 16)	= p. 220, 28ff.	: not two sons.
140, 1ff. (ch. 18)	= p. 209-213; 226-9	: crucifixion and death of Christ.

(*) BABAI, LU, p. 162/131: certain folios are absent in the ms.; so the discussion on the application of the term is not perfect here.

153, 25-8 (ch. 21) = p. 227, 22-25 : reference to the destruction of Jerusalem.

235, 1ff. (esp. 239-241) = p. 221, 35-223, 35 : as body and soul are one qnoma, (TV) (T VII) Word and man- not one qnoma.

In the T VII arguments are utilised to meet the changed conditions under the influence of the Monophysites and the arguments are directed against them. In the 10th answer to the adversary, in T VII, there is an indication as to the date of its composition.³¹ Babai says that the Jerusalem which killed Christ is desolate. Babai is referring to the defeat and dispersal of the Jews after the death of Christ. He is making use of an old Christian theme against the Jews, "temple and town." Here, he is not speaking against the Chalcedonian Jerusalem, taken by Chosroes II in 612. Making use of the example of the old Jerusalem, which crucified God, Babai is speaking about Antioch and its associate Constantinople. Antioch was brutally pillaged by Chosroes after 612. And then there occurred terrible earthquakes in Constantinople.³² The same happened to those who proclaimed the crucifixion of God.³³ Babai thinks that the calamities at Antioch were due to their false belief.

31. BABAI, *T VII*, p. 280ff. / 226-9.

32. Isoiahb I, the Catholicos refers to earlier earthquakes in Constantinople, and says that it is because of the introduction of the Theopaschite formula in the Liturgy of the city by Emperor Anastasios (ISOIAHB I, *On the Trisagion*, p. 690ff.) Nestorius had already spoken on the calamities befallen upon the Byzantine Emperor Theodosius and upon Rome under Pope Leo, as a result of their misconduct in matters of Faith (*LH* 519-520 / 378-379: BEDJAN / DRIVER).

33. BABAI, *LU* 238, 11-14 / 193, 25-8; *T VII* 281, 11-14 / 221, 22-25: "Truly the temple which was in Jerusalem is made a desert, and the sacrifices and libations in it are rejected because it was not able to cure the conscience of those who sinned." (*LU*). "Their city is destroyed; their temple is burned; and is made a desert and behold they are dispersed to all the

From the reference to the defeat of Antioch, it appears that T VII was written after the defeat of Antioch, and before the beginning of the defeat of Chosroes in 620.

3. The Small Extract transmitted in the "Nestorian Collection of Christological Texts" (=X) *34

The text exists today in a 19th century ms. copied from an ancient one.³⁵ It seems that X is a self sufficient treatise of Babai himself, and is an exposition of the philosophical impossibility of holding two "kyane" without holding at the same time two "qnome".³⁶

4. Dogmatic Florilege

The work has not come down to us. But there is a collection from the Fathers at the end of the discussion of the delegation to the Persian King in 612. It has passages however, from the Greek Fathers only.³⁷ Dogmatic florileges, both

winds because they crucified him, in whom, God the Word univertely dwelt" (T VII). "Thus happened this time to the miserable Antioch and her associate which have united to themselves this most wicked blasphemy, to crucify God through infidelity. And because thereupon this impious locution has begun by Anastasius, the wicked King, and remained the whole long period of many years, the miserable city was punished by different castigations, such as captivities, serious destructions and various calamities, but it did not turn away from its blasphemy. Behold, now it is entirely desolate of its inhabitants, the crucifiers of God: some are killed, some are led captives and others are dispersed to all the winds to teach all, how the punishment is to come upon those who crucify God and kill their Creator" (T VII, 281, 14-26 / 227, 25-228, 2).

34. L. ABRAMOWSKI, *Nestorian Collection*, p. 207-209/123-125.

35. *Ibid.* vol. 2, p. ix.

36. There is a similarity between X, p. 124, 17-125, 9 (vol. 2), and LU, p. 132, 10-133, 7 and TV, 243, 28-144, 1 (discussion on one of the qnome of the Trinity united with one of the qnome of men).

37. J. B. CHABOT, *Syn. Or.* p. 579-580.

Monophysite and Diphysite were already in existence.³⁸ Babai might have made a collection from the existing one or might have added some more to face the new situation.

5. Against the doctrinal positions of Proclus, Philoxenus and Massya

It is doubtful whether Babai himself joined these three writers together or a subsequent copyist prior to the ChrS had done so. The ChrS, which makes the work known puts the three together. As the title in the ChrS indicates, it is against the ideas of those three writers. Some think that Massya is the same as Meskena Arbaya one of the faithful disciples of Henana.³⁹ Anyway, this work has not come down to the posterity.

6. Against Justinian

Babai himself refers to his work against Justinian, defending Theodore of Mopsuestia.⁴⁰ From the context of the reference of Babai, it appears that it is against the 'Three Chapters' condemned by Justinian and the Second Council of Constantinople.

7. A Work Refuting the Commentary of Henana on the Nicæan Creed is not extant. In his commentary on the Nicæan Creed, Henana had attacked the teachings of Theodore, and Babai took pains to defend Theodore's position and to give his own commentary on the Creed.⁴¹

8. A Work defending the Doctrinal Position of the Persian Diphysite Church before the Persian King is also no longer extant. But we have the Creed of the assembly of 612. Although Babai did not take part in the assembly personally, the Creed was highly influenced by him.

38. Cf. M. RICHARD, *Les Florilèges diphysites in Chalkedon I*, p. 721-748; F. GRAFFIN, *Le florilège patristique de Philoxène de Mabboug in Symposium Syriacum 1972*, Rome 1974 (OCA 197), p. 267-290.

39. A. VOEBUS, *School*, p. 277, n. 15.

40. *LU*, p. 82; 98.

41. *Historie nestorienne*, II, p. 209.

The document of 612 is composed of three parts: The Creed, the Results of the disputes and the Answers to the questions of the Persian King.⁴² The "Creed" includes an "introduction", "the creed", "the epilogue", and "the request of the Fathers to the King for a head for the Persian Church." The Creed exists in two forms: one in the "Synodicon Orientale" and the other in the "Nestorian Collection of Christological Texts." There are some differences between these two versions in the arrangement of arguments.

Nos. 9-14

As Visitor of the monasteries in the Northern regions of the Persian Empire, Babai encountered different kinds of heretics. He wrote a number of works attacking them. Although many were extant at the time of the compilation of the ChrS, none has come down to us.

The Origenist tendencies were widespread in monastic circles in the 6th and 7th centuries. No. 9 is against *Origenism*. It seems more probable that they were written against the Origenist propaganda in the Persian Empire.

A certain Moses was the teacher of Henana.⁴³ But it is not sure whether Babai has written against him especially, if we follow A. Scher, who considered Moses an orthodox teacher. Moses asked Thomas of Edessa to write on Christmas and Epiphany, and converted Mar Aba, the later Catholicos.⁴⁴ It is possible that Babai wrote against a contemporary "heretic", less known.

John of Edessa and *Mark* seem to have been heretical Origenist monks. *Isaiah of Tahal* was one of the faithful disciples of Henana. The other faithful disciples of Henana were Aha and Meskena Arbaya.⁴⁵

42. J. B. CHABOT, *Syn. Or.* p. 564-580.

43. *Histoire nestorienne*, II, p. 189.

44. *Ibid.* n. 3.

45. *Histoire nestorienne*, II, p. 191.

15. The Commentary on the Centuries of Evagrius Ponticus (=CE)*

In the Syrian Church, Babai is one of the principal commentators on the "Gnostic Chapters" of Evagrius. The commentary of Babai has come down to us in an 8th century ms. (Cod. Vat. Syr. 178)⁴⁶. It contains Evagrius' text and Babai's commentary. The present commentary is an abridged version of a larger one which Babai had written earlier.⁴⁷ The former has not survived.

Mar Babai made his commentary on the "Common Syriac Version" of the Gnostic Chapters of Evagrius, known as S¹. In this version, the translator was careful to eliminate the specific Origenist-Evagrian Christology.⁴⁸ Babai presents Evagrius not only free from Origenism, but also opposed to it.⁴⁹ In the process of his commentary Babai tries to eliminate the still existing Evagrian Origenism, not fully eliminated by the Syriac translator of the S¹ text.⁵⁰ In the S¹ text and the Commentary of Babai, there is no "nous-Christus" - God-Logos and flesh united to the nous, Jesus Christ, the subject of Incarnation - Christology of Evagrius, contained in the Greek texts, and in the authentic translation S², and condemned in 553 and propagated by the Origenist monks in Palestine and elsewhere.⁵¹ It is very interesting to note that Babai reads Evagrius in the translation by Philoxenus.⁵²

46. W. FRANKENBERG, *Evagrius Ponticus*, Berlin 1912, p. 2.

47. *Ibid.* p. 352, 29-30.

48. Cf. A. GUILLAUMONT, *Kephalaia Gnostica*, p. 227. 233-6.

49. *Ibid.* p. 263.

50. *Ibid.* p. 283.

51. *Ibid.* p. 158-9. 169, for the Evagrian Picture of Christ, cf. *Ibid.* p. 151-6. A. GRILLMEIER, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, I, p. 377-384; F. REFOULE, *La Christologie d'Evagre et l'Origenisme*, in *OCP* 27 (1961), p. 221-266; D. B. EVANS, *Leontius of Byzantium, An Origenist Christology*, Washington D. C. 1970.

52. Babai speaks of a heretical translation in Syriac (the more authentic one as in the original Greek text, made by Sergius of Resaina): cf. A. GUILLAUMONT, *op. cit.*, p. 227. 261. 272. A. Guillaumont has published the two Syriac versions together (*Les six Centuries des 'Kephalaia Gnostica' d'Evagre le Pontique*, Paris 1958 (PO 28, 1).

16. **The Commentary on the Spiritual law of Aba Markos or Marcus Eremita (= CM)***

It is still an unpublished work and is transmitted in a single ms. in the British Museum (Add. 17270).⁵³ "This ms. is written in a good, regular hand of about the 9th century. It consists of 42 leaves (vellum), all more or less soiled, torn and mutilated. There are from 30-33 lines in each page. It is a commentary on the two discourses of Marcus the Monk on the Spiritual law."⁵⁴ P. Krüger made a study of a copy of this ms. and he testifies that it was very difficult to read the text.⁵⁵ The "Spiritual Law" has, according to Babai, the double motive of being in and imitating Christ in his twofold nature.⁵⁶

17. **Canons for the Monks (= C) ***

This has come down to us in an Arabic translation and has been edited, and twice translated.⁵⁷ In the ms. Canons 1-3, are missing, canon 4 is damaged and canons 5-25 are kept.

53. W. WRIGHT, *Catalogue of Syriac Manuscripts in the British Museum*, vol. 2, London 1871 (= *Catalogue*), p. 482 (n. 605).

54. *Ibid.*

55. P. KRÜGER, *Überlieferung und Verfasser der beiden Memre über das 'geistige Gesetz' des Mönches Markus in Ost K. St. 6* (1957), p. 297-299; IDEM, *Zum theologischen Menschenbild Babais des Grossen nach seinem noch unveröffentlichten Kommentar zu den beiden Sermones des Mönches Markus über "Das geistige Gesetz"*, in *OC* 44 (1960), p. 46-74. P. Krüger reads "Babai" in fol. 40v of the ms. This reading was questioned by O. Hesse in the Acts of the 17th Deutscher Orientalistentag (*Markus Eremita* p. 454). After going through the ms., A. Guillaumont could not find "Babai" written there, but "abed" (fol. 40v). The nature of the treatment of the subject is similar to that of Babai's CE; but an objection is that, Babai who is a professed opponent of the Messalians, does not mention them in this commentary, especially when he cited Mark in another work as a witness against the Messalians (CE III, 85, p. 252). (Cf. A. GUILLAUMONT, *Le témoignage de Babai*, p. 263-5).

56. P. KRÜGER, *Überlieferung*, p. 297.

57. Ms. Vat. Arab. 153, 192a-192b; W. HONERBACH & O. SPIES, ed. *Ibn at-Taiyib, Fiqh an-nasraniya*, (CSCO 167/168), Louvain 1957, p. 174-178/176-180; A. VOOBUS, *The Rules of Babai* p. 176-184.

18. Some Useful Counsels on the Ascetical life (= CA) *

This has come down to us through four mss.⁵⁸ It is an important ascetical work addressed to monks. It contains four comparisons between the Satan who assumed the form of a serpent and the Word of God who took the man Jesus.⁵⁹

19. An Explanation on the Letter (s) of John Hazzai

John the Solitary, or John of Apamea (5th c.) has to be distinguished from John of Lycopolis or from John of Edessa. Babai cites John in CE,⁶⁰ and considers him equal to Evagrius⁶¹. In his citation, Babai is quoting from John's letter to Eutropios and Eusebios (CE II, 6. p. 134/135 = L. G. RIGNELL, *Briefe*. p. 80, line 18 - p. 81, line 4).⁶² Babai does not call John, "the visionary (Hazzai)" but "John the Solitary of Apamea." It is not improbable that in later centuries, John was called "the visionary". Babai might have commented on the letter or letters of John. At the time of Abdiso, there was some confusion regarding John the Solitary and Joseph Hazzai (8th c.). J. S. Assemani translated the statement of Abdiso, "egron d'Jausep Hazzai" "Epistolae ad Josephum Videntem".⁶³ Recently much research has been made on John the Solitary⁶⁴ But the work of Babai on the letters of John has disappeared.

58. Ms. Vat. Syr. 592, fol. 8b-26b; Ms. Alqosh 247, cah. 2, fol. 10b-cah. 6, fol. 4a; Ms. Bagd. 6033, fol. 14b-49a; Ms. Charf. patr. 80, fol. 33a-53a. Prof. Dr. Placid J. Podipara CMI has made an English translation of it based on the Ms. Vat. Syr. 592.

59. Cf. Ms. Vat. Syr. 592, fol. 13a (Memra II).

60. W. FRANKENBERG, *op. cit.*, p. 134.

61. *Ibid.* p. 16.

62. G. RIGNELL, *Briefe von Johannes dem Einsiedler*, Lund 1941.

63. ABDISO, *Catalogus librorum*, p. 97; J. S. ASSEMANI, *BO III*, 1 p. 97.

64. G. RIGNELL, *Drei Traktate von Johannes dem Einsiedler*, Lund 1960; W. STROTHMANN, *Johannes von Apamea*, Berlin / New York, 1972; B. BRADLEY, *Jean le Solitaire (d'Apamée)* in *DS 8*, 764-772, with bibliography.

20. Babai's *Ascetical Work for the Novices* has not come down to us. Dadiso Qatraya cites from it.

Nos. 21-31

From the hagiographical writings only two are in existence today, one in full and other in part. Babai was very much interested in writing lives of saints. Though we know many of them by names only, they indicate his interest. Since we do not have the hagiographies, it is difficult to evaluate them and divine his motives for writing them. Monastic influence was great in the Persian Christianity. Babai might have made use of this style of writing to expound the doctrines of the Diphysite Church; and that would have helped their immediate spread among the laity as well as the monks. But how can one account for their total disappearance?

*The Biography of Martyr Giwargis (= TG)** is extant in more than one ms.⁶⁵ It is the history of a certain Mihramgusnasp, born in 576 in the royal family, who became a Christian with the Christian name of Giwargis in 596 at the age of 20, when Sabariso (596-604) was the Catholicos.⁶⁶ After some time, he became a monk under Dadiso (588-604) in the Great Monastery of Izla and his sister Mariam became a nun in Nisibis itself. When Babai was the superior, three important events took place in the life of Giwargis: he opposed the Henanians; took part in the delegation to the Persian King in 612; and worked in company with Subhalamaran in keeping the Shrine of St Sergius under their custody. Giwargis was put into prison in two places for 15 months, and in 615 was martyred. When he died, he was only 39 years old.⁶⁷

This monastic biography was written after 620.⁶⁸ It gives some indication regarding the internal doctrinal crisis in the Persian Church in the seventh century.

65. Br. Mus. Add. 7200; Berl. ms. or. oct. 1257, fol 542-719; Ms. Dijarb. 96: Cf WRIGHT, *Catalogue* III, p. 1207; J. ASSFALG, *Syrische Handschriften*, p. 58; A. BAUMSTARK, *Geschichte*, p. 138 n. 5.

66. *TG* (O. BRAUN) p. 262:

67. *Ibid.* p. 277.

68. *Ibid.* p. 221-222: In 620, Isosabran of Bet-Slok was martyred. At the beginning of TG, Babai says that he had

The work "the Martyrdom of Christina" is an imperfect work in its extant form.⁶⁹ It narrates the story of a certain Yasdui who became Christian from paganism. It begins with the general ideas on the glory of the cross and once it comes to the story of Christina it stops abruptly because some folios were lost. This affords very few hagiographical references.⁷⁰

All the other biographies have been lost. Item No. 24 seems to be an apologetical work, defending three teachers. *Mathai Msanyana* was a wandering monk. *Abraham* was the head of the school of Nisibis who introduced the names of Diodore and others in the Dyptics.⁷¹ *Gabriel Qatraya* was Director of the School of Seleucia.⁷² Abdiso speaks of a Gabriel Arya and a Gabriel Qatraya.⁷³ J. S. ASSEMANI considers the first one a writer of the 6th century, and the Second, one of the 8th century.⁷⁴ A. SCHER thinks that the two are not distinct persons, but one and the same.⁷⁵ Scher states that Gabriel was a contemporary of Babai the Great and refers to the work which Babai wrote about him. But according to a ms. in Seert in his library, Gabriel seems to have been much younger than Babai and had died much later.⁷⁶ If this is correct, then Babai might have written about another Gabriel.

Ramiso was a disciple of Mar Aba, and successor of Isai, the Director of the School of Seleucia. Later Ramiso became the bishop of Anba.⁷⁷

already written the history of Isosabran. He states also in the same context that before 33 years he wrote the history of Mar Abraham, the first Abbot of Izla. Mar Abraham died in 588. So TG must have been written in 621 or later.

69. Ms. Dijarb. 96 (n. 49); Ms. or. oct. (Berlin) 1257 (n.21). Cf. A. BAUMSTARK, *Geschichte*, p. 138, n. 6; J. ASSFALG, *op. cit.* p. 58.

70. P. BEDJAN, *Sahduta de-Christina*, in *Acta Martyrum et Sanctorum*, IV, Paris 1894, p. 201-207.

71. See above p. 4.

72. Cf. ABDISO *Catalogus librorum*, p. 172f; A. SCHER, *E: rivains Syriens*, n. xvii, p. 19.

73. ABDISO *ibid.* p. 153. 172.

74. J. S. ASSEMANI, *BO III*, I, p. 153, n. 3; 172, n. 8.

75. A. SCHER *ibid.* p. 19.

76. Cf. *Ibid.*

77. *Ibid.* p. 12. n. 10.

Isosabran was martyred in 620. Isoiahb III as Catholicos also wrote a biography of *Isosabran*.⁷⁸

Abimelek of Qardu was a teacher in Balad and Bet-Sahde. *Isodenah* does not call him a martyr.⁷⁹ The school of Bet Sahde in Nisibis was close to the school of Nisibis; it was established with the approval of the authorities and the encouragement of Mar Abraham of Cascar, as an opposition to Henana the teacher of the school of Nisibis. *Abimelek* was appointed as the director of the school. He died before 588, before Mar Abraham the Great who appointed the second head, also an Abraham.⁸⁰

*John the Arab of Hira*⁸¹ studied in Nisibis and later became a pastor of the troops in the mountains of Siggarr. After a few years he came to Izla, and lived there in a place called Meare, near the Great Monastery.⁸² A church was built there after his death. "The monastery of Meare of John the Arab" was still existing at the time of *Isodenah*.⁸³ Ms. Cambr. Add. 1979 attributes a hymn to John of Hirta.

Daniel of Babel built a monastery in the desert as a hospice for the travellers.⁸⁴ *Isodenah* says that for some time, he was with Abraham of Cascar and his monastery was in the mountains of Ourouk (Oroh).⁸⁵

Gregory was from Bet Aramaye and studied in the school of Seleucia. He taught first at Arbel and later in Cascar. Mar Sabariso made him Metropolitan of Nisibis.⁸⁶

78. J. B. CHABOT, ed. *Histoire de Jésus-Sabran, écrite par Jesuyab d'Adiabene*, in *NArchMS VII*, Paris 1897, p. 485ff.

79. ISODENAH, *Livre de la Chasteté*, n. 41.

80. *Ibid.* n. 42, p. 26.

81. Ms. Cambr. Add. 1979 says 'Hirta' (W. WRIGHT, *Catalogue*, p. 146. ix.)

82. BABAI, *TG*, p. 222 (O. BRAUN).

83. ISODENAH, *op. cit.* p. 249 (n. 46).

84. BABAI, *TG*, p. 222 (O. BRAUN).

85. ISODENAH, *op. cit.* p. 243 (n. 31).

86. *Ibid.* n. 56, p. 254-255; *Histoire nestorienne*, II, p. 187ff.

Babai himself mentions that the first biography he wrote was of *Abraham*.⁸⁷ Ms. Or Paris 234, n. 9 fol. 92v-95, is a biography of Abraham written in the 13th century in Tur-'Abdin. The name of the author is not mentioned. It is adapted from an earlier biography.⁸⁸ In Ms. Syr 175 (Berlin), (=Sachau 329), fol. 133bff. written in 1826 in Midyat there is a biography of Abraham and the author cites from the biography written by Babai (fol. 133b). The author of the biography says that Abraham first lived in a place called Madra in the cell of Jacob of Nisibis (fol. 135a).⁸⁹

References of *Maria* the sister of martyr Giwargis is seen in TG.⁹⁰ We do not know anything about the biography he wrote of her.

Nos. 32-36:

In the liturgical traditions it is usual to attribute liturgical works to famous men. It is not impossible that some works at least, have their origin with the authors themselves.

Among the five, the first four are missing. Henana also wrote a work on Palm Sunday (Hosana).⁹¹ The Persian Diphysite Church instituted this feast at the time of Catholicos Babai (497-502).⁹²

Among the different ms. collections in Berlin, Paris, Rome, Cambridge, British Museum, Mingana Collection, and other collections in West Asia, different hymns are attributed to Babai. They are:

- i) Hymn for the Season of Annunciation (Sūbarā) and Christmas (*)

87. BABAI TG, p. 221 (O. BRAUN).

88. Cf. H. ZOTENBERG, *Catalogue des manuscrits syriaques et sabéens (mandaites) de la Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, 1874* (= *Catalogue*), p. 182.

89. E. SACHAU, *Verzeichnis der syrischen Handschriften, I-II*, Berlin, 1899 (*Handschriften*), p. 553ff.

90. TG (O. BRAUN), p. 223ff.

91. ABDISO, *Catalogus librorum*, p. 83.

92. J. S. ASSEMANI, *BO*, III, 1, p. 83, n. 3.

- ii) Hymn for the Season of Denhā (manifestation of Christ) (*)
- iii) Hymn for the Season of Lent (*)
- iv) Hymn for all Sundays of the Year (*)
- v) For Other Occasions (*)

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i) *Hymn for the Season of Annunciation and of Christmas* (*) (HC)

The following mss. contain this hymn: Ms. Or. Paris, 24; Br. Mus. Ms. Add. 14675, fol. 162a; Berlin Ms. Syr. 29, fol. 119b (ms. or. quart. 803); Mingana, 507, fol. 68a; Ms. Vat. Syr. 585, fol. 18v 19v.⁹³ There are mss. of this hymn in the West Asian mss. collections. The hymn begins with the words: "Brīk hananā dabtaibūteh parnes hayan". It has been printed by P. Bedjan in Leipzig and reprinted in Rome.⁹⁴

ii) *Hymn for the season of Denhā (epiphany)* (*)

The following mss. contain this hymn: Ms. Syr. 43 (Berlin); ms. Cambr. Add. 1980, fol. 229a.⁹⁵ It is a hymn in honour of the Greek doctors in accordance with the spirit of the Persian Diphysite Church. It contains the names of the Greek Doctors such as Diodore, Theodore and Nestorius. It begins with the words: "Basbīl k'enē uzadiqē d'etnaṣah halēn warda qadisā."

iii) *Hymn for the season of Lent* (*) (for the Sundays of Saumā rabbā)

The following mss. contain this hymn: Ms. or. Paris 24; Ms. Syr. 29 (ms. or. quart. Berlin 803), fol. 122a; Ms. Vat.

93. W. WRIGHT, *Catalogue*, I, p. 136s; H. ZOTENBERG, *Catalogue*, p. 9 (no. 3. r); E. SACHAU, *Verzeichnis*, p. 125. ix (vol. I); A. MINGANA, *Catalogue*, I, p. col. 935; A. VAN LANTSCHOOT, *Inventaire*, p. III (of the year 1676); cf. J. MATEOS, *Lelya-Sapra* (OCA 156), Roma 1972, p. 114-115, with n. 3.

94. P. BEDJAN, *Breviarium Chaldeorum*, Leipzig 1886 (3 vols); Rome (1886), p. 57-58 (vol. I).

95. Cf. E. SACHAU, *Verzeichnis*, I, p. 161; W. WRIGHT, *Catalogue*, I, p. 154. 8a (of the year 1722/3); Ms. or. Paris 24. s (H. ZOTENBERG, *Catalogue*, p. 9 (n. 3. s).

Syr. 585, fol. 21v; Mingana 507, fol. 67b-68c.⁹⁶ It begins with the words: "subhā lak Alaha."

iv) *Hymn for All Sundays of the year* (*)

The following mss. contain the hymn: Berlin ms. syr. 29 (ms. orient. quart. 803), fol. 119a; Ms. Vat. Syr. 585, fol. 18r. v; Ms. or. Paris, 24; Br. Mus. Ms. Add. 14675, fol. 161a.⁹⁷ It begins with the words: "Abūn dbasmayā qadis b'aineh."

v) *Hymns for Other Occasions*: (*)

In the mss. there are some more hymns attributed to Babai, but we do not know for which occasion they were written. Br. Mus. or. 4525; Ms. Cambr. Add. 1998, fol. 200a; Mingana, 25, fol. 135a; Berlin Ms. Syr. 43, fol. 234b.⁹⁸ Ms. Cambr. Oo 1.22 contains several hymns of different Syrian authors, including that of Bābai. In some cases, the names of the authors are erased⁹⁹ In certain mss. the names of Diodore and others are erased and other names are written over them.¹⁰⁰ In some cases, certain expressions of the Persian Diophysite Church are erased by a recent hand and other expressions are added.¹⁰¹

It is to be noted that in the Hudra, the book which contains the prayers for the Sundays and Feast Days, the HC

96. Cf. H. ZOTENBERG, *Catalogue*, p. 9 (n. 3. v); E. SACHAU, *Verzeichnis*, I, p. 126, n. xiv; A. VAN LANTSCHOOT, *Inventaire*, p. 112; A. MINGANA, *Catalogue*, I, col. 935; cf. J. MATEOS, op. cit. p. 162-163.

97. Cf. E. SACHAU, *Verzeichnis* I, p. 125. n. viii; A. VAN LANTSCHOOT, *Inventaire*, p. 111, H. ZOTENBERG, *Catalogue*, p. 9 (n. 3. q); W. WRIGHT, *Catalogue*, I, p. 135r; cf. J. MATEOS, op. cit. p. 183-184, n. 1.

98. Cf. G. MARGOLIOUTH, *Descriptive list*, p. 46; W. WRIGHT, *Catalogue*, p. 44 (n. 5); A. MINGANA, *Catalogue*, I, col. 73; E. SACHAU, *Verzeichnis*, I, p. 161.

99. Cf. W. WRIGHT, *Catalogue*, II, 1082-3 (n. 8).

100. Cf. A. VAN LANTSCHOOT, *Inventaire*, p. 112 Ms. Vat. Syr. 585 (of the year 1676): f. 24v. 46r. 48r. f. 50r.

101. Ms. Vat. Syr. 575, fol. 3r. "bqnumaihūn" is erased and instead of that "bdilayatahūn" is written over it by a recent hand. The same with the Ms. Vat. Syr. 585, fol. 18v-19v.

is not attributed to Babai. Ms. Vat. Syr. 574, fol. 2v-3v contains the HC. But the introduction is just as "A Praise Recited till Denhā (epiphany)" (fol. 2v). It is the same case in other mss. Mar Aprem, the Bishop of the Church of the East in India (the Nestorian Bishop of Trichur) testifies that in the Hudra the name of Babai is not met.¹⁰² Invariably, the collections of Hymns at the end of the Psalms in the mss. attribute it to Babai the Great. There is a serious reason to suspect that they are an addition by later scribes, but the authorship of Babai cannot be totally denied.

"The book on the solemnities of the Sanctoral Cycle" is understood by J. S. Assemani as the "arrangement of hymns for the temporal and sanctoral cycles according to the order of the Chaldean Office."¹⁰³ Babai might have given some order to the already existing Divine Office. But it is said that it was Isoiahb III the Catholicos who arranged the Office as it is today.

102. Cf. MAR APREM, *The Nestorian Fathers*, Trichur 1976, p. 85.

103. J. S. ASSEMANI, *BO* III, 1. p. 97, n. 1.

CHAPTER II

The Political and Religious Background of the Persian Empire in the Seventh Century

There will be a discussion of two points here, namely the historical and ecclesiastical background of Babai, and the Christological problems he encountered. The political and religious background of the Persian Empire in the 7th century places one in the whole context of Babai. His theological formation in the School of Nisibis, his monastic training in the Great Monastery of Izla, and the decisions of the Episcopal Synods had definite influence on him and on his Christology. His Christology ought to be understood in the light of the problems he had to face. Hence a discussion of those points constitutes the two articles of this chapter.

Art. I: Historical and Ecclesiastical Background

Seven points will be discussed in this section: The political situation in Persia in the first half of the seventh century and the relation of Persia with the Byzantine Empire, the theological School of Nisibis Henana and the Henanians, the monastic traditions of the Great Monastery of Izla, the Monophysites in Persia, the Episcopal Synods, and the Persian Synod of 612.

Henana together with his group, and the Monophysites constituted the double internal enemy against whom Babai made use of all his strength.

§ 1. The Political Situation

Here the main concern is with the political situation in Persia during the period of Babai's career as Abbot and Visitor of the monasteries. The relation of Persia with the Byzantine Empire during this period shall also be briefly discussed.

of Nisibis, and Gabriel of Siggar, were Christians. Among the great Lords of the State, was Yazden, a Christian.³ The king built a church and a monastery near the royal palace for his wife Maria, the daughter of Maurice, the Byzantine Emperor. On two occasions, in 591, on his restoration to the throne, and in 593, in thanksgiving for his wife Sirin's conception, he gave lavish gifts to the Shrine of St Sergius at Circesium.⁴ Maria was Chalcedonian while Sirin was Monophysite; Yazden was a Diphysite, while Gabriel was a convert from Diphysite faith to Monophysitism.

In 610, when Phocas murdered Maurice, Chosroes II took the opportunity to attack the Eastern provinces of the Byzantine Empire. He captured Jerusalem, brought the Holy Cross to Persia, attacked and pillaged Antioch and almost reached the very Byzantine capital.⁵ He deported large numbers of Chalcedonians and Monophysites to Persia from the conquered territories. For 12 years (610-622), he was the Lord of the Eastern Byzantine provinces, and during this period, he followed his "diplomatic" policy towards the Persian Diphysite Christians. He wanted the support of both the Nestorians and the Monophysites, and as an able administrator and shrewd politician, he tried to pacify both. In the conquered territories, the Monophysites have been given the status of a majority religion, while in the Persian territories, the "Nestorian Faith", was considered the principal Christian faith of the empire. But he did not permit the "Nestorians" to prosper under a supreme head, the Catholicos.

3. *Histoire nestorienne*, II, ch. 81, p. 524-5: It speaks also of other Christians employed by Chosroes II.

4. M. J. HIGGINS, *Chosroes II's votive offerings at Sergiopolis*, *BZ* 48 (1955), p. 89-102.

5. Cf. A. R. VINE, *The Nestorian Churches*, London 1937, p. 66-76; J. B. BURY, *op. cit.* p. 214-225; M. J. HIGGINS *The Persian War of the Emperor Maurice. Part I: The Chronology with a Brief History of the Persian Calendar*, Washington D. C., 1939; W. H. C. FRENCH, *The Rise of the Monophysite Movement. Chapters in the History of the Church in the Fifth and Sixth Centuries*, Cambridge 1972 (= *Monophysite Movement*), p. 335.

The year of 622, when Mohammed ran from Mecca to Medina, marks a turning point in world history. In that year, Heraclius, the Byzantine Emperor, began his counter-attack against the Persians, and in 628, the year when Mohammed returned to Mecca, the Byzantine Emperor reached the very Persian capital. This victory of Byzantium over Persia was the last one in a continuous series of hostilities, between Seleucia and Constantinople.⁶ It definitively destroyed the Persian power and considerably weakened the Byzantine Empire too, so that the new Arab power under Mohammed found it very easy to capture Mesopotamia and the provinces of the Byzantine Empire.

The advance of Heraclius was accompanied by large numbers of Monophysite and Chalcedonian Christians to Persia, and the Monophysites occupied several of the Sees and converted several of their villages.

Chosroes had Monophysite sympathisers inside his court, and that added to his "diplomatic policy", towards the Nestorians. The instigation of the Magi and Mazdeism also had a vital role to play in the sporadic persecution of the Nestorians during the reign of Chosroes.

The attitude of the Persian King undermined the strength of the Diphysite Persian Christians. It weakened their position and status as the Church of the Persian Empire, and as a result, they had to remain without a head for several years, and the Monophysites established their bishoprics in the Persian Empire. According to the *Anonymous Chronicle*, Chosroes II only pretended to show favour to the Christians. He seemed to have distrusted all Christians, Monophysites and Diphysites.⁷

6. Cf. R. E. WATERFIELD, *Christians in Persia*, London 1973; A. S. ATIYA, *A History of Eastern Christianity*, London 1968.

7. *Chronicon anonymum*, p. 19.

§ 2. The Theological School of Nisibis

The School of Nisibis¹, the intellectual centre of the Seleucian Church, followed the traditions of the School of Edessa.² In the Edessan School, Theodore of Mopsuestia was the authority in Theology and Exegesis.³

In Nisibis and in the whole Seleucian Church, Theodore was "the Theologian," "the Commentator," the "Pillar of Orthodoxy," and "the Doctor of doctors."⁴ Theodore's works were available to the students from an earlier time, contemporary to the life of Theodore himself. By the time Babai had his studies practically all the works of Theodore were available in Syriac translation.⁵ In addition to Theodore, other

1. Nisibis was regarded as "the mother", "the source of science" "the intellectual tower," "the mother of towns." (A. VOEBUS, *School*, p. 209). Cf. T. HERMANN, *Die Schule von Nisibis vom V bis VII Jahrhundert*, ZNTW 25 (1926), 89-122; N. PIGULEVSKAYA, *History of the Nisibis School* (in Russian with French Summary), in *Palestinskii Sbornik*, Moscow, 80 (1967), 90-109; VAN SELMS, *Nisibis, the oldest University*, in T. B. Davies Memorial Lectures, Cape Town 1966; A. VOEBUS, *The Statutes of the School of Nisibis*, Stockholm 1961; W. WOLSKA, *Cosmas et l'école de Nisibe* in *La Topographie Chrétienne de Cosmas Indicopleustes*, Paris 1962, 63-84.

2. From A. D. 243, *Edessa came under the direct rule of the Romans* (J. B. SEGAL, *Edessa the Blessed City*, Oxford 1970, p. 14).

3. Prior to Theodore, the authority in the School was Ephrem and even after the appearance of Theodore, Ephrem did not lose his position as the Doctor of the Church. In the later part of the history of the Edessan School there were two groups among the students one supporting the traditions of Theodore and the other, the traditions of Cyril (R. C. CHESNUT, *Three Monophysite Christologies*, Oxford 1976, p. 5).

4. F. MARTIN (ed.), *Homilie de Narsai sur les trois docteurs nestoriens*, in *JA*, IX, 14(1899), Paris, p. 475.

5. Qiyore began the work of translating the writings of Theodore into Syriac (BARHADBSABBA, *Fondation des écoles*, p. 382-3). Ibas is known in the Syriac tradition as "translator." He is associated with the project of translation of Theodore's works. (J. S. ASSEMANI, *BO*, III, 1, p. 85). Qumi collaborated with Ibas in the translation (*Ibid*). Ma'na translated the works of Diodore of Tarsus. Elisa is credited with the completion

Antiochene Theologians also were available in Syriac translations either partly or fully. The School of Nisibis was, thus, the real heart of Antiochene convictions and propaganda and from there it influenced the whole Seleucian Church.

During his tour of the Eastern provinces in the Byzantine Empire, between 523 and 533 Mar Aba, the future Catholicos, came in contact with several Christian communities and various traditions.⁶ Returning to Nisibis, he brought along a few theological works of Nestorius, and Liturgies known as those of Theodore and Nestorius.⁷ As Mar Aba was the teacher in the School of Nisibis, he gave the impetus to translate these new materials into Syriac.⁸ Thus, for the first time in the history of the "Nestorian Church of Persia" Nestorius appeared during the time of Mar Aba. This was a new element in the doctrinal history of the Persian Church, and perhaps it could be the reason for the Henanian reaction and agitation within the Church. Abraham of Bet-Rabban continued the movement started by Mar Aba.

A major event took place under the leadership of Abraham of Bet-Rabban. In 562 or 563, after the peace agreement called the Eternal Treaty for 50 years, with Chosroes I, Justinian invited the Persian Theologians for a discussion and asked King Chosroes to send some representatives of the Persian Church to the Byzantine Capital. Chosroes sent a delegation consisting of Paulos, Metropolitan of Nisibis, Mari, Bishop

of a work by Theodore (*Histoire nestorienne*, PO VII, p 127); He might have completed the Syriac translation (A. VOEBUS, *School*, p. 125)

6. L. I. SCIPIONI, *Nestorio e il Concilio di Efeso*, Milano 1974, (=Nestorio) p. 303; L. ABRAMOWSKI, *Untersuchungen*, p. 8. 199: she thinks that the journey was between 525-533; P. PEETERS, *Observations sur la vie syriaque de Mar Aba, Catholicos de l'église Perse (540-552)* in *MGM*, vol. V, p. 69-112 (= *Observations*); J. LABOURT, *Le Christianisme*, p. 166.

7. L. ABRAMOWSKI, (*ibid.*) p. 7-13; L. SCIPIONI, *ibid.* 303ff.

8. The three works, *The Tragedia The Book of Heracleides*, and the *Letter to Quzma* were thus translated (ABDISO, *Catalogus Librorum*, p. 35-36).

of Balad, Barsauma Bishop of Qardu, Isai the interpreter of the School in Seleucia, Isojahb of Arzun the future Catholicos, and Babai, the Bishop of Siggar.⁹ Abraham of Bet-Rabban, the then-director of the school of Nisibis, was also invited, but he did not go or perhaps he could not go personally; he prepared a creed and answered the questions of the Byzantine court theologians.¹⁰ A. Guillaumont has recently published a Syriac document, an extract from the discussion at Constantinople.¹¹

The meeting could not bring about any positive result. After the discussion with the Byzantines, there arose an animosity against the Neo-Chalcedonian teaching because of the complicity between the Monophysites and the Neo-Chalcedonians: in accepting certain controversial expressions and in condemning the "Three Chapters". Moreover, Justinian's attempts were politically motivated rather than evangelical. When the delegation came back, they included the names of Diodore, Theodore and Nestorius in the Dyptics. The lead came from the School and the Church accepted it. For this Abraham of Bet-Rabban fell into disfavour with the Monophysites in Persia.¹² Thus the dialogue paved the way for a further alienation of the Persian and Byzantine Christians.

The leadership of Abraham of Bet-Rabban, gave a deeper foundation and conviction to the Theodorian-Antiochene theological and exegetical tradition; through the inclusion of the names of the three 'Doctors' a new commitment was made to "Nestorianism", opposed to the tradition of the Byzantine Empire. The formulation of the delegation, "two natures, two qnome, one parsopa" was also, in the eyes of the Byzantines, a great deviation from orthodoxy, because they were for one composite hypostasis.

That which was condemned in the Byzantine Empire became orthodoxy in Persia, and what the Byzantines did at

9. *Histoire nestorienne*, II PO VII, p. 187.

10. *Histoire* II, p. 628, n. 13-14.

11. A. GUILLAUMONT, *Justinien et l'Eglise de Perse*, p. 62: "Extrait de la discussion que fit l'Empereur Justinien avec Paul, Evêque de Nisibe, qui était nestorien."

12. BABAI, *TG* p. 560 (BEDJAN).

their Synod of 553 was heretical in the eyes of the Persian Christians; what the Persians did in their School—the inclusion of the names of the Doctors in the Dyptics—was emphatically unacceptable for the Byzantines and the Monophysites alike.

§ 3. Henana and the Henanians

The third historical factor to consider is the internal Henanian agitation in the Persian Church, simultaneous with the life and activities of Babai. Henanianism was one of the chief factors against which Babai directed all his strength.

Henana was a Diphysite Seleucian Christian, who had his training in the School of Nisibis. He joined the teaching staff of the School when Paulos was Bishop of Nisibis. As a teacher under Abraham (+569), Henana had difficulties with the authorities and had to discontinue his profession for some time. In 571, when Bishop Paulos died, he returned to the staff and soon became its director.¹

In his exegetical works, Henana deviated from the main stream of thought of the School, based on Theodore of Mopsuestia. He followed the Commentaries of Origen and did not accept all the conclusions of Theodore in various fields of biblical studies. In the doctrinal field, he deviated from the "Nestorian" tradition in Persia, and adhered to the theology of the Byzantine Empire. It is not certain whether he leaned towards the Neo-Chalcedonian theology of 553, or towards Monophysitism, because information regarding Henana is available solely from hostile sources. He might have accepted the "traditions" around the Second Council of Constantinople and was prepared to make concessions with the Byzantines.

Henana wrote volumes like the great Interpreter Theodore, to almost all the biblical books and to all important theological and liturgical documents. But except for two writ-

1. Cf. A. SCHER, *Traites d'Isai le docteur et de Henana d'Adiabene*, PO, VII (= *Traites*), p. 7-11; *Histoire nestorienne*, PO XIII, p. 530.

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ings and a few passages on the New Testament Commentaries, preserved by Isodad of Merv, all others are lost.²

Henana had direct contact with the Origenist monks in Palestine. During the interim period when he was dismissed from the school, he made a journey to the Byzantine Empire and to the Origenist monks in Palestine in particular.³ His opponents connect him with Origenism, Severianism and Magism.

Henana tried to make a synthesis of the various traditions as Babai himself did in Persia. Henana wanted to be conciliatory, so he adopted formulae, which he thought would lead to better clarifications. But his conclusions were suspected and repudiated, and he was considered heretical in the "Nestorian" traditions of Persia, while the solutions presented by Babai became normative for them. In a perfect Theodorian tradition, among the "Nestorians" of Persia, any deviation from Theodore was heretical. Both, the monastic tradition and the ecclesiastical authority condemned the Hananian movement strongly.

Even in 585, under the leadership of Isoiahb I, the Catholicos (582-595) a Synod warned against all kinds of interpretations against Theodore. It defended Theodore and rebuked all those who in any way spoke or wrote against him. Though Henana was not mentioned by name, it was directed against him.⁴

2. The two works extant are: "Cause du vendredi d'or", and "Cause des rogations" (Cf A. SCHER, *ibid.* p. 53-82). C. VAN DEN EYNDE, *Commentaire d'Isodad de Merv sur l'Ancien Testament*, in *CSCO*, 126/156; 176/179; 229/230; 303/304; 328/329 Louvain, 1950-72; M. D. GIBSON, *The Commentaries of Isho'dad of Merv, bishop of Hadatha* (New Testament Commentaries), in *HS* 4-11, Cambridge 1911-16.

3. *Histoire nestorienne*, II *PO* 13 p. 530 "He did not cease to traverse the lands of the Orient until the death of Abraham, Narsai's relative and employed cunningness until he obtained his place (seat in the School)."

4. Cf. *Ibid.*; J. B. CHABOT, *Syn. Or.*, 136-8/398-400.

Since Henana did not pay any attention to the strong-worded ruling of the Synod,⁵ Isorahb's successor, Sabariso (596-604) convoked a synod in 596, and rejected all teachings against the Theodorian tradition.⁶ Though not mentioned by name Henana was the target of the Synod's rebuke.⁷

Under the authority of the Synod Mar Gregory, the Bishop of Nisibis (596-601/2) warned Henana and later condemned his writings. Gregory tried to get the approval of the Catholicos himself. This attempt ended in the exile of Gregory himself because of the intervention of the Persian Court politicians. Gabriel of Siggar, the physician and Sirin, the queen supported the faction of Henana and thus he stayed at his post. But after the exile of Gregory

5. "It is reported also now before the Synod, that at this time, men have appeared who are called by name orthodox; however, in their importunity they are disturbers of the orthodoxy, of the teachings and the traditions of the Church, and are fighting with an adverse but powerless strength against the enormous power of the doctrines of the truth, which by the assistance of grace are piled up and put into the writings and traditions of the Interpreter. Whoever dares in secrecy or in public to be against that which has been said and written by us above shall be anathematized and foreign to all ecclesiastical communities" (*Ibid.* p. 137-138/399-400).

6. *Ibid.* 198/459: "We reject and anathematize all those who reject the expositions, traditions and teachings of the tested doctor, the blessed Theodore, the Interpreter; who try to introduce new and foreign traditions full of fiction and blasphemy, and rise against the pure and exact teaching of that saint and of all the true doctors, the masters of the schools who have walked in his vestiges."

7. Timothy I (780-823), the Catholicos understood it as against Henana. In his letter to Naṣr, the faithful, Timothy asks him, "Have you not heard that he (Henana) was anathematized in a Synod by Mar Sabariso?" (O. BRAUN, *Timothei patriarchae I epistulae*, CSCO 74/75, Louvain 1914-1915, p. 233-4/161.

in 601/2, about 300 students deserted Henana and joined other schools and monastic centres.⁸

In 605 once again the Seleucian ecclesiastical authorities intervened to rebuke Henana. The Synod under Gregory the Catholicos (605-608/9) rebuked all who invented new ideas and propagated a new spirit contrary to the spirit of the Fathers.⁹ It referred to a decree of Bar Sauma in the Synod of Bet-Lapat in 484 regarding Theodore; although the Synod of Bar Sauma was not accepted as a Synod during his life-time, at the time of Gregory in 605 the bishops began to quote it as authority.¹⁰

In 610 Henana died, but very few of his followers tried to propagate his ideas with the support of the court officials. In the Persian "Nestorian" tradition, he is a heretic and even after his death, the authorities wrote against

8. Cf. *Histoire nestorienne*, II, PO 13, p. 509ff. 530; MARI, *De Patriarchis*, p. 54; According to Mari there were 800 students. But J. M. Fiey considers that it is an exaggeration: "Il semble exagéré de dire avec Mari (p. 54/48), que l'école avait alors huit cents élèves; les récits de la crise imminente remèneront le chiffre dans les environs de trois cents, ce qui est déjà considérable". *Iso' yaw le Grand*, in *OCP*, 35 (1969), p. 311.

9. J. B. CHABOT, *Syn. Or.* p. 210/475: "All of us united in the Synod define that each one of us must receive and accept all the commentaries and all the writings of the blessed Mar Theodore, the Interpreter, Bishop of Mopsuestia". The synod also excommunicates all those who write against Theodore: "Whoever calumniates or will calumniate in public or in private, by words or by writings, the words and the doctrines of this doctor of the religion; whoever proposes or will propose things contrary to his writings or does not accept with the whole heart the things, which this man of God has written by the wisdom of the Grace of God, will be excommunicated and anathematized in heaven and earth, by the word of God who holds the heights and the depths." (*Ibid.* p. 211/476).

10. *Ibid.* p. 211/475-6.

11. Cf. ISO'IAHB, *Liber Epistularum*, p. 133ff; THOMAS OF MARGA, *Historia Monastica*, vol. 2, p. 251.

his writings. But he had some ardent followers for some time in Persia.¹²

According to the description of TG, there were different groups among the Henanians.¹³ After the death of Henana there was no uniform teaching among his disciples. The Synod of 612 was occasioned by the activity of the Severians and the Henanians. The doctrinal points of Henana will be discussed separately in the next article.

4. The Monastic Traditions of the Great Monastery of Izla

From the earliest times, monasticism played an important role in the Christian life of Persia. It was able to produce a form of Christianity notably different from the one in other places.

The monastic movement inaugurated among the Persians in the second part of the sixth century by Abraham of Cascar, called the Great, had a vital importance in the history of the Persian Church and in the life of Babai in particular. After his studies and pilgrimages in the West, Abraham founded the Great monastery at Izla¹, to which he attracted young and enthusiastic men. This monastery evolved into a great centre of Theodorian-Antiochene convictions. It began as a reform movement which could transform the monastic system in Persia.²

The nature of the monastic life under Abraham can be learned from the rules he prescribed for the monks concerning

12. Henana found followers in Isaiah of Tahal, Cyriac of Nisibis, Sahdona. Babai wrote a book against Isaiah. Cyriac the Bishop of Nisibis became an issue of division of the Christian community in Nisibis (J. M. FIEY, *Iso' yaw le Grand*, OCP 36/1970, p. 18-19). The schism of Sahdona was ended by his deposition (A. DE HALLEUX, *La Christologie de Martyrios-Sahdona dans l'évolution du nestorianisme* in OCP 23 (1957), p. 5-32; IDEM, *La vie mouvementée d'un "heretique" de l'Eglise nestorienne*, in OCP 24 (1958), p. 93-128.

13. TG (O. BRAUN), p. 247

1. Cf. above, p. 4.

2. Cf. A. VÖÖBUS, *School*, p. 207.

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mainly religious and ascetic practices, which were veiled in biblical quotations and offered little guidance for daily life.³ The community life was influenced by the great spiritual masters such as Aba Anthony, Aba Markos (Mark the Monk or Marcus Eremita), Aba Isaiah and others whom Abraham quotes in his rules.⁴ During the 40 days of Lent the monks were prohibited to leave their cells, except in emergency.⁵ He introduced a special tonsure, head shaved in the form of a crown, so the members of that community could be distinguished from the monks of the Monophysites (Severians). The Rabban cut off the hair from the top of his head, leaving a space like a wheel and a crown.⁶

The canons by Dadiso who was the second head (588-604), bound the monks to the faith of the Catholic Church, to the interpretation of the Orthodox Fathers, especially of Diodore, Theodore and Nestorius, and to the teachings of the monastic Fathers.⁷

By the time of Babai, the third head of the monastery, the centre attained leadership in the whole church: in organizing monastic life, in defending the doctrinal traditions against the internal and external enemies and in helping to defend it in the court of the Persian Emperor. From 604, especially after 608 until 628, Mar Babai with the help of other monks guarded the communities against the Messalians and other heretics; and in those days of political and ecclesiastical crises it was the leadership of the Great Monastery of Izla that strengthened the Seleucian Church in the "orthodox faith." By a chain process, it operated throughout the Persian Empire.

3. A. VÖÖBUS, *The Rules of Abraham of Kaskar*, in *Syriac and Arabic Documents regarding legislation relative to Syriac Asceticism*, Stockholm 1960 (= *Rules of Abraham*), p. 150-162.

4. Cf. *Ibid.*: canons, 1. 3, p. 155: 157.

5. *Ibid.* can. 5, p. 160.

6. THOMAS OF MARGA, *Historia Monastica* 2, p. 40-41 with n. 4; ISODENAH, *Livre de la Chasteté*, n. 14, p. 232.

7. A. VÖÖBUS, *The Rules of Dadiso*, in *Syriac and Arabic Documents*, Stockholm, 1960, p. 163-175 can. 1, p. 168.

The monks of Izla were under the current Evagrian mystical revival prevalent among the Syrians and the Greeks. While among the Greeks Evagrian thought intermingled with Origenism, among the Syrians it was devoid of Origenism, chiefly because of the Syriac translation by Philoxenus.⁸ The Seleucians were Antiorigenists, because of Theodore's spirit they were imbued with. Added to that there was a complicity between the Origenists and the Monophysites in the Byzantine Empire. For the monks of Izla, Evagrius was the pillar of mystical theology, devoid of all sorts of Origenistic features and even Antiorigenist. Henana represented Origenism to them. But it is interesting to note that these "Nestorian" monks of Izla read Evagrius in the translation of the "Monophysite" Philoxenus.

In addition to Theodore, the monastery studied the newly translated works of Nestorius and fixed the Seleucian faith in the Theodorian-Nestorian patterns. The monks used largely the works of Nestorius and thus a new element was introduced into the history of the Persian monasteries.

The Great Monastery took the lead in disputations with the followers of Henana and defeated them in argumentation.⁹ The head of the parallel school of Bet-Sahde, established in Nisibis by deacon Elisha, came from this monastery. The head of the School, Abimelek of Qardu had his monastic training under Abraham the Great. The second director, another Abraham, also was appointed by Mar Abraham the Great (+588).¹⁰ In fact, the monastery was the leading factor in the opposition to Henana and in the confirmation of the faith along the Theodorian-Nestorian lines.

§ 5. The Monophysites in Persia

The Monophysitism¹ condemned in Chalcedon in 451 and periodically hunted after by the Byzantine Emperors did

8. See above, p. 32.

9. BABAI, *TG* p. 495ff. (BEDJAN).

10. ISODENAH, *Livre de la Chasteté*, p. 247; MARI, *De Patriarchis*, p. 55; AMR, *De Patriarchis*, p. 44.

✓1. "Monophysitism" or "Monophysism" is a relatively

not die out in the Empire, nor outside of it. Though there arose diverse groups among them under various names, they flourished among the non-hellenised people in Armenia, Syria, Egypt and Ethiopia. The leadership of Jacob Baradeus unified them. By the time Justinian became the Emperor, he found them to be a strong power and he did not follow a policy of a general persecution of the "heretics." He banished them in Syria, allowing them to escape to Egypt or to upper Mesopotamia in the Persian Empire.²

The Monophysites had great theological leaders in the 6th century, among whom Mar Jacob of Sarug (+ 521), Mar Philoxenus of Mabbog (+ 523), Mar Severus of Antioch (+ 538), and John Philoponus (+ 565), were the most important. Mar Jacob and Mar Philoxenus were Syrians and studied Antiochene theology in the School of Edessa and wrote in Syriac. They chose to follow Monophysism and opposed the Diphysite interpretation as they had studied in the School in Edessa. Since they wrote in Syriac, their writings were most easily accessible to the Persian Christians.

Though the Monophysites had several followers in Persia, no bishopric of theirs was known before 559.³ It was at the time of Chosroes I that Jacob Baradeus promoted

modern name. No one used it in the first centuries of its growth. In the Roman Empire, the opponents of Chalcedon were the "Hesitants", the *diakrinomenoi* i. e. those who had reservations about accepting its definition. They were also called the "dissidents" or the "headless ones" (*acephaloi*). In the Persian Empire, they were called the "Severians," the "Theopaschies."

✓2. Empress Theodora favoured the Monophysites and protected them. Constantinople remained the powerhouse of Monophysism for long. (A. S. ATIYA, *A History of Eastern Christianity*, p. 180). The Monophysites in Egypt were not persecuted for fear of their reaction (R. BROWNING, *Justinian and Theodora*, p. 41. 44). Emperor Anastasios was favouring the Monophysites and was appointing the Monophysite Bishops, exiling the Chalcedonians (*ibid.* p. 31).

3. J. M. FIEY, *Tagrit*, in *OS* 8 (1963), p. 289-342:301.

Ahudemmeh as the first Metropolitan of the Orient.⁴ He worked in and around Tagrit.⁵ At the time of Chosroes II, the Monophysites strengthened their positions in the Persian Empire with the support of the court officials.

In the Persian Empire, the Jacobites (Severians) were centred mainly around Tagrit,⁶ on the bank of Tigris south of Mossul, and the convent of Mar Matthai⁷ in Ninive near the ruins of the old Nineve. They had there a few monasteries and hermitages in the mountains. According to Bar Hebraeus, Tagrit was from early times against the normative theology of the Persian Church.⁸ After Ahudemmeh, Qamiso (578-609), and Samuel (614-624) were the Metropolitans of the Orient. Both of them consolidated the Monophysite position in the Persian Empire. In 628-29 Tagrit became the first See of the Jacobites in the Persian Empire and Mar Marutha was appointed as the first Maphrian there.⁹ From Mar Matthai, the neighbouring places and centres were converted to

4. L. DUCHESNE, *L'Eglise au VI^e siècle*, p. 322.

5. J. M. FIEY, *Les Diocèses du 'Maphrianat' Syrien 629-1860*, in *Parole de l'Orient*; 5 (1974), p. 158: Before he was promoted, he was Bishop of Bet-Arabaye, and was consecrated by the Armenian Catholicos, Christopher. He might have been working among the Arabs in the no-man's land on the border area, and not in the Persian district of Bet-Arabaye itself.

6. Tagrit, Tigris or Takrit (in Latin, *Castellum Tigridis*, given by the Romans to a formidable citadel against the Persian invasion). From the Latin words, comes the word, Tagrit (J. MOUNAYER, *Les Synodes Syriens Jacobites*, Beyrouth 1963, p. 13, n. 1): from 628/9 till the 12th c. Tagrit was the See of the Maphrian of the East.

7. Probably in the place now known as Holwan on Jebel Maqlub, about four hours' journey from Mosul, in the area between the Tigris and the Greater Zab (DE LACY O'LEARY, *How Greek Science Passed to the Arabs*, London 1948, p. 90; for further details, Cf. E. A. W. BUDGE, *The Chronography of Bar Hebraeus*, vol. I, London 1932, p. liii-lxiii).

8. Cf. BAR HEBRAEUS, *Chronicon Ecclesiasticum*, t., 2, Louvain 1877, col. 63-78; J. S. ASSEMANI, *BO II*, p. 410.

9. J. M. FIEY, *Les Diocèses du 'Maphrianat' Syrien*, p. 142.

Monophysism.¹⁰ It is said that in the 7th century, the Jacobites had five schools in the Persian Empire.¹¹ About 605, there was Monophysite propaganda in Hira in the Bet-Aramaye region, and the Julianist heresy was prevalent there through the activities of a certain Sergius.¹² Mossul was essentially a "Nestorian" area, but the Jacobite infiltration has brought some to them. By the end of the 6th century, there was a considerable number of Jacobites there.¹³

Thus by the beginning of the 7th c., there was large number of Jacobites in the Persian Empire. Though there was no organised hierarchy for them, they continued their activity of converting the Diphysites to the Monophysite Faith. The Jacobites hated the Diphysites in Persia, calling them, "Nestorians". Hailing St. Cyril as the pillar of orthodoxy, they showed exaggerated horror for the Diphysite faith: to Chalcedon, to the "Tomus" of Leo, to the Antiochene theologians and to the Seleucian Diphysite Christians. In the condemnation of the "Three Chapters" in 553 the Seleucians saw the hand of the Monophysites. The Monophysite success and presence in Persia irritated the Seleucians. When several of their centres and churches became Jacobite, because of the imperial support, the

10. Thus Bartelli Qaraqoa, Bet-Hudaida and the surrounding villages at the region of Nineve changed obedience before 615 (J. M. FIEY, *Assyrie Chrétienne*, vol. II, p. 417, 441, 442). In Ba'siqa they acquired a stronghold; the Aramean town Bazhani and Magara and Merge also became Monophysite. Bet-Edrai and Bet-Daniel also passed to Jacobitism. (*ibid.*)

11. The Monophysites had schools in Bet-Qoqi (Qiqi), Bet-bar Terlai (bar-Telli), Bet-Bani, Suraq, and Tell-Salma (*ibid.* p. 488-9).

12. In the beginning of the 6th century the Monophysites, expelled from the Roman Empire, arrived in Hira. The Catholicos Sila of Seleucia-Ctesiphon (503-523), gave them an ultimatum: either profession of Diphysite faith or exile; some accepted his authority, while others refused. About 549 the Julianist heresy was professed there and even at the beginning of the seventh century it was strong there (*ibid.* p. 226-227).

13. J. M. FIEY, *Mossoul Chrétienne*, p. 13-14. Mossul was called "Hesna 'Ebraya". After the muslim attack in 637, it was called "Mossul", the point of meeting.

Seleucians felt strong indignation, but they were unable to hinder this growth.

§ 6. The Episcopal Synods

The doctrinal enactments of the Episcopal Synods also form an integral part of the theological tradition. The Seleucian Church held several Synods and formulated doctrinal propositions. Their synodal acts begin in 410 with the Synod under Isaac and Marutha of Maipherkat.¹ It was at this Synod that the Seleucians accepted for themselves the Creed and the decrees of the Council of Nicaea.² In subsequent centuries, though different formulations appeared, they never deviated from this Nicaean faith, once accepted in the Synod and it continued to be their official Creed.

The different Synods of the Persian Church could be found in the edition of J. B. Chabot.³ It was the custom of the

1. J. B. CHABOT, *Syn. Or.* p. 17-36. J. S. Assemani has confounded this Marutha, Bishop of Maipherkatt (Martyriopolis) with Marutha of Tigris, the first Maphrian of the Jacobites in the seventh century (*BO.* I; p. 174f. II, 401). The Marutha here in question played an important role in the Persian Synod of 410, and he died before 420 (*Syn. Or.* p. 255, n. 2).

2. The Creed exists in two recensions: the more commonly known is that which is published by J. B. CHABOT in *Syn. Or.* (p. 22-23/262-3). The other one is the one published by T. J. LAMY basing on a single codex and later published by A. VÖÖBUS with some corrections, basing it on several mss. (T. J. LAMY, *Concilium Seleuciae et Ctesiphoni habitum anno 410*, Lovanii 1868; A. VÖÖBUS, *New Sources for the Symbol in early Syrian Christianity*, in *Vigiliae Christianae*, 26 (1972), p. 291-6: Note the comment of J. Gribomont; "The first Synod of the Church in Persia took place at Seleucia Ctesipon, 410. The Nestorian version of the Seleucian creed scrupulously reproduces the Nicaenum. The Jacobite version gives it a peculiar wording; thus it is apparently earlier. The Nestorian formula probably comes from the Syriac version of the Acts of Chalcedon." (*Le Symbote de Foi de Seleucie-Ctesiphon (410)*, in *A Tribute to Arthur Vööbus*, Chicago, 1977, p. 283-294:294).

3. J. B. CHABOT, *Syn. Or.*; A German version in O. BRAUN, *Das Buch der Synhados*, Stuttgart-Wien, 1900.

Synods to make formulations of Faith based on the Nicæan Creed. A previous article presented their attitude to Theodore of Mopsuestia, which was always the same: Just as St Cyril was the pillar of orthodoxy for the Chalcedonians and the Monophysites, Mar Theodore was their theologian and doctor, upholding the orthodox faith of the Catholic Church.⁴

All the expositions of the different Synods are in line with Chalcedon. They employed less technical terms and expressed the doctrine in simple terms.

If one makes an analysis of the different Creeds and Synodal enactments of the Persians, it will be clearly seen that basically they were Chalcedonians. Although they did not formally accept Chalcedon, they taught the Chalcedonian doctrine very clearly and fully. But they had adopted certain expressions in accordance with their taste, and except in the use of words, there was no difference between the Persians and the Byzantines (Chalcedonians).

§ 7. The Persian Synod of 612

The gathering of 612 was occasioned by the plot of Gabriel of Siggar in the election of the Catholicos. According to a previous decision, Chosroës II had prohibited the election of a head after the death of Gregory. So the Persian Church remained without a head from 608/609. In the meantime, Gabriel of Siggar managed to change the mind of the king. Gabriel wanted to have his sympathiser as Catholicos, and he sided with the "dissidents" of the "Nestorian tradition" the Henanians, and the Severians (Jacobites).

It is not quite clear from which group Gabriel wanted to have a Catholicos. The Severians alone did not have the strength enough to have a Catholicos from their midst. So he wanted to have a person from the Henanians who would support him. There were Henanians who adopted the Monophysite views and this group might have been prepared to accept a "Theopaschite" Bishop as head. In TG, the opposing

4. See above, p. 50 ff.

group is called Severian, and the Henanians are mentioned only once that they joined with the Severians.¹

The "Nestorians", so called by the opponents, knowing the plot, quickly intervened and the king asked the two sides to hold a dispute. Then a delegation, consisting of bishops, priests, monks and a deacon took part in the gathering. The delegation included Subhālamāran, Metropolitan of Bet-Garmai, the leader, who was eventually put to prison in 620². Isoiahb Arbaya, Bishop of Balad, the future Catholicos who was exiled, Gabriel Bishop of Nahargoul, Mar Yonadab, Metropolitan of Hadiab, Sergius of Caskar, Mar Giwargis, the future martyr, Andrew a priest, Mar Michael Malpana from Bet Garmai, Deacon Gausiso and Mar Hananiso the monk.³ The delegation wrote a formula of faith, held a dispute with the opponents and wrote down the results and answered the questions of the King. Mar Giwargis translated the documents from Syriac to Persian.⁴ But at the end, the King did not permit them to have a Catholicos, nor did he allow the opponents around Gabriel to install a head. The Creed of this assembly was presented earlier.⁵

Although Babai did not take part in it, he had a major influence on its documents, and the representative of the Monastery of Izla was later crucified because of the treachery of Gabriel by denouncing Mar Giwargis to the emperor that he was a convert from Magism, "a crime" deserving capital punishment.⁶

1. *TG* (O. BRAUN), p. 247.

2. *Ibid.* p. 259.

3. *Histoire nestorienne*, II p. 529. 534-6; *TG* (P. BEDJAN) p. 507; (O. BRAUN), p. 253. 258-9.

4. *Ibid.* p. 257.

5. See above, p. 30-31.

6. See above, p. 35.

Art. II - Theological Problems

In this article there will be a brief review of the main theological and Christological problems, discussed in the "Book of Union" and the other writings of Babai, to see how the old problems appear under new circumstances. They are discussed under five headings: Hypostatic union, Theopaschism, Henanianism, The title, "Mother of God", and The Accusation of 'two sons', and "quaternity" instead of Trinity. The first two, namely "Hypostatic Union", and "Theopaschism" are the two main "Nestorian problems". Henana and his followers posed serious theological and Christological problems to Babai. Henana was accused of all kinds of heresies. The title "Theotokos" was the touch-stone of orthodoxy since 431 and the Nestorians used to give their own interpretations to it. There had been always hesitation in the Nestorian circles in the unqualified use of the expression. The accusation of 'two sons' and "quaternity" instead of Trinity was as old as the accusation of Nestorianism in Nestorius. There will be a discussion on the history of these problems, followed by that of Babai's. There is no intention to anticipate the solutions given by Babai to these problems. Rather, basing on the information given by Babai, there will be an attempt to see how the old problems appear to the new Nestorian theologian.

§ 1. Hypostatic Union

St. Cyril of Alexandria used the expressions, natural union (*henōsis physikē*), and hypostatic union (*henōsis kath' hypostasin*) to designate the union of the two natures in the Incarnation of the Word.¹ Basing on the Alexandrian theological tradition, Cyril insisted on the unity of Christ. He sees the union in Christ resulting from the "Person", and the duality from the 'natures'. Hypostatic union meant for Cyril, the union in one Person (hypostasis) of the divine and the human natures. Jesus Christ is both God and man because of the

1. CYRIL, *Ep. 2 ad Nestorium* (Ep. 4): PG, 77, 45 B - C; *Ep. 3 ad Nestorium* (Ep. 17): PG, 77, 106 ff.; COD. p. 40. 41. 44. 46. 47. 48.

hypostatic union. The natures are united without mixture or confusion. St Cyril's natural and hypostatic union without mixture or confusion had definitely its value. He had the deeper theological insight, but he lacked the clarity of expression, which the Antiochenes, his brethren in Episcopacy had and they lost no opportunity to attack him.

His terminology and attitudes gave occasion for misunderstanding. He was flexible and could easily modify his views. One can note a great difference between his earlier and later works. The young Cyril followed strictly St. Athanasius. During this period, Cyril does not indicate the theological importance of the soul of Christ. The flesh was for him the subject of Christ's suffering, sanctity and glory. He had no hesitation to use the expressions such as, "inhabitation," "temple," "assumption" etc.² In the Anti Nestorian struggle, Cyril applied himself to the study of Christology in depth, and one can notice development of his thought during this period. He accepts a rational soul (*psyche logike*)³ and rejects the expressions such as, "indwelling" (*enoikesis*) "conjunction" (*synapheia*) or "close participation" (*henosis schetike*)⁴ He made use of the expressions physis and hypostasis without any distinction, to signify "nature" as well as "person".⁵ The incarnate Word was for Cyril one physis, one hypostasis and one prosopon. He employed the example of body and soul to explain the Christological union⁶. He accepted the "mia physis" formula of Apollinarius thinking that it originated from St Athanasius.⁷

2. IDEM, *Thesaurus*, 23, 24, 28; *Dialog.* 5

3. Cf. Ep. 4.

4. Cf. Ep. 17, 4-5.

5. Cf. Ep. 46, 2: *mia physis tou logou sesarkomene*"; Ep. 17, 8: "*mia hypostasis tou theou logou sesarkomene*". He identified hypostasis with person (Ep. 17: *COD*, p. 48).

6. Ep. 17, 8: "For the one and sole Christ is not twofold, although we conceive of Him as consisting of two distinct substances inseparably united, even as a man is conceived of as consisting of soul and body, and yet is not twofold but one of both."

7. APOLLINARIUS, *Adversus Jov. I* (LIETZMANN, p. 251); CYRIL, *De Recta Fide ad Regina*, I, 9: *PG*, 76, 1133f.

In his "Laetentur Caeli" he anticipates the 'divisive Christology of Chalcedon':⁸ "And as to the expressions concerning the Lord in the Gospels and Epistles, we are aware that theologians understand some as common, as relating to one person, and others distinguish as relating to two natures, explaining those that befit the divine nature according to the Godhead of Christ, and those of humble sort according to his manhood".

St Cyril fought against Nestorianism and Apollinarianism. But he was accused of Apollinarianism, Arianism and Monophysitism. His acceptance of the "mia physis" expression of Apollinarius gave his opponents an occasion to attack him. Moreover, he spoke of two natures before the union and one nature after the union of the Word with the flesh: 'We say that two natures are united, but that after the union there is no longer a division into two; we believe, therefore in one nature of the Son ("mian einai pisteuomen ten tou uiou physin"), because He is one though become man and flesh". Apollinarius identified nature with person and taught that there was only one nature in Christ. By "mia physis" Cyril meant the union of the Word with a perfect human nature, subsisting in the Word.

The expression natural and hypostatic union was very dear to Cyril and he was not in a theological position to try to understand the expressions of his theological adversaries:¹⁰ "If we reject", Cyril writes, "this hypostatic union either as impossible or unmeet, we fall into the error of making two sons". His opponents bluntly express their incapability in understanding the "hypostatic union".

Nestorius, for example, understood hypostatic and natural union (as the union of body and soul), as resulting in a combination and "confusion" of natures, forming a new composite nature and "causing" suffering to the Divinity. But

8. Ep. 39: PG, 77, 173ff; M. FOUYAS, *The Person of Jesus Christ*, p. 85.

9. Ep. 40 ad Acacium.

10. Ep. 4.

St Cyril never meant that, and he positively held *asygchutos henosis*.¹¹ Nestorius drew logical conclusions from the premises of Cyril, which the latter never thought of. For Nestorius, hypostatic union was in no way admissible.¹² This union, as he sees it, is corruptible and passible. As the soul suffers with the sufferings of the body in a natural union, so the divinity suffers with the sufferings of the body.¹³ Nestorius rejects the analogy of body and soul for the union of Word and man and accuses St Cyril of Arianism. Taken in themselves, soul and body are incomplete natures and in the union they suffer mutually and their union is a second creation.¹⁴ For him the very concept of hypostatic union was unintelligible.¹⁵ Nestorius never tried to see Cyril from the latter's view point and was monotonously arguing against the expression "natural" and "hypostatic union". In his logical conclusions Nestorius may be correct, but in his intuition of the truth of incarnation St Cyril was correct and in their passion for orthodoxy, each one failed to see the point of view of his brother!

Theodoret of Cyrus accused Cyril of Apollinarism,¹⁶ and calls him the inventor of the hypostatic union. As such, he says, the expression is seen neither in the Scriptures nor in the Fathers.¹⁷ Theodoret took physis and hypostasis as synonyms and understood them to mean "substance," and

11. Ep. 39.

12. NESTORIUS, *LH*, p. 49-50, 161, 179 (DRIVER); L. I. SCIPIONI, *Ricerche*, p. 68; *Nestorio*, p. 109, 395-396.

13. NESTORIUS, *LH* 162 (DRIVER).

14. *Ibid.* p. 8-9; 33-39; 161-162; 313-314.

15. *Ibid.* p. 154-155: "Why do you wish that there should be an hypostatic union which makes us neither understand that there is (in the union) the ousia of man nor understand (that he is) man in nature, but God the Word in nature, that is, God who is not in nature what he is in his nature through the hypostatic union, wherein there are no distinctions and definitions of the various (elements) ... What is this unintelligible hypostatic union?"

16. THEODORET *HE*, V, 3: *PG* 82, 119 D; *Reprehensio*, *PG* 76, 389 Aff.; Ep. 150: *PG* 83, 1413 A-1416 B.

17. THEODORET, *Reprehensio*: *PG* 76, 400 A.

"nature". So for him a union by nature or substances is inevitably Monophysitism a mixing (*Krasis*) of the natures.¹⁸ A natural union is a forced union uniting parts which are on the same level of being: i. e., whose being is similarly limited in time, created and subject to slavery.¹⁹ In the case of the union of Christ the analogy of body and soul is inadmissible.²⁰

Let us now see how Babai presents the point: He considers the profession of the "natural and hypostatic union" (*hdayūtā kyanaitā waqnomaitā*) as the basic Christological error. Cyril is accused of following the teachings of Arius and on some occasions of Apollinarius and on others of Manichaeus. He is accused of inconsistency in his teaching. He accepted "assumption" saying that Our Lord took a complete man; but later, says Babai, "he spoke of a natural and hypostatic union, saying that, 'God Himself is born hypostatically, according to the flesh and suffered according to the flesh, and tasted death according to the flesh.'" Cyril took away the properties of the humnnyty of our lord.²¹

According to Babai the natural and hypostatic union is a necessary and a forced one as the union of soul and body, resulting in the one 'qnoma', man.²² The natural union results in the mixture of the two; the hypostatic union results in one hypostasis. When applied to Christ it is an impossibility and a contraditon.

18. *Ibid.* 400 B.

19. THEODORET, *Eranistes* 2: PG 83, 145 A.

20. *Ibid.*

21. BABAI, *LU*, 75, 9ff. / 61, 1ff. Cyril actually followed Apollinarius in making use of his "mia physis" expression. Apollinarius also held that the *compositum* Christ is one physis, and hypostasis and one ousia because the Word as the determining principle is the sole source of all life in him (APOLLINARIUS, *De fide et Incarnatione*, 6: (H. LIETZMAN ed. p. 198-9: "Holy Scripture makes no difference between the Logos and his flesh, but the same is one physis, one hypostasis, one, power, one prosopon, fully God and fully man").

22. BABAI *LU*, 72/58; 79/64; *I VII*, p. 274f. / 221f.; *TV*, 291-307/235-247.

In short, we have to say that neither the Antiochenes nor Babai had the idea of Cyril regarding the *henōsis physikē and henōsis kath' hypostasin*. They could not see the viewpoint of Cyril, and the same was the case with Cyril regarding the Antiochenes.

Now we turn our attention to another group who upheld the hypostatic union, namely the Monophysites. Babai says that the different kinds of Theopaschites (Monophysites)-Eutyches Dioscoros, Julian, Philoxenus, and Severus - got their doctrinal origin from Cyril²³ They were disciples of Cyril in upholding the natural and hypostatic union.

Eutychēs professed two natures before the union, but one nature, and one hypostasis after the union.²⁴ Dioscoros is not quoted, but Babai says, "These evil ones with their progeny were destroyed by the admirable Leo who holds the seat of the Great Peter".²⁵ Julian of Halicarnassus asserted, says Babai, that our Lord did not take the mortal body of the race of Adam, which is passible and mortal but that which Adam had before he sinned being immortal and impassible.²⁶

Babai considered Philoxenus also a follower of Cyril in upholding the hypostatic union and Theopaschism, and accused him of Eutychianism.²⁷ The accusation of Eutychianism on Philoxenus is mere polemic. Philoxenus had outrightly condemned the Eutychian error.²⁸ There is a citation in LU from Philoxenus. Babai considers it as unorthodox:²⁹

23. BABAI, LU, 75 6/61.

24. *Ibid.* p. 76/61.

25. *Ibid.*; Cf. W. FRANKENBERG, *Evagrius Ponticus*, p.22/23; NESTORIUS, LH, 374.

26. BABAI LU p. 77, 19-22/62, 31-34; *Juliani fragmenta dogmatica*, 48. 121. 122; R. DRAGUET, *Julen d'Halicarnasse et sa controverse avec Sévère d'Antioche sur l'incorruptibilité du corps du Christ*, Louvain 1924, p. 56*. 72*. Severus also fought against this aptharthodocetism of Julian (Cf. Severus, *La polémique anti-julianiste*, I. II A. II B. III ed. and tr. by R. HESPEL. (CSCO 244/245. 295/296. 301/302. 318/319), Louvain 1964-71.

27. BABAI, LU, 77/62.

28. PHILOXENUS, *Tractatus tres*, p. 203-5/151-3.

29. BABAI, LU, p. 76, 29-77, 8/62, 14-21

This is not to be said as sign and miracle which our Lord made: that he changed water into wine; that he multiplied the bread; that he cured the sick; that he expelled the demons; that he raised the dead; but this is the sign and miracle which he made: when he was not man he became man; when he was not finite he was shut up in the womb of the Virgin and hypostatically born from her and sucked milk and wrapped up in clothes; when he was not passible and mortal he died and was buried and resurrected.

Philoxenus actually did not deny the "wonder-characteristic" of the miracles. The greater wonder according to him was the "becoming" man.³⁰ Philoxenus also considered the union as that of the body and soul, but without any mixture.³¹

Although Severus held that God the Word assumed the mortal and passible body of men, he also upheld a natural and hypostatic union and attributed suffering to the divinity.³² Furthermore, he compared the union to that of body and soul, but he did not consider it a forced union and that the divinity suffered with the sufferings of the body.³³ That is the explanation of Babai regarding the hypostatic union. Severus in fact spoke of a composite nature. He wanted to maintain a duality in the one nature. For him, before the Incarnation, the Word was simple nature, but by becoming man he became "a composite" in regard to the flesh. In Christ, Severus conceived two essences in abstract, and considered him as a composite (*Synthetos*) nature and hypostasis, but at the same time he opposed any idea of a mingling of the natures.³⁴

30. Cf. A. DE HALLEUX, *Philoxène de Mabbog*, p. 152. 158; PHILOXENUS, *Tractatus tres*, p. 208. 19-24/155, 6-11.

31. *Ibid*, p. 196. 24-22/147, 10-17.

32. BABAI, *LU* 78/63.

33. SEVERUS, *Homilies*, 67 (*PO*, 8, p. 359); 58 (*PO*, 8, p. 219. 222-3); *Contra Grammaticum*, I, 4. 76-7/60-1 (*CSCO*, 111/112, Louvain 1938. 1965); See *Chalcedon*, I, p. 470; n. 44.

34. SEVERUS, *Ep. to Sergius*, p. 124-5/94 (*CSCO*, 119/120, Louvain, 1949). *Ep. to Oecumenius*, p. 176-177 (E. W. BROOKS, ed. *PO*, 12).

There are three citations in LU from Severus or from the Severians:³⁵

"The union is made naturally and hypostatically as the union of soul and body, necessary and forced, and according to the natural law suffers jointly." "The divinity of the Son is not a complete 'qnoma' as Father, without the body; nor his humanity possesses a complete 'qnoma' without his divinity, as other men; nor his humanity has a free will; for indeed, through a natural union, his will is necessarily joined to God." "And also this nature and hypostasis is constituted of God and man through a hypostatic and forced union; one is the hypostasis as all the other hypostases."

The doctrines of Severus are nothing but that of Cyril in a more philosophical framework. Severus fought against Chalcedon and the Chalcedonians. He did not make a strict distinction between Chalcedonians and Nestorians. In his view, Chalcedon had abandoned Cyril and the hypostatic union. Though Chalcedon made a distinction between nature and hypostasis and identified hypostasis with prosopon, Severus continued to use them as synonyms in the pre-Chalcedonian sense. Though he stood for the Cyrillian orthodoxy, he did not have the theological pliability of Cyril. Severus' Christology evolved into a stricter system than that of Cyril.

Thirdly and lastly we speak of another group that upheld the hypostatic union, namely the Emperor Justinian and the group around him. Babai considers Justinian as the climax of all impieties. Two chief impieties of Justinian were the condemnation of the "Three Chapters"³⁶ and the profession of "hypostatic union through composition."

Babai's elaborate refutation of the anathemata of Justinian has not come down to us. In the LU he repeats a few

35. BABAI, *LU*, 79, 14-16/64, 10-12; 80, 10-15/65, 1-6; 81, 1/65, 29-31.

36. BABAI, *LU*, 81-2/66.

arguments against two of the anathemata (anath.11.1V). He opposes the expression, "God the Word has two generations" and refutes it.³⁷ After a brief refutation of the second anathema Babai turns to the fourth: "Union is effected hypostatically through composition", "one is the composite hypostasis, which is Jesus Christ, one of the hypostases of the Trinity."³⁸ For Babai, the affirmation of the natural and hypostatic union leads to the affirmation of a composite nature and composite hypostasis (*hypostasis synthetos - qnoma drūqabā*).

The idea of a composite hypostasis is not an invention of Justinian, as it has been used by heretics and orthodox alike.³⁹ The emperor reaffirmed it and made it his teaching. For him *henōsis kath' hypostasin* is the same as *kata synthesisin*.⁴⁰ In his anathemata, he identified *physis* and *ousia*.⁴¹ Chalcedon had already identified hypostasis and prosopon.⁴² So naturally one comes to the assertion of St. Cyril: *mia physis-mia hypostasis* and that expression was a very dear one to the Monophysites.

The chief reason for the opposition of Babai to the system of Justinian was his fear of the attribution of suffering to the divinity. He could not understand how one "composite qnoma" can avoid the mixing and suffering. Babai has

37. *Ibid.* 83ff./67ff.

38. *Ibid.* 101/70; 107/76; TG. p. 248 (O. BRAUN), p. 248; (COD, p. 91)

39. The expression "composite hypostasis" is seen in the Bishops who condemned Paul of Samosata (H. DE RIEDMATTEN, *Les Actes du procès de Paul de Samosate, Fribourg* 1952, p. 36. 14); Origen (*Ctr. Cels.* 1, 66); Eudoxius, the Arian Bishop of Antioch (357-9); (A. HAHN, *Bibliothek* p. 261-2); Lucian the Bishop of Alexandria (273-8), DIEKAMP, ed. *Doctrina Patrum*, p. 65); Ps. Athanasius (*Quod unus sit Christus*, PG 28,124). Apollinarius (*Ep. ad Dionys.* 9: H. LIETZMANN, p. 260, 1-2); Cyril of Alexandria (*Ep. 2 to Nest.* COD, p. 47); Andrew of Crete (*In transfiguratione Domini*, 47, 6: PG 97, 937. 940); Severus (*Letter to Oecumenius*, PO, 12, p. 176-7); Ps. Dionysius, *The Petition of the Monophysites to Justinian in 532* (ZACHARIAS RHETOR, HE, IX, 15).

40. *Anathema*, IV: COD, p. 91.

41. *Anathema*, VIII & IX: COD, p. 94.

42. *Definitio Fidei*, COD, p. 62.

nine arguments against the "union of composition." In all composites, either the whole is put together with a whole, or a part with a part, or a part with a whole. The parts subsist hypostatically and they mutually depend for its being and operation; both lose their individual properties which they had in simple nature when they are put together in the composition. The component parts of the composite mutually limit one another, and a new form is emerged, which in the simple state the parts did not have. The emergence of the new form and operations and actions in a composite harmony is the result of the putting together of the two parts.⁴³ But such a concept cannot be applied to Christ, perfect God and perfect man, one of the "qnome" of the Trinity and one of the "qnome" of men, form of God and form of servant.

Regarding the natural and hypostatic union, Babai's ideas were different from those of Cyril, the Monophysites and emperor Justinian. He shared the views of the Antiochenes and under their influence, he continued to oppose the Alexandrian terminology.

§ 2. Theopaschism

Theopaschism¹ is the profession that God suffered. As a heresy, it is seen in the Sabellians. It might mean that God suffered in the Godhead, Trinity, or in one of the hypostases of the Trinity, the Word in the divine nature.

But as an expression of the "Communicatio Idiomatum"^{ca} it is seen in the New Testament, and in the early Fathers.²

43. BABAI, *LU*, p. 107ff./76ff.

1. On Theopaschism, cf. A. GRILLMEIER, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, p. 521; M. RICHARD, *Proclus de Constantinople et le théopaschisme RHE*, 38 (1942), p. 303-331; C. MARTIN, *Un florilège grec d'homélie Christologique des IV^e et V^e siècles sur la nativité* (Paris gr. 1491), le *Muséon* 54 (1941), p. 17-57; E. AMANN, *Théopaschite* (controverse), *DTC*, 15, col. 505-512; W. ELERT, *Die Theopaschitische Formel*, *ThLZ*, 75 (1950), p. 195-260.

2. St Paul speaks of "the princes of this world" "who crucified the Lord of Glory" (I Cor. 2, 8). St Ignatius speaks of the suffering of God: "Leave me that I be an imitator of

The Nicaean Creed had already expressed its faith in 'the Son of God... crucified for us under Pontius Pilate.' Nobody took scandal at these expressions.

St. Cyril of Alexandria taught a kind of Theopaschism, which became a matter of dispute among the Christians for centuries. In his 12th anathema, Cyril affirmed,

If any one does not believe that God the Word suffered in the flesh, and was crucified in the flesh, and tasted death in the flesh, and became first-born from the dead, let him be anathema.³

Cyril wanted to insist on the oneness of the Person (the Word), and the distinction of the natures; he, however, expressed this statement, remaining faithful to the Word-flesh frame-work of the Alexandrian theology. In this context and sense, it is orthodox and it expresses the, "Communicatio Idiomatum" as understood by the Alexandrians.

But even during his life time, St. Cyril had to answer the objections of his brothers in the Episcopacy. Nestorius, Theodoret, and Andrew of Samosata wrote against it and many of the Antiochene Bishops of the time did not accept the formula. Nestorius considered Cyril as a new teacher, teaching the death of God:

And even if you make your way through the whole of the New (Testament), you will nowhere find death attributed to God (the Godhead), but either to Christ, or the Son or the Lord, because the

the Passion of my God" ("mimētēn einai tou pathous tou Theou mou"). (*Ep. to the Rom.* VI, 3). Gregory Nazianzen says, "We needed a God made flesh and put to death." ("edeethōmen Theou sarkoumenon kai nekroumenon." *Hom.* 45, 28: *PG* 36, 661 C; 30, 5: col. 709 A), "in order that we could live again". He uses the expressions, "blood of God" "haima Theou" and "crucified God" ("Theos stauroumenos") *Hom.* 45, 19. 22. 28: *PG* 36, 649C. 653A. 661D.

3. *CGD*, p. 50; *PG* 76, 449 B. 378 A: 'Ei tis ouch homologeï ton tou Theou Logou pathonta sarki kai estauromenon sarki kai thanatou geusamenon sarki...'

name Christ, Son, or Lord, which is employed in the Holy Books for the Unique Son, designates the two natures and it indicates sometimes the divinity, and sometimes the humanity, and sometimes both.⁴

For Theodoret, "Logos has suffered in the flesh" ("Logos epathen sarki") was an unacceptable expression. He could not make the Logos, the common subject of the statements. He will freely use another Theopaschite formula, "the Son died or Christ died," as Nestorius would say. "The Logos suffered," meant for Theodoret, the suffering of the Logos in the divine nature, even if "in the flesh" is added to it. Suffering and death belong to mortals and not to the Immortal Word equal to the Father. At the request of John of Antioch, Theodoret wrote, at the beginning of 431, a refutation of the Anathemata of Cyril.⁵

Andrew also wrote a refutation of the anathemata of Cyril. The divinity united with the flesh did not undergo any suffering; God the Word who is united to the flesh allowed the flesh to suffer and sustained it. Andrew never called "the suffering," the suffering of the Word.⁶

The Monophysites, considering themselves as the followers of Cyril, proceeded to a Monophysite Theopaschism. Peter the Fullo⁷ added, "who was crucified for us" ("ho staurōtheis di' hēmas") in the Trisagion. He thus changed the theological

4. LOOFS, *Nestoriana*. 269, 14-20; cf. also 273, 13-17; Timothy Aeleurus cites it (*Contre Chalcedoine: PO*, 13, p. 231); cf. L. ABRAMOWSKI, *Nestorian Collection*, p. 142-6/84-7 (the anonymous refutation of the 12 Anathemata of Cyril).

5. The text is extant in the answer of Cyril: *PG* 76, 385-452:449 C; it was translated into Syriac (A. BAUMSTARK, *Geschichte*, p. 106).

6. *PG* 76,316 A-385 A : 377-385 (in the answer of Cyril).

7. He occupied thrice the Seat of Antioch (471, 475-7, 485-8). Cf. *PG* 86, II, col. 2885-96.

prayer to a Christological one.⁸ Severus of Antioch argued that the addition by Peter was a safeguard against the Nestorians.⁹

During the reign of Anastasius (491-518), Severus came to Constantinople with a 100 fellow believers (Severians) and chanted the Trisagion with Peter's addition and gave great scandal there. But Patriarch Timothy, a Monophysite minded, interpolated it in the Liturgy in St. Sophia. During the reign of Anastasius, this form of Theopsschism spread rapidly.¹⁰

Another Theopaschite formula emerged during the reign of Anastasius himself: "One of the Trinity suffered in the flesh" ("henatēs hagian triados peponthenai sarki"). The Scythian monks, with their leader Maxentius, by the end of the reign of Anastasius, combined their acceptance of Chalcedon with the addition, "One of the Trinity suffered in the flesh".¹¹ About the same time St. Sabas of the Great Laura of Palestine seems to have used this expression.¹² He may be considered as one of the influences that led to the Theopaschite solution of Justinian later.¹³ Around 513, Severus in his homily used this expression.¹⁴

The Theopaschite formula, "one of the Trinity suffered in the flesh," was made the orthodoxy of the Capital by Justinian. In the "Confession of Faith" of 551, he asserts

8. E. AMANN, *art. cit.* 506; W.H.C. FREND, *Monophysite Movement*, p. 167-8; Dionysius Bar Salibi speaks of a tradition which says that the addition is very ancient, and it goes to the day of crucifixion of Christ (Cf. *A Treatise against the Melkites WS*, I, p. 17-95; 125-171; 165-169).

9. *Hom.* 125: *PO* 29, p. 249.

10. J. B. BURY, *History of the Later Roman Empire*, I, p. 436-441.

11. E. AMANN, *Scythes (Moines)*, *DTC* 14, 1746-53; C. MOELLER, *art. cit.* p. 676-9; W.H.C. FREND, *op. cit.* p. 244.

12. CYRIL OF SCYTHOPOLIS, *Vita Sabae*, p. 127-8 (ed. SCHWARTZ).

13. W.H.C. FREND, *op. cit.* p. 205; C. MOELLER, *art. cit.*, p. 657.

14. *Hom.* 24: *PO*, 37, p. 137.

strongly the orthodoxy of the Theopaschite formula.¹⁵ Again in the tenth anathema of 553, he repeated and proclaimed it. But here the form is slightly different :

If any one does not confess that our Lord, Jesus Christ who was crucified in the flesh, is true God and the Lord of Glory and one of the Holy Trinity, let him be anathema.¹⁶

According to Babai, from Cyril arose the different kinds of Theopaschites.¹⁷ Theopaschism flows naturally from the hypostatic union: in the profession of one hypostasis, whether it is simple (Cyril), or composite (Justinian). Babai continues the opposition of the old Antiochenes to the Theopaschism of Cyril. In addition to that, the different Theopaschite expressions of the different groups are attacked by him.¹⁸

Theopaschism, as it was professed among them was a heresy and an impiety to Babai. He does not oppose the expression, "one of the hypostases of the Trinity," but his opposition is to the saying "suffered in the flesh."¹⁹ Although, independent of the new Trisagion formula and of the "one qnoma" resulting from the natural and hypostatic union, one can say "God is dead" or "has been crucified," as Ignatius or Gregory Nazianzen, in the particular context in which his theological adversaries used it, was a contradiction for Babai. He did not reject every kind of Theopaschism; his opposition was to the form used by his theological adversaries.

Babai says that the locution of the "crucifixion of God" began at the time of the Byzantine Emperor Anastasius (491-518), who remained for a long time in office and spread the error.²⁰ Here Babai is referring to the interpolation of the

15. E. SCHWARTZ, ed. *Drei dogmatische Schriften Justinians* in *AAM NF*, 18, München 1939, p. 72-111; *PG* 86, 993-1035.

16. *COD*, p. 94.

17. BABAI, *LU*, 76/61.

18. BABAI, *T VII*, p. 279-280/226; 288/228; *TG*, p. 226. 264. 268 (O. BRAUN).

19. BABAI, *T VII*, p. 276/223: Babai made a parallel: "one of the 'qnome' of men".

20. *Ibid.* p. 281/227.

Theopaschite formula in the Trisagion in Constantinople, and the Theopaschite formula of the Scythian monks and the Palestinian monks during the reign of Anastasius.

In the LU there is an entire chapter (18) dedicated to the discussion of the crucifixion and death of Christ.²¹ And in the T VII, four propositions of the Theopaschites are cited and refuted.²² 1. "The Word became flesh, and it is He who was crucified, and suffered and died." 2. "God the Word Who is incarnate is wholly dead." 3. "Holy God, holy Strong one, holy Immortal, Who was crucified for us." 4. "By His Will He was crucified and he died."

Babai's opposition to the Theopaschite formula of his opponents was motivated by his theological tradition, which he inherited from the Antiochene theologians and from his vision of the hypostatic union. His concept of the divinity and his liturgical tradition also influenced his thought.

§ 3. Henanianism

Henana was the chief theological and ecclesiastical adversary of Babai. The Henanian theological and exegetical deviation is called Henanianism. According to the description of Babai, Henana or some of his followers joined the Severians, while others joined the Neo-Chalcedonians.¹

Babai condemns Henana in the LU, TG and CE. Henana and the Henanians are accused of all sorts of errors. He is connected with Cyril of Alexandria, in teaching limitations in the unlimited² Henana propagated the natural and hypostatic union, and the composite hypostasis as Justinian taught. Babai states that among the Persians the errors of the tyrant king (Justinian) is taught by Henana and the Messalians.³ Henana and his followers are connected with the Severians

21. BABAI, *LU*, p. 173ff. / 140ff.

22. BABAI, *T VII*, p. 252/205, 260/211; 279/226.

1. BABAI, *LU*, 109, 17-18/88, 22-23; 195-196/158.

2. BABAI, *LU*, p. 77, 33-35 (tr.).

3. *Ibid.* 82/83; 148. 158. 247 (tr.).

because they accepted "the one nature, one hypostasis" and Theopaschism.⁴ The Henanians are said to have denied the resurrection of the body of Our Lord on the third day, and to have said that it was a phantasy.⁵ They held also the spherical resurrected body just as the Origenists. Th Henanians spread the Origenist errors among the Persians.⁶

In Chapters 12 and 20 of LU, there are two citations from Henana. The first citation reads:

"He is called Christ (*msihā*) because he came to limitation", (*mūsahtā*), and, "From Infinity he became finite, and fell under the limitations of quantity." "Christ is God and God is Christ", and, "there is no difference between these appellations", and, "there is no difference between Only Begotten and first-born", and, "these two signify the same."⁷

In the first sentence, there is a tentative etymology, but historically false of "msiha". Both *msihā* and *mūsahtā* come from the same root, *msah*, meaning to measure, to anoint, etc. For Henana, He is Christ (*Msihā*) because He came to *Mūsahtā* (measurement, limitation or human standards). It is a new interpretation given to the name *Msihā*. This argument makes sense only in Syriac. Babai attacks Henana for the misrepresentation of the name, *Msihā*, and he is connected with Cyril in this.⁸ Babai might have had the knowledge of the Syriac translation of the *Apology of Cyril* for his anathemata and had seen similar ideas in Henana.⁹ Henana might have based

4. BABAI, *LU*, p. 77 (tr.); *TG*, p. 596f. (BEDJAN).

5. BABAI, *LU*, p. 184, 1-188 4/149, 3-152, 17; 158, 13-16.

6. *Ibid.* p. 183/148.

7. *LU* 137, 30-138, 6/111, 6/111, 6-12. "God is Christ" is an expression coming from Ps. Athanasius, *Contra Apoll.* PG 26, 1116B: "And man is called Christ, and God is called Christ, and God and man is Christ, and one is Christ."

8. BABAI, *LU*, p. 96, 11f./77, 33; 137-8/111, 4f.

9. British Mus. Ms. Syr. Add. 12,156 (the Syriac tr. of the *Apology of Cyril* for his Anathemata) uses several times the word, 'Mūsahtā' (Cf. L. ABRAMOWSKI, *Babai der Grosse*, p. 316).

his explanation of the name Msihā on Cyril, and might have abandoned the primitive tradition kept by the Antiochenes and the Seleucians.

The second sentence has a parallel in Philoxenus.¹⁰ Nestorius had already attacked the expression, "Christ is God, and God is Christ." Msiha is Alaha (God), but Alaha (the Trinity) is not Msiha. Babai distinguished between Msiha, the Word made flesh, one of 'qnome' of the Trinity, and "Alaha" the Whole Trinity.

Babai admits the identity of the parsopa, but the identity of their significance he denies.¹¹ Here also Henana borrows from an earlier Alexandrian tradition. Philoxenus also has something similar but he will not say that both mean the same thing.¹²

The second citation from Henana reads: "Jesus' denotes only the operation without the human qnoma".¹³ According to Babai, Henana held that it signifies only the operation not the nature. For Theodore, "Jesus" meant the "assumed";¹⁴ for Henana only the "operation." For Babai, "Jesus" is a term primarily, indicating the human nature of Christ and then his operations.¹⁵

§ 4. The Title "Mother of God"

The title, *Theotokos*¹, addressed to the Blessed Virgin Mary is an ancient tradition in Christendom. As an expression

10. PHILOXENUS, *Tractatus tres*, p. 268 / 199: "he came to our *Musahtā*."

11. BABAI, *LU*, p. 172, 20-21 / 139, 14-15: "If you say the first-born, it is He; if you say, Only Begotten, it is He;... but not in the same way."

12. PHILOXENUS, *Tractatus tres*, p. 36, 15-33, 9-10: "The Only Begotten became the first-born from Mary."

13. BABAI, *LU*, p. 209, 17-19 / 169, 17-19.

14. THEODORE, *De Incarnatione*, lib. 12: H. B. SWETE, II, p. 304, 14.

15. BABAI, *LU*, p. 208, 28-30 / 168, 33-4; 209, 6-19 / 169, 6-18; 11-14.

1. On 'theotokos', cf. F. J. DÖLGER, *Zum Theotokos Namen*,

of the popular piety, in the early period of Christianity, it found acceptance.² Reservations arose only with the Arian upheaval and the Apollinarian conflict with orthodoxy.

At the time of Diodore of Tarsus Julian fought against this title and accused Diodore as the inventor of the divinity of Christ. He accused the Christians as "worshippers of a man from Palestine."³

Theodore of Mopsuestia preferred *Christotokos*. According to him, the Blessed Virgin Mary is *Theotokos* and *Anthropotokos*: one by nature, and the other by relation. She is truly *Theotokos*, because God is in the man whom she brought forth; she is truly *Anthropotokos* because the human nature is taken from her; but the Word did not originate from her.⁴ Theodore was careful to uphold the transcendence of the divinity against the Arians and the Apollinarians.

That there was a discussion around these terms in Antioch is clear from Nestorius.⁵ When Nestorius came to Constantinople as the Patriarch, he found that the city also was split into groups on the basis of this title. As a compromise, he proposed *Christotokos*. According to the narration of the events by Nestorius, the quarelling parties were satisfied

in *AC*, I (1929), p 118-123; H. RAHNER, *Hippolyt von Rom als Zeuge für den Ausdruck Theotokos*, in *ZKTh* 59 (1935), p. 73-81; IDEM, *ibid.*, 60 (1936), p. 577-590.

2. The expression is seen in Origen (*Selecta in Dt.* 22, 23: *PG* 12, 813C; *Hom. 7 in Lk.* 7: M. RAUER, *GCS*, 9 (1930), p. 50. 9); Eustathius (*frag.* 64. 68.70: M. SPANNEUT, ed. *Recherches*, p. 114. 116. 118); Gregory Nazianzen (*Ep. to Cledonius*, 101: *PG* 37, 177); Gregory of Nyssa (*Ep.* 3: *PG* 44, 1024 A); Athanasius (*De Incarnatione*: *PG* 26, 1025 A); Cyril of Jerusalem, *Cat.* 10, 77 (*PG* 33, 685 A).

3. Cf. FACUNDUS, *Pro def. trium cap.* 4, 2: *PL* 67, 621 AB; CYRIL, *Adv. Julianos*, 8 *PG*, 76, 901 C. 924 D-925 A. Cf. E. SCHWARTZ, *ACO*, t. I, 5, 216.

4. THEODORE, *Frag. De Incar* lib. xv. *PG* 66, 992 BC, *Frag. Contra Apoll.* *PG* 66, 993. 994 *Comm. on the Nicaean Creed*, V (ed. Mingana), p. 63-4.

5. NESTORIUS, *LH*, p. 98 99 (DRIVER).

by the solution given by the Patriarch.⁶ The expression could thus avoid the errors of Photinians and the Manichaeans.⁷ Mary is Theotokos and Anthropotokos: one by nature, and the other by union.

The better expression to avoid all confusion is Christotokos. The arguments of Nestorius are the following: the Sacred Scripture calls her mother of Christ, and not mother of God; the Nicaean Fathers spoke of the birth of Our Lord Jesus Christ. Theotokos in the Apollinarian sense has a nuance of the confusion of the natures. The Scriptures attribute the birth to the human nature of Christ and not to the divinity. Christotokos removes the blasphemy of Paul of Samosata and the malice of Arius and Apollinarius. Just as women are not called *Psychotokos*, but *Anthropotokos*, Mary is to be called *Christotokos*, which is indicative of both the divinity and the humanity.⁸

In the Ephesian conflict and afterwards, Nestorius was very consistent. But because of the historical situations, Nestorius was not at all understood by the group around Cyril and he was condemned as a heretic. In the second letter of Cyril to Nestorius, the formula of reunion of 433, and Chalcedon, the expression "Theotokos" appears and thus has entered into "official" documents.⁹

The Monophysites and the Neo-Chalcedonians branded Nestorius as a denier of the expression Theotokos. Severus called him the worshipper of a man.¹⁰ The Seleucians, as the followers of the Antiochene tradition in the version of Theodore, were accused by the Monophysites, of calling the Blessed Virgin Mary, "the mother of a mere man". But they have always denied this allegation.

6. *Ibid.*

7. *Ibid.*

8. NESTORIUS, *Second Ep. to Cyril* (PG 77, 49B (56C); *Ep. I. to Celestine* (LOOFS, *Nestoriana*, p. 167); *Ep. III to Celestine* (LOOFS, p. 181, 182); *De Incarnatione* (LOOFS, p. 303); LOOFS p. 352, 351, 252, 338, 274-8, 297, 309; LH 98-99; Cf. L. I. SCIPIONI, *Nestorio*, p. 63-93.

9. COD, 46; PG 77, 177; COD, 62.

10. SEVERUS, *Contra Grammaticum*. III, 2. 28 (ed. LEBON, p. 80/58).

As a follower of the Diphysite tradition, Babai also opposed the allegation. He preferred the expression mother of Christ (*yaldat Msihā*).¹¹ He does not have new arguments, but he is very clear in his expositions regarding the matter. The discussion of Babai will appear in a later article when treating the birth of Christ. The name Christ indicates the divinity and the humanity of the Son in the one Parsopa, and it is he who is born from Mary in his human nature unitively. If any one says that Mary gave birth to a mere man only, as impiously said by Paul of Samosata, the blessed Virgin is deprived of the honour given to her: "Blessed are you among women". If any one says "mother of God" in the sense that she did not take anything from our nature, our salvation will become meaningless. It is the impiety of Manes. Some people erroneously said that the Word passed through her as a channel as if He did not take anything from her, and called her mother of God. Because of these different groups, the Blessed Virgin Mary is called Mother of God and mother of man. She is mother of man by nature, Mother of God by union made in the womb.¹²

In T VII a statement of the adversary is refuted: "The Virgin brought forth God Incarnate."¹³ The statement was untenable if it meant that the Word had its origin from the Virgin. But no one ever taught that. However, the terminological misunderstanding between the different groups had a great part to play in their discussions. Philoxenus has similar expressions as cited by Babai.¹⁴ But Philoxenus never meant that the Word originated from her.

11. BABAI, *LU*, 99-100/69-70; *T VII*, 264-5/214. 271-2/219-220 *TG*, p. 23 (O. BRAUN).

✓12. "Yaldat Alaha dahwat leh men gaw marb'a" (*LU* 100, 4-5)

"Yaldat Alaha dēn metul hdayūtā dahwat leh 'am 'nasūtēh" (*T VII*, 264, 27-28).

"Yaldat Alaha den metul damhayed lbarnaseh" (*T VII*, 271, 28-29).

13. *T VII*, 263-4/214.

14. PHILOXENUS, *Tractatus tres* p. 251. 186: 'Truly and rightly, the Virgin who brought forth Jesus is called Mother of God (*Yaldat Alaha*), not only because she brought forth

§ 5. The Accusation of "Two Sons", and "Quaternity" Instead of Trinity

St. Cyril argued that if one repudiates the hypostatic union, one will naturally arrive at the teaching of two sons: God the Word and the man honoured by the title, 'Son'.¹ Nestorius has strongly opposed this conclusion and asserted that he never wants to speak of two sons.² Proclus, in the presence of Nestorius, his Patriarch, preached that if there is difference between Word and Christ it will result in a quaternity instead of Trinity.³ Nestorius denied the allegation and asserted that he never taught that the Son is one and God the Word another: "Not indeed that the Son is One and God the Word another".⁴ The imputation that Nestorius taught of two sons, that he taught Jesus to be a mere man and as a result it leads to quaternity instead of Trinity, was the result of a misrepresentation of what he had said.⁵ He freed himself from the Samosatana heresy and constantly denied the allegation. Nestorius distinguished between the nature and the person while his opponents continued to identify them.

Monophysites continued the Cyrillian tradition in accusing their opponents, the Persian Christians as believers in two

without intercourse, but also because she brought forth God Incarnate"; p. 255/189: "And she brought forth naturally and above nature: naturally because she brought forth the flesh, and truly and above nature because, she brought forth Word Incarnate... that God is born from the Virgin and the Virgin could bring forth God".

1. CYRIL, *Ep. 2 ad Nestorium* (Ep. 4) : PG 77, 45 B - 48 D.; *In Jo.* : PG 73, 1009 C-1012 B; *Adv. Nest.* 1, 1 : PG 76, 24 D.

2. NESTORIUS, *LH*, p. 47, 144-146, 207-9; LOOFS, *Nestorian*, p. 308, 22-25, 309, 3-10, 275, 1-9, 283, 299, 19-21, 335, 25-27, 336, 17-24, 275, 1-5; "I did not say that the Son was one (person) and God the Word another; I said that God, the Word was by nature one and the temple by nature another, one Son by conjunction" (309, 3 f.); cf. L. I. SCIPIONI, *Nestorio*, p. 390-1.

3. PROCLUS, *Laudatio in sanctissimam Dei genitricem Mariam*: PG 65, 680-692 : 689 A.

4. NESTORIUS, *LH*, p. 261. (DRIVER)

5. *Ibid.*

sons. The Persian Bishops condemned the accusation in their Synods, but the accusation was continued.

Babai used all occasions to assert strongly the oneness of the Son. In the LU, whole of chapter 16 is dedicated to demonstrate that they never taught the error of two sons.⁶ In T VII and TV also Babai opposes the accusation.⁷

Babai condemns the heresy of Paul of Samosata. In chapter ten there is a citation from Paul. Here the citation, comment and the biblical citation are put together.⁸ The arguments appended to the Creed of 612 also had to answer the accusation of the adversaries.⁹

The Monophysite picture of the Seleucian belief was not objective and fair. From Babai's constant denial, it is clear that the accusation was strong in the air. The deep root of the misunderstanding between the Nestorians and the Monophysites in Persia lies in their inheritance of the Antiochene and Alexandrian thought pattern and theology. Although both were Syrians using the same Semitic Syrian Christian traditions, hostilities prevailed and they could not come to a mutual understanding. The same words had different meanings among them and each group accused the other for not having the same meaning as one had for the terms. In their zeal for orthodoxy, both parties forgot that the opponent was affirming the very same truth for which they were fighting; and condemned the others as heretics.

6. BABAI, *LU*, p 152-159/123-128.

7. BABAI, *T VII*, p. 272, 24-27 / 220, 28-30; *TV*, 302, 24-25/244, 9-10.

8. BABAI, *LU*, 89, 9-28/83, 8-25.

9. L. ABRAMOWSKI, *Nestorian Collection* p. 160-3/95 7. The delegation to Justinian had to answer this accusation (Cf. A. GUILLAUMONT, *Justinien et l'église de Perse*, p. 62ff.)

CHAPTER III

The Christological Terms

This chapter treats of three sets of terms which continuously occur in the subsequent discussion. The first set namely, *kyana*, *qnoma* and *parsopa*, is theological and Christological, used in discussing the Trinitarian and Christological relations. The second and third sets of terms are purely Christological, employed only in connection with the two natures of Christ. *Union*, *indwelling*, *assumption*, *putting on* and *conjunction* explain variously the mode of the union of the two natures. *Mixture*, *admixture* and *commixture* indicate how the Christological union is not constituted. For a better understanding of Babai's Christology, it is necessary to know the precise meaning of these terms, as Babai understood them.

Art. I. Kyana, Qnoma and Parsopa

Babai does not define those terms, nor does he explain them enough. He does not begin his major Christological work (*LU*) with a definition of terms. He clarifies their meaning somewhat, only in the seventeenth chapter. That shows that philosophical concepts and technical language were secondary for him. Nor was he the first one to introduce them among the Persians. They were in current use already, which he tried to clarify to a degree.

Among the Greeks, Theodore spoke of two *physeis* and two *hypostaseis* (on the side of duality), and one *prosopon* (*hypostasis*) (on the side of unity).¹ Nestorius also spoke of Christ

1. Cf. THEODORE, *frag. from De Incarn.* VIII, 62; ed. SACHAU 69; A. GRILLMEIER, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, I, p. 438, n. 61. Cf. P. GALTIER, *Theodore de Mopsueste in RSR* 45 (1957), 167-169. See the description of *Prosopon* by Theodore, *Contra Eunomium*, XVIII (L. ABRAMOWSKI, *Nestorian Collection*, o. 179-180 / 107).

in two *ousias* or natures and one *prosopon*.² The Council of Chalcedon differentiated *physis* from *hypostasis* / *prosopon*.³ But Chalcedon was not accepted by all in the same way.⁴ There was no common terminology among the Greek-speaking Christians, and the resultant misunderstanding was one of the main reasons for the divisions among them.

The Persian Christians adopted the Trinitarian terms as explained by the Cappadocians and therefore their manner of expressions was similar to the Greeks. Except for the Arians, all Christians used the same terminology speaking of the Trinity.⁵

With regard to Christology they acquired the terms with their divisive background. The Syrian Monophysites accepted the Alexandrian way of understanding the terms while the Seleucians adopted the Antiochene, and thus the Syrians were divided in the use of the very same words.

The early Syrian writers did not employ technical language. Ephrem was a poet and he had no interest in the typically Greek metaphysical notions. His faith and doctrine were expressed without reference to those terms.⁶ Narsai used *kyana*

2. *LH* (DRIVER), p. 170.233.236; Here Nestorius refers to Gregory Nazianzen, Ambrose and Athanasius. cf. A. GRILLMEIER, *op. cit.* p. 510ff.

3. Cf. *De fuitio Fidei*: COD, p. 62: *hen prosopon kai mian hypostasin*.

4. Some continued to identify *physis* in the concrete sense with *hypostasis* and consequently with *prosopon*. They accepted the *mia physis* and became radical Cyrillians (the Monophysites); the Chalcedonians continued the distinction of Chalcedon (two natures, and one *hypostasis* / *prosopon*: the Neo-Chalcedonians); a third group made distinction between *hypostasis* and *prosopon*. For them the Christological form would be: two natures, two *hypostasis* and one *prosopon* (Nestorians).

5. Cf. *Ep. 38 of Ps. Basil* (of Gregory of Nyssa): *PG* 32, 325ff; *Ep. 210, 5: Ep. 214* (Basil); *LH* (DRIVER), p. 247. 189f. 261f. 308f.; BABAI *LU*, p. 26/21; 70-71/57-8; 160-1/130-1; 171/138; *TV* 300/242. Cf. A. GRILLMEIER, *The Council of Chalcedon, An Analysis of a Conflict*, in *WWS* I, p. 33ff; II, 34ff.

6. Cf. J. B. BETHUNE-BAKER, *Nestorius and his Teaching*, Cambridge, 1908, p. 212-232.

for *physis* and *parsopa* for *prosopon*.⁷ The Seleucian Synods used less technical words. With regard to Christ, they persisted in the mode of speaking of Narsai, namely, "Christ is in two kyane, and one *parsopa* of Filiation."⁸

The word *qnoma*, the Syriac rendering of the Greek *hypostasis*, was used by the Syrians, to designate the three Persons in the Trinity and it appears in official documents for the first time in the Synod of Acacius in 486.⁹ It was applied to Christology for the first time in the discussion held by the Persian delegation with Justinian in 562/3. There the form used was "Christ is in two kyane, two *qnome*, and one *parsopa*."¹⁰ The Synods after 562 did not take up this terminological development, but continued to express the faith as before till 612. The Assembly of 612 has the same formula as that of the delegation of 562/3, and it is seen in Babai.

Now comes a review of terms as used by Babai, in order to understand them. Although those terms were the translation from the Greek regarding Trinity and they had the same meaning for the Greeks, the Seleucians and the Monophysites, with regard to Christology, they had a different meaning for the three groups.

Kyana

Babai does not elaborate on *kyana*. That shows that it did not pose any problem for his hearers the Diphysite Persians. It is the same as *physis* (nature), designating the common elements, found in all the members of the species. It is the universal compared to the particular. Hence, *kyana* is nature in

7. Cf. I. IBRAHIM, *La Doctrine Christologique de Narsai*, (Thesis in Angelicum) Rome 1974-5, p. 320-330.

8. Cf. J. B. CHABOT, *Syn. Or.* p. 54-55/302 (Synod of Acacius in 486); 97-8/355 (Synod of Mar Joseph in 554); 541-3/551-553 (Mar Aba in 544); 113 6/372-5 (Mar Ezekiel in 576); 133-6/394-8 (Mar Iso'iahb I in 585); 196-200/456-461 (Mar Sabariso in 596); 207-214/471-9 (Gregory in 605).

9. Cf. J. B. CHABOT, *Syn. Or.* p. 54-55 / 302.

10. Cf. A. GUILLAUMONT, *Justinien et l'Eglise de Perse*, p. 62ff.

abstract". *Kyana 'nasaia* is human nature, and *kyana alahaiā* is divine nature. It is different from the Monophysite "kyana".¹¹

Qnoma

Babai gives a description of qnoma:¹²

"Qnoma is called a singular substance, existing by itself, indivisible, numerically one, and distinct from many, not only because one becomes but also because, in as much as it receives in rational free creatures diverse accidents of virtue or vice, knowledge or ignorance, and in irrational beings diverse accidents as a result of contrary temperaments or in any other way, which (accidents) as I said, are not created nor made alone."

"Qnoma is fixed in its naturalty, and is under a species and kyana whose is the qnoma and is included among the similar qnome, but distinct from the similar qnome, through the singular property which it possesses in its parsopa: eg. Gabriel's which is not Michael's; and Paul's which is not Peter's. Truly in each qnoma, the common nature is recognized and by reason is known, which is this one nature, which contains the qnome in common of man or of the rest, Qnoma does not include the common aspect."

11. The Monophysites would say one kyana in Christ and that kyana is different from the two kyane of the Seleucians. For the Monophysites, kyana is concrete and is indicative of the essence of the being.

12. *LU*, 159, 16-160, 1/129, 4-20; A. Vaschalde translated the first sentence into Latin: "Hypostasis definitur substantia singularis; substitit in esse suo unico, una numero, et distincta est a multis." It has to be slightly corrected: "Hypostasis dicitur ousia singularis subsistens in se, individua una numero et distincta est a multis" (Cf. L. ABRAMOWSKI, *Babai der Grosse*, p. 311, n. 2). See the Syriac: *Qnoma ousia yihidaita mestmeh mqayyam byateh lhūdayā bmenyanā haw dhad upares men sagiē*. Vaschalde translated to *substitit in esse suo* reading *mqayyam* as *mqym* (part. act Aph'el). It has to be read *mqayyam* (part. pass. Pa'el) *yutā* is here used as a reflexive pronoun, *mqayyam byateh* seems to be a translation of the Greek *authypostaton* or *hypostasis monimos* (Cf. *ibid.* p. 311 - 3).

Qnoma is a singular substance; an individual ousia, opposed to a common ousia, comprising many.¹³ The common ousia corresponds to the Cappadocian *koinē physis*.¹⁴

Qnoma exists or subsists by itself or in itself. It does not exist "in aliis", i. e. qnoma is incommunicable.¹⁵

It is indivisible. Qnoma as qnoma cannot be divided. Once divided, it ceases to be that qnoma.

It is numerically one and is distinct from many. It exists or subsists by itself, distinct from others of the same species. Babai's synonym for "exists" (*mqayyam*) is "firm" (*qbi'a*) and "confirmed" (*msarar*).¹⁶ Qnoma is fixed and non communicable. It possesses all the properties of the common nature.¹⁷ But it cannot include all the members, coming under a common species. Since it is fixed, it cannot be "taken or added to another qnoma, so that it be with it one qnoma subsisting, which possesses everything of its nature."¹⁸ i. e. One complete or perfect qnoma cannot receive another perfect qnoma. Therefore a union of two perfect qnoma so as to form one qnoma is impossible.

The human body without the human soul is not a *qnoma mqayyam* (i. e. subsisting). But the angels are such because

13. *LU*, 159, 16/129, 4; *TV*, 299, 28/242, 1-2. 301, 1-2/242, 34-5.

14. Ep. 38 of Ps. Basil develops the doctrine of ousia and hypostasis. There is the universal nature, common to different members of a species (*koinē physis*). The particularising characteristic, the *idion* pertains to the hypostasis, whereas universality is attributed to the physis. The particularising characteristics (*idiōmata*) make the *universal* a hypostasis (Cf. *PG* 32, 325ff, Ep. 214) (of Basil). Ousia has the same relation to hypostasis as the common has to particular. Every one of us both shares in existence by the term ousia and is such or such a one by his own properties. A. GRILLMEIER, op. cit. p. 373, with n. 53; W. ELERT; *Der Ausgang der altkirchlichen Christologie*, Berlin 1957, p. 141.

15. *LU* 159, 16/129, 4-5; *TV* 301, 7/243, 2-3.

16. *TV* 299, 27/241, 39; 300, 31/242, 32-33.

17. *TV*, 299, 28/242, 1-2; 300, 1-2/242, 34-5.

18. *TV*, 301, 7/243, 2-5.

of their simple nature (*psūtūtā*). The human soul can be said as a non-subsisting qnoma (*qnoma-lā maqayyam*).¹⁹ Human being is a "subsisting qnoma" as Peter or Paul or any other person.²⁰

Qnoma is the concretization of the abstract kyana such as this or that. Kyana as such never exists except as qnome. Although originally qnoma was the Syriac translation of the Greek *hypostasis*, it cannot be identified, especially after the Chalcedonian identification of hypostasis with prosopon and the Seleucian differentiation of qnoma from parsopa. Babai follows this Seleucian differentiation. Qnoma may be translated, "this or that substance", "substratum", "subsistence", "reality" opposed to the unreal or illusion." It is primarily referring to concrete reality or actuality rather than Person (*prosōpon or persona*). The qnoma in Babai is not the Chalcedonian hypostasis. So to translate it into hypostasis or to person is incorrect and highly misleading. Having in mind today's understanding of hypostasis and person and reading Babai from that standpoint will lead us nowhere.²¹

Parsopa

Parsopa is the property which distinguishes one qnoma from another qnoma of the same species. It is the sum total of the accidents, and properties, giving the particular charac-

19. TV, 298, 11-18/240, 33-241, 3.

20. In Severus of Antioch, there is a similar distinction.
 a) *Simple and self-subsistent qnoma* (exists in its own right and is not a composite) such as Father, and the Holy Spirit.
 b) *Composite self-subsistent qnoma*, such as Peter, Christ, etc.
 c). *Non self-subsistent qnoma* such as body and soul. For him Christ is a self-subsistent composite qnoma, the product of a union of a simple self-subsistent qnoma (divinity) with a non-self-subsistent qnoma (humanity): Cf. R. C. CHESNUT, *Three Monophysite Christologies*, p. 9-12; cf. the discussion of Scipioni regarding the understanding of Nestorius (*Ricerche*, p. 53-56).

21. Cf. M. JUGIE, *Theologia dogmatica*, p. 179 f; W. DEVRIES, *Die syrisch-nestorianische Haltung zu Chalkedon*, p. 614. 616ff.; J. PELIKAN, *The Spirit of Eastern Christendom*, p. 39ff, and almost all the writers on Babiian Christology invariably translated qnoma to hypostasis and misinterpreted the thought of Babai.

teristic to the qnoma. The indivisible and singular property of the qnoma is given by the parsopa. Babai writes,²²

“Parsopa, indeed, is that property of whatsoever qnoma, by which it is distinct from others, since the qnoma of Paul is not that of Peter, although they are equal regarding kyana and qnoma, since both have body and soul, and are living and rational and bodily, but one is distinct from another, through the parsopa because of the indivisible singularity, which each one possesses, either age or figure, or temperament or wisdom or authority or paternity or filiation or masculine sex or feminine sex or whatever other mode which distinguishes and manifests the indivisible and singular property, in so far as this is not that, and that is not this, although they are equal as kyana, because the singular property which this qnoma possesses, by which it is not that, is a parsopa which distinguishes of which kind the qnoma is.”

Parsopa is called the property of the qnoma. The word used is *dīlaitā* coming from *dil* (belonging to). The other words used to indicate the properties (*idiōmata*) are *dīlāiūtā* and *dīlāiatā* signifying the same thing.²³

Parsopa is not exactly the translation of the Greek *prosōpon* nor the Latin *persona*. It seems that Babai is applying to parsopa what Basil says of hypostasis.

Qnoma is fixed and non-communicable. Parsopa the sum total of the properties, also is fixed, but it could be communicated and it could be assumed by another qnoma. “Fixed” because it is the distinguishing property of a qnoma from the other qnoma of the same species and it shows that this is not that. It could be assumed by another qnoma and can indicate everything that the qnoma possesses in its distinction from other qnoma.²⁴ When applied to men, qnoma and parsopa are one and the same thing: and there is identity

22. LU 160, 2-16/129, 21-34.

23. Cf. TV, 298/241; 300/242; LU 57/71; 160-1/129-130.

24. Cf. TV, 299, 26-300, 4/241, 39-242, 6.

between *qnoma* and *parsopa*.²⁵ When we say "Paul", we mean the *qnoma* of Paul and the *Parsopa* of Paul.²⁶

In the divinity, *qnoma* is not the same as *parsopa*. *Parsopa* distinguishes one *qnoma* of the divinity from the other, and there it is no accident like in the creatures. The distinguishing property of the Word is Filiation and it is ontological and essential, proper to the Son.²⁷

Art. II Indwelling, Assumption, Putting on, Conjunction and Union

Mar Babai makes use of five terms to explain the mode of relation of the Word with the man.

(a) *Indwelling*: There are two Syriac words used by Babai to denote this concept: '*amr* and *srā*. '*Amr* means to dwell, to sojourn, to stay; with "beth" it means to indwell, to inhabit.¹ *srā* as an intransitive verb means," to dwell, to lodge, and to stay with."² Babai uses another noun also to denote "indwelling": *maḡnamuta*, derived from "agen."³ The most commonly used expression is '*amr* and its noun form;⁴ *srā* is used rarely and its noun form is not at all used by him.⁵ "Indwelling" is always followed by, "as in a temple (*haikalā*)", and in some cases also by, "unitively."

(b) *Assumption*: The word used in Syriac to denote, "to take", or "to assume" is "nsab". From the verb, *nsab*, the

25. Cf. L. ABRAMOWSKI, *Nestorian Collection*, p. 182, 5-7/108, 25-26.

26. *Ibid.* p. 180/107, 6ff.

27. Cf. *LU*, 26/21; 70-71/57-8; 160-1/130 1; 171/138; *TV*, 300/242.

1. J PAYNE SMITH, *A compendious Syriac Dictionary*, Oxford 1903, p. 418.

2. *Ibid.* p. 596.

3. *T VII*, p. 257/208, 30.

4. Cf. *LU*, 48, 6; 99, 11-12; 103, 20; 88, 12; 92, 24; 168, 9; 220, 18-19; *TVII* 274, 28.

5. Cf. *LU*, 59, 15; 113, 5; 209, 1-2; 211, 18-19.

noun *ns̄būtā* ("assumption, taking") is formed.⁶ The expression is used all through the LU and other writings of Babai.⁷

(c) *Putting on*: The word used is "lbes" meaning "to put on", "to clothe oneself"; metaphorically, "to take, to assume", etc.⁸ *Lbūsīā* is the noun derived from the verb. It is used very rarely by Babai.⁹

(d) *Conjunction (adhesion)*: The verb used is *nqep* signifying, "to cleave, to stick to, be joined in marriage, adhere, accompany, follow, agree with, be in accord with." The noun derived from the verb is *naqīputa* ("conjunction, adhesion, relating, affinity, copulation, connection," etc.) *Naqīpūta* is the Syriac rendering of the 'Greek *Synapheia*.¹⁰ As such, *nqep* need not signify a unity, but by use it got that significance, especially when it is used with, "inseparable" (inseparable adhesion). Babai uses it a number of times.¹¹

(e) *Union (Unity, Oneness)*: There are two nouns used by Babai to denote Unity: *hdaiūta* (union, unity, solitude) derived from *had*. The second noun is *haidūta*, derived from the verb, *haidēd*, to unite, to make one, join, adjoin. We see the different forms in Babai: *Ethaiad*, to be united, joined (etaphel), *mhaiēd* (act. part.), *mhaiad* (pass. part.) *Haiēd* is the pael form derived from the noun *had*.¹² The most commonly used expression by Babai, to describe the unity of the two natures in Christ, is *haidēd* and its noun, *hdaiūta*.¹³ *Haidūta* is used only very rarely.¹⁴ *Hdaiūta* is the expression used to indicate the unity in the Trinity, while *haidūta* is never used for the Trinity. *Haidūta* is the result of the union. In the case of Christ, the latter is more applicable, but because it is the most intimate and

6. J. PAYNE SMITH, *op. cit.* p. 341-2.

7. Cf. LU, 50, 7; 51, 2; TV, p. 294; 300; T VII, 253; 257; X p. 208, 3.

8. J. PAYNE SMITH, *ibid.* p. 235.

9. Cf. LU, 40, 26; 48, 5; 59, 4; 63; 167; 199; 274.

10. J. PAYNE SMITH, *ibid.* p. 351-2.

11. LU, 47, 8; 56; 57; TV, 291. 301; X, 208, 4.

12. J. PAYNE SMITH, *ibid.* p. 127-8; 139.

13. LU, 101, 28; 102, 5.11.

14. LU, 102, 3.

inseparable union, once united and has become one, and no more two, *hdaiūtā* is more appropriate. That may be the reason why Babai uses *hdaiūtā* more frequently than *haidūtā*.

Art. III Mixture, Commixture, Admixture (*Mauzaga, hbukya, hultana*)

Babai excludes any kind of mixture in the union of the Word with the humanity. There are three kinds of mixture.

(a) *Mixture (Mauzagā)*: In a mixture, there occurs a corruption of the components and its parts cannot be separated after the mixing and the components mutually increase the quantity.¹ "Mixture" is spoken of ^{two} *liquids or humids*. When two such things are mixed, both lose their original properties and receive the quality of the other.² Babai makes use of the example of wine and water.³

(b) *Commixture (Hbukyā)*: In a "commixture", as in a mixture, after the mixing, the component parts cannot be separated. It is the mixing of two or more solids such as the flour of grain or of barley or of vetch, with lime or dust or any other similar substance.⁴ In another part of LU, Babai calls such a mixing, admixture.⁵

(c) *Admixture (Hultanā)*: It is the mixing of solid substances, in which even after the mixture, the component parts could be separated. Through mutual admixture, their quantity alone is increased, and they occupy more space. Thus the mixing of the broad bean and the grain of wheat and barley is an admixture.⁶ But in another place it is called commixture.⁷

Babai is not quite consistent in the use of the three terms. It is not of much importance in his thought. The

1. Cf. LU, 53, 13-16/43, 17-20.

2. *Ibid.* 74/60, 21ff.

3. *Ibid.* 248/201, 28.

4. *Ibid.* 53/43, 20-24.

5. *Ibid.* 248, 14-15/201, 28-29.

6. *Ibid.* 53, 30/43, 25-28.

7. *Ibid.* 248, 15/201, 30-31.

division into three categories also might not have come from him. All these pertain to material substances, and cannot be applied to spiritual beings.

The admixture of Babai is the same as the *synthesis* of Aristotle,⁸ and the *parathesis* of the Stoics.⁹ With regard to the other two, although we find similarities of Babai in the Stoics and in Aristotle, his view is different.

8. A *Synthesis* is formed by the juxtaposition of very small parts of its constituent elements (ARISTOTLE, *De gen. et corr.* 327a, 34ff.). The elements do not react upon each other. They retain their distinctive properties intact. Aristotle speaks of *mixis* or *krasis*. He uses them interchangeably (*ibid.* 323 a, 8). Because of the mixing, there will result a "tertium quid" the compound, in which the properties of the component parts remain potentially. His example for mixture is "a drop of wine in ten thousand gallons of water" (Cf. R. A. NORRIS, *op. cit.* p. 68-9).

9. Juxtaposition (*Parathesis*), is the same as the Aristotalian *synthesis*. (Cf. ALEXANDER APHR., *De Mixtione* (ed. BRUNS). Berlin 1892, p. 216. 17). The other kinds of mixtures for the Stoics are: (a) *Synchusis*, a mixture in which both ingredients are altered and cannot be resolved again into its elements (*ibid.* 216. 22; 220. 29ff.). (b) *krasis di holon* a mutual and total interpenetration of two material substances, in which each retains all of its characteristic properties unaltered, so that even in their intimate union, the two elements remain distinct (*ibid.* 216. 28ff.).

CHAPTER IV

Mar Babai's Exegesis

This chapter is a presentation of Babai's exegesis on a few selected biblical passages; the first from the Prologue of St. John: "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us" (Jn 1: 14).¹ This is a passage often commented on in the Cyrillian and Monophysite circles in favour of their Christology. It is useful and important to know how Babai interprets it. The next is from the second chapter of the Epistle to the Philippians: "The form of God assumed the form of a servant" (2: 7).² It is a passage often commented on in the Nestorian circles. According to them, it expresses clearly the double nature of Christ. The third is from the Epistle to the Hebrews: "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and for ever" (13: 8).³ It is also a favorite text in the Nestorian Christology. For them, this text demonstrates the unity of the person and the distinction of natures. After the analysis of these texts, a few texts will be considered together.

In this analysis, all the Christological writings of Babai shall be drawn upon and examined to see how these passages are commented on and presented in various contexts.

Art. I The Word became flesh and dwelt among us

Among his Christological writings, Babai comments on this passage in the T VII and passingly in LU. There are four brief comments on Jn 1: 14 in LU.⁴ In the first instance (p. 37/30) Babai quotes the sentence and says that it is handed down to us without investigation. He expresses his wonder at

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1. "Melta besra hwa wagen ban."
 2. "Dmütā dalahā dmütā d'abdā nsab."
 3. "Yesu' msihā etmali uyaumanā hūyū wal'alam."
 4. LU 37/30; 48/40; 125-6/101-2; 149-150/121.

the affirmations of the Prologue: God with God and God became flesh (Cf. Jn 1: 1.14). How can the mind understand them? According to him, the mysteries of Christ are to be accepted in Faith. The same mood of admiration is seen in p. 48/40 also. A brief comment falls on p. 125-6/100-101: "Word became flesh and dwelt among us" signifies that the Word assumed the flesh and dwelt in it, in one of our qnome. This becoming shows the excellent and ineffable union with our humanity, the peculiar and sublime indwelling, His ineffable revelation, and the self-emptying of the Word in His adorable economy for the salvation and renovation of all. Though God the Word is everywhere, He united Himself with one of the human qnome and that is His humanity. He assumed the man Jesus to His parsopa that He may be revealed in him.

In T VII Babai comments briefly in three instances on the verse.⁵ In the first instance (p. 252-7/205-8) Babai accuses his adversaries, saying that they do not quote this biblical verse fully: "The Word became flesh", is followed by "and dwelt among us". (in us). That signifies "one in another." The Eternal Word was in the beginning with the Father; the flesh which is made, is assumed, so that the Word may dwell among us. So "becoming flesh" or the act of becoming (*hwā*) is spoken not of the Word which was in the beginning, but of the flesh which was not in the beginning. "Dwelt in us", is said of the Word Who was in the beginning, God the Word Who was in the beginning did not begin "by becoming".

When it is said "Word became flesh", St John does not assert a change in the Word so that the Word was transformed into flesh. If He was transformed into flesh, He is no more Word of God. "Dwelt among us" signifies, God dwelt in the flesh "which is flesh or man of our nature."⁶ "In us" or among us" is as Emmanuel, i. e. "one in another", our Lord with us, united with our nature. The Word dwelt in His temple by union, and one is the Parsopa of Union. "Became" denotes the assumption. "He became flesh" is the same as "He assumed flesh." It is like the expression, "He became a

5. T VII 252-7/205/8;272-4; 220-1; 276-8/223-5.

6. T VII 256/208.

curse" (Gal. 3: 13), and, "He became sin" (2 Cor. 5: 21). He took upon Himself our sin and curse. In the same way, "He assumed the flesh and dwelt in it", as one in another.⁷ The double nature of Christ is clearly indicated by this passage; the first part refers to the human nature which was not in the beginning; the second part to the Word which assumed the flesh, unitively in His Parsopa.

The second reference (p. 272-4/220-1) also has a similar comment: "Became" is the property of the flesh, which was not from eternity, nor in the beginning; "dwelt" signifies "one in another." The Word of God was in the beginning, but the flesh which was not in the beginning, became or came into being. God the Word assumed the flesh which is man from us to His Parsopa and dwelt in it. Hence there is distinction between the assumed and the Assumer.

The third passage (p. 276-8/223-5): God the Word did not become flesh by changing into flesh. When God sent His Son (Gal. 4: 4), there came about no change in the Son. He had his Godhead from above and manhood from the Jews. The nature which was not existing came into being and that is the meaning of "becoming". He Who was with the Father from eternity assumed the flesh and dwelt in it unitively.

Thus for Babai, "the Word became flesh, and dwelt in us" signifies, "the flesh which was not existing came into being and God the Word assumed it and dwelt in it." i. e. the flesh became and Word dwelt in it. The Word became not by changing into flesh, but by assuming flesh. There is a distinction between the flesh and God the Word, the assumed and the Assumer, one in another.

Art. II The Form of God Assumed the Form of Servant

In the Nestorian exegetical tradition, this passage is very often quoted and commented on. Babai also refers to it a

7. *Ibid.* 257/208.

number of times and makes his own exegesis. Taking phil. 2, vv. 5-11, together, since they form one unit, we examine how Babai explains this biblical text. The TV, T VII, and LU use this text to explain the two kyane, two qnome, one Parsopa Christology.

St. Paul demonstrates the inconfused existence of the two kyane in their proper qnome in the one parsopa of the one Son, Christ Jesus.¹ The Apostle began with the parsopa of union, "Jesus Christ" (v. 5). Then he speaks of the divinity in the one parsopa: "he was the form of God and he took the form of a servant" (vv. 6-7)² And afterwards he speaks of the human nature which belongs to the same parsopa without separation: "he humbled himself till death on the cross" (v. 8). Finally St. Paul ends the discussion with the same union (v. 11). The One Who assumed and the one who is assumed are not one and the same. He who took and he who is taken are not one and the same. The former is God the Word, the latter is man. But from the time of the union and afterwards, there is only one parsopa of the divinity and of the humanity of one Lord Christ Jesus.

Christ Jesus: This name is the name of union, i. e. of the Economy of the two kyane. Eminently speaking (*maranait*) it pertains to the humanity, as "Son" eminently (*maranait*) pertains to the divine nature. The human nature is anointed by the Holy Spirit that it may be one Son through union with the Eternal Son from the beginning of its formation. But the two natures are united in one parsopa of Christ. The names which are eminently (properly) pertaining to the Word also by union pertain to the humanity, as Only-Begotten, the Lord of Glory, etc. The names "Jesus" and "Son of Man" eminently (properly) pertain to the human nature of Christ, but by union pertain also to God the Word.⁴ Hence the name, "Christ Jesus"

1. BABAI, LU p. 69-70/56.

2. Babai often uses the expression, "the form of God", instead of, "in the form of God."

3. BABAI, T VII, p. 272/220.

4. BABAI, LU, p. 69/56; 209-210/169.

signifies the double kyane in their qnome in the one parsopa of Filiation, Son of God, "one Son, one Lord of Glory."⁵

Form of God: It is a name before the union, and it signifies the consubstantiality of the Word with the Father.⁶ He is the form of God in all things: in eternity, infinity.

Form of God assumed the form of a Servant: The two forms refer to the two qnome, having two kyane.⁷ Assumption does not signify a change in the one. The form of God, i. e. the Divine Word did not change.⁸ It is as a "temple and its dweller."⁹ Without changing into the qnoma of man, the Word assumed the form of a servant.¹⁰ He assumed the body and dwelt in it: "seen in the body" (2 Tim. 3: 16). The two kyane, divine as well as human, subsist in their proper qnome. There is no mixture of the properties.¹¹

But the two natures in their qnome are united in the one parsopa of Filiation: Form in form, Dweller in His temple, God in His man. And from the moment of union or assumption, there is only one Christ who is God over all (Rom. 9: 5), having the divine and human natures. He assumed the man that He may be revealed through him.¹²

The parsopic and assumptive union is between two qnome: the Form of God and the form of servant, form in

5. *Ibid.*, p. 70/56.

6. *Ibid.* p. 39/32.

7. BABAI, *TV*, p. 294/237; *T VII*, p. 260/211; 271/19; 273/220; *LU* p. 232/188-9. 247/200-201.

8. BABAI, *T VII*, p. 257/208; 278/225; *LU*, p. 232/188; 123/99: "Infinite and finite natures in the one union without confusion in the one Parsopa of Christ, the Son of God."

9. BABAI, *T VII*, p. 260/211; *LU*, p. 243/197.

10. BABAI, *TV*, p. 304/245; *LU*, p. 213/173: "He did not become man; He assumed the form; He did not become the form. He became in the similitude; He did not become the human nature." Here "becoming" is understood as "coming into being by a transformation." He did not become man by a change of His nature. He became man by "assumption."

11. *LU*, p. 243/197.

12. *Ibid.* p. 233/190.

form, united in the one Parsopa of the Form of God, namely the Parsopa of Filiation.¹³

The Effects of the assumption: The man or the humanity received a glorious name and participated in all the glories of the divinity¹⁴ It received the name of Sonship,¹⁵ and the parsopa of the divinity, "so that this is that and that is this."¹⁶ The divinity assumed the flesh and revealed Himself in the flesh and assumed "the name of humanity." The Divine Word humbled Himself in taking the low name and assuming the flesh and manifesting in body.

He became obedient: This signifies that the humanity of our Lord was free. In his humanity Christ underwent all justice and was subject to all obedience. His human will was free.¹⁷ He was obedient in His human nature, even unto death.¹⁸ The Divinity perfected the obedience of the human nature, remaining with it in an intimate, unique and parsopic union, never broken from the moment of conception.¹⁹

A glorious Name, and supreme Adoration: Because of his sufferings and death, of course, manifestations of his obedience, God the Word who was in the man or in the human nature exalted him above all names.²⁰ The human nature is exalted with the divinity and adored with it in one adoration and glorification.²¹ The humanity of Christ is adored with one unique adoration by all the creatures, with the unique adoration due to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.²²

*The Creed of 612:*²³ According to the Creed, the "Form of God" is applied to Christ in His Godhead and the "form

13. *Ibid.* p. 126-7/102.

14. *Ibid.* p. 131/105.

15. *TV*, p. 301/243.

16. *LU*, p. 190 (tr.)

17. *Ibid.* p. 80/65; 105 (tr.)

18. *Ibid.* p. 60-1/49.

19. *Ibid.* p. 62-63/50-51; 173/140.

20. *Ibid.* p. 130-1/105; 140/113.

21. *Ibid.* p. 214/173; *T VII*, p. 283/226; *TV* 302-3/243.

22. *TV*, p. 239/194.

23. L. ABRAMOWSKI, *Nestorian Collection*, p. 150-7/88-93.

of a servant" to Christ in His Manhood. The "form of God" took while "the form of servant" was taken; but there is no confusion of properties of the two kyane. It is impossible that He who took should be he who was taken or that he who was taken should be Taker. God the Word was revealed in the man, whom He took, and the human nature which was taken appeared to men. At the same time, in the undivided union should be confessed the one Son of God, Christ. But there is no confusion of properties. It is impossible that the Godhead be changed into the manhood and the manhood be transmuted into the nature of the Godhead. If Godhead changes, there is no more revelation, and if manhood changes, no more salvation. "And for this reason, we believe in our hearts and confess with our lips one Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the living God, whose Godhead is not hidden, nor his manhood concealed, but He is perfect God and perfect man."²⁴

The Creed teaches the distinction between the two, but not their *independent* existence after the union and their unity in the one parsopa of the Son. There is only one Son; in the divinity and in the humanity.

Art. III "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and for ever"

According to Babai, St. Paul here speaks of the one Son. In the whole Epistle to the Hebrews, certain verses refer to His divinity certain verses to His humanity, and certain to the one Parsopa. Thus, the Apostle begins with the Parsopa of Union: Son (Heb. 1: 2: 'He has spoken to us by a Son'), then he speaks of the same Son in His humanity (Heb. 1: 2: "whom He appointed the heir of all things?") and adds, what is of the divinity in the one Parsopa and speaks as of one ("tanquam de uno": *a(i)k d'al had*) without interruption (Heb. 1: 2-3: 'through whom He created the world and He is the splendour of His glory and the figure of His substance and He holds everything by the power of His word'). Throughout the Epistle this is the method adopted by Paul: he joins the distinct ones and distinguishes unitedly those which are of the

24. *Ibid.* p. 155/91.

divinity and those which are of the humanity and exposes the properties of both natures without confusion but at the same time exchanging the properties and speaks as of one in the union till the end and concludes with 13: 8. Paul begins his epistle with the Parsopa of the union: Son (1: 2) and he ends his discourse with the same Parsopa of union: Jesus Christ (13: 8). Paul thus exposed the two natures, and taught and confirmed the adorable union without confusion in the one Parsopa of the Son, Christ, for ever.¹

In the Epistle to the Philippians (2: 5-8, 11) also, Babai sees the same method: Paul speaks first of the Parsopa of union (2: 5: Have this mind among yourselves, which was in Christ Jesus); and then he speaks of the divinity in the same Parsopa (2: 6-7) and then of the humanity in the same Parsopa, without separation and as of one without interruption (2: 8f.) and again he speaks of the Parsopa of union at the end (2: 11).²

Babai understands Epistle to the Romans 9: 5, "From them is seen Christ in the flesh who is over all" in the same way.

The first part, namely, "from them is seen Christ" refers to the Parsopa of Union, which is effected in the womb; the second part, "in the flesh", pertains to the humanity of Christ; "who is over all" pertains to the divinity of Christ in the same Parsopa. One is Christ in both natures and one is the Son in both natures.³

Heb. 13: 8 for Babai is a conclusive text for the unity of Christ (oneness of Parsopa) and the dualities of the natures in that oneness of Parsopa. Jesus Christ is God the Word who came in His time and unitively assumed our human nature to His Parsopa and made it with Him one Son and Lord.⁴ He is one in His divinity and in His humanity, one in the Parsopa.⁵

1. LU 68 - 9/55-6.

2. LU 69/56.

3. LU 62/50; TVII, 272/220.

4. LU p. 50/41.

5. LU 62/50; TVII, 263/211.

"Yesterday and today" refers to his humanity; "for ever" refers to his divinity; in the one adhesion of Filiation in one Parsopa "the same" refers to the one Parsopa. Jesus Christ is the Parsopa of union.⁶

Jesus Christ, the Son of God is the one Parsopa having the two natures in their proper qnome; both natures have their properties without mixture, separation and independence. They are united in the one Parsopa of the Word. The union and distinction last for ever. Because of the union those which are of the humanity or man, and those which are of the divinity or Word are spoken of one Parsopa, Christ the Son of God.⁷ The oneness of the Parsopa and the duality of the natures in their proper qnome is expressed in several other passages.⁸ The text appears at the end of three chapters of LU as a proof of the oneness and the duality.⁹

From the moment of the union even for a moment the divinity is not separated from the humanity nor the humanity from the divinity. But the two natures subsist in their qnome without confusion in one adhesion for ever.

Art. IV A few other Passages

First, the Epistle to the Romans: *Rom.* 1: 3: "About His Son who is born from the descendents of David". St. Paul knew that the Son had His eternal generation from the Father in his divine nature, but because of the parsopa of Filiation, it is spoken about His temporal generation". *Rom.* 5: 19: "As by one man's disobedience, many were made sinners, so by one man's obedience many will be made just." Obedience is an act of man, but it is spoken of Christ because of the parsopa of union. i. e. because of the oneness of Filiation of the one Son whose are the properties of the humanity and of

6. LU 62/50; TVII, 272/220; 263/211.

7. LU, 127-8/102-3.

8. LU, p. 209-210/169-170; 244/198; 227/184; 252/204; 171-2/138-9.

9. LU, p. 172/139 (at the end of ch. 17); p. 227/184 (at the end of chapter 20); p. 252/204 (at the end of ch. 21).

1. LU, 174/141.

the divinity; obedience is spoken of him in the union. The divinity was not separate from him in his act of obedience but was united with him in one *parsopa*. Thus the verse is applied to the one Christ, and definitely understood as the act, by nature, of the humanity of Christ.²

Rom. 8: 3: "God sent His Son in the similitude of the sinful flesh". It is the Father who sent the Son, but "sending" and "similitude of the flesh" do not refer to any change in the divine nature. It is the same Son who is sent by the Father, and became man, by assumption and union.³

Rom. 8: 32: "God did not spare His Son, but gave Him up to us all". It is through the humanity that He underwent death and He is handed over to us not in His divinity. Because of the unity, it is spoken of one Son.⁴

Rom. 9: 5: "From them is seen Christ according to the flesh, who is God above everything". We know what pertains to the divine nature (God above everything), and what pertains to the human nature (from them is seen Christ according to the flesh). But because of the union, the Scriptures speak "tanquam de uno" (*a(i)k d'al had*). It is stated to show that by the union with the Eternal Son, he, Christ according to the flesh, is one Son for ever, in one *parsopa* of Filiation, dominion power and in one adoration for ever. This verse indicates also the two natures, the Assumer and the assumed, Form of God and form of servant, and the identity of the same subject: the Assumer and the assumed are the same Christ. One is Christ in both, one is the Son in both.⁵

Now a few passages from John: *Jn 1: 18*: "The Only begotten who is in the bosom of the Father." It pertains

2. *LU*, 70/57; 174/140.

3. *LU*, 64-5/52; the same explanation for *Gal. 4, 4 (T VII, 278/225)*.

4. *LU*, 65/52; 66/54; 70/57; 139/112; 174/141.

5. *LU*, 62/50; 100/70; 127/102; 210/170; 247/201; *T VII, 277 | 224*.

properly to the divinity of Christ; by union and assumption, Filiation pertains to the humanity of Christ. It is spoken of the one Lord.⁶

Jn 3: 13: "The son of man who is in heaven"; "God so loved the world that He gave His Only Begotten Son" (*Jn* 3:16); "Father loves the Son and has given all things into his hands" (3: 35); "I am in the Father, and the Father in me" (14: 11); "All that the Father has, is mine" (16: 15); "All things are made through Him" (1: 3); "When you see the son of man ascending, where he was before" (6: 63); "I am the bread which descended from heaven, and the bread which I give, is my body which is divided for the salvation of the World" (6: 51. 52); "I am the Resurrection and Life (11: 25); "You know me and know from where I am" (7: 28); "You do not know me nor my Father" (8: 19); "I will go and will come; I will be with you all the days" (14: 28). All these and similar ones are spoken of the One Son because of His *parsopa* of Filiation, which is of the divinity and of the humanity. Because of the Union, that which is eminently (*marana'it*) of the Word, is of the man from us assumptively and unitedly. They are spoken of the visible and of the Invisible Christ. Christ is the Son, and the Son is Christ, in the one *Parsopa*. From the womb and afterwards, the Word is the Son, always with His humanity; the man Jesus is Christ always with his divinity.⁷

A few other statements from the different New Testament books: "All authority in heaven and on earth is given to me" (*Mt* 28: 18); and similar expressions are spoken because of the *parsopa* of Filiation which is one. In His divine nature, He has all authority like the Father; the referred text here, is of the humanity because of the union with the Word. In the same way is *Col.* 2: 3: "In him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." All knowledge, immortality and immutability are given to the humanity because of the union.⁸

6. *LU*, 65/52; 139/112; 225/182.

7. *LU* 66-8/53-5; 105-7/74-5; 139/112; 154/125.

8. *LU* 103-4/72-3.

1 Tim. 2: 5: "One is the mediator of God and man, the man Jesus Christ". In the union, it is spoken of the humanity of the Son, and not about His divinity". "Remember Jesus Christ resurrected from the dead, who is from the seed of David, according to my Gospel (*2 Tim. 2: 8*); "We preach the crucified Christ" (*1 Cor. 1:23*); "He is crucified in infirmity but resurrected by the power of God (*2 Cor. 13: 4*); "Through a man death, through a man resurrection of the dead" (*1 Cor. 15: 21*); "The son of man will be handed over to the hands of the sinners, and they will kill him and on the third day he will resurrect" (*Mt 20: 19*); "If they had known, they would not have crucified the Lord of Glory" (*1 Cor. 2: 8*); "This Jesus whom you crucified, God made Lord and Christ" (*Act 2: 36*). All these are possible because of the one *parsopa*; all are spoken of the one Son in his divinity, and in his humanity and sometimes both.⁹

9. LU, 66/54; 70/57; 174-175/141; 213/172.

CHAPTER V

Mar Babai's Doctrine on God

Babai the Great begins his *Book of Union* with an exposition of the oneness and the Trinity of the Divinity. He discusses the existence and the essence of God from reason and revelation. It appears from his treatment of the subject in LU that Babai follows the line of the *Catechetical Homilies* of Theodore and was influenced first and foremost by him in his exposition. St Basil and the other Cappadocians clarified the Trinitarian terminology and Babai was influenced by them definitely through Theodore and other sources. The doctrine on God was well developed by the Cappadocians, and there was common agreement on it among the Christians. Babai was also influenced by Ephrem, through his training in the School of Nisibis. And he develops his teaching further on the agreed doctrines, in the light of the new problems.

Art I - Faith as the Basic Requirement

In the first chapter of the LU, Babai speaks of the need of faith in discussing matters pertaining to God. He demands faith from his readers for the understanding of the Divinity and Incarnation.¹ The mystery of the Divinity is beyond all human comprehension and it has to be accepted by the faithful in faith.² He asks, "If what is in man is a mass of mysteries and wonders, how much more would the Divinity be".³ The words of John in the Prologue also have to be taken in true Faith. John did not, in fact, tell us the mode of the divine existence in Three. It is beyond our understanding. The Economy of the Son is also a world of wonder and mystery.⁴ This reminds one of Theodore who states,

1. LU p. 3-6/2-5; 20/16.
2. *Ibid.* p. 7, 31-8, 1/6, 24-26.
3. *Ibid.* p. 20-21/16-18.
4. *Ibid.* p. 33/27; 2/2; 241/196.

In fact it is difficult for our language to expose exactly those things regarding the created natures, because they are also formed with a great wisdom by their Maker. But those which surpass our nature—how do they not surpass all the human thought? And necessarily, it surpasses our words.⁵

In several places in the Catechetical Homilies, Theodore demands faith from his hearers. That faith is basically needed for the understanding of the mysteries, was common to all Christians.⁶

Art. II – The Existence and the Essence of God

§ 1. The Existence of God:

Babai makes use of two words, to explain the divine existence and essence: *Ityā* and *Itūtā* both deriving from the same root, *It*. It means “being,”- “existence”; *Ityā* expresses the idea of “being” and “existence”, while *Itūtā* refers to the “essence of the being”.

Babai does not explain these terms, since they are in common use among them.¹ He makes use of them. God alone is the Eternal *Ityā* (Being).² He is exalted in His *Itūtā* (Essence) above all visible and invisible realities.³ He is being Who is (*Ityā d'itāw*). That which is Being Who is, implies that there is nothing before Its Eternal *Itūtā*. In the beginning God is called

5. THEODORE, *Hom Cat.* I, 1 (R. TONNEAU, p. 3); Cf. also *ibid.* I, 8, p. 13; I, 4, p. 7 (“We must have a faith firmly founded in those good things to come”) 1, 2, p. 5; I, 5, p. 11; I, 12, p. 19. The same type of rhetorical questions are seen in Theodore and Babai: Cf. *Ibid.* I, 1, p. 3 and *LU* p. 7-9/6-7.

6. Cf. BASIL, *Hom. de Fide*, PG 31, 463-472; PHILOXENUS, *Tractatus tres* p. 33/31; 82/66: “From Faith, however, no heresy has sprung up”; *Ibid.* p. 122/94.

1. Cf. E. BECK, *Die Theologie des hl. Ephrem in seiner Hymnen über den Glauben*, (SA. 21) Roma 1949, p. 5-13.

2. Cf. *LU*, 7, 25-26.

3. *Ibid.* p. 7, 28-29.

Ityā d'ūtaw.⁴ *Ityā d'ūtaw* and *ahyh asr ahyh* denote that He exists eternally. He is above the creatures in His essence.⁵

God's nature is *Ityayā*, i. e. existing, "is",⁶ showing that it is. In His *Iūtā*, He is above all creatures. This idea is repeated a number of times.⁷ He is simply called *Ityā*. He is the true *Iūtā*.⁸ He exists eternally and is perfect in existence (*Ityāis*)⁹. He is the true Being. All the *Itwatā* or essences are brought to existence by Him.¹⁰ Babai uses the word *Itwatā* and not the plural of *Ityā* to designate the creatures.¹¹ He alone is *Ityā*. If He wills, they become nothing¹² He alone exists in existence and naturally (*Ityāis kyanāis*).¹³

The existence of God is known to men. It is through the creatures that human beings come to the knowledge of God: "And the knowledge of God is placed in the reason of men, not of the mode of His essence, but of His existence,"¹⁴ "and He is known from the creatures and through the creatures and through all His works and the magnitude of His wisdom and eternal knowledge and His admirable operation is seen in them."¹⁵

4. *Ibid.* p. 10, 8-10.

5. *Ibid.* p. 18, 18-21; 10, 5-8, 12, 6-7; 12, 29-13, 1; 13, 28-29; 14, 24-25; 15, 19-20; 16, 14-16; 17, 5-7; 17, 9-10; 14-11; 18, 11-19; 18, 27; 9, 11-13; 16, 4-5.

6. *Ibid.* p. 26, 18: A. Vaschalde translated it, "per se existente" tr. p. 21-26).

7. *Ibid.* p. 11, 7; 12, 6-7; cf. below, n. 29:

8. *Ibid.* p. 12, 13, 16.

9. *Ibid.* p. 13, 28: A. Vaschalde translated it, "essentialiter" (tr. p. 11, 15).

10. *Ibid.* p. 16, 15-16.

11. Babai is here definitely influenced by Ephrem, who used the term *Ityā* to the divinity alone and reprehended the Marcionites and the Manichaeans who used this term to designate the created things also (Cf. O. DE URBINA, *Patrologia Syriaca*, p. 77-8).

12. *LU*, 16, 16-17.

13. *Ibid.* p. 17, 9-10: A. Vaschalde translated *Ityāis kyanāis*, "essentialiter naturaliter" (tr. p. 14, 5-6).

14. *Ibid.* p. 17, 15 17/14, 11-12.

15. *Ibid.* p. 25, 5-8/20, 22-25.

What are the ideas we get from the creatures regarding God?

that He is Creator and Cause of all things,¹⁶

that He alone is the Eternal Being, who exists eternally,¹⁷

that He is entirely perfect in His Being.¹⁸

that He governs the universe and provides for the creatures,¹⁹

that He is the First Mover, who moves everything.²⁰

§ 2 The Transcendence of the Divine Essence

One basic idea which Babai stresses over and over again is the idea of divine transcendence. The Essence of God transcends our knowledge.²¹ His essence is not so clear as His existence. The true knowledge regarding God is the ignorance which is above every knowledge. The divine essence is Eternal, Uncreated, Infinite, and Immutable. It has no equality among the creatures. Though He is the Creator, His Essence is above the creatures; though He is the First Mover, and governs, and holds everything, He is greater than all of them in His essence. "Immutable and invariably, He alone exists by essence, and by nature".²²

16. *LU*, p. 7, 26-27/6, 18-21; 11, 23-4/9, 28-9; 14, 18/11, 35; 16, 2/13, 6; 25, 5/20, 22; THEODORE, *Hom. Cat.* I, 13 (R. TONNEAU, p. 23); I, 16, p. 29; II, 3, p. 33; II, 4 p. 35; II, 10-13, p. 41-47; Theodore makes a distinction between God the Father (*aba*) and God the Cause of All (*elat kul*). He is the Father of the Son; He is the Creator and Cause of all creatures (Cf. *Ibid.* I, 12, p. 19-20).

17. *LU*, 13, 28/11 14-15; 7, 25-26/6, 19-20; THEODORE, *Hom. Cat.* II 1, p. 31; II, 8, p. 39-41.

18. *EU*, 8, 22/7 8-9; THEODORE, *Hom. Cat.* II, 9, p. 41: "He is the true Being."

19. *LU*, 16, 1ff./13, 6ff; 14, 19/37; *HC*; THEODORE, *Hom. Cat.*, II, 17, p. 51.

20. *EU*, 12, 18/10, 14; 13, 1/10, 23-24. Theodore had a good background in the Cappadocians and surely Babai had confidence in following Theodore, when he read others also in the same line. So he went further than Ephrem.

21. Cf. *LU*, p. 20, 24/17 10.

22. Cf. *Ibid.* 19/16; 17, 8-10/14 5-6; 17, 2ff/13; 36-37; 16, 26ff./13, 36-7.

More than 14 times, Babai speaks about the transcendence of the divine nature: "God is the Creator of everything; He is Immutable and exalted in His Essence above every creature, visible and invisible"²³

The sense of the divine transcendence was common to the Fathers, especially at Antioch. It is certainly a major factor behind the opposition to the "Theopaschism". But most of the Fathers could combine this transcendence with the full sense of the Economy: i. e. the presence of God with us and His salvific activity among us. Theodore was for that and he could combine the two.²⁴ In his opposition to the Theopaschites, Nestorius might have exaggerated the aspect of the divine transcendence and Babai has inherited this point from Nestorius. But whenever he follows Theodore, he keeps his balance between the divine transcendence and the Economy.

§ 3. The Names of God

The Creator and Cause of all things, the Eternal Being, the Highest Perfection, is called Essence, Life, Spirit, Light etc. These names are applied to God not as they are applied to the creatures.²⁵ He is *the* Being, He is *the* true Life. He is *the* Light, He is *the* Spirit. He is *the* true Essence. He is One, in an inexplicable, inscrutable and ineffable way.²⁶ He is not

23. *Ibid.* 7, 24-9/6, 20-22; 8, 22/7, 8-9: "He is entirely perfect in Himself"; 8, 29-30/7, 15-6: "He alone is the powerful one"; 9, 3/7, 19; 9, 6/7, 22: "His Essence knows no finiteness. He is the Infinite Spirit"; 9, 12-13/7, 29-30: "Behold His Essence is more excellent than all the beings and also He is named above all the names"; 10, 5-8/8, 16-18: "He in His Essence is above all modes and forms which the intellect knows"; cf. also, 11, 6/9, 11-13; 12, 6-7/10, 2-3; 12, 29-13, 1/10, 23-5; 13, 28-9/11, 14-5; 14, 24-5/12, 5-6; 15, 19-20/12, 31-2; 17, 5-7/14, 1-3; 16, 4-5/13, 6-9; 17, 11/14, 7; 18, 18-9/15, 12-3; 18, 27/15, 22.

24. Cf. R. A. GREER, *The Captain of our Salvation*, p. 179; John Chrysostom wrote a book on the incomprehensibility of God. (Cf. *Chrysostome, sur l'incompréhensibilité de Dieu*, éd. J. DANIELOU and others: *SChr.* t. 28 bis, Paris, 1970).

25. *LU*, p. 9, 17-21/7, 32-7.

26. *Ibid.* p. 12, 13ff./10, 9ff; 16, 14-18/13, 18-22.

composed of parts. His names are His properties, and belong to Him by nature, and remain with Him immutably from eternity.²⁷

We call Him *Alaha*. It is the most sublime name, indicating the very divine nature. It is through this name that He is known. It pertains to Him by nature. It is His distinct, unique and singular name. Without change properly it pertains to Him. As His Essence is Immutable so is His name. The name *Alaha* cannot be applied to creatures properly and by nature. From the beginning of the world He is known by that name. Together with the world He has handed down His adorable name also.²⁸ It is not a name imposed from outside. It is His proper name. Just as He cannot give His very nature to the creatures the sublime name of His nature cannot be given to creatures "quoad naturam". This proper name of His essence is more sublime than everything, and it is above everything and Cause of everything, and Omnipotent, according to the proper appellation.²⁹ His name, *Alaha*, is exalted and elevated above all sensible and intelligible beings; and the fear of His name is established in the very nature of man.³⁰ The name *Alaha* reveals His very Essence and uniquely belongs to Him alone. Those who are called by this name receive it because of dignity and familiarity or because of rebellion and pride. Exodus 7: 1, where Moses is called a "god" to pharaoh, belongs to the first category. Genesis 3: 5, where Satan approaches Adam, belongs to the second category.³¹

Alaha cannot die.³² He is the Life and the Giver of life. *Alaha* is indicative of the One Godhead and the one immortal

27. *LU*, p. 16, 18-9/13, 22-4; 15, 10-11/12, 22-3.

28. *Ibid.* p. 17-18/13-15.

29. *Ibid.* p. 17-18/13-14.

30. *Ibid.* p. 17, 12-4/14, 6-9.

31. *Ibid.* p. 17, 21ff/14, 16ff; cf. *LH (DRIVER)*, p. 203ff. (Christ is called God not in the same way Moses is called god). "And the Lord said to Moses, See, I make you as a god for Pharaoh" (Ex. 7: 1). "For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened and you will be like God, knowing good and evil" (Gen. 3: 5).

32. *LU*, p. 10, 25-6/8, 35: It is stated in a non-polemical context, as part of a sentence; Pheilo Xenus also has a very similar statement: "Death cannot adhere to His Essence" (*Tractatus tres*, p. 15/18).

nature. If the soul of the finite man cannot die at death, how can the Giver of Life, the Infinite Spirit, the True Life die? To say that *Alaha* died is a blasphemy and stupidity; it is insensible and illogical.³³

He has other names also either because of His authority providence and judgement or because of the absence of imperfections, showing that His Essence is above them and that the debilities of the creatures can in no way be found in Him. He is called Being "who is" and "I am who am" (Ex. 3: 14). It signifies that He exists eternally, essentially and immutably. He is Incorruptible, Immortal, Invisible. He does not become weak, does not sleep. He is Unchangeable, not apprehended etc. All these belong to His hidden Essence. He is Lord, Prince, Judge, the Strong One, Wisdom and Providence. The last names are applied to Him, considering His relation to the world.³⁴

Art. III. The Trinity

§ 1. The Trinity "inse"

Through the creatures, human beings came to the knowledge of the existence and oneness of God. And the Old Testament period was destined to teach about the unicity of God and people were taught to adore the one only God.

But in the Old Testament times it was through symbols, that the Trinity was indicated. "As if in riddle and as if through certain allegory, as I think, the adorable Qnome of Father, Son and Holy Spirit in one eternal nature were prefigured in the Old Testament."¹ Babai considers that mystically (*razanait*) the names of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit were indicated in the Old Testament

33. *LU*, p. 10, 26 ff. / 8, 36 ff.

34. *LU*, p. 18/14-5.

1. *Ibid.* p. 26, 3-7 / 21, 11-4. Babai cites two texts from Genesis (1:16;11:7), one from Exodus (4:5), one from Isaiah (6:3) and one from Daniel (7:9), as vaguely indicative of the Trinity (*LU*, 26/21).

"In the Old Testament, the divine nature was called Father because of the care and solicitude and special providence of *Alaha* to the Hebrews and because these were separated from other people."² And in the Old Testament, God declared that the Son will be born from the house of David (Ps 87:27-28; 2 Kgs 7: 14) and the Holy Spirit also was known mystically though not accurately on account of His care and solicitude for the people (Ps 142:10;50,13). Babai refers to New Testament passages, speaking of the Old as a preparation and teacher (Gal. 3:24; Eph. 5: 23; I Cor. 10: 6; Lk. 16:16).³ In his exposition Babai goes a step further than Theodore, who considered the Old Testament writers having no knowledge of the Trinity.⁴ That Babai also has reservation on this point is clear from the scant treatment of the matter in a few lines.⁵

It is through the revelation of the Son in the flesh that the reality of the Trinity is made known to men. Until that time humanity was in the state of infancy and was being educated in the preliminary notions regarding God. The Old Testament was a preparation for this revelation through the Son. The Son came and taught that the divinity exists in Trinity.⁶

2. *Ibid.*, p. 42, 13 21/34,30-35.2.

3. *Ibid.* p. 42-3/34-5.

4. THEODORE, *Comm. Amos*, PG 66, 299 BC; *Comm. Haggai*, PG 66, 484 C. 485 A; *Hom. Cat.*, II, 2, p. 31.

5. The chapter where Babai speaks of the Old Testament references to the Trinity (ch. 4) is the smallest of the *LU* (p. 26/21-2).

6. *LU*, 27, 4 ff. / 22, 10 ff.; THEODORE, *Hom. Cat.*, II, 2, p. 31: "The doctrine concerning the Father, Son and Holy Spirit was kept to be promulgated by Christ our Lord, who taught his disciples that which was unknown before and was not revealed to men, and ordered them to teach it to others." Cf. NESTORIUS, *LH*, p. 58: "The prosopa of God the Maker - of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit - were not revealed to us, so that we might also know the Creator and obtain completely the teaching of the divine knowledge and receive the completeness of a complete idea." Cf. Eph. 3: 8-10, where St. Paul says that it is through the Church that the wisdom of God is made known to the angelic powers. Cf. also *Hom. Cat.*, II, 1, p. 29; II, 3, p. 33; II, 4, p. 35.

At the time of the annunciation of Gabriel to the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Most Holy Trinity was revealed and indicated.⁷ Secondly, at the time of the Baptism of Christ by John in Jordan, the Holy Trinity was again indicated.⁸ Thirdly, in his public teaching, Christ taught about the mystery of the Trinity.⁹ Fourthly, through the resurrection of Christ from the dead, the Holy Church teaches us the mystery of the Trinity.¹⁰ After his resurrection, Christ himself gave the Apostles instructions to baptize and make disciples of all nations in the name of the Trinity.¹¹ After the descent of the Holy Spirit, it was clearly known to humanity that the divinity exists in Trinity.¹²

The Holy Trinity has only one divine nature (*kyanā*). The divinity subsists in three Qnōmē. Each of the divine Qnōmē is distinguished from the other by the ^{ḍāḥḥā} *parsōpā*. "Father" indicates the property of the first Qnōmā and shows that He is not the Son, nor the Holy Spirit. "Son" indicates the property of the second Qnoma, the Word, and shows that He is not the Father, nor the Holy Spirit. "Holy Spirit" indicates the property of the third Qnoma. Except the property proper to each Qnoma (*parsopa*), in all the rest everything is common to the three divine Qnome. When it is said "three" it does not mean a Trinity of numbers such as one, two, three; on the contrary, it is one, one, one. Three are One, and unique God, Creator of everything.¹³

7. *LU*, p. 27, 14-28, 14/22, 21-23, 16.

8. *Ibid.* p. 28, 14-20/23, 16-21.

9. *Ibid.* 28, 20-29, 1/23, 22-34.

10. *Ibid.* 29, 1-10/23, 34-24, 7.

11. *Ibid.* 29, 11-19/24, 8-15.

12. *Ibid.* 27, 19-20/22, 26-27.

13. *Ibid.* 34, 8-12/28, 7-11; *CE*, II, 47; VI, 10 (FRANKENBERG, p. 368/369); VI, 12, p. 370/371; II, 47, p. 160/161f. In the last case Babai is referring to Gregory Nazianzen. With regard to his views, he was definitely influenced by Gregory (Cf. GREGORY, *Oratio*, 40, 41; *Orat.* 39, 11 and other references; Philoxenus also has very similar treatment of the subject: "It is not permitted to speak of them, one, two, three; but only Trinity or three Qnome" (*Tractatus tres*, p. 24, 11-13 (tr.); Cf. also, *ibid.*, p. 24, 33-34: "We name it Trinity, and we confess three Qnome", (*De Uno e sancta Trinitate*, PO, 15, 4, p. 56ff.)

Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are not three names attributed to the Divinity according to the impiety of Sabellius, nor are they Qnome of different essences according to the insane allegations of Arius.¹⁴ Truly they are perfect and complete Qnome in One nature. Father is truly Father, implying a true Son. Paternity distinguishes Him from the Son. Son is not the Father; but Filiation implies Paternity. Holy Spirit is in the Father and in the Son, and proceeds from them.¹⁵ God is the true Father, the true Son, the true Holy Spirit—one Infallible Truth, one Incorruptible Light, One Immutable Nature, one Impassible Essence, and one Invariable Eternity.¹⁶ It is impossible to divide the Son from the Father; and the Holy Spirit from the Father and the Son. The three Qnome dwell “in se invicem” infinitely, inconfusedly, inseparably, without admixture, without mixture, and without distance. When they are distinct, they are united; when they are united, they are distinct. There is no distinction without the union; there is no union without distinction.

Babai has two examples to illustrate the oneness and the threeness. (a) The example of the Sun. The flame, heat and light of the Sun cannot be separated. One is not prior to the other, but not one and the same thing. Although these three are not “qnomē mqayyamē”, but only powers (hailē), Babai accepts it, since it is an apostolic example (Heb. 1: 3).¹⁷ The three exist simultaneously. The divinity, “qnomē mqayyamē”, is inseparably united.¹⁸ (b) The second example is from the first human family: Adam, Eve, and Abel:

Adam was not born, he was never a son; he generated Abel in the mode of Filiation; and Abel was born, but he was never a Father, and Eve

14. *LU*, p. 34, 21-5/28, 19-22.

15. *Ibid.* p. 34, 12ff/28, 11ff.

16. *Ibid.* p. 34, 25-35, 1/28, 23-27.

17. *Ibid.* p. 30/25.

18. *Ibid.* Babai is inspired by Gregory Nazianzen, *Oratio in S. Lumina*, PG 36, 345; Severus of Antioch cites it (*Contra Grammaticum*, I. CSCO, 112. p. 59); Cf. BASIL, *Hom. de Fide* (*Hom.* 15, 3): PG 31, 469A.

was in the mode of procession; not in the mode of generation; she was never a daughter, nor called a sister.¹⁹

It is an imperfect example. But, according to Babai, if among the mortals we can find this example, how can it be impossible to see the one divine nature existing in three Qnome: one divinity in Trinity, and Trinity in one divinity.²⁰

With regard to the discussion of the matter, Babai was not only indebted to Theodore, but also to the Great Cappadocians, especially to Basil and Gregory Nazianzen. The reason why he began his Christological work with the discussion on the Trinity, seems to be a historical one. He might have found the work of Philoxenus *Tractatus tres*, written in the same way and he found similar treatment in the *Catechetical Homilies* of Theodore, on whom he chiefly based his exposition.

§ 2. The Trinity and the Incarnation

After speaking about the oneness and the Trinity of the Divinity, Babai speaks about the divine action for the salvation of all. Incarnation is the act of the three divine Qnome. In the Old Testament, God (*Alaha*) was preparing a people for the revelation of the Son, and accordingly, He made promises to them and in the fullness of time the revelation came into effect.²¹

It is the Father who sent the Son. It is the Son who was incarnate and became man. Babai has repeated discussion on the question, that it is the Son who became man, and not the Father nor the Holy Spirit.²² Although there is only one

19. *LU* 32, 1-5/26, 15-18; *CE*, VI, 4, p. 364/365. Adam, Eve and Seth.

20. *LU*, p. 32 1ff./26, 15ff.; Here also Babai is influenced by Gregory Nazianzen (*Oratio*, 31, 11: *PG* 36 2, 144 D-145B).

21. Cf. *LU*, p. 40/33; 42/34.

22. Cf. *LU*, p. 39, 1ff./32, 1ff. 'It is about the *Word* that it is said, 'He became flesh' and 'is revealed in the flesh'... neither the Father, nor the Holy Spirit... It is not said about the Father, 'became flesh' but about the *Word* who was in the beginning with the Father; nor about the Holy Spirit that, 'He was sent and became flesh from the woman'; but everything which pertains to the Economy is ascribed to the Son"; *LU* 36, 25-8/30, 9-13; 44ff/36ff: 40, 24/33, 20; 50/41; 103/72; 48, 4ff./40, 14ff; 58. 11-12/47, 1f.. etc. *CE*, IV, 3 p. 260/262.

divine will, one divine nature, and one divine essence, the property of each Qnoma is mutually incommunicable; so what is spoken of the Son does not refer to the Father and to the Holy Spirit.²³ Babai might have in mind the Patripassians or other heretics, who went wrong in explaining the mystery of Incarnation. It is neither the Father, nor the Holy Spirit who is united with our humanity, but it is the Son alone who became man and revealed to the rational beings the glorious mystery of the Trinity.²⁴ But it is the work of the Three Qnome. The Holy Spirit also has specific functions in the act of Incarnation. It is He who formed the body, to be united with the Word in the womb of the Virgin Mary. And at Jordan he descended upon Jesus and anointed him.²⁵ Babai is very clear on the point that it is God Himself who is the subject of the human salvation, and it is first and foremost a divine act.²⁶

In his discussions Babai does not deal with soteriology very much. Except for a few passing remarks, he concentrates his attention on the question of union of the two natures. The Word assumed flesh and united Himself to flesh and revealed Himself in flesh and manifested His divinity to men.²⁷ The created natures were unable to behold the glorious nature of His Godhead, and the Son appeared in the flesh to reveal the mystery of the Trinity.²⁸ His revelation in the flesh was for us and for our salvation.²⁹

23. Cf. *LU*, p. 39, 6/32, 5; 39, 22-3/32, 21-22.

24. Cf. *Ibid.* p. 40/32-33.

25. Cf. *Ibid.*

26. See THEODORE, *Hom. Cat.* V, 3 (TONNEAU, p. 103).

27. Cf. *LU*, p. 1, 20/1, 20-1, 26, 31f./22, 6-7; 40, 24f./33, 20f; 44, 29/36, 33-4; 58, 25ff./47, 14f; 103, 17/72, 24-5; 126, 30f./102, 13; 180, 8/145, 28; 233, 26f./190, 3; *TV* 299, 4/241, 16f.

28. *Creed of 612*: Cf. L. ABRAMOWSKI, *Nestorian Collection*, p. 152/90.

29. *LU* 1, 6-7/1, 6-7; 40, 28-30/33, 24-26; 36, 22-3/30, 6-7; 50, 24-5/41, 20-2; 57, 30/46, 25-6; 72, 21-2/58, 29f; 173, 23f./140, 16f; 215, 4ff/174, 12-17: "Through Him, in one spirit, we have access to the knowledge of truth and He delivered us from the power of darkness and led us to the true familiarity, and He took sin and affixed it to His cross and gave us propitiation and redemption in His blood, and by Him, is given the high priesthood in His Church."

CHAPTER VI

The Unity and Duality in Christ

In this chapter the discussion is on the various aspects of Babai's Christology. It will be treated under three articles preceded by two preambles.

Mar Babai himself states that the LU is about the divinity and the humanity and the parsopa of union.¹ Without any qualification whatsoever, he accepts the fact of the union of the two natures.² He believes firmly that it is the Word, the Second Qnoma of the Trinity who is united to our humanity. That at the angelic salutation to the Blessed Virgin Mary there effected a perfect and everlasting union in the womb of the Virgin, of the humanity and of the divinity in the one parsopa of Filiation of the Second Qnoma of the Trinity is also one of the basic Christological concepts, accepted by Babai as dogma. Babai has absolutely no doubt regarding the intimacy of the union. He speaks about the union of Christ as most intimate and inseparable as possible. He is a believing Christian whose faith is above every rational argument and metaphysical principle. That the Son is one and

1. Cf. LU, 1, 5-6/1,47; 2. 22-4/2, 18-20.

2. LU 36, 25-8/30, 9-13: "We accept and confess that there was effected the union, and that God the Word was united parsopically to our humanity, which He made with Him one Son in one dignity and power; this we believe and hold fast without doubt and without investigation"; LU, 166, 16-22/134, 24-30: "We, however, believe and hold, that there was effected the union of the two natures, i. e., of the two qnome, form of God, and form of servant, temple and its dweller, in one adhesion, in one name, in one power, in one adoration, the properties of both qnome being preserved, namely of the divinity and of the humanity of Christ in the one Parsopa of Filiation."

unique and He has two perfect natures in the union without mixture is also an unquestioned fact for Babai. His concern was to explain the duality in the union.³

Preambles

§ 1. Babai's Christ-Picture

Mar Babai's Christ picture is biblical and in accordance with the Tradition. The very first chapter of LU begins with this basic Christian affirmation of the believing Christian: "Jesus Christ is head of our life, and our hope and our God."⁴ Jesus Christ is our God.⁵ He is our Lord Jesus Christ, head of our life and our God.⁶ Christ is our hope who is present in our infirmities and in our feebleness and deficiency of our puerile knowledge, according to our faith in Him.⁷ He fore-knows everything because He is God eternally, and there is nothing which came to Him or occurred to His mind recently.⁸

Christ is our Lord and we are His servants; He is to be adored and we, with all the creatures, are His adorers because of the divinity, which is in Him, in one union, which is unbreakable and for ever. He is the Cause of our salvation and our life.⁹ Christ is the Principle of our life, and our God and our Teacher.¹⁰ He is our wisdom, our hope, our power and our consolation.¹¹

3. At the time of Babai, almost all the different groups of Christians were in agreement regarding the completeness of the divinity and of the humanity. The whole problem was centred around the question of union. Each group tried to explain it in its own way and found fault with the explanation of the other groups, because of a lack of understanding among them.

4. LU 2, 1/1, 25; cf. LU, 57, 26-7/46, 22-3; 199, 4-5/161, 4-5; CA f. 86ff.

5. LU, 6, 20/5, 18-19; CE (FRANKENBERG, p. 8-9).

6. LU, 27, 17/22, 23-4; 26, 31/22, 6; 236, 15-6/192, 11.

7. LU, 39, 28-9/32, 28; 57, 27-8/46, 23-25.

8. LU, 39, 29-31/32, 28-30.

9. LU, 139, 30-31, 140, 1.3/112, 35-113 3.

10. LU 160; 17/ 130; 2-3.

11. LU, 245, 18-9/199, 19-20.

The hope of all sincere adorers is strongly rooted in Him. All the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hidden in Him (Col. 2:3). He gives wisdom to the wise and intellect to the intelligent; He inspires and incites those who ask for the common good and teaches abundantly through the effusion of His Grace those which are beneficial to the future life.¹² Christ is the sublime head of the Church.¹³

§ 2. The Use of Concrete and Abstract Terms

In his exposition in the LU and other works, Babai makes use of concrete and abstract expressions side by side. He uses "humanity" for "man", and "man" for "humanity"; "divinity" for "Word", and "Word" for "divinity". On one and the same occasion he may use both, side by side. The Syrians did not find such usage difficult and it is in accordance with their liturgical tradition.¹⁴ Perhaps, they might have inherited it from Theodore, the Interpreter. Theodore uses concrete and abstract terms, in almost the same sense.¹⁵

12. LU, 2, 2ff./1, 26f.

13. LU, 51, 6/46, 33.

14. In the Persian Synodal tradition, the preference was for abstract terms, such as humanity and divinity. Thus Acacius in 486 (J. B. CHABOT, *Syn. Or.* 55/302), Joseph in 554 (*ibid.* 97/355), Iso'iahb I in 585 (*ibid.* p. 134-6/395-8; 194-5/454-5) and Sabariso in 596 (*ibid.* 197-8/457-8) use only abstract terms. But Ezekiel in 576 (*ibid.* 113/372), Gregory in 605 (210/474) and the Creed of 612 (p. 564-567/582-4) have both, side by side. Thomas of Edessa, a contemporary of Mar Aba, the Catholicos, uses them both (Cf. S. J. CARR, *Thomae Edesseni tractati de Nativitate Domini Jesu Christi*, Romae 1898, p. 54-56/40; 'Abdiso (14th c.) speaks in the same way (*Liber Margaritae*, 325/349). The cautious wording of some of the Synods may be to avoid opportunity for attack on the part of the adversaries.

15. The human nature meant for Theodore the "assumed man" and the "assumed man", the "human nature", just as "divine nature" essentially meant "God" or the "Son of God" and "Word", "the divine nature" (Cf. THEODORE, *Hom. Cat.* VIII, I. 13 (TONNEAU, p. 205-7. 187); *Comm. in Joh.* (J. M. VOSTE, p. 303-4/217); R. A. NORRIS, *Manhood and Christ*, p. 200; F. A. SULLIVAN, *The Christology of Theodore of Mopsuestia*, p. 207; K. MACNAMARA, *Theodore of Mopsuestia*, in *ITQ* 19 (1952), 269ff.

Babai says: "God the Word... assumed *the man* and joined him to Himself parsopically in one Filiation." In the same context we read, "God the Word assumed *our humanity* and joined it to Himself in one Filiation."¹⁶

Humanity meant for Babai, the perfect humanity, a man like all men, except sin, but not independent of the parsopa of Filiation of the Word. Divinity meant for him, perfect Qnoma, like the Father and the Holy Spirit, but after the union and assumption in the womb, *only* united with the humanity, for ever.

Art. I. The Starting Point of Babai

A synthesis of different traditions can be found in Babai. As a follower of the Antiochene Tradition, he begins with the historical Jesus Christ, ascending to his divinity. On the other hand, in certain parts he begins with the Word of God, the Second Qnoma of the Trinity and comes down to the union.

§ 1. The "Word"

It is God the Word who assumed our humanity. Word is the Second Qnoma of the Trinity. The term "Word" is indicative of the divine nature shared by the three divine Qnome equally and eternally. The natural, unique, and unchangeable property of the Word is the parsopa of Filiation, by which He is distinct from the Father and the Holy Spirit and related to them. The parsopa of Filiation is ontological and essential to the Word. The Word of God is perfect in everything as the Father and the Holy Spirit in nature, essence and substance. He required no other honour or exaltation than what He shared with the Father and the Holy Spirit. Everything visible and invisible was created through Him. He is almighty and all-knowing. As God, He knows everything and nothing could be

16. LU 54, 29-31/44, 25-27; 55, 8-9/44, 33-34; cf. also, *ibid.* 68, 11ff./55, 15ff.; 71, 15ff./57, 33ff.; 81/68; 105-7/74-5; 105/74; 157/127; 162/131; 163-4/132; 223/181, 26ff.; 230-1/187-8; 248/201, 23ff.; T VII, p. 256, 28/238, 1f.

added to His knowledge. Eternally, He has authority over everything and is God over all.¹

His divine nature with its attributes common to the three Qnome, cannot be shared with any creature. Such are His Eternity, Infinity and Incomprehensibility. But His parsopa of Filiation, with all its honour and glory could be communicated.

Babai speaks of the "humiliations" of the Word. It consists in His "coming down" and being united with the flesh from us:

Though He was God, begotten from the Father eternally, with the greatest humility He put on our humanity and dwelt in that temple unitively, in order to complete the adorable Economy for the renovation and salvation of all.²

Although he affirms that the Word assumed our humanity "with the greatest humility," he would not say that the Word is born from the Virgin or "the Word died." He makes a very subtle, rational distinction between "Word" and "Son". *Word* is pointing to the common nature (divinity) and the quoma, while *Son* is indicative of the particular Property of the nature, the parsopa of Filiation, which is incommunicable with the Father and the Holy Spirit, while communicable with the creatures. The two terms, Word and Son, speak of the two aspects of one and the same reality.

In opposing the Arians and the Apollinarians, Theodore had made such a distinction. He rejected the predication of all the attributes to the Word. According to him, whatever is predicated of a subject must be predicated by nature, so the physical actions and the human sufferings cannot be attributed to the Word by nature, but can be attributed to the Son or to Christ.³ In the Alexandrian tradition, it is possible to attribute all the predications to the Word. There the distinction

1. Cf. *LU*, 39-40/32-33.

2. *LU*, 48, 4-8/40, 14-17; cf. 63, 6ff./51, 4 ff.

3. Cf. R. A. GRIBER, *The Captain of our Salvation*, p. 211.

is only in time. Nestorius also made a distinction between the Word and the Son; but it was just a "diverse terminological significance" as Scipioni puts it.⁴ For Nestorius "Word" is a purely quidditative designation of the divinity of the Son. Nestorius was very careful to assert that the Word and the Son are not different ones.⁵

Here, Babai has inherited the Antiochene tradition from Nestorius. In the Seleucian Synodal declarations there is no such a distinction. That however, does not prove that it was not known to them prior to Babai.

§ 2. The Nicæan Creed

In the LU, in more than one place Babai refers to the Holy Fathers of Nicæa and their Symbol.⁶ They have clearly showed the divinity of the Son and the completeness of the natures in the one *parsopa*. As they have started with the one "Lord Jesus Christ" and not with "God the Word", Babai also follows that line in his exposition. In ch. 8, of LU, there is a part of the Nicæan Creed with an explanation. In his Liturgical Tradition, Babai has the Creed of Nicæa, as accepted by the Synod of Mar Isaac in 410 and till today it is the Creed of the Persian Church. He made an elaborate exposition of the Creed but it is lost.⁷

4. Cf. L. I. SCIPIONI, *Ricerche*, p. 59; cf. NESTORIUS, *LH*, 308-9; 262; 187; 166; 169-170; 209; 215-6, 261-2 (DRIVER).

5. Cf. LOOFS, *Nestoriana*, 295, 7-9; 308, 8-11: "I did not say that the Son was one and God the Word another; I said that God the Word was *by nature* one and the temple *by nature* another, *one Son by conjunction*"; cf. L. I. SCIPIONI, *Nestorio*, p. 391; 392: "It is clear that it is always a matter of the same person except that the term "Word" sees this (same) person in his divine nature as such, whereas "Son", "Lord" and "Christ" see him directly as a person. For this reason Nestorius can predicate of the person existence in both natures, human and divine" (390-1); IDEM, *Ricerche*, p. 57-59.

6. Cf. *LU*, 73/59; 232/188-9; 241-2/196-7; 6/5; 95/87.

7. Cf. *Histoire nestorienne*, II p. 529.

In the Creed of Nicaea two words are used to describe the incarnation: *sarkōthenta enanthrōpēsanta*. In the Syriac translation, the Creed of Mar Isaac employs *etgasam wetbarnas*.⁸ On one instance, Babai has the same expression as that of Isaac: *Etgasam wetbarnas*.⁹ On three other occasions, he has *etbasar wetbarnas*.¹⁰ For Babai *etgasam* and *etbasar* are synonymous.

Babai understands the Nicæan expression, "was incarnate and became man" as "assumed" or "taken" (*nsāb*). He finds proof for it in the Bible (Phil. 2: 7) and in the Fathers.¹¹ Although he does not say that the Nicæan Fathers said so, still he speaks of the Fathers, having used such an expression. On two occasions, "assumed" comes after the citation from the Nicæan Creed, "was incarnate and was made man" and in all four cases he refers to the Fathers.¹² Philoxenus also accepts this expression.¹³ Both Philoxenus and Babai might have been influenced by the common Edessan Tradition.¹⁴

The basis for Babai's interpretation was the Synod of 150 (of 381 or 382 of Constantinople). The document of 612 cites the letter of the 150 Fathers to the Western Bishops and there the word *nsāb* occurs; "God the Word is perfect God before all worlds and times. But at the fullness of time for

8. J. B. CHABOT, *Syn. Or.* 22, 30. The Nestorian Baptismal Creed has, *sarkothenta kai anthropon genomenon* (H. HAHN, *Bibliothek*, p. 145). The East Syrian Liturgy has *etgasam men rūhā dqudsā wahwā barnāsā*. With regard to the use of the expression among the various Syriac writers, cf. A. DE HALLEUX, *Philoxénienne du Symbole*, p. 308-309.

9. *LU*, 232, 8/188, 29.

10. *LU*, 58, 25-6/47, 14-5; 241, 18/196, 10-11; 95, 2-3/87, 27-28.

11. *LU*, 232, 5-8/188, 26-29; 73/59; 241/196.

12. *LU*, 232, 5-8/188, 26-9; 232, 23-5/189, 8-9; 241, 18/196, 9-11; 242, 23-4/197, 9-10.

13. Cf. A. DE HALLEUX, *Philoxène de Mabbog*, p. 153.

14. L. ABRAMOWSKI, *Babai der Grosse*, p. 335-336.

the salvation of men: he *took (sqal)* from us a complete man and dwelt in him."¹⁵

Theodore's commentary would have given Babai and the other Persians added authority for such an interpretation: "Our holy Fathers said "who was incarnate" so that you would understand that it was a perfect man that he took... And he took not only a body, but the whole man, composed of a body and an immortal and rational soul. He assumed him for our salvation and through him He won salvation for our life.¹⁶ Although the "Nestorian Baptismal Symbol" was in use among them and the "Nicaeanum" came later,¹⁷ the former does not contain the word, "assumed". The "expositio Fidei" of Ps. Athanasius, has the expression, "he assumed the man" (aneilēphen anthrōpon).¹⁸ It could also have influenced Babai and Philoxenus, and it is anterior to both of them. The Persian Synodal Tradition also might have helped Babai to formulate such an interpretation.¹⁹

Art. II. The Oneness of Christ

§ 1. Incarnation – Its Nature

God the Word the Second Qnoma of the Trinity, having the Parsopa of Filiation, assumed our humanity to His Parsopa and gave His parsopa to the man, formed in the womb of the

15. Cf. J. B. CHABOT, *Syn. Or.* p. 576/594; O. BRAUN, *Das Buch der Synhados*, p. 326; C. A. KNELLER, *Zum 2. Allgemeinen Konzil vom Jahre 381*, *ZkTh.* 27 (1903), p. 794.

16. THEODORE *Hom. Cat.* V, 19 (TONNEAU, p. 127); cf. V, 5, p. 107; V, 7, p. 109.

17. H. HAHN, *Bibliothek.* p. 144-146; J. GRIBOMONT, *Le Symbole de foi de Séleucie-Ctésiphon* (410), in *A Tribute to Arthur Vööbus*, Chicago 1977, p. 283-294.

18. *PG*, 25, 197ff.; H. HAHN, *ibid.* p. 194.

19. Iso'iahb I in 585 says, that "he descended, was incarnate and became man incontestably demonstrates the assumption (nasibūtā) of our humanity" (J. B. CHABOT, *Syn. Or.*, p. 134-5/396): Cf. also Ezekiel's Synod in 576 (*ibid.* 113, 27-8/372), and that of Sabariso in 598 (*ibid.* 202/463).

Blessed Virgin Mary. Thus the parsopa of Filiation of the Word became the parsopa of the thing formed in her. The Word is a perfect Qnoma and the humanity is a perfect qnoma as any other man.¹

Jesus of Nazareth possesses a fixed qnoma with his natural parsopa, such as height, weight, color etc., but he has no human filiation and independent existence. By his natural parsopa, he is Jesus of Nazareth, and not Peter nor John.² God the Word assumed the man Jesus and gave him His glorious parsopa of Filiation at the moment of his formation in the womb. At the same time, Word of God received the humble parsopa of the human nature and revealed Himself through it. The man, apart from the Word, and independent of Him and without union with Him, never existed and can never exist, not even for a moment. The human nature is formed to be united: formation and union were simultaneous.³

At the very moment of its formation, the human nature or man received the parsopa of Filiation and thus he became the Son of the Most High, because of the parsopa of the Word. But the human nature remained a perfect man, endowed with a rational soul and body. The Word did not take the place of the soul. He, in fact, was united to both body and soul.⁴

“The Word became flesh and dwelt in us” is understood as, “the Word assumed our nature and dwelt in it.” So by assuming our human nature - a perfect man - the Son of God became the Son of man; the Only Begotten became the First-Born of Mary.

§ 2. Christ is One

Repeatedly, all through the LU, Babai teaches that Christ is one and the Son is one. He condemns the accusation of

1. Cf. *TV* 300, 14f./242, 17f.

2. *Ibid.* p. 300. 31/242, 32-33.

3. *LU* 59, 13ff./47, 32ff.; 95/88; 133/107.

4. *LU*, 58, 29ff /47, 18ff.

his opponents that the Persians teach the error of two sons.⁵ He condemns also the Samosatan heresy.

In his divinity Christ is Son by nature; in his humanity, he is Son by union and assumption. It is the same son. One and the same is the Son of the Most High in heaven and in the womb of the Blessed Virgin. The one who is formed from her is called Son of the Most High by union with the Eternal Son of the Most High.⁶ Christ is Son in his humanity, not by adoption, but by union.⁷ One is Christ in his human nature and in his divine nature. One is Son in his human nature and in his divine nature. One is Christ, the Son of God and the Son of man.⁸

The principle of the union or unity in Christ is the Parsopa of Filiation. The parsopa of Filiation of the Eternal Son became the parsopa of the man formed in the womb. The Son of God assumed the man to His parsopa of Filiation and gave His glorious parsopa to the man formed in her. Thus the parsopa of Filiation of the Word became the parsopa of man. Except the very divine nature of the Word, which cannot be imparted to anyone, all what the Word has or is, are of the man, formed in the womb by union with the Word. The union did not take away the distinction of natures—God and man—but remaining what He is, God the Word, united the man to His parsopa of Filiation. At the same time, the Word assumed the lowly state of the man and it became his own, not by nature, but by union. All what the man has or is, are

5. *LU*, 152, 17. 20. 28/123, 19-20. 22. 29-30; 154, 9ff./124, 31ff.; 156, 14/126, 28-29; 158, 3/127, 38; 158, 21/128, 11.

6. *LU*, 223, 9ff/181, 9ff.; 105-6/74.

7. *LU*, 62, 9-10/50, 11-12; *hadū msīhā batraihēn hadū brā batraihēn*. 61, 24-25/49, 32-4; 134, 11-3/108, 7-10; 137, 9ff./110, 23ff.; 223, 26-9/181, 26-30; 105-6/74; 133, 14ff./107, 15ff.; 59, 16/47, 35; 69/56, 1ff.

8. *LU*, 131, 18-9/105, 32; 93-4/86, 32-4; 121/97, 34-6; 122/98, 37-8; 127/103, 4; 131/105, 25ff.; 157, 27-8/127, 34; 159, 8-10/128, 33-4; *TV*, 290, 20-5/241, 32-6; 302, 16ff/244, 1-26.

of the Word by union. So everything can be spoken of the one Son, both the glorious ones of the Word and the humble ones of the man.⁹

Christ is one in his Filiation; the Son is one in his anointing. There is only one honour and adoration to Christ. The double qnome is not against the most intimate union between the two natures in the one *parsopa*. There is no distinction between Christ and Son. Christ and Son are not one and another. Christ is the Son and the Son is Christ (*msihā*).

This *parsopa* of Filiation by which Christ is one unique Son is called by several names. It is called the "*parsopa of union*" (*parsōpā dahdaiūtā*). It is indicative of the uniting element namely the Sonship, which is one. It is ontological, because it is in the very property of the Word. Babai takes this expression from Nestorius.¹⁰ According to Babai, the name "Christ" is also a *parsopa* of union, in the sense that "Christ" is indicative of the two natures. It is the result of the union achieved through the *parsopa* of Filiation. Since the *parsopa*, of Filiation is one, the names also are spoken as of one.¹¹

Babai calls this unique *parsopa* of Filiation, "*common parsopa*" (*parsōpā gawanaīā*), because it belongs to both the qnome, to the one by nature (naturally), and the other by union and assumption. This common *parsopa* is not the result of a fusion of the two natural *parsope*.¹² The name "Christ" is also a common *parsopa*. With regard to this concept also, Babai is

9. LU, 162, 13-163, 13/131, 20-132, 10.

10. NESTORIUS, LH, p. 211, 5; 212, 3, 7f. and parallels (BEDJAN); Cf. L. ABRAMOWSKI, *Untersuchungen* p. 222; L. I. SCRIPIONI, *Ricerche*, p. 59ff.

11. LU, 99/69; 209/169. For Babai, the concept of *parsopa* was not a very rigid juridical one. He was not bothered about the number of *parsopa*: could be many. But the *parsopa of Filiation*, which brings about the union, and oneness, is unique.

12. LU, 162, 11/131, 17-8; 163, 14/132, 11-3; 164, 8/132, 33-35; 164, 17/133, 7.

indebted to Nestorius, who speaks of *prosōpon koinon*.¹³ Many have misunderstood this common *parsopa*, as, the result of a fusion of two *parsope*.

It is also called the *parsopa of Economy* (*parsōpā damd-abranūtā*). The *parsopa* which is natural to the Word, becomes the *parsopa of Economy*, because it is the Son who became man. It is through His adorable *pasopa* that He undertook all the salvific Economy for our renovation and salvation. The *parsopa of Economy* is in contrast with the *parsopa of the Father* and the *parsopa of the Holy Spirit*. The *parsopa of the Father* is not the *parsopa of Economy*, nor of the *Holy Spirit*.¹⁴ This concept also is seen in Nestorius.¹⁵

It is also called "His *parsopa*" referring, of course, to the one unique *parsopa of the Word*.¹⁶

§ 3. Christological Union Compared with the Trinitarian Union

The Christological union is explained by the anterior Trinitarian formula. In the Trinity there is absolute oneness.

Gregory Nazianzen is the first one to make use of the Trinitarian union to explain the Christological union. But Gregory was careful to make the distinction. The elements in Christ are distinct one from another; but they are not persons, only elements constituting one Christ: *ouk allos de kai allos; legō de allo kai allo*. But the Trinity are persons: *allos kai allos*.¹⁷ Nestorius takes up this analogy:¹⁸

13. NESTORIUS, *LH* (BEDJAN), p. 219, 6; 250, 3 and parallels: Cf. L. ABRAMOWSKI, *Untersuchungen*, p. 222; L. I. SCIPIONI, *Ricerche*, p. 60.

14. *LU*; 40, 27/33, 22-3, 72, 8/58, 16; 103, 19-20/72, 27-8; 106, 8/74, 33-5; 213, 24/173, 2-3; 262, 12/212, 29; 272, 6; 220, 8; 88, 26/82, 29; 92, 5-6/85, 9.

15. NESTORIUS. *LH*, p. 55. 414. 305 (BEDJAN); L. I. SCIPIONI, *Ricerche*, p. 60.

16. *LU*, 32. 41. 44. 45. 46. 48. 49. 50. 52; *TV*, 237. 241. 242. 246 (tr.).

17. GREGORY NAZIANZEN, *Ep. 101 to Cledonius*, *PG*, 37, 180.

18. NESTORIUS. *LH*, p. 207 (DRIVER).

Confess, then, the Taker as He took, and the taken as it was taken, wherein each is one and another, and wherein there is one and not two, after the same manner of the Trinity.

In another place, also Nestorius teaches the same thing¹⁹

As in the Trinity there is one ousia of three prosopa, and three prosopa of one ousia, here there is one prosopon of two ousias and two ousias of one prosopon.

Nestorius bases his arguments on Gregory's epistle to Cleodnius. He refers to it more than once in the context, where he discusses this problem.²⁰ He quotes him to substantiate the two ousias and the one prosopon in Christ.

For one thing and another are those of which our Saviour is, if the invisible and the visible are not the same God on the one hand who was man and man on the other who was made God."²¹

In another place he cites again,²²

There are indeed two natures, God and man, but not two sons; for one thing and another are those from which our saviour is, but not one and another - far from it.

From the above citations it is clear that Nestorius knew the distinction made by Gregory. In the Syriac translation, for both

19. *Ibid.* p. 247; cf. also, p. 309.

20. *Ibid.* p. 255. 260. 200. 215. 221. 224. 231. 230. 237. 243.

21. *LH*, p. 200 (DRIVER); p. 280 (BEDJAN): "'hrenā gēr wahrenā hanūn dmenhūn itaw porūqan ēnhū dlā hī kad hī itēh hai dlā methazyānā uhai dmethazyānā: Alahā men de'tbarnās ubarnasā dēn de'talah'".

22. *LH*, p. 215 (DRIVER); P. 300 (BEDJAN): "kyana men trēn; Alahā ubarnasā bnayā dēn lā trēn; 'hren gēr wahrēn itaihūn hanūn dmenhūn itaw porūqan; lā dēn 'hrenā wahrenā has." Cf. also, *LH* 220 (DRIVER); 307 (BEDJAN): "'hren gēr wahren itaw: Alahā ubarnasā; lā dēn 'hrenā wahrenā itaw: elā bpar-sōpā had bahdayūtā bālahā de'tbarnas: ubarnasā de'talah."

cases the same words are used: God is one and man another but he is not one and another.²³

Even though different words were not used, the difference was very clearly meant by Nestorius. He spoke of the duality of the natures (ousias) and the oneness of the prosopon.

In addition to the citation in LH Gregory's Epistle to Cleodnius was cited by the document of 612 of the Persians.²⁴ And from both of them Babai was aware of this distinction.

Babai makes use of the Trinitarian Union to explain the Christological Union. Just as the three divine Qnome are one eternal nature and essence and existence the two natures and two qnome (eternal and temporal) constitute one Son: the humanity of the Son by the union with the Eternal Son is One Son.²⁵ Just as we believe in one God, existing in three Qnome, we believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, having two qnome, eternal and temporal. Though there are three Qnome we do not count the Trinity: there is not one, two, three, but only one, one one. The three Qnome are united in one unique divine

23. LH (DRIVER), p. 220; (BEDJAN), p. 307: "They, (the natures) are one thing and another, and He is not one and another in the parsopa" (*'hrēn wa'hrēn: ulā 'hrenā wa'hrenā bpar-sōpā*). *Ibid.* p. 221 (DRIVER); p. 307 (BEDJAN): "He is conceived as one thing and another in natures. But he is without distinction in the union; in view of the natures which are distinct, it is considered one thing and another" (*'hrenā wa'hrenā metra'ē bakyanē waddā purās bahdayūtā. bmetā dēn dakyanē dapriin 'hrenā wa'hrenā ap itaw umetra'ē*). *Ibid.*, p. 233 (DRIVER); p. 320 (BEDJAN): "He in one is the prosopon and another and another in the ousias" (*bpar-sōpā had; ubusyas 'hrenā wa'hrenā*). After a citation from Ambrose, Nestorius says, "Two natures, one thing and another" (*trēn kyanēn 'hrenā wahrenā*) (*Ibid.* p. 245 (DRIVER); p. 339 (BEDJAN)). In another place too Nestorius says, "We speak of one and another in the natures, but of one prosopon in the union for the use of one another" (*Ibid.* p. 247). In an 8th c. ms. in the British Museum we read the extract No. IX (of Nestorius), compiled by a Monophysite: "Not one and another; not one Son and again another Son" (Cf. *PO* 13, p. 164-165. 200).

24. J. B. CHABOT, *Sjn. Or.* 576/593.

25. *LU*, 29, 21-3/24, 18-19.

nature, one power, one will, one dominion and excellence. But at the same time, each Qnoma of the Trinity preserves the property of each, without confusion, infinitely and inseparably and the whole divine nature is acknowledged in each Qnoma.

In the same way the two natures of Christ are preserved in the one parsopa of the Son of God with the properties of each qnoma, preserved without confusion; and each qnoma is acknowledged in the same parsopa, not separately. That which is of the divine qnoma by nature and fixedly, pertains to the human qnoma by union and assumption, and viceversa.²⁶ Thus Babai makes a distinction between "naturally and fixedly" on the one hand, and "assumptively, parsopically and unitively" on the other.²⁷

The three divine Qnome are entirely one without any limitation (*unum quid: had enūn kul bkul*).²⁸ In the same way the two natures in Christ constitute an absolute oneness, *unum quid: had medem*.²⁹ The expression, *unum quid: had medem* is

26. LU 71, 1ff./57, 20ff.; 71, 18ff./57, 35ff.; 162, 6ff./131, 11ff.; 166, 1ff./134, 9ff.; 169, 28-170, 3/137, 8-13; 174/140, 30ff. HC.

27. That which is of one qnoma naturally and fixedly, is of the other qnoma by union and assumption in the one parsopa. For example, *anointing* pertains to the humanity by nature (*kianāit*) and fixedly (*qbi'āit*); it is of the divine Qnoma, assumptively and parsopically (*nsībāit parsōpāit*). The name "Son of man" fixedly and naturally pertains to the human nature; assumptively to the divinity (LU 71, 1ff./57, 25ff.; 168, 6ff./136, 1ff.; 162, 6ff./131, 11ff.) The parsopa of Filiation pertains to the Word preeminently, fixedly and naturally (*maranāit, qbi'āit, kyanāit*) while assumptively, and unitively to the humanity (*nsībāit, mhaidāit*): LU. 166, 1ff./134, 9ff.; 168, 1ff./135, 28ff.

28. LU, 39, 9-10/32, 8-10.

29. LU, 245, 16/199, 14; 228, 19, 23/185, 31, 35; 247, 23, 201, 4 (*had medem: quid unum; aliquid unum*); 68, 28-9/55, 32; 69, 15/56, 11; 127, 21/102, 33; 232, 7/188, 28 (*a(I)k d'al had: tanquam de uno*).

taken from Theodore of Mopsuestia.³⁰ *Unum quid* is spoken because of the parsopa of Filiation, not because of the natures.³¹

Babai makes use of the Trinitarian analogy to Christology, to show the most intimate unity existing between the two natures and the unconfused existence of the two natures in the one parsopa of Filiation. In both cases - Trinity and Christ - "while united, they are distinct, while distinct, united."³²

The two natures are not one and another in the Parsopa; they are one and another only in the natures and qnome. The unity or oneness is in the Parsopa of Filiation.³³

§ 4. Union is not a mixture

Apollinarius considered the union of the Word with the flesh as a mixing (*mixis krasis, sygchrisis*) as an equivalent of *henōsis*.³⁴ Nonetheless Gregory Nazianzen and Gregory of Nyssa accepted the same vocabulary to describe the union.³⁵ Nestorius accepted it on the authority of Gregory and spoke of the union as mixture: *sygchrisis*.³⁶ The Eutychians upheld the doctrine of

30. LU 246, 7-8/199, 35; 246, 18/200; THEODORE, *Hom. Cat. VIII*, 10 (TONNEAU, p. 200-1): *had medem bparsōpā*.

31. LU, 246 18f./200, 9f.

32. LU, 59, 18-24/48, 2-7; [245, 13-7/199, 13-16; 248, 22-24/201, 36-202, 3.

33. LU 110, 2-3/88, 35-37: "aliud forma Dei et aliud forma servi, aliud qui habitat et aliud ille in quo habitat, aliud Deus et aliud homo secundum naturam et hypostaticam"; TV, 302, 7-26/243, 28-244, 12: Vaschalde translates: "alius est assumens et alius est assumptus" (243, 32); it has to be corrected to "aliud est assumens et aliud est assumptus" as in LU. The natures of Christ and their qnome are not *alius et alius* for Babai.

34. APOLLINARIUS, *Frag.* 10: 134, 147; (LIETZMANN).

35. GREGORY NAZIANZEN. *Ep. 101 ad Cledon.*, PG 37. 180 A; GREGORY OF NYSSA, in PG: 45, 1276C.

36. LH (DRIVER). p. 260. 224: "He is not one and another; far from it, but one in the mixture (*Sygchrisis*), God who was made man and man who was made God."

mixture (*mauzagā*) and confusion (*suhlapā*) basing on Gregory³⁷, although Gregory did not teach any confusion of the natures in the union.

In the early Syriac tradition, Ephrem used the word "mix". Philoxenus testifies that Ephrem made use of such expressions, because at the time of Ephrem, Syriac did not have proper technical vocabulary.³⁸ Philoxenus, who had his training in the School of Edessa, had very widely employed the concepts *mauzāgā* and *hultānā*, in Christological and non-Christological discussions. The concept of mixture was a key concept in Philoxenus.³⁹ Philoxenus, however, excluded any idea of confusion (*bulblā*) or corruption (*hubalā*) or commixture (*hbukyā*)⁴⁰. He uses the words *mauzāgā* and *hultānā* to indicate the union of soul and body, of Word and humanity, of the believer with the Holy Spirit and of the believer with Jesus Christ.⁴¹

Philoxenus was carelessly using "mixture" without meaning what his opponents meant by the word. He would say the soul is mingled (*hlīṭā*) with the body.⁴² For him it is through a change which takes place when the blood and semen are united, that the new baby is created. It is one of his

37. Cf. BARHEBRAEUS. *Mnarat Qudsē*, IV, PO 31, 206-9; Barhebraeus tries to explain the use of Gregory (*ibid.* p. 213). He cites from the *Homily on Nativity* by Nazianzen which gives the opposite expressions: no mixture, nor commixture (*lā mauzagā ulā hultānā*). But this part is not evident in the extant homilies in Greek (*ibid.*).

38. Cf. PHILOXENUS. *Lettre aux moines de Senoun*, 51/42; EPHREM, *De Nativitate*, VIII. 2 (ed. BECK, CSCO 186/187, p. 59, 8-10/51, 7-9)

39. Cf. R.C. CHESNUT, *Three Monophysite Christologies*, p.66.

40. Cf. PHILOXENUS, *De Uno e Sancta Trinitate*, 8. fols. 75rb-rc; *Prologue johannique*, p. 114-119/111-117; *Tractatus tres*, p. 39-41/35-36. 151/114. 201/150; *Lettre aux moines de Senoun*, p. 9/8. 15/13; A. DE HALLEUX, *Philoxène de Mabbog*, p. 231. 387, n. 31.

41. PHILOXENUS, *Hom X (Homilies, introduction, translation, and notes by E. LEMOINE, SChr. 44, Paris 1956)*, n. 408. 358; XI, n. 476; XIII, n. 570. 571. 577; IX, n. 317. 324; XII, 497; XIII, n. 526.

42. *Hom. XIII*, n. 511.

models for the union of Word with the humanity. But he denies any idea of a change in the incarnation.⁴³

Jacob of Sarug, following the Edessan tradition, employs the term *hultānā* in a variety of senses.⁴⁴

The Cyrillian position was considered by the Nestorians as resulting in a mixture; hypostatic union would naturally result in a mingling of the natures. Hence the followers of Nestorius opposed them. Severus himself speaks of such opposition from the part of the Nestorians.⁴⁵ Both Cyril and the Monophysite leaders including Severus opposed any idea of a transformation or mingling of the properties in Christ.⁴⁶

Severus argued that the analogy of a union of two material substances could not be used to explain the union of

43. *Tractatus tres*, p. 151/114: "The Word was not changed into flesh, when he was embodied in it, nor was the flesh turned into the nature of the Word when He was united to it. Nor again were the natures mixed with each other like water in wine - those things that by means of their mixture destroy their natures - or like colours and darkness."

44. Cf. R. C. CHESNUT, *op. cit.* p. 132- 136.

45. Severus quotes from a lost dialogue of Nestorius, preserved in part by Cyril, against whom it was written. In it a "Theopaschite" explains his doctrine of the union, and the Orthodox (Nestorian) refutes it: "The Theopaschite says: 'What do you think of an egg-shell of water that has been poured into the sea?' The Orthodox says: 'What else except that the unstable addition of the water has disappeared in the great volume of the sea.'" The Theopaschite goes on to explain that the same is true in the Incarnation: "The humanity is transformed into the divinity" (SEVERUS, *Letter*, XXV, p. 235-6 (PO. 36); CYRIL, *Adv. Nest.* 11, 7).

46. CYRIL, *Ep. to John of Antioch* (Ep. 39): Cf. J. STEVENSON, *Creeds*, p. 292. SEVERUS, *Letter*, 1, p. 179 (PO.12): Commenting on the expression of Gregory Nazianzen regarding mixture Severus says, "Do not let the term mingle disturb you; for he used it very clearly and without danger, with the intention of denoting the primary union".

divinity and humanity.⁴⁷ He noticed the basic mistake in thinking that spiritual substances could be mixed as the material substances. But there were those who spoke in terms of "mixture" and those who opposed vehemently any such idea.

The council of Chalcedon had already taught that the union of the two natures is without confusion, without change, without division and without separation (*asygchutōs, atreptōs, adiairetōs, achoristōs*).⁴⁸ In his attack on the anathemata of St. Cyril, Theodoret rejected such expressions like *krasis* and *sygchusis*.⁴⁹ For Nemesius, the relation of the Word with the humanity is *amikton kai asygkuton*.⁵⁰

Babai says that God the Word assumed the form of servant and dwelt in it unitively in one adhesion "without mixture, without admixture, without commixture and without confusion" and made him one son with Him for ever.⁵¹ In the same chapter, he repeats the idea once again, "without confusion, without mixture, without admixture, keeping the properties of both natures in their qnome in one adhesion of one

47. SEVERUS, *Letter*, X, p. 203 (PO, 12); *Letter*, I, p. 179-180 (PO, 12): "The basic mistake of those who mix or confuse the two natures or hypostases in Christ is that they are thinking in materialistic terms, as though the two natures in Christ are material substances which could be mixed together.

48. Cf. COD, p. 62, 33-34; The Syriac equivalents are: *lā suhlapā, ulā sugnaīā ulā pūlagā, ulā pūrasā*: cf. F. SCHULTHESS, *Die syrischen Kanones der Synoden von Nicaea bis Chalcedon*, Berlin 1908, p. 157, 16-17; This syriac translation (Ms. A) is made in 501 A. D. in Mabboug (*ibid.* p. III); Timothy Aelurus, the Monophysite Patriarch of Alexandria (457-477) in his refutation of the Symbol of Chalcedon (extant in Syriac in a ms. of the 8th c.) uses: *lā bulblā, ulā suhlapā, ulā pūrasā* (PO, 13, p. 230).

49. THEODORET, *Reprehensio*, in ACO I, 1, 6, 114, n. 19.

50. NEMESIUS, *De Natura Hominis*, PG 40, 608A; The soul is united to the body "atreptos kai asygkutos" (*ibid.* 601B); he rejected the example of wine and water to explain the union of body and soul (*ibid.* 592-3).

51. Cf. LU, 56, 26-7/45, 32-3: "lā mmazga'it lā hliṭa'it lā hbika'it lā blīla'it."

Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God.”⁵² The last reference reads, “without confusion, without mixture, without admixture, without composition, without parts.”⁵³ If we put the terms into Greek, they read, *asygchutōs*, *akratōs*, *amiktōs*, *asynthetōs*, *ameristōs*,⁵⁴ It appears that Babai is opposing the different philosophical schools and dissociates the divine union from all of them. *Asygchutōs* could be against the Stoic *sygchusis*; *akratōs* against the Stoic and Aristotalian *krasis*; *amiktōs* against the Plotinian mixing (*ememikto*); *asynthetōs*, against the Aristotalian *synthesis*; and the latter in concrete could be against the Neo-Chalcedonian *henōsis kata synthesisin*. Babai understands the Neo-Chalcedonian and Monophysite positions (and also the Cyrillian position) as leading to a mixture of the properties of the divinity and humanity.

Babai rejects the example of water and wine to describe the divine union.⁵⁵ It is the Aristotalian example of *krasis*. The Stoics employed it for their purpose. Gregory of Nyssa used the comparison of Christ’s humanity with a drop of vinegar that is dissolved in the Sea of Divinity.⁵⁶ Theodoret of Cyrus rejected the image of the drop in the Sea. Instead of vinegar, he has “a drop of honey”; he rejected it because it implied a mixture.⁵⁷

Babai makes use of the example of Sun to illustrate the unmixed existence of the two natures. The Neoplatonists have largely used it, and so did Nemesius to illustrate the body-soul

52. LU, 57, 14-8/46, 11-4: “lā blīla’it lā mmazga’it lā hliṭa’it.”

53. LU, 230, 20-1/187, 18-9; “lā blīla’it lā mmazga’it lā hliṭa’it, lā markaba’it, la mnata’it.”

54. Cf. L. ABRAMOWSKI, *Babai der Grosse*, p. 331.

55. LU, 74/60, 25; 248/201, 28

56. GREGORY OF NYSSA, *Adv. Apoll.* 42: PG 45, 1224.

57. PG, 83, 153D.

relation.⁵⁸ Theodoret employed the same to describe the un-mixed existence of the two natures of Christ in the union.⁵⁹

Babai produces it as an example from the Fathers.⁶⁰ The Sun has light and heat. But the air filling the atmosphere does not mix with the light and heat. The Sun is distinct from the light, its heat and the air. Each of them is different. But in one space, we have the illuminating Sun, the brilliant light, and the heat of the Sun, and the air, without any kind of mixture or confusion with them. Each of them exists without any kind of mixture.⁶¹

§ 5. Union Expressed in Various Ways

Chapter 21 of the LU deals specifically with the question of the different ways of expressing the union of the two natures in Christ. Babai makes an analysis and comparison of the basic Antiochene christological terms and evaluates them. He says that theologians use different terms to express the "adorable Economy" i.e., the union of the two natures in the Incarnate Son. First comes the Antiochene writers' usage of the different terms, followed by Babai's.

Diodore made use of the expressions, "assumed" and "dwelt" and the example of king and his purple:

"Indeed, in the Virgin's womb, the Indweller formed for Himself a temple; and He was not far from it, but filled it with His own glory and wisdom."⁶²

58. NEMESIUS, *De Natura Hominis*, PG 40, 597 B: "As the presence of the Sun transforms the air into light, making the air luminous by uniting light with air, at once maintaining them distinct and melting them together, so likewise the soul is united to the body and yet remains distinct from it."

59. THEODORET, *Dialogue*, II (NPNF, second Series, 3) p. 197.

60. Cf. BASIL, *De Spiritu Sancto*, IX, 22: PG 32, 109 A.

61. LU, 52, 1-54, 2/42, 18-44, 2.

62. Cf. SEVERUS, *Contra Grammaticum*, III, 15 (CSCO, 94, p. 178: citation from Diodore).

"We worship the purple because of the one who wears it, the temple because of the one who indwells it, the form of servant because of the form of God, the lamb because of the High Priest, the one who was assumed because of the One who assumed, the one who was fashioned in the Virgin's womb because of the Creator of all."⁶³

Theodore of Mopsuestia employed a variety of expressions to denote the union of the two natures in Christ: union, assumption, indwelling, adhesion, putting on and conjunction. Theodore understands the "becoming" (Jn 1: 14) as "assuming" (Phil. 2: 7).⁶⁴ He clearly teaches that God the Word assumed our nature, body and soul, a perfect man from us.⁶⁵ He speaks of the union as the Word "putting on the man".⁶⁶ He makes use of the indwelling framework also.⁶⁷ This union is "exact conjunction", "wonderful and sublime conjunction".⁶⁸

63. *Ibid.* III, 25, p. 33-34.

64. Cf. *Hom. Cat.* VII, 1 (TONNEAU, p. 161): Theodore uses four expressions together in one context; "He took our very nature; he clothed himself with it, and dwelt in it so as to make it perfect, through sufferings; and he united himself with it; Cf. THEODORE, *De Incarn.* VII, (H. B. SWETE, II, p. 296); *Contra Eunomium*, 18 (L. ABRAMOWSKI, *Nestorian Collection*, p. 179-180/107).

65. Cf. *Hom. Cat.* VIII, p. 193: "He took our nature"; *ibid.* V; 5: "And for our salvation, he took upon himself to become man and to manifest himself to all; and he took to himself all that (belongs) to the nature of man"; *ibid.* V, 11: "Christ had to assume not only a body, but also a soul; or viceversa, first the soul had to be assumed, and then the body because of the soul"; V, 14; V, 19: "Our holy Fathers said, 'who was incarnate', so that you would understand that it was a perfect man that he took...and he took not only a body, but the whole man, composed of a body and an immortal and rational soul. He assumed him for our salvation and through him he won salvation for our life"; Cf. H. B. SWETE, II, p. 315.

66. Cf. *Hom. Cat.* VII, 1, p. 161; III, 5, p. 59.

67. Cf. *In Ps.* 44, 9a (DEVRESSE, 290, 13-15); *In Ps.* 2, 6, p. 11, 15-6.

68. THEODORE, *Frag. De Incarn.* VIII, 62 (ed. E. SACHAU, 69; *Hom. Cat.* VI, 4, p. 137; VIII, 10, p. 201; LEONTIUS, *frag.* VI (SWETE, II, p. 299).

Because of the 'exact conjunction', there is only one unique I, "...When they say as of one (*a(i)kd'al had*), that which belongs to either one of them (the natures), we understand what a wonderful and sublime conjunction is effected (between them)".⁶⁹ In order to explain the union, Theodore uses the analogy of husband and wife: "Who are no longer two parsope, but one, though it is evident that the natures are distinct".⁷⁰ Theodore introduces the body-soul analogy to express the unity. Considered separately, body and soul are two and even in the union the two are not confounded, because the soul is immortal and the body is mortal. Yet the two are one: "unum quid": *had medem*. Taken separately, none of the two alone is said, man, unless with some qualification, such as exterior man and interior man. In the same way (*ton auton dē tponon*) the unity of prosopon in Christ is achieved.⁷¹

Nestorius had several terms to designate the unity. The most preferred one, however, was conjunction (*synapheia*); he calls it the close conjunction,⁷² a union⁷³, and an indwelling.⁷⁴ It is an assumption and putting on: "Being in the form of God, I am clothed in the form of a servant".⁷⁵ Christ took

69. THEODORE, *Hom. Cat* VIII, 10, p. 201; VIII, 11, p. 203.

70. H. B. SWETE, II, p. 318 f.

71. *Ibid.* p. 299.

72. LOOFS, *Nestoriana*, 292, 1-4: "But I say this for you to learn how close a conjunction (*synapheia*) existed between the Godhead and the flesh of the Lord, visible in the child"; Cf. also, 327, 4; 299, 19-21; 340, 17f; 176, 15-17; 337, 22-23; 338, 5-6. 15-16; 340. 7. 17-18; 267, 5-6; for further reference, cf. *Chalkedon*, I, p. 223, n. 41; SEVERUS, *Letter*, 25, *PO*, 12, 234.

73. LH (DRIVER) 158. 228. LOOFS, *Nestoriana*, p. 197 f.

74. LH 233: "For I have called the 'dweller' one who by all means dwells in the nature; and the dweller is he who dwells in whom there is dwelling, and he has his prosopon, while he in whom, there is dwelling has the prosopon of him who dwells"; LOOFS, *Nestoriana*, 174, 26-175, 11; 270, 8-9; 299 10; 340, 10-14; 245-6; 290, 10; According to Cyril, Nestorius defends an ordinary and simple indwelling, which is extrinsic. He accuses Nestorius for not speaking of *henōsis* but only of *synapheia* (*Contra Nestorium*, I, 8; *ACO*, I, 1, 6. 37-38.

75. LOOFS, *Nestoriana*, 358, 1-4; 298; LH, 90 f.; 218 (DRIVER).

the form of a servant.⁷⁶ Nestorius makes use of the example of man to illustrate the unity of Christ.⁷⁷ He calls the union a mixture (*sygchrasis*) on the authority of Gregory Nazianzen; but he was careful to exclude any kind of confusion of the natures.

Babai inherits these and other traditions from the Fathers and presents his own views. There are six basic terms, namely assumption, indwelling, temple, vestment, adhesion, and union. Babai arranges three pairs in ch. 21: assumption and indwelling, indwelling and vestment, indwelling and temple.⁷⁸ The meaning of these terms was explained in a previous article.⁷⁹ Babai says that the adorable union is all these and above all these. All these terms have their limitations, but the union is an inexplicable mystery.⁸⁰ Since there is no word corresponding to the wonderful mystery, different terms are needed and they express one or the other aspect of the mystery. It is ineffable, unspeakable, inscrutable, indivisible, and unmixed and theologians use different expressions to denote this union.⁸¹ Each of them expresses a part of the truth, which the other terms may not be able to express.

The most commonly used expression by Babai is union. This union is called assumption, the second preferred expression. Assumption is equivalent to the Nicæan concept, "was incarnate and became man" (*etgasam wetbarnas*). Assumption alone indicates "the diverse natures in their properties," and the Assumer and the assumed in the one *parsopa* of Filiation and domination.⁸² This union is more than assumption; not all the assuming is indwelling. Babai brings the example of Adam and Eve: Eve is taken from Adam by God; we do not

76. LOOFS, *ibid.* 275, 1-5; 298.

77. *Ibid.* 330-1.

78. Cf. LU, 227/185.

79. See above p. 91-93.

80. Cf. LU, 230/187, 12 ff.; 36/30; 37/30; 38/31; 248/201; 252/204.

81. LU, 166, 10-11/134, 18-20: "We do not have an exact similitude by which we can demonstrate the mode of this adorable union."

82. Cf. LU, 231/187, 25-30; 232/188, 35 ff.

say "He indwells in her."⁸³ "Taking" is a biblical expression (Phil. 2: 7). This expression excludes any kind of mixing of the properties of the natures.⁸⁴

Hence the expression "assumption" or "taking" has several advantages: It indicates exactly the two natures in their properties, in their proper qnome without any kind of mixture. Since the assumption is unitively to the one parsopa of Filiation of the Assumer, it is clearly indicative of the union and oneness. It shows us the sublime honour of the assumed with the Assumer in the union. It is a biblical expression and was used by the Fathers.

For Babai, there is difference between indwelling and putting on the vestment and union. We put on, he explains it, our clothes; but it is never said that we indwell in our clothes, nor do we say that we are united to our clothes. Fish dwell in water, but nobody says that they put on water.⁸⁵ The Word of God put on the nature of our humanity; more than that, he dwelt in it and is united with it in one ineffable union. The man of our Lord is called the vestment or dress; it does not mean that there was no union as the dress of a man and that it was exterior to him as the dress of a man.⁸⁶ Christ's dress - his humanity - is ever united, and never separated, and belonging to him for ever. The dress and the one who dresses it are not one and the same, and they do not constitute one nature and one qnoma.⁸⁷ In order to show the distinction of the natures, this example of dress helps. Just as the dress hides the members of the body, the divinity was hidden in the humanity. Since it is assumption, it is not a simple putting on. The Word put it on by assuming. It is His dress, belonging

83. Cf. *LU* 227, 30-228, 3/185, 10-13.

84. Cf. *LU*, 232/188, 23ff; 232/189, 5-7: "Assumption by the Assumer shows us also the sublime honour of the assumed with the Assumer."

85. *LU*, 228/185, 14-18.

86. *LU*, 233/189, 23ff.

87. *LU*, 241, 3ff /195, 33ff; 242/197, 10ff.

to Him in the one union, for ever.⁸⁸ Babai refers to the Fathers for his authority, without mentioning them by name.⁸⁹

This union is called adhesion or conjunction. Man and woman adhere to each other; fish adheres to water: our dress adheres to our skin, but they do not constitute a union. So there is a difference between adhesion and union. In the union of humanity and divinity, "unum quid-had medem" is constituted in one parsopa of Filiation,⁹⁰ But neither between water and fish, nor between dress and the skin, is the "unum quid", because of the parsopa of union, so that, the fish is called water and water, fish; and we, our dress, and our dress, we. All things united are not called adhered. Body and soul are united, but they are not adhered. Adhesion makes clear the distinction of the properties.⁹¹

Even though the Christians are united to Christ in faith and in one direction of Christ, and in the spiritual birth, and by the bond of charity to one another, we do not say, we are adhered to one another; we do not dwell in one another, nor are we temples of one another. The parts of a house adhere one another, but they do not indwell mutually. The adhesion of husband and wife is no indwelling, nor do they mutually put on, nor are they temple of one another; nor do they have parsoptic union through assumption.⁹² When it is said, states Babai, in Zacharia 8:3, that God dwells in heaven and in jerusalem, it is no dwelling conjunctively, unitively and parsoptically, "so that they be gods and God may be they assumptively, through the union of the parsopa."⁹³

Indwelling shows that one is in another and that God the Word has not adhered extrinsically and finitely to the

88. LU, 242, 18-23/197, 4-9; 241, 23/199, 9; 245, 10/196, 11-15; 245, 10/199; 251/204, 13.

89. LU, 242/197, 9-10.

90. LU, 228/185, 31. 35; 232/188, 28; 245/199, 14; 246/199, 35; 247/201, 4. 6; 246/200, 9.

91. LU, 228-9/185-186.

92. LU 230/ 186, 35-187, 2.

93. LU, 230, 9-10/187, 7-8.

form of servant, whom He assumed to His *parsopa*. Adhesion shows that the natures are not mixed in any way and that there is no union through composition. Babai brings forward the example of fire and wood. As the fire in the wood, God the Word assumed the form of servant and put it on not extrinsically, but *parsopically* and dwelt in it for ever. The fire which burns the bush does not destroy the "kyana" of bush, nor is it made the "qnoma" of bush, although full of fire in the one union. In the same way, Word did not become the *qnoma* of man; the man did not become the *qnoma* of Filiation. But both are united in the one *parsopa* of the Word. The example is made use of to show the continued differentiation of the natures in the union.⁹⁴ Several early writers used this example, but it was open to different interpretations.⁹⁵

This union is not an extrinsic adhesion nor an intrinsic limitation or inclusion, nor is made *parsopically*, "cum distantia" nor voluntary "cum separationone." Here the Infinite is in the finite without any confusion, or mixture or admixture, composition or parts.

It is more than all these terms put together can express. Because of the *parsopa* of union, "this is that and that is this,"⁹⁶ and the names of the humanity also are applied to the divinity assumptively in the union, and vice versa. When all the terms are put together, they in some way express the ineffable mystery.

The different terms, therefore, together show that the divinity is not distant from the humanity; the humanity assu-

94. *LU*, 57/46; 128/103; 156/126; 166/134; 232/188; 85/79; 248/201; *TV*, 299/241; 300, 11-14/242, 13-17.

95. THEODORET: *PG*, 83, 156; *LH* (DRIVER), 160; L. I. SCIPIONI, *Ricerche*, p. 149; St. CYRIL, *Hom. pasch.* 17: *PG* 77, 781C. ORIGEN, *De Principiis*, II, 6, 6: *PG* 11, 213f., GREGORY OF NYSSA, *Oratio Cat.* 10; Ps. BASIL, *Hom. in Sanctam Christi generat.* II: *PG*, 31, 1460C.

96. Cf. *LU*. 234, 6/190, 15; 23I, 19/188, 10; 68, 27-8/55, 31; 172, 16/139, 10.

med the parsopa of Filiation of the Divinity adhesively; the properties of each nature exist without any confusion; the union is non-composite and free, unlike the union of body and soul.⁹⁷

Because of the union, one is the adoration of the temple and God the Word; and the whole Trinity is adored in the adoration of the humanity of Christ. There is united distinction and sublime adhesion. In the one united parsopa the body properly belongs to Him. It is His body. Hence the adoration to the body is the adoration to Him and by that to the whole Trinity.⁹⁸

Babai tried to give a synthesis of the different expressions in use and explain the union in a possible way.

Art. III. The Duality in Christ

The Council of Ephesus overemphasised the unity of Christ, mainly basing on the Alexandrian theology. Chalcedon on the other hand stressed the dualities: "in two natures." The Persians taking their stand from the Antiochene theology, were happy with the emphasis by Chalcedon. Nestorius himself was pleased with the formulations of Chalcedon.

The actual concern of the Antiochenes and of the Persians was the question of the duality in Christ. They believed that Christ is one, the Son of God. But they could not understand how the duality could be explained if one holds a natural and hypostatic union, or a composite hypostasis.

The Persian Synods reflect this basic question. From Acacius (486) till the Assembly of 612, the emphasis on duality is clearly seen: Christ is perfect God and perfect man, in two natures, preserving the properties of each nature without any kind of mixture or confusion or change.¹ For the delega-

97. Cf. *LU*, 235-6/191, 31-37.

98. Cf. *LU*, 236-7/192, 18ff; 239/194, 15ff.; 240/195, 7ff.

1. J. B. CHABOT. *Syn. Or.* 54-5/301-2 (Acacius in 486); 97-8/355 (Joseph in 554); 113-4/372 (Ezekiel); 133-6/394-8 (Isaiah I in 585); 209-210/473-4 (Gregory in 605); 564-7/582-4 (assembly of 612).

tion of 562/3 to Justinian it was equivalent to the affirmation, "Christ is in two qnome."² The Assembly of 612 also repeated it,³ and Babai made it his teaching.

Babai held firmly that Christ is God and man; the two natures exist in him without any mixture or confusion in the one parsopa of Filiation. He is Son in his divine nature and in his human nature. The formula, "preserving the properties of each nature" of Chalcedon is an ever recurring expression in Babai.⁴ His whole concern was the question of explaining the duality in Christ.

The inconfused existence of the two natures cannot be explained satisfactorily by the *mia physis* expression of the Cyrillians and the Monophysites, nor by the one composite qnoma (*hypostasis synthetos*) of Justinian. In order to keep the properties of the two natures intact, it was necessary for Babai, to admit two qnome.⁵ It could be the result of a reasoning, after the acceptance of the doctrine of two qnome. For the Monophysites on the other hand, one Qnoma is enough, and there should only be one qnoma to explain the inconfused existence of the natures in the "mia physis". But it is quite clear that qnoma had different meanings among them, and they could not at all understand one another.

Babai finds the duality of Christ on the side of natures as the Scriptures teach. Christ is God and man. The Son of

2. Cf. A. GUILLAUMONT, *Justinien et l'Eglise de Perse*, p. 63.

3. In the Creed of the assembly one does not find the affirmation as such of two qnome. It appears in a question of the King to the Diphysites: "Until Nestorius, did any one say that Christ is two natures and two qnome, or not?" (*Syn. Or.* 574/591). They brought forward proof from several Fathers, showing that it was the constant teaching of the whole Church (*ibid.* 574-8/591-6).

4. *COD*, p. 62; Cf. L. ABRAMOWSKI, *Babai der Grosse*, p. 341, n. 2; *LU* 62, 15-16/50, 18-9; 62, 21-2/50, 24-5; 64, 18-19/52, 8-10; 68, 8-11/55, 12-15; 70, 30-1/57, 18-20; 85, 1ff/79, 21ff.; 131, 17-22/105, 30-5.

5. *T VII*, 270/218.

God became the son of man, by assuming a complete man. If he is perfect God, states Babai, Invisible, Eternal, equal to the Father and the Holy Spirit, even before the Incarnation, He is a perfect Qnoma, one of the qnome of the Trinity. If He is perfect man, it means one visible, human qnoma, as of any other man, one of the qnome of men. The eternal divine qnoma became man, not by changing to the human qnoma. On the contrary, preserving the properties of the divine qnoma, the Word assumed to its parsopa of Filiation the human qnoma with its humble parsopa. The human properties subsisted in the human qnoma. Hence two qnome and two natures. If there is only one qnoma after the Incarnation, namely the Eternal Invisible qnoma, Word, either it has undergone change in Incarnation by becoming man and has become a composite qnoma by adding that which is of man, or it has not assumed anything from us. Both these are impossible. He could not think of another alternative and he considers that this is the only way to explain the perfect Godhead and perfect manhood in Christ.⁶

In this system, Christ is visible and invisible, the Assumer and the assumed, the Form of God and the form of servant, God and man, the subject of passion and the Lord of Glory. He suffered and died in His human nature; in His divinity, He did not suffer, nor die.⁷

As "principium quod" Babai attributes all the actions to the Son and to Christ; as "principium quo" the humiliations are attributed to the human nature and human qnoma. It is the Son who underwent all humiliations in His human nature; it is Christ who died for us in His humanity.⁸

Babai finds the duality on the side of nature and qnoma. But there is no independence for the human qnoma. Even though, according to the definition, qnoma is a singular sub-

6. *T VII*, 254/206; 274ff./221ff.; *TV*. 291ff./235ff.

7. *LU*, 67, 20-3/54, 28-31.

8. *LU*, 60, 23-5/49, 1-3: "Christ suffered in his human nature naturally, but Christ did not suffer in his divine nature naturally."

stance, existing by itself, etc.,⁹ the human qnoma of Christ has no separate existence, of its own, not even for a moment. It is a complete human qnoma, but its parsopa of Filiation is that of the Word. The human qnoma, man, does not have a human filiation. At the moment of its formation in the womb of the Blessed Virgin Mary, it was assumed by the Word and it received the parsopa of Filiation of the Word. The man has no autonomous existence and independence. It exists, united with the Word, in the one parsopa of Filiation.

Kyana as such does not have an existence; it exists only as qnome.¹⁰ So human nature and divine nature imply two qnome, two realities, two actualities opposed to illusion or unreality. "Two qnome" signifies that the two are really existing in Christ.

Even in the union, which is everlasting and ineffable and never-breaking, the natures do not come into any kind of mingling. Each nature keeps the properties proper to it. Babai makes use of the example of the burning bush. It is already used by Nestorios and Theodoret.¹¹ In spite of the union, the natures remain distinct. Babai also follows the line of these writers, and speaks of the example as coming from the Fathers. When they are united, they are distinct; when they are distinct, they are united. They are united in the one parsopa of Filiation, they are distinct in the properties of each nature.¹² They are distinct, but not distant, and independent.

Babai, as a follower of the Antiochene tradition, speaks of the "Son" as the subject of attribution of all the predicates. He accepts all the biblical statements and he can see them all

9. Cf. *LU*, 159, 1ff./129, 4ff.

10. See above, p. 89

11. *LH* (DRIVER), 160; *THEODORET*, *PG*, 83, 156.

12. Cf. *LU*, 245, 13-17/199 13-16; 248, 22-3/201, 36-202, 3. *THEODORE*, *Ho. Cat.* VIII, 13, p. 205 (TONNEAU): "The distinction between the natures does not annul the close union, nor does the close union destroy the distinction between the natures, but the natures remain in their respective existences while, distinct, and the union remains intact."

being attributed to the one Son. There are biblical statements, speaking about the divinity of the Son, and there are other statements speaking about the humanity of the Son, and certain other statements about both the divinity and the humanity. Because of the *parsopa* of Filiation - of the Word and of the man - all are spoken of the one subject.

Babai makes a distinction: by nature and by union.¹³ That which by nature pertains to the divinity (eg. *parsopa* of Filiation) pertains to the humanity by union. The *parsopa* of Filiation of the Word is the *parsopa* of the man from Mary. He does not have another *parsopa* of Filiation. In the same way, that which pertains to the humanity by nature (eg. anointing) is of the Word by union. The Filiation and anointing are of the one unique Son. He is Son of God and son of Mary.¹⁴ He is Son of the Most High and Son of man: "The Son of the Most High is the son of man and the son of man is the Son of the Most High".¹⁵ He is God incarnate and man deified.¹⁶

As the natures are united in the one *parsopa*, the names also are united in the one *parsopa*. There are certain names properly and by nature pertaining to the one or the other nature, but always to the one Christ.

Thus, the names Son, Word, God, Lord, Only Begotten, Light, Splendour, Image, Life, Form of God, Being, Holy are the names of the divinity before the union with our humanity.¹⁷ All these names are applied to Christ. But the infirmities of the flesh cannot be spoken in connection with all these terms, but in connection with some we can say, such as, "Son", because it is the *parsopa* of Union.¹⁸

13. See above p. 133.

14. *LU*, 212-3/172,7ff.

15. *LU*, 214, 5-6/173,15-16.

16. *TV*, 299, 20 ff. / 241, 33 ff.: "had *msihā* had *brā*: Alaha *de'tbarnas*; *ubarnasā de'ta'lah*".

17. *LU*, 200-1/162.

18. *LU*, 172/139.

The other names such as Jesus, Christ, Child, First-born, Emmanuel, Man, Son of man, Son of the Most High, First-born of all creation, First-born from the dead, Priest, Son of David, King, Lord, Prophet, Adam, Image of the Invisible God, Just, Holy, Rock, Bread, Life, Way, Host, Pastor, Vine, etc., are names of the Son after the union.¹⁹

The two sets of names differ and they could be spoken of the *one Son* without any reserve; but all these cannot be applied to the *Word*. It is a very fundamental point in the understanding of the Christology of Babai. In the same way, all things can be spoken of Christ as "Christ is born", "Christ died for our sins," etc. The expressions such as, "Word is born", "the Word suffered," "the Word died" etc., are in no way admissible to Babai. He is aware that it is the Word of God who assumed the man to His *parsopa* of Filiation. But he wants to keep the distinction between God and man, between the divinity and the humanity. Even in the closest union, there is no mixing up of the properties of the natures. They remain distinct, but united in the one *parsopa*.²⁰

God and man are not one and the same; humanity and divinity are not identical; the Assumer (Word) is not the assumed (man); the form of God is different from the form of servant. There is difference and the difference is great. There is no mingling of the properties of the two natures in the union. Both do not lose their properties. But they are kept in the one Filiation. In the one Filiation, Word and man, the Assumer and the assumed are one Son; the Only Begotten is the first born of Mary the same Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of Glory.²¹

19. LU, 201/162.

20. He can say "Christ is God and man"; but he cannot say "God is Christ", or "man is Christ"; but he can say, "this man is God". He will say, "Son is God", but he will not say, "God is the Son" (LU, 138/111, 6 ff.). He accused the Henanians for holding the expression: "Christ is God and God is Christ and there is no difference among them" (*ibid.*).

21. LU 70/56.

The duality does not constitute a duality of sonship; there are not two brothers; nor is there a question of one real son and another adoptive son. There is only one Son in two natures: in His divinity and in His humanity.

Conclusion

There is a mutual giving and taking in the one *parsopa* of Filiation. The Word appeared to men in the *parsopa* of man, by assuming the humble *parsopa* from the womb of the virgin; at the same time, the man received the *parsopa* of the Word the glorious *parsopa* of Filiation, and it became his own *parsopa*. The humble human *parsopa* is that by which Jesus of Nazareth is different from Peter and other men such as the physical qualities and other accidents. The Word assumed it and made it his own and he manifested himself to men in this humble *parsopa*. The giving and assuming does not result in a third *parsopa* as often thought by some. The giving and taking is not between equals. There is a vast gulf of difference between the Taker and the taken. It is God the Word who assumed and the human *qnoma* that is assumed. The exchange takes place on the level of *parsopa*, so much so that the natures and the *qnome* remain without any mingling or mixture.²²

Because Babai speaks of two *quome*, it does not follow that he teaches a theory of two sons. For him *kyana* exists only as *qnome*. If there are two *kyane* in Christ, there must be two *qnome*: the concrete actuality of the two *kyane*. They remain without any mixture, but united for ever in the one *parsopa* of Filiation of God the Word. Babai finds the unity of Christ on the side of the *parsopa* of Filiation and the duality on the side of natures with their proper *qnome*. There is only one Son, and he is God and man, having perfect Godhead and perfect manhood.

22. *LU*, 163, 14/132, 10-12; 164, 8/132, 33-4; 164, 17/133, 6-8; *TV*, 300/242, 12ff. 161/130, 16ff. (*LU*); *TV*, 243, 6ff.; 162/131, 13-19; Nestorius had already spoken of the exchange of *prosopon* (*LH*, 309. 319. 320); L. I. SCIPIONI, *Ricerche*, p. 86 ff.

Here are three passages from the works of Babai (LU. TV) wherein he describes very beautifully the unity and the duality. At the end of Ch. 17 (Memra IV) and at the end of ch. 21 (Memra VI) these are given almost identical treatment, the quotation of which is as follows: Ch. 21:²³

Just as the humanity of Our Lord assumed the parsopa of the divinity, the divinity assumed the parsopa of humanity in one adhesion... This mystery is great, stupendous, and admirable. For, indeed, God the Word assumed the form of a servant, i. e., a complete man to His parsopa, and dwelt in it unitively and infinitely. He appeared in the flesh (I Tim. 3: 16); and His humanity, through the union with Him received a name, more excellent than all names, i. e., Son and Lord, in one power and dominion. And He is made this in the union (*wahwā hū hanā-ille factus est is*), and not in the nature: 'Son of man who is in heaven' (Jn. 3: 13); and this is made He in the union (*wahwā hanā hū-is factus est ille*) and not in the nature, i. e., Son and Lord of glory. And in this one parsopa are recognized the two natures with their properties, without separation; and one is the Lord Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God, yesterday and today and forever (Heb. 13: 8). To *Him* and to *His* Father and to the Holy Spirit, be honour, adoration, and exaltation, for ever and ever. Amen.

The second passage is in Ch. 17:²⁴

One is the parsopa of Christ, the Son of God, in his divinity and humanity. And He is the one parsopa, the Son of the Most High: the Lord, Jesus, the Only Begotten, the first-born, the son of man, Christ; and in this one parsopa which is one Christ the Son of God is recognized, in two natures, and their names, in the properties of their qnome, which while distinct, are united without confusion, and while united without confusion are distinct, in their properties in the one union of one parsopa of Christ, the Son of God for ever... From the union and afterwards, the divinity is not Son without the humanity; nor the humanity is a

23. LU, 251, 25-252, 14/204, 18-36.

24. LU, 172, 2-26/138, 32-139, 19.

mere man, separately, without the divinity, and not united and called Christ. But in this one parsopa, they give and take mutually, so that this be that and that be this parsopically only; for in their qnome, this and that remain in this adorable union of one parsopa of Christ, the Son of God. Therefore, if you say, Son, He is this one parsopa; if you say man, He is; if you say firstborn He is; if you say Only Begotten, He is; if you say the Lord of Glory, He is; if you say Son of David and of Abraham, He is; if you say Son of the Most High, He is; truly, not in the same way. And in short, Jesus Christ, Son of God, yesterday, and today, He is for ever (Heb. 13: 8).

The third is from the TV: ²⁵

God the Word, one of the qnome of the Trinity, assumed to His parsopa the form of servant and in form was seen as man. He did not become man in qnoma (*secundum qnomam-bqnoma*),²⁶ but He assumed the form of servant. One is the Assumer and another is the assumed ... one in another.²⁷ And one and the same is the parsopa of Filiation, but not in the same (way): one is of the nature and the other is of assumption; one (and) the same is the parsopa of humanity²⁸; but not in the same (way): one is of assumption and the other of nature. There are not two parsope of Filiation, as there are not two qnome of the Word; there are not two parsope of man, just as there are not two qnome of Jesus; but one is the parsopa of Filiation of the divinity and of the humanity in one union. On account of this, one is the parsopa of Christ and not two christs; one is the parsopa of the Son, and not two sons; but two qnome in Christ and not one composite qnoma according to the impiety of them (heretics).

25. 302, 7-26/243, 28-244, 12.

26. i.e., He did not become man by changing the Divine Qnoma into the human qnoma.

27. "alius in alio" has to be corrected to: "aliud in aliud".

28. "and of the divinity" is understood.

CHAPTER VII

Major Events in Christ's Life

This chapter will be a presentation of the major events in Christ's life as seen by Babai. Instead of going into all the aspects of Christ's life, here is a selection of four major events in his life. In a previous chapter, there was an examination of the main Christological problems, Babai had to face.¹ A discussion on Christ's life will afford an answer to these problems. The chapter has four articles: on the Birth, Baptism, Death and Resurrection of Christ respectively. This analysis further clarifies Babai's Christology.

Art. I - The Birth of Christ

§ 1. The Birth

In this section, three questions are dealt with: the Incarnation, the Inhumanation, and the Birth from the Virgin. Babai considers the Incarnation and Inhumanation in two stages. The Word of God was first united with the flesh and then with the human soul, created in the womb.

The Holy Spirit formed the flesh in the womb of the Virgin at the moment of the angelic salutation and at that very moment God the Word was united with that flesh. The angelic salutation, the formation of the flesh and the union with the flesh were simultaneous actions.² Here Babai is influenced by earlier traditions, especially that of Theodore.³

1. Cf. above, p 62ff.

2. Cf. *LU*, 91, 4-9/84, 24-9; 91, 15ff./84, 36ff.; 91, 20ff./85, 3ff.; 91, 26ff/85, 8-11; 92, 23-5/85, 34-6; 93, 10-11/86, 14-5; 94, 23ff./87, 17ff.; 94, 30-31/87, 23-6; 95, 16-23/88, 5-11; 110, 17-20/89, 13ff.; 113, 18ff/91, 24ff; 114 29/92, 33ff.; 115, 6-7/93, 3-5; 115, 28ff./93, 24ff. 116, 12/94, 2-4; 120, 10-13/97, 8-11; 148, 9ff./118, 36-119 1; 83/67, 26ff.

3. THEODORE, *Frag. De Incarnatione*, VII: PG 66, 980 BC; *Frag. Contra Apollinarem*: PG, 66, 993-4. 997, THEODORET, *Graecorum affect.*: PG, 83, 942.

Thus the Word became flesh, by uniting with the flesh and by assuming it to His *parsopa* even before the creation of the human soul, and even before the fetus became a man. From that moment onwards, one is the dominion, and one is the adoration of God the Word and His temple.⁴

For Babai, all the souls are created in the womb after the 40th day of conception. The soul of Jesus also followed the natural course as any other human being, and did not preexist as the Origenists taught.⁵ For 40 days, the weak and fragile fetus was united with the Word and it took nourishment from the uterus and grew. When the soul was created, the fetus became a man and the soul also got united with the Word.

The creation of souls after the 40th day was a current idea among the Syrians and the Greeks. Philoxenus held the view: "The body of the Incarnate Word was animated only after the 40th day."⁶ Dionysius bar Salibi says of Philoxenus:⁷

Philoxenus said: God the Word and the flesh from Mary came together to the union; and then the Word is made flesh as John says (Jn 1: 14) and remained 40 days in the limbs and forms, and it received the rational soul after the order of men, whose body having perfected in limbs for 40 days receives the soul; therefore it appears that 'the Word is made flesh', by which he means 'united with flesh'. If some one says the flesh was dead for these 40 days, I answer: it was living because it was living the life of the divinity of the Word. This doctor is among those who say the body is prior to the soul.

4. Cf. *LU*, 93, 24-6/86, 25-28.

5. See above. p. 55

6. A. DE HALLEUX, *Philoxène de Mabbog*, p. 143; *Résumé* of a fragment of a Philoxenian Commentary on Lk 1, 35 in Dionysius bar Salibi: cf. J. S. ASSEMANI, *BO*, II, p. 158-9.

7. DIONYSIUS BAR SALIBI, *Comm. in Evangelia*, II, 2, p. 248, 17-19/201, 1-13; PHILOXENUS, *Tractatus tres* II, 8, p. 143-4/109; III, 1, p. 170/128; *Prologue johannique*, p. 108-9/106-7. Cf. A. DE HALLEUX, *Philoxène de Mabbog*, p. 372, n. 34.

Bar Salibi states that in the case of Christ, the opinion of Philoxenus cannot be followed.⁸ But in his *Letter to the monks of Senoun* Philoxenus writes that the body, soul and Word began to exist simultaneously in the Virgin.⁹ It is possible that there was a development of thought in this matter in Philoxenus. Severus also distinguished two stages for the formation of man.¹⁰ Philoxenus may be following the traditions of the School of Edessa regarding the distinction, but the change may be due to his contact with the Cyrillians.

Babai states that the Cyrillians held the view that the animation is simultaneous with the formation of the flesh, and together with that there effected the natural union.¹¹ Severus and Philoxenus were Cyrillians, but they held views different from other Cyrillians. Babai speaks of some physicians who held such views, without mentioning them by name.¹² He may be thinking of Galen or other Greek medical authorities.

Babai brings the Mosaic law of purification after birth for forty days if the child is a male in support of his argument (Lev. 12:2-4).¹³ He does not, however, refer to the purification for eighty days if the child is a female (Lev. 12:5).

He finds proof from the Nicæan Creed, "was incarnate and became" man (*et gasam/et basar - wet barnas*).¹⁴ He understands the wording of the Creed to mean successive animation. "That is why the Fathers say that he was incarnate and they speak afterwards that he became man with the rational soul."¹⁵

The successive animation was a current idea in the Edessan - Nisibis School tradition and it was widespread among

8. DIONYSIUS BAR SALIBI, *loc. cit.*

9. PHILOXENUS, *Lettre aux moines de Senoun*, p. 56-57/46-47.

10. Cf. J. LEBON, *La Christologie du monophysisme Syrien*, p. 437, n. 41.

11. LU, 90, 25ff./84, 17ff.

12. LU, 117, 30-1/95, 10.

13. LU, 118/95.

14. See above, p. 125.

15. LU, 95, 2-3/87, 27-28.

the earlier writers. Bar Salibi, who opposes it in the case of Christ, affirms that it is true of all men. The Origenist idea of the preexistence of the souls might have given Babai an added reason to accept animation in a second stage.

He makes use of the example of Adam to explain the creation of the soul in the second stage. Adam was first formed in all his limbs and was corporated. And once he was perfect in all his limbs, the soul was infused into the body (Gen. 1: 26; 2: 7). The first man was formed from dust and he was perfect in his organs, but he lacked vitality and sensibility. Therefore he lay there without life and soul. Once the soul was infused he became alive and animated and soon admirably stood up to praise his Maker.¹⁶ In the same way, the body of the Lord was formed in the womb of the Virgin without human intercourse; but like the body of all children it took 40 days for the perfection of the fetus to be a body, for the reception of the soul. Till 40 days it was flesh (*besrā* or *gusmā*) and was not properly a body (*pagrā*). Once the bodily perfection came, the soul was infused into it.¹⁷ Philoxenus also makes use of this example to illustrate the animation in the second stage.¹⁸

For 40 days, what was the function of the fetus? It had life like a plant, getting nutrition from the mother, leading a vegetative life and increasing the quantity of the matter. Babai discusses the matter thrice in his works. The LU and CE agree while TV differs slightly.¹⁹

16. LU, 111/89-90.

17. LU, 112/90.

18. PHILOXENUS, *Tractatus tres*, 182, 18-25/137, 3-12; St Augustine made use of this example to show that as in the case of Adam, God gives an immortal soul to the human body only after it has been formed. *Quaest. ex. Vet. Testam.* 23: PL 35, 2229.

19. LU, 117, 9-13/94, 27-32: "Because the body for 40 days is without the soul in the maternal womb, it grows like plants (*badmūt nesbātā*) and the quantity from the natural matter of the mother is added to its growth; and because of

The soul was created after the fortieth day of conception and it entered into the union already established. He opposes the idea of those who held that the union took place only after the creation of the soul (after the fortieth day), or the assertion of others that the union took place only at the time of the Baptism at Jordan (as held by Paul of Samosata), or the opinion that it was perfected only after the resurrection²⁰. Against all these heretical views, Babai upheld that the union was effected in the womb at the very moment of the formation of the flesh in the Virgin by the action of the Holy Spirit. The union was already perfect there at that moment. It was not perfected on the 40th day, but at the creation of the soul the Word was united with it. It is never again broken either from the soul or from the body, not even at the moment of his death on the cross.

Examining the fact closely, we conclude that the complete man did not exist at the moment of the assumption or taking. What was assumed was only the flesh at the first stage and then the soul. The Word was first united not with a complete man but with a human fetus.

the infirmity and debility, which the fetus has from the frigidity, because of the lack of soul which vivifies and moves it..." CE, 111, 76, p. 242-3: "Until we receive the human stamp and the members in the womb, through the entrance of the soul, we live as plants (*hayē dnesbātā*) without sensation and movement; as plants take nourishment from the earth and grow, so we absorb from the beginning of formation in the womb, the nourishment of blood through the navel cord. From the 40th day, when the soul is created till the birth, we lead the life of a zoophyton (*haiwat nesbtā*) in so far as we grow and move, certainly without any movement from place to place as the Snail in the Sea or as the Sponge." TV 291, 15-7/235, 16-8: "And in its formation in the womb, until the soul is created in it is as a zoophyton (*haiwat nesbtā*) without sense but growth alone."

20. LU, 89, 1ff./82, 34ff.

Babai wanted to speak of Christ as of any other man; though Christ was formed in a miraculous way, in all the rest he is like any other human being. Most of his contemporaries believed in the animation after 40 or 80 days, and that tradition continued during the middle ages. But with regard to Christ, they were careful to assert that he was an exception and the animation was simultaneous with the formation of the flesh.²¹ Babai, however, does not want to make Christ an exception in this matter and so for him Christ also followed the natural course like any other human being. Moreover, he wanted to close all doors against the Origenists regarding the preexistence of the souls. And in his Nisibis tradition, he could not think otherwise. But on this point, Babai cannot be followed.

§ 2. The Action of the Holy Spirit as Anointing

For the Antiochenes, there is always a concurrence of the Word and the Spirit in Christology. Theodore spoke of the participation of the Holy Spirit as anointing.²² Commenting on Ps 45: 8b, Theodore stated that the anointing is to be understood as for the Son. The Word of God required no anointing.²³ The delegation to Justinian in 562/3 also referred to the action of the Holy Spirit as anointing.²⁴

Basing on the New Testament (Mt 1: 20; Lk 1: 35) Babai considers the work of the Holy Spirit as anointing, and he brought proof from the Old Testament (Ps. 45: 8) and further proof from the New Testament (Act 2: 36; 13: 38).

It was through the action of the Holy Spirit that the flesh was formed in the womb of the Virgin. He formed it and

21. The majority of the Scholastics spoke of the creation of the soul in ordinary men after the 40th day and of women after the 80th day (Cf. *DTC* 1,2,1308-9).

22. THEODORE, *Frag. De Incarnatione*, XIV: H. B. SWETE, II, p. 309, 24-26.

23. R. DEVRESSE, *Le Commentaire de Théodore de Mopsueste sur les Psaumes (ST 93)*, Vatican City, 1939, p. 289-290.

24. A. GUILLAUMONT, *Justinien et l'église de Perse*, p. 65.

anointed it that it be united with the Word of God. Formation and anointing were simultaneous. At the angelic salutation, at the blink of an eye, formation, anointing, assumption and union took place simultaneously.²⁵ This anointing was necessary for the human nature for it to be united with the Word. From the womb itself he is the anointed one (*msihā*). On account of this anointing, he is the Lord and the Son.²⁶ And in his birth, he was known as Christ because of the unction and union; because of this, though he appeared to be a child, he received adoration from the Magi as King and Lord.²⁷ Here is evident Babai's preoccupation to oppose the Samosatan heresy, that Jesus became Christ at his baptism, and to deny the unjust reproach of his opponents that the Persians teach this error.²⁸

Babai employs an example to explain the action of the Spirit. At the invocation of the Spirit by the Priest in a moment the bread and wine become the body and blood of Christ. In the same way, at the voice of the angel, "The Holy Spirit will come and the Power of the Most High will dwell in you", there occurred the assumption and with the assumption, the union in an instant.²⁹ The assumed, namely the flesh, was imperfect because of the lack of the human soul, development, members and organs. But there occurred a union of God the Word with the flesh. Philoxenus makes use of this example to show "the becoming without change."³⁰

25. LU, 133, 14-20/107, 15-22; 133, 31-134, 3/107, 32-35.

26. LU, 134/108.

27. LU, 134, 21ff./108, 16-19.

28. LU, 89, 9-28/83, 8-25.

29. LU, 95/87-88.

30. A. DE HALLEUX, *Philoxène de Mabbog*, p. 153, n. 19; cf. BAR SALIBI, *op. cit.* p. 245, 7-9/195, 4-6; P. KRUGER, *Der Sermo des Philoxenos von Mabbug de annuntiatione Dei Genitricis Mariae*, in *OCP* 20 (1954), 153-165. (= PHILOXENUS, *Comm. on Lk.* 1 26-35); PHILOXENUS, *Tractatus tres*, 122, 13ff./93, 36 ff.

In the NT commentary of Isodad of Merv, there is a discussion on this particular biblical passage: the angelic salutation and the incarnation. Isodad cites some authors:³¹

Some say that with that voice that said, 'the Lord is with thee', some material was taken up; that is to say, one drop of blood was formed from the Virgin, and was deified and was made a son and was united with God the Word and became a temple to the adorable Trinity. Others say that when Mary said, 'Behold me, the handmaid of the Lord,' the Word dwelt in the Virgin and was united with the material which He took. Ambrose of Milan and Ephrem the Great give this last explanation.

Babai presents a slightly different interpretation not cited by Isodad:³²

When the angel said, 'the Holy Spirit will come and the power of the Most High will overshadow you', 'instantaneously, with the voice was made the assumption and with the assumption, the union.

§ 3. The Union is For Ever

The union, effected in the womb at the formation of the flesh is for ever and perfect. There is no question of a growth in the union; there are no successive stages for the union. Even though the Word was united only with the flesh at the first stage, there was no second union with the soul. The soul was created into this union. Once united, it is forever.

Babai uses the expression, *wal'alam* to designate the perpetuity of the union.³³ It is an expression seen all through the LU. It is from Heb. 13: 8: "Jesus Christ is the same, yesterday and today and for ever." (*Yesu' msihā etmali uyaumanā*

31. ISODAD, *Commentary on Luke*, I,28 (M. D. GIBSON, *HS VII/V*), p. 7/150.

32. *LU*, 95,16-18/88,5-7.

33. *LU*, 58, 8, 59, 5; 57, 7; 56, 28; 60, I, etc.

uhūyu wal'alam). The union remained in the earthly life of Christ, in his death, resurrection and his ascension and it will remain in his second coming, and forever.

§ 4. Growth for the Human Nature

Even though Mary conceived not in the natural way, but by the Holy Spirit, the fetus followed the natural course like any other human child. It had to grow for forty days so that the soul might be created in it. It grew in the womb for nine months, and when the time was completed, the child was born, but keeping the virginity of the Mother intact.³⁴ His conception and his birth were miracles. But he was in need of growth in his human nature. He was circumcised and was comforted by the Spirit.³⁵ The humanity had to be perfected in wisdom and in immortality and in all other things pertaining to men, except sin. It was a gradual process. It became totally perfect only at the resurrection.³⁶ So the affirmations that Christ was hungry, he wept at the tomb, he was comforted by the angels, he was tempted, he slept, he died, and was buried and has risen are correct, because he was a perfect man.³⁷ All these are spoken of Christ in his human nature.

God the Word, who became man, did not undergo any change. He was united with the humanity/man, giving His *parsopa* of Filiation to it and was showing the properties of the Divinity. Because one is the divine nature for the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, the Father and the Holy Spirit dwelt in Him, "quantum autem ad naturam", (*bhai dān dakyanā*), but not unitive.³⁸ The divinity was perfecting the humanity in its process of growth and perfection.

34. Cf. *LU*, 58-59/47.

35. Cf. *LU*, 120/97, 11ff.

36. Cf. *LU*, 121-2/98; 148/118-119.

37. Cf. *LU*, 121/119, 8ff.; 60/48; See the parallels in Theodore, *Comm. in Joh.* 10, 18 (VOSTE, p. 149); *Hom. Cat.* V, 5, p. 105; VI, 14, p. 183-5 (TONNEAU); *Frag. de Incarnatione*, PG 66, 980.

38. Cf. *LU*, 148-9/119, 18ff.

The divisive Christology of Babai is clearly seen in his exposition of the birth of Christ. "Becoming" is spoken of the flesh and "dwelt among us" (Jn 1: 14) is of the Word. Birth is spoken of the Son and of Christ; he admits only one generation for the Word: the eternal generation from the Father. He speaks of the birth from the Virgin, the birth of Christ or the generation of Jesus Christ as the Gospel teaches (Mt 1: 1). It is the same Son who was born from the Father and from the Virgin.³⁹ Even if it is added "in the flesh", he cannot speak of the generation of the Word. *Word* is indicative only of the divine nature, but *Son* indicates both the nature and the *parsopa*. Babai's Antiochene background, Theodorian formation and Nestorian influence are the basic reasons for making such a distinction. Since Christ is born from her, Mary is mother of Christ. Christ is God and man and not simply a man (*shima*) and she is mother of God and mother of man.⁴⁰

Art. II - The Baptism of Christ

Jesus Christ was baptised by John the Baptist, in the river Jordan (Mt. 3: 13ff.; Mk. 1: 9ff.; Lk. 3: 21ff.; Jn. 1: 30f.). This historical reality, narrated in the Gospels, has been wrongly understood by many. Babai gives a description of the different heretical groups which erred in explaining the baptism of

39. See a similar comment by Prof. V. C. Samuel (Indian Orthodox), "Is there one subject willing and acting in two natures as God-man?... The Orthodox faith would insist that it is God the Son incarnate... For both the Chalcedonian and non-Chalcedonian traditions, God the *Son* incarnate is the God-man. In Him the two natures of Godhead and manhood remain united without confusion and mixture, division and separation... Both the Chalcedonian and non-Chalcedonian sides affirm two births of the *Son*, the one from God the Father in eternity and the other from Mary in time... To admit a distinction between the pre-incarnate Son and the incarnate Son is indispensable for any sound theology. To affirm it is not Nestorianism; but not to affirm it is Monophysitism." (*Geneva Consultation*, in *GOTR* 16, 1-2 (1971), p. 58-59.

40. See above, p. 81.

Christ by John. He explains their positions in the tenth, eleventh and fifteenth chapters of the LU. Chapter 15 has an elaborate discussion on the baptism of Christ. It is possible that there were several heretical groups, with contradictory positions.¹

Babai speaks of two anointings: one at the incarnation and the other at Jordan. The first anointing had Christological implications: the flesh, formed in the womb to be united with the Word, required the anointing that he be made Christ by that anointing. And he received the fullness of the Spirit. It made him Lord and Christ and one with the Word in adoration and worship and everything in the one *parsopa* of Filiation.

The second anointing has more ecclesiological and soteriological implications. The human nature, taken from us, was perfectly united with the Word at the very first moment of its assumption, but it was not perfect. It followed the natural course of growth like any child. His human nature was passible and mortal; he had to be justified through obedience and in fact he perfected all justice in his Passion.² Christ the new

1. Babai makes mention of a group which held that the union between the Word and the human nature was effected at the baptism, because of the righteousness of the man (LU, 89, 4-6/ 83, 2-4). Babai mentions Paul of Samosata and his followers (LU, 89, 9ff. 18-19/ 83, 8ff. 15-17; 92, 1-3/ 85, 13-15). A second group said that God the Word was hypostatically baptised, dead and resurrected (LU, 143, 29-144, 2/115, 14-18). This seems to be some kind of extreme Monophysites. A third group argued that the Scriptures are lying, saying that the humanity of the Lord did not receive anything from the baptism of John, and nothing more is added to what he had at the time of union in the womb. These people consider baptism only for the remission of sins, and so Our Lord did not require any remission of sins (LU, 144/ 115-116). A fourth group misinterpreted the words, "the Spirit descended upon him" and arrived at false conclusions (LU, 146/ 118, 17ff.). For Babai, all those who deny the assumption of our nature, err in different ways in explaining the mystery of the baptism of Christ.

2. LU, 145, 14ff./ 117, 26ff.

Adam did not know that he was born to immortality and immutability. He had to grow in wisdom. It is true that the Father and the Holy Spirit were with him (not united), and he had the fullness of the Spirit from the very beginning; but its manifestation was gradual, because he was ignorant as any child. He was deprived of several things which he received later. As the human nature matured and the power was made known to him from above, the humanity came to the full understanding of the divinity.

At baptism Christ did not receive any additional unction from outside; the descent of the Spirit is not to be understood as coming from above. At the time of baptism there occurred a special manifestation of the Spirit and it is taken as a second anointing. Christ in his human nature knew the pledge of immortality and incorruptibility. From then on, he began to work signs and wonders. Even though he could work wonders before, he waited till the manifestation came from above. By speaking of the descent, the Scriptures wanted to show the sublimity of the divine nature, and not that the Spirit entered in him from outside.³ All these things are narrated to show that it was in baptism that the man received the pledge of immortality and immutability.⁴ In several places Babai speaks of the pledge of immortality; as the first-fruit from us he received the pledge at his baptism and the reality, at the resurrection.⁵ He began his preaching about the kingdom of God and the spreading of the good news, only after the manifestation of the Spirit. "He was filled with the Spirit", means that power was made manifest to the humanity and the pledge of immortality and incorruptibility was given to him.⁶ It was a spiritual birth for the humanity, and a manifestation of the Trinity.⁷

3. *LU*, 149/ 119.

4. *LU*, 146-7/ 120, 2ff.; 142, 17-19/ 116, 15-17.

5. *LU*, 152, 8-10/ 123, 11-13; 143/ 114, 25ff.; 141-2/ 115, 35ff.; 146-7/ 120, 2ff.; 147/ 120, 14ff.; 150/ 121, 25ff.; 150/ 122, 4-6; 151/ 122, 28ff., 152, 1ff./ 123, 4ff.

6. *LU*, 151, 2ff./ 122, 11ff.; 151, 17ff./ 122, 27ff.

7. Cf. *LU*, 148-9/ 120, 35ff.

The baptism of John was the baptism of penitence, but Christ was sinless and there was no corruption in him, and he required no baptism.⁸ But by that baptism, he received the spiritual nativity and the mystery of immortality and incorruptibility, so that he might be first in everything and first-born of many brothers in the adoption of filiation through the resurrection from the dead for the redemption of our bodies.⁹ Through this, he has mystically portrayed in himself the reason of the new life which we attain after the resurrection.¹⁰ Through this second anointing Christ became the head of the Church, and of the faithful who are his members. We are baptized into it and receive the name Christians.¹¹

By undergoing the baptism of John, Christ was inaugurating the new baptism for his followers. In baptism, mystically (*'razana'it*) we receive the pledge of adoption of life for the salvation of our bodies through the grace of the Holy Spirit and as first-fruits, immortality and incorruptibility.¹² Christ preceded us first and is made first in everything.¹³ Thus he became the Giver of Immortality and incorruptibility to all those who believe in him.¹⁴ Christ remits sins, and gives adoptive filiation through the baptism in the spirit to immortality.¹⁵ In baptism we Christians receive mystically the pledge of immortality, immutability and the adoptive filiation.¹⁶ But the human nature of Christ became Son with the Word, not by adoption but by assumption and union. By participating in his baptism we are able to participate in his filiation by adoption.¹⁷

8. LU, 142-3/114, 17-20.

9. LU, 135, 3ff./108, 28-33; 137, 2-4/110, 14-16.

10. LU, 135/108, 35ff.

11. LU, 135, 29-136, 1/109, 17-20; 136, 11-13/109, 30-32.

12. LU, 143, 2ff./114, 20-24; CE, IV, 39, p. 289.

13. LU, 142, 28/114, 14-15.

14. LU, 143/114, 26-28.

15. LU, 142/116, 4-6; 142/115, 36ff.

16. LU, 143/114, 22-24; 26-27.

17. LU, 139/112, 22ff.; CE, V, 36, p. 333.

Because of his baptism, Christ became our Head and we became his members. He became the First-Born, and the Cause of our salvation.¹⁸

Thus Babai considers the Scriptural statements to be important and dogmatic, not just symbolic. What is necessary is a proper understanding of these statements. It was for us that he was baptized in Jordan, and he thus became the first-born of many brothers and our head, and the Giver of immortality to us, who believe in him.

Art. III - The Death of Christ

“Theopaschism” had already been treated and it afforded the occasion to perceive how Babai viewed it as a problem.¹ As a follower of the Antiochene tradition in the Theodorian and Nestorian versions, Babai opposed the Theopaschism prevalent among the Monophysites and the Neo-Chalcedonians. In the seventeenth and the eighteenth chapters of LU, Babai discusses the crucifixion and death of Christ.²

Jesus Christ is God and man, in the one *parsopa* of Filiation, before and after the crucifixion and death. His death was not the death of an ordinary man. His divinity was not separated from the humanity at the moment of his death. His divinity was not crucified, has not suffered, nor died. Influenced by Nestorius,³ Babai speaks of the death of Christ, and not of the Word (in the human nature). He excludes the two errors: the error of the Paulinians who professed that at the time of the crucifixion the divinity left Jesus and a mere man was crucified and the error of the Manichaeans who professed

18. Cf. P. KRUGER, *Zum theologischen Menschenbild Babais*, p. 57; *Das Geheimnis der Taufe*, p. 98ff; P. Krüger discusses the various aspects of the baptism, based on the LU and CE. W. DE VRIES, *Sakramententheologie bei den Nestorianer* (OCA 133), Rome 1947,, p. 152.

1. See above, p. 71-76.

2. Cf. also, ch. 8 (LU, 60ff./48ff.)

3. LH (DRIVER), 35-36; 176; 202; 212; LOOFS, *Nestoriana*, p. 222, 10-21.

that the divinity was crucified and that his humanity was a phantasm.⁴ For Babai, death of God is a contradiction in terms. God whose glory fills heaven and earth can in no way die. God the Word who is of equal nature with the Father and the Holy Spirit can never die. He is Infinite and Immortal. He cannot accept the expression, "God the Word died," even if, "in the flesh" is added to it. He has a detailed discussion against those who attribute death to the divinity (Word).⁵ It is basically due to the misunderstanding of Babai regarding his opponents. The opposite also is equally true.

Since Christ is God and man, Babai is correct in stating that Christ was crucified and Christ died, and by that he means the crucifixion in the human nature. Only a human being can die and the man taken from us died for us.⁶ As death is the separation of the body and soul, in death Christ's human soul separated from his body on the cross. When a man dies, no one will say that the soul died; so, too, we should not speak of the death of the Word. It was Christ who died as any man dies. The temple is dissolved so that he may fulfil all Economy in him.⁷ Death, suffering and other humiliations of the flesh cannot be spoken of the divinity. They befit the humanity of Christ. It was the humanity taken from us that underwent all humiliations for our sake.⁸ It was the man who was deprived of the living human soul for three days.⁹

As he speaks of the death of Christ, he can also speak of the death of the Son, because of the *parsopa* of Filiation, which is one and unique. So the sufferings and death of the humanity are the sufferings and death of the Son. He refers to the Scriptures, where they proclaim the crucifixion and death of Christ: "On account of it the Scriptures say that Christ was born, Christ was crucified, Christ died for our sins, was buried

4. *LU*, 176, 1-4/142, 14-18.

5. *LU*, 178, 5-19/144, 6-20.

6. *LU*, 174/141, 3ff.

7. *LU*, 173/140, 15ff.; 175/141, 25-27.

8. *LU*, 180/145, 28ff.

9. *LU*, 179, 28-180, 16/145, 16-36.

and after three days he rose again, and behold they belong to his humanity."¹⁰

Babai sees the duality on the side of the nature, existing in their proper qnome, and the unity in the one parsopa of the Word. Then he can attribute all the infirmities to the perfect man. But he does not exclude the Word. The man has no independent existence, apart from the Word and apart from the parsopa of the Word. He speaks of the humanity which underwent the suffering:^{10a}

This is the one who was dissolved in death by the separation of his body from his soul; it is about him that the blessed Paul said; 'He is the one who tasted death for every one except God who is in him'¹¹ (Heb. 2: 9); this is the one in whom God wanted to dwell all fullness (Col. 1: 19-20). He is the one taken from our race, the link of the creation; through him He renewed everything; he is the Father of the new world; in him dwells all the fullness of the divinity bodily; through him He fulfils all the salvific economy; He made him the rational temple so that He be revealed in him and be able to speak to us; and in him God is adored

10. LU, 174, 18-21/141, 3-6. 10a. See no. 9 above.

11. Babai uses a special form of Heb. 2, 9: *hū gēr star men Alaha (dbeh) hlap kulnas t'em mautā*" (LU, 60, 26-7; 62, 29-30; 79, 30-1). *Chōris Theou* is a variant reading for *chariti Theou* ("except God" or "apart from God" instead of "by the grace of God"). This variant reading is seen in Origen and followed by Theodore and Theodoret. It seems that Babai takes it from Theodore. (ORIGEN, *Comm. in Jn. I*, xxxv, 255f, *SChr.* 120, p. 187f.; THEODORE, *Comm. Heb.*, STAAB, *Paulus kommentare*, p. 204f; PG, 66, 956f.; THEODORET, *Comm. Heb. ch. II*, PG 82, 692 CD). Origen interpreted this variant reading to mean "he tasted death for all but God, including the angels and men" (ORIGEN, *ibid.*). For Theodore on the other hand, "except God" meant to show that none of the suffering and change is attributed to the Godhead. The man alone suffered and died (THEODORE, *ibid.*).

with the Father and the Holy Spirit as in His united temple. And His temple is adored with Him, because He dwells in it unitedly.

The divinity was perfecting the humanity in its sufferings and death.¹² When Christ was nailed to the Cross, and the human soul separated from the body, and the body was in the grave for three days, the divinity did not separate either from the soul or from the body. Hence it is more than the hypostatic union (as the union of the body and soul, which breaks at death). It is impossible to break the parsopic union, the parsopa being one for both and the assumption eternal. Here one can see clearly the influence of Theodore.¹³

Babai speaks of the adoration given the cross. We adore and venerate, says Babai, the sign of the cross, because by it we are redeemed from sin, death and Satan. We adore the cross because of the one who was crucified upon it. And we adore the crucified one, the man from us because God the Word unitedly dwells in him and gave him everything except His very nature. We adore the cross because the Son died on it for our sins; we adore the cross, because the Son died upon it in his human nature.¹⁴ He overthrew Satan, and affixed the sin to his cross and by his death he put an end to the enmity.¹⁵ He is thus the Cause of our Salvation and our Life.¹⁶

12. LU, 62/ 50, 26f.; 61/ 49, 15ff; 121/ 98; 146/ 118.

13. THEODORE, *Hom. Cat.* V, 5ff. p. 105ff.; VII, 9, p. 199 (TONNEAU).

14. LU, 67, 22/ 54, 30 "The Son suffered and was crucified in his human nature." *brā eztleb uhās bakianeh nasaia*; LU, 175, 29-30/ 142, 10-11: "We say the Son of God is handed over for us": *amrinan dabreh dalaha estlam hlapain*; LU, 239, 6-24/ 194, 15-32; 180/ 146, 1ff.; 236, 28-237, 9/ 192, 23-31; TG (O. BRAUN, p. 263).

15. LU, 139/ 112.

16. LU, 140/ 113.

Art IV - The Resurrection of Christ

Chapter nineteen of LU is dedicated to explain the resurrection of Christ from the dead and much of it is about Origenism.¹ In addition to Origenism he discusses some other errors in connection with the resurrection. There were some who held that the Filiation was perfected only after the resurrection.² In contradiction to those heretics, Babai taught that the Filiation was perfect from the moment of the union and assumption; there was no gradual reception of Filiation or union, but that was already achieved at the angelic salutation.

Against the Origenists, who denied the identity of the earthly body and the resurrected body, Babai strongly upheld the identity and affirmed that Christ has risen not in the form of a sphere without organs.

As the earthly body is composed of bodily members and organs so must the resurrected one be; and it must also be in the case of Christ. To explain it further, Babai brings out the distinction between body (*pagrā*) and matter (*gusmā*). In Syriac, both *pagrā* and *gusmā* are synonyms for "corpus". But Babai makes a distinction between the two. The term "*pagra*" can never be applied to anything unless it has organs.³ "All *pagra* is, *gusma*; but not all *gusma*, *pagra*; that which has no organs cannot be called a *pagra*, for behold stones, wood, hay, and dust are never called *pagra*."⁴ So to be a *pagra*, it must have organs. And anything which has no organs, cannot be called *pagra*, but it must be called *gusma*. Babai's synonym for *gusma* is *besra* (flesh). The human fetus for 40 days in the womb without the human soul, is not called *pagra*. It is *besra* or *gusma*. About Christ is spoken, "etgasam or etbasar."⁵

1. LU, 181/146.

2. LU, 90, 1-2/83, 27-29; 92, 2-3/85, 15-16.

3. LU, 182/147.

4. LU, 182, 6-9/147, 17-20.

5. See above p. 125.

If the resurrected body is to be called pagra, it must have organs, and it should not be spherical.

In the Old Testament, pagra was applied more to the dead bodies, while in the New Testament more to the living bodies.⁶ Mar Ephrem, speaking of the resurrected body, never used the word gusma; on the contrary, he spoke of it always as pagra.⁷ Philoxenus applied the term pagra to the bodies which have organs, while gusma to the material world.⁸ The Syriac translators of the 'Gnostic Chapters' of Evagrius used pagra to signify the fleshy body while gusma designated other compositions: those of angels, demons, or the spiritual bodies.⁹

Babai cites I Cor. 12 in support of his view, that the identity of the bodies will not be destroyed in the resurrection.¹⁰ It will be the same body. Those who deny the identity of the bodies will be denying the teaching of the Scriptures. It will be the same body but it will be transformed by the glory it receives: "Behold the whole man will be transformed in his body and in his soul, perfect and blessed."¹¹

To those who demand the need of organs in the after life, Babai answers that they have not only material purposes, but also spiritual: "It is not for food alone that the mouth is made, but for praise and glorification and thanksgiving before the majesty".¹²

In answer to the Origenists, Babai states that the body which was on the cross was buried and the same body was resurrected. That body, taken from us, was totally similar to us; it had all its organs intact, as any one of us. It was perfect in its formation. The Jews crucified Jesus of Nazareth and

6. Cf. NABIL EL KHOURY, *Die Interpretation der Welt bei Ephrem dem Syrer*, Mainz, 1976, p. 107.

7. *Ibid.* 100. 106f.

8. A. DE HALLEUX, *Philoxène de Mabbog*, p. 372, n. 33.

9. A. GUILLAUMONT, *Kephalaia Gnostica*, p. 114, n. 149.

10. *LU*, 181-2/147 (Babai cites I Cor. 12:12. 14. 19-20).

11. *LU*, 182, 16-17/147, 26-28.

12. *LU*, 196/158.

the soul of Jesus was separated from his body at death on the cross and the body was buried; on the third day, the body was raised and was united with the soul. His risen body had all its limbs perfect.¹³

What did Christ receive specifically at his resurrection? What he received mystically at baptism, namely immortality and incorruptibility, were conferred on him by the divinity which was in him. His fragile body, weak and dead, became incorruptible and immutable. Thus the foretaste at baptism became a reality ever permanent in him and he became the first-born of many brothers. His body got it as the redeemed and he became the Giver of Life to those who are in him. Thus it has soteriological and ecclesiological dimensions. Through his resurrection, he became the firstborn from the dead and the firstborn of many brothers; those who are baptized in him become his brothers through participation of the adoptive filiation.¹⁴

Babai evokes the example of the first man:¹⁵

If the first man was a true man, body and soul, the second man, the new Adam also should be a true man, body and soul; and he is risen and became the first fruit of the dead and the Father of the future world.

Here Babai is influenced by Theodore in the application of the example.¹⁶

13. *LU*, 181, 19-24/146, 35-147, 5; Severus of Antioch upholds the same view. On the day of resurrection, we shall have all our limbs intact. The risen Lord is our model. This state to which we shall come will be higher than that of paradise (R. C. CHESNUT, *Three Monophysite Christologies* p. 54, also n. 1).

14. *LU*, 113, 27ff./92, 1ff.; 135, 3ff./108, 28ff.; 139/112, 22-3; 141, 4-5/113, 33-114, 1; 210-1/170; 182, 24-8/147, 35-148, 4; *CE*, VI, 89, p. 420-421.

15. *LU*, 185, 25-9/150 20-3; 74, 13-18/60, 10-15.

16. THEODORE, *Hom. Cat.* V, 10, p. 112/113 (R. TONNEAU).

Christ is the Firstborn. Babai understands "firstborn" in a triple sense. He is the firstborn from Mary because he opened her womb; he is the firstborn from the dead because he is the first one to be risen from the dead in his humanity; he is the firstborn of all creation, because through him everything is renewed.¹⁷ Babai makes a distinction between "firstborn" and "Only Begotten". "Only Begotten" (*ihidaia*) is the name of the divinity. "Firstborn" (*buqrā*) is the name of the Economy.¹⁸ The Only Begotten of the Father became the firstborn (*buqrā*) of Mary. Both refer to the same Son, but not in the same way: "If you say, firstborn, he is; if you say, Only Begotten, he is...but not in the same way."¹⁹ On this point Babai is influenced by Diodore²⁰ and Theodore. For Theodore, Christ is the firstborn of many brothers (Rome 8: 29) and firstborn of all creation (Col. 1: 15). Theodore had made a distinction between Only Begotten and firstborn:²¹

"There is in fact, a great deal of distinction between an Only Begotten and a firstborn son. And it is impossible for the Only Begotten and the firstborn to be one and the same. Firstborn is a name given to some one who has many brothers, while Only Begotten refers to some one who has no brothers."

Babai's exposition on this point is almost the same as that of Theodore.

Christ has risen incorruptibly, and perfectly. He appeared to the disciples and confirmed them in faith that he had resurrected from the dead. He showed them wonders to prove it. Babai speaks of three wonders.

Although he had no stigmata in his body, because it is the risen body, he miraculously made them on himself to

17. *LU*, 210-1/170; 140-1/113-114.

18. *LU*, 204/165; 210-1/170.

19. *LU*, 172, 20-21/139, 14-15.

20. Cf. A. GRILLMEIER, *op. cit.* p. 354, n. 17-18.

21. THEODORE, *Hom. Cat.* III, 9-10, p. 62. 64/63. 65; III, 7, p. 60/61.

confirm the Apostles in their faith. The wounds he showed were real and not phantasies.²² And the disciples believed that he has risen in the same body in which he was crucified. The disciples had not yet known that he had risen to incorruptibility, but that he has risen like others to corruptibility as the prophets raised the dead and our Lord raised Lazarus to life. They were raised to life, but they died later. Therefore, Christ had to make them firm in their faith about the reality of his resurrection.

Babai makes a parallelism here. In his earthly mortal body, during his earthly life, Jesus transformed himself before the three Apostles at Tabor. He showed them the glory of the future life. It was a miracle which he did before them in his humanity to show them the reality of his divinity. Though, for some time, the body was a transformed one, after the event it remained as the mortal body. In the same way, after the resurrection, even though his body has resurrected to immortality and incorruptibility, having no stigmata, he made a miracle and showed them in his body. The stigmata remained for some time but disappeared. He made them in his body by a miracle to convince the disciples of the reality of his risen body. As the transfiguration at Tabor was true and real, his stigmata were real and his body remained incorruptible.²³

Theodoret of Cyrus considered the wounds as real, meant to teach the Apostles that Christ's body has not changed into another substance in the resurrection. He showed them the identity of the earthly and the risen bodies.²⁴

Babai calls the incident at Tabor "a mystical demonstration" (*tahwītā 'razanaitā*). "Mystical" means as in a sacrament. Babai discards the opinion of those who consider that Moses had risen from the dead and Elias had come from

22. LU, 190, 27ff./154, 24ff.

23. LU, 190-1/154-155.

24. THEODORET, *Dialogue*, II, p. 199.

Paradise.²⁵ Isodad of Merv mentions Henana and his followers as having held this view:²⁶

For he did not raise Moses, and afterwards cause him to die, according to the fancy of Hennan of Hedhaiyahb and his colleagues.

Isodad also supports the tradition held by Babai, without naming him:²⁷

Not that those things were found in the body that had risen to new life, and was purified and rarefied, and illuminated; but He showed himself for the confirmation of the disciples about his resurrection: not before that hour, nor even after it was found in him; but in this hour He suppressed the supernatural nature ('aṣā lakyanā men kyanā), and allowed them to touch (Him).

Bar Ebraya comments that he showed them the stigmata, so "that they might not suppose that they were beholding a phantasm."²⁸

As he showed his stigmata, he ate and drank before the disciples, as he truly showed mystically ('razana'it) his splendour on the mountain. It was no phantasm, but was reality. Before their eyes he took the food with his venerable hands and ate it. But his resurrected body has no need of food; it did not nourish him. Because of a secret power the food was dissipated.²⁹

25. LU, 88, 8/ 82, 12; 193, 8-9/ 156, 18; CE, IV, 23, p. 278/ 279.

26. ISODAD OF MERV, *Comm. Mt.* 17, If.; HS, 6/ 5, p. 114/ 67.

27. *Comm. Lk.* 24, 40: HS 7/ 5, p. 97/ 207; *Comm. Jn.* 20, 20: HS, 7/ 5, p. 221/ 285.

28. BAR HEBRAEUS, *Comm. on John*, p. 159 (W. F. CARR, Gregory abu'l Faraj, commonly called B. H., commentary on the Gospels from the *Horreum Mysteriorum*, London 1925).

29. LU, 193, 8-10/ 156, 18-20; 88, 1ff./ 82, 5ff.

Theodoret says that he took food and ate it; it was no appearance; but his immortal body required no food. The food he ate did not satisfy the need of the body. By this act, he showed them the reality of the resurrection of bodies.³⁰

Isodad makes a distinction between "truly" (*sarīra'it*) and "really" (*haṭīta' it*). Commenting on Lk 24:43 he writes that Christ did not eat really and naturally (*lā haṭīta'ir wakyana'it*) but truly (*sarīra'it*) he ate before his disciples. He did not eat in appearance as Simon Magus or Manes taught. The risen Lord was not nourished by the food. He showed them that he ate, and that not in imagination. Isodad states that truth (*sarā*) is different from reality (*haṭītūtā*), and that it was a supernatural act that Christ did. By sharing their meals, he was working a miracle there, to confirm them in faith, that he rose again in his body.³¹ Bar Ebraya also notes that he did it "that he might remove from them the idea of a phantasm. He did eat, not because he had need of food."³²

Thirdly the risen Lord appeared before the Apostles in dress, although he did not have clothes. The cloth which was wrapped around his dead body was seen in the tomb. It was also meant to make them firm in their belief in his resurrection, although it was a matter of minor importance.³³ Severus believed that the risen Lord was naked.³⁴ Isodad mentions the dress of the risen Lord as a miracle.³⁵

These three miracles of the risen Lord are minor compared to the immutable and incorruptible body which he acquired in the resurrection. But they were necessary so that he might be able to make the disciples firm in their faith. Just as in his earthly life till the resurrection, he taught them several things, accompanied by signs and miracles, to show them that

30. THEODORET, *Dialogue*, II, p. 198.

31. ISODAD, *Comm. Lk.*, 24, 43: HS 7/5, p. 97/208.

32. BAR HEBRAEUS, *Comm. on Lk.* p. 135 (CARR).

33. LU, 193, 29ff/156, 35ff; 194, 8-11/157, 8-11.

34. SEVERUS, *Hom. 77:PO*, 17, p. 820-821.

35. ISODAD, *Comm. Lk.*: HS 7/5, p. 98/208.

he was not a mere man, but God united with our humanity, after the resurrection he had to teach them the reality of his risen body, and its identity with the earthly body; he had to confirm them in the faith of the body in which they knew him and to show that his body was no phantasm, nor an appearance but that he rose again in reality as he had promised.³⁶

Babai compares the miracles in the risen body to the three miracles before his death in the mortal body. These three were much more sublime than the mortal body, showing that he was not a mere man, but God.³⁷ The first is the Virgin birth of Christ: without destroying the virginity of the Mother He came to the world through "closed doors", and kept her perpetually chaste and virgin.³⁸ It was done by the power of the divinity which was in him. It is above the nature of an ordinary man. Babai compares this to the one which he did after the resurrection: namely his apparition to the disciples in a closed room.

Now this is how the early writers understood it: Diodore doubts whether the risen Lord could have entered the room without opening the doors! During his ministry, Jesus often escaped his enemies unnoticed "by inflicting hallucinations upon them."³⁹

Theodoret compares the entering of the risen Lord in the closed room to his birth from the Virgin. Amphilochius of Iconium states that our Lord entered in the closed room only after his resurrection, lest the Apostles should suppose that the Lord's body was of a different order. He appeared to them in order to show that in the resurrection the natural body becomes a spiritual body, preserving the identity of the earthly body. St. Cyril of Alexandria connects the birth from the

36. LU, 188, 12ff./152, 25ff.; 192/155, 22; 194, 11ff./157, 11ff.

37. LU, 188, 7-12/152, 20-25.

38. LU, 188, 22ff./152, 34ff.

39. DIODORE, *frag.* 10 (M. BRIERE).

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Virgin to the coming out of the tomb, entering in the closed room and walking upon the Sea.⁴⁰

Nestorius considered the entering the closed room a miracle:⁴¹

And further, that he went through the closed doors. It is the concrete body and that is something wonderful; but if the divine nature went through it, it would not be remarkable, in which I abstain from what happens to the Infinite.

Leo in his Tome considers that the childbearing of the Virgin is a token of divine power, and refers to the entrance in the closed room.⁴²

Babai affirms that his risen body could enter in the room, even though the doors were shut. This is because of the power of the divinity.⁴³

The second miracle in the mortal body of Christ, mentioned by Babai, is the walking on the water (Mt 14: 22 ff.). We see first how the writers prior to Babai spoke about the walking of the Lord on the water: According to Diodore, it is the Lord who walked on the Sea with the power of the divinity.⁴⁴ Commenting on the incident Nestorius says,⁴⁵

40. Cf. THEODORET, *Dialogue*, II, 198; 208-9; *Demonstrations by Syllogisms*, p. 247-248; PG 39,105 C-108 AB; MANSI, XI, 570.

41. LOOFS, *Nestoriana*, 219,4-9; cf. also, L. ABRAMOWSKI, *Nestorian Collection*, p. 198/118, 11-14.

42. LEO, *Tomus*: (J. STEVENSON, *Creeeds*, p. 319-320).

43. LÜ. 188,27ff./153,2ff.

44. DIODORE, *frag.* 47 (R. ABRAMOWSKI, p. 58): "Walking upon the Sea belongs to the Godhead"; Ps. Justin (= Diodore): "Also in the walking on the Sea there did not take place a change of the body to the Spirit, but the Lord walked on the Sea through the divine power, in which he made the undescribable, describable" (A. HARNACK, *Diodor von Tarsus, Vier pseudojustinische Schriften als Diodors nachgewiesen* (TU, 21, 4), p. 137.

45. LOOFS, *Nestoriana*, 218,20-219,4; cf. also, L. ABRAMOWSKI, *Nestorian Collection*, p. 198/118, 6-10.

To the one who asks, 'Who was it that walked upon the Sea?' we answer, it was the feet, that walked and the concrete body with the power of the one who dwelt in it. That is a wonder. Because when God walks upon the water, there is nothing wonderful, as also regard to the air.

It is a miracle of the mortal body, done by the power of the divinity. Theodoret says, "When he walked upon the Sea, He displayed the almighty power of the Godhead."⁴⁶ Cyril of Jerusalem (+386) said, almost the same thing:

"As man he slept in the boat. As God he walked upon the waters." Theodoret cites this passage in his dialogues.⁴⁷ For Leo, 'to walk upon the surface of the Sea with feet that do not sink, and to calm the rising waves by rebuking the tempest, is without question divine.'⁴⁸

Narsai says, "He slept in the ship and they awoke him; he rose and rebuked the Sea and calmed it. The sleep was that of mortals but the silencing of the Sea was that of the Creator."⁴⁹

Severus opposes the way in which it is explained by the Diphysites.⁵⁰

Babai states that Christ's body had human, earthly and mortal nature. Peter who had the same human nature began to sink while imitating Christ, but Christ did not sink because he was not a mere man. By his divine power, he extended his hand and saved Peter. As a man he slept in the boat, but as God he calmed the Sea.⁵¹

46. THEODORET, *Dialogue*, I, p. 166.

47. CYRIL, *Cat. Or. IV*: PG 33, 465 B; THEODORET, *ibid.* p. 211.

48. LEO, *Tomus* (J. STEVENSON, *Creeds*, p. 319).

49. Cf. L. ABRAMOWSKI, *op. cit.* p. 130/74-75.

50. SEVERUS, *Le Philalèthe* (R. HESPEL, 267-8/219, 13-27). Severus understands the statements of the Diphysites as opposed to Cyril, and as spoken of the man and God independently. Cf. also, *ibid.* 327/267.

51. LU, 188, 30 ff. / 153, 5-25.

The third miracle of the Lord in his earthly, mortal body was the transfiguration on Tabor. It was above the nature of the mortal body, but was done by the power of the divinity to show the disciples the future nature of the body, which he was to receive.⁵²

There is confusion regarding the numbering:

Miracles before his death

- 1) Birth from the Virgin preserving the virginity
- 2) Walking upon the water
- 3) Transfiguration at Tabor

Miracles after his resurrection

- 1) Entering the room when the doors were shut
- 2) The stigmata in the risen body
- 3) The eating of the risen Lord
- 4) The dress of the risen Lord

Could we add another miracle to the three in the first column? Isodad of Merv speaks of a passage in the *Book of Union* of Babai the Great, which has not come down to us; it is in connection with the paying of tax for Christ and Peter with the coin from the mouth of the fish (Mt 17:27):⁵³

Babai the Great in his *Book of Union* and Hannan of Hedhaiyab say that these drachmas in fish's mouth were created out of nothing; that same hour it went up suddenly to the dry land.

It is difficult to fit this miracle here in this context. Isodad himself enumerates the miracles before and after the resurrection.⁵⁴

There is a repetition of the explanation for emphasis. In the first place, where he speaks of the miracles before the resurrection, he compares the birth from the Virgin without destroying her virginity to the entrance in the room with closed doors after the resurrection.⁵⁵ The second has no comparison.⁵⁶ The third, namely, the transfiguration on Tabor has three parallels: the stigmata, the eating and the dress.⁵⁷

52. LU, 189, 19 ff./153, 25 ff.; CE, IV, 23, p. 278/279.

53. ISODAD, *Comm. Mt.*: HS, 6/5, p. 120/71.

54. ISODAD, *Comm. Lk.*, HS, 7/5, p. 97-98/208.

55. LU, 188/152-153.

56. LU, 188-9/153.

57. LU, 189/153, 25; 193/157, 18ff.

The purpose of the miracles was to create faith in the disciples. Those before the death in the mortal body were to show them that he was not a mere man but that the divinity dwells in him unitedly.⁵⁸ Those after the resurrection were meant to confirm them in their faith that he has risen in the self same body. Here a polemical exposition against the Origenists is seen. That Henana and the Henanians held several Origenistic ideas is clear from the reference of Isodad, who often cites the opinion of Henana sympathetically.

The risen Lord clearly taught and demonstrated his resurrection, the immortal and immutable state of his risen body and confirmed the Apostles in their faith. He made them certain of his resurrection.⁵⁹

Now Christ sits at the right hand of the Father with the united humanity. There is only oneness after the resurrection. Babai says:⁶⁰

After the resurrection, already one is the beatitude; again, there is not the one who gives and the one who receives; but one is the knowledge, one power, one dominion, one adoration of the humanity and the divinity of Christ, in one par-sopa of Filiation, united.

As Theodore had already taught,⁶¹ Babai teaches also that Christ will come at the end in the united humanity to judge the living and the dead.⁶² We, the Christians, will receive in reality what we have received as a pledge in baptism, the eternal life, immortality, and immutability.⁶³

58. LU, 189/153.

59. LU, 192/155.

60. LU, 122, 13-17/98, 31-35, cf. 131/105, 22ff.

61. THEODORE, *Comm. in Joh.* V, 22 (VOSTE, 81, 34-82; 1; 82, 29-83, 2; 83, 14-19); V, 30 (VOSTE, 85, 26-29); *Hom. Cat.* VII, 14, p. 183-5; R. DEVRESSE, *Essai sur Theodore de Mopsueste*, p. 118, n. 4-5.

62. LU, 177, 25ff./143, 29ff.; CE, IV, 41, p. 288/289.

63. Cf. *ibid.* DIODORE, *frag.* 21 (M. BRIERE) THEODORE, *Comm. in Joh.* III, 29 (VOSTE, 56) *Hom. Cat.* XIV, 10 (TONNEAU, 423).

CHAPTER VIII

Comparison and Evaluation

This chapter will contain a discussion on four points: the comparison of Babai's Christology with that of Theodore and Nestorius, the evolution of his Christological thought, his specific contribution to the Christology of the Universal Church, and his Christology as a point of dialogue between Christians of divergent traditions.

Art. I - Comparison of Babai's Christology

Babai mentions his sources in LU only once.¹ He has, in fact, very few direct citations either from the Fathers or from the dogmatic florileges. His is an original work, the result of his study and formation. The Antiochene "rationalism" combined with the Alexandrian mysticism produced a balanced Christology in Persia. The influence from Ephrem and the Cappadocians through the School of Nisibis helped Babai not to be a blind follower of Nestorius, but a thorough study of LH enabled him later in life to develop his own Christology, based on the fundamental Theodorianism.

The comparison of Babai's Christology with his sources is difficult, for two reasons: Firstly, Babai had at his disposal many more books of his sources, especially of Diodore, Theodore and Nestorius, than are extant today. There are only very few works of these writers in Syriac translations and some fragments in Greek derived from hostile sources. Secondly the modern scholars are not unanimous in their judgment of Diodore, Theodore and Nestorius.

1. LU, 245,2/199,31; in his *Commentary on the Gnostic Chapters of Evagrius*, he mentions and cites several ancient writers.

Babai was primarily influenced by Theodore, but also by Nestorius, Diodore, John Chrysostom, Theodoret, the Cappadocians and several other Fathers and writers even of the Alexandrian ambient. He had at his disposal a very large library of books in Syriac of the various Fathers. His thought was a synthesis of the different traditions, certainly in accordance with the basic tradition of his particular Church. There is no evidence that he could read Greek.

§ 1. Babai and Theodore

Mar Babai was a total Theodorian in spirit and letter. He had his theological training in Theodorian theology in the School of Nisibis. In the above exposition, the influence of Theodore on Babai was indicated wherever possible.

The comparison of Babai with Theodore poses a great Problem. First, in great part Theodore's works are lost. A direct study of all the existing works of Theodore is beyond the scope of this book. Secondly the modern scholars are divided in judging Theodore's Christology. Some consider him to be perfectly in line with the teachings and traditions of the Catholic Church. There may be obscure expressions in his works but the general trend of his Christology is free from any error. Others consider Theodore as the Father of Nestorianism.²

From the Alexandrian point of view, Theodore's Christology offered problems, obscurity and even division in Christ. The Monophysites and the Neo-Chalcedonians inherited the Alexandrian tradition from St Cyril and that became apparently the tradition of the Church at large. It was inherited by the Scholastics and modern scholars with some rare exceptions. But viewing Theodore from his own theological and historical background, one may perhaps find a different picture of Theodore's Christology.

According to Babai, Theodore continued in the footsteps of the Lord and of the Apostles. He clearly taught about the oneness of Christ the Son of God. He was careful to make

2. Cf. F. A. Sullivan, *The Christology of Theodore of Mopsuestia*, Rome, 1956, p. 18-33.

distinctions on the level of nature, by saying, "two natures and two qnome in the one parsopa of Christ, the Son of God."³ Babai sees "no error, no impurity" and no defect in his teaching; he is the universal teacher for Babai; his behaviour was beyond any mistake and his doctrine was totally orthodox. Theodore died as an orthodox pastor but after his death he was condemned. Babai considers it as the work of Satan.⁴ In one of his writings, Babai tried to demonstrate Theodore's orthodoxy from Scripture and from the testimony of the Fathers of the universal Church.⁵ Those who condemned Theodore, considered Babai, were condemning Christ and the Orthodox Doctors.⁶ On one occasion Babai speaks explicitly of Theodore and names him as one,

Who firmly builds a tower and rightly on the foundations of steel and rock, with integral and united stones, the blessed Theodore I say, the perfect disciple of the blessed Apostles, the dwelling of the Holy Spirit and the mansion of all good things, the mirror of virtue and the firm column which is never shaken nor will ever be shaken.⁷

In the LU, there are two explicit citations from Theodore:

We say the union the conjunction of the two where one thing is considered in the parsopa.⁸ Where one thing is said in the parsopa not one thing in the nature; but in the parsopa one Son, Lord, Christ, Emmanuel.⁹

3. BABAI, *TG*, 42 (P. BEDJAN; p. 498-9; O. BRAUN, p. 249).

4. *LU*, 82/66.

5. *LU*, 82/66-67.

6. *LU*, 106-7/75.

7. *LU*, 245, 29-246, 6/199, 29-34.

8. *LU*, 246, 7-8/199, 35-36/ "hdaiūtā amrinan nāqipūtā datrēn mā dhād medem methasbīn bparsōpā."

9. *LU*, 246, 17-9/200, 8-10: "Mā dhād medem met'amrīn bparsopā; lā bakyanā had medem; elā bparsōpā had brā Maryā Msihā 'Amanu'el". Cf. *Hom. Cat.* VIII, 10, p. 200-201 (R. TONNEAU).

Both the citations of Babai belong to the same context in Theodore, and could be two parts of one reference. The common element in both of them is the "one thing in parsopa."¹⁰ Here Theodore is quoted to substantiate the unity in one parsopa and to ascertain the existence of the two natures in the union. Babai writes,

He said, the adhesion of the two: i. e., of the divine nature and of the human nature of Christ, not to a mutual annihilation, nor to a mixture, nor to a confusion nor to a natural and hypostatic union, nor one has absorbed the other after they are united... but adhesion of the two, i. e., two and they adhere, but their properties are distinct.¹¹

In TG, Babai refers to Theodore's eighth *Book of Incarnation* in order to explain the oneness of the parsopa and duality of the nature in the one parsopa without mixture.¹²

The exact citation could not be identified. But there are several parallels in Theodore.¹³

Babai connects Theodore with Leo:¹⁴

'As the blessed Leo, the Bishop of Rome, and Theodore, the Interpreter and all the other orthodox Fathers, distinguish the natures and attribute their properties (*dīlaiatahūn*) to the same unity of the one Christ, the Son of God...

Here in this context, Babai is speaking of the heretics, who translated from Greek into Syriac certain parts from the works

10. "Hād medem bparsōpā."

11. LU, 246, 10-6/200, 1-7.

12. TG, 42 (P. BEDJAN, p. 498-9; O. BRAUN, p. 249).

13. THEODORE, *frag. De Incarn.* (E. SACHAU, p. 48; H. B. SWETE, I, 215ff.; R. DEVRESSE, *Essai sur Théodore de Mopsueste*, p. 115, n. 1; PG, 66, 98IB; FACUNDUS, *Pro def. trium Capit.* VI, 3, IX, 2; *Comm. in Joh.* V, 29-30 (J. M. VOSTE, p. 113, 24-29/80, 38-81, 4); *Hom. Cat.* VI, 3, p. 135.

14. CE, p. 22-23.

of Evagrius in accordance with their false teaching. But they were clearly refuted by the other writings of Evagrius himself. The followers of Eutyches and Severus totally reject Evagrius because they saw that he taught the same thing as Theodore and Leo the Great.¹⁵

Theodore had to oppose the Arians and the Apollinarians; Babai on the contrary, had the Henanians and the Monophysites as his opponents. Taking his stand on the side of Theodore, Babai clarified the points where Theodore was obscure. Theodore died in 428; Babai in 628; i. e., two centuries later. That means, Babai had the possibility to make use of the theological development of two centuries and to present his Christology with more clarity. The difficulties posited against Theodore's Christology cannot be posited against Babai's.

§ 2. Babai and Nestorius

It needs to be affirmed that in his early theological formative period, Babai was not deeply influenced by Nestorius. Although the LH was available in Syriac, it is very doubtful that it was used in the School of Nisibis. But it is a fact beyond doubt that when Babai wrote the LU, he had before him the LH and was clearly influenced by it. It is not certain whether he had the book in its present form or whether in a different form.¹ When he saw the very same ideas of Theodore in the LH and in several earlier Fathers cited such as Athanasius, Gregory Nazianzen, Theophilus of Antioch, and Ambrose,² he could confidently follow Nestorius on secure grounds. Wherever possible, in this discussion there was an attempt to indicate the influence Nestorius had on Babai.

The case of Nestorius, the ex-Patriarch of Constantinople, is more lamentable than that of Theodore. Extant are only a few fragments of his works including the Syriac translation

15. *Ibid.* in the LU also Babai speaks of Leo (LU, 76, 12-13/61, 34-35.)

1. Cf. L. ABRAMOWSKI, *Untersuchungen*, p. 108ff.

2. Cf. the index of LH (DRIVER) for the above names.

of LH. For people trained in and accustomed to the Cyrillian theology it is difficult to understand the letter and spirit of Nestorius. He writes in a style difficult to follow, repetitious and appearing to be more rationalistic than traditionalistic. The first part of the LH (Ps. Nestorius)³ confuses the modern reader; the second part (the authentic Nestorius), repeats the same thing over and over again, leaving the reader confused at the end because of the lack of a precise language. His discussion on the parsopic union gives the impression that it is his central issue.

After Cyril and Ephesus, Nestorius was considered by a very large section of Christendom as a heretic, and this tradition continues even to this day.

Babai was influenced by Nestories through the LH and other works not available to us. Though Babai was basically indebted to Theodore for his theology, (he took the expressions on the concept of parsopa from Nestorius and further clarified them.

Babai is completely clear on the one unique parsopa of Filiation of the Word, which is also the Filiation of the man/humanity assumed from us. Instead of the two ousias of Nestorius, Babai uses two qnome. The concept of two parsope of LH, is not very basic and fundamental to Babai. Babai inherits the meaning of "one and another", *aliud et aliud*, from Gregory through the LH. Christ is one and the same in his parsopa of Filiation, but he is one and another in the natures and qnome.

Nestorius had to vindicate his position, trying to point out his orthodoxy in exile. Babai's intention was to explain the union of the two natures in Christ for his Church in the seventh century. Since there were several things common to many authors like explanations and examples, it is difficult to point out precisely what is derived from Nestorius.

If we accept the traditions on the condemnation of Nestorius, (teaching of two independent persons in Christ,

3. Cf. L. ABRAMOWSKI, *Ibid.*

united only morally, and externally by grace; Christ was a mere man, adopted by God, etc.) we have to affirm that Babai stands far away from Nestorius, and even in opposition to him. But if we accept Nestorius as holding a tradition of the Church, different from that of St Cyril, and expressing the very same truths in a different way, then, Babai continues that tradition and stands as the evident exponent of the Antiochene position, demonstrating the oneness of the person and the duality of the natures of Christ in that oneness.

Art. II - The Evolution of Babai's Christological Thought

There is a slight difference between the Christological ideas of the *CE* and the other works. *CE* represents the traditional Seleucian Christology and uses only very rarely such concrete expressions as "man," to designate the humanity of the Son. It speaks of the one *parsopa* of Christ. The Godhead of the Son is united with His manhood in the united *parsopa*.¹ But the natures do not become mixed, on the contrary, each preserves its property.² He who was born eternally from the Father before time, is united in time with our humanity to one Sonship.³ Thus the only difference is that *CE* does not use the expression "two *qnome*", and "man" for humanity." In all the other ideas its Christology is the same as that of Babai's other works.

CM also uses only "manhood" to designate the humanity of Christ.⁴ But a third ascetico-monastical work, *CA* uses both concrete and abstract terms side by side to designate the humanity. "The Word of God put on the sweet man Jesus"; "God through His humanity, gently made them (men) to return to paradise".⁵

1. *CE* III, 1, 186; IV, 3, 260; IV, 9, 264; V, 46, 336; IV, 43, 290; VI, 89, 420; VI, 18, 374; VI, 33, 382; VI, 4, 364.

2. *CE*, VI, 89, 420; IV, 3, 260-1.

3. *CE*, IV, 3, 260-1.

4. Cf. above, p. 33.

5. Cf. above, p. 34.

It is an indication that among the three ascetico-monastical works, CE and CM were written in the early period of Babai's career. It shows also that the basic trend among the Seleucians was to employ abstract terms to designate Christ's humanity. In the ultimate Henanian conflict (the meeting of 612), and afterwards, there occurred a change in the use of terms, clarification of terms, further preciseness of terminology and commitment to certain systems.

In the Henanian conflict, Babai used the LH extensively and developed his own thought further, and under the influence of Theodore and Nestorius, began to use concrete and abstract terms side by side.⁶

Fundamentally Babai did not change his views: One unique Parsopa of Filiation of the Only Begotten; His two natures without mixture preserved in their proper quome in the one Filiation; TG, CA, LU, TV, T VII, X and HC represent this system. It seems that all these works appeared after the Synod of 612.

LU could be divided into four broader divisions: 1) Memre I and II: they represent one of the most beautiful pieces of Christian literature. Without reference to any heresy, they represent in an excellent way, the doctrine on God (Trinity and Unity of the Supreme Godhead) and the Incarnation of the Word, the Only Begotten Son of God. There is no polemic, no exaggeration in presentation and no attack of the adversary. This piece can compete with any other Christian literature in its beauty, excellence and clarity of presentation. As has been demonstrated earlier, this part was influenced by the *Catechetical Homilies* of Theodore. The use of concrete and abstract terms side by side have by this time become Babai's basic trait, definitely inherited from Theodore and others. 2) Memre III is polemical: It is devoted to an attack on the adversaries by which he clarifies the doctrine on Incarnation. Babai was subject to the weakness of not being able to see the viewpoint of the opponents properly. It is true in all disputes and controversies.

6. Cf. above, p. 121-122

Babai's opponents in the LU are Arius and the Arians, Apollinarius (the opponents of Theodore and Nestorius and early Fathers), Cyril of Alexandria (inherited from Nestorius), Eutyches, Dioscoros (from Chalcedon), Philoxenos, Julian, Severus, Justinian (from personal study of their works), Paul of Samosata (from earlier Fathers), and Henana, who is connected with several of the opponents.⁷

The third part of LU (Memre IV-V) is apologetic: what the "Nestorian" duality means and what it does not mean and in what the unity consists. In this part (ch. 17 of LU), Babai discusses the technical terms used in his Christology, namely *gnoma* and *parsopa*. The exposition does not come into the forefront at all and it is not at all adequate. It may be because it was much clear to his readers, or it was not a matter of much importance to him. Because he was necessitated to explain them in his apology for Diphysitism, he explains them in brief. This part of LU was written under the direct influence of Nestorius' LH. A part of TV has this attitude⁸ and X is a further exposition of this part.

The last Memra of LU (ch. 20 and 21) is likewise one of the best pieces of Christian literature. These chapters deal with the names of Christ, and the expressions describing the union. Ch. 21 is the culmination of the whole of LU and here too Babai was under the influence of Theodore. Babai admits the limitations of the human terms and the inadequacy of the various expressions, such as union, adhesion, conjunction etc. to designate the mystery of Incarnation.

TV is argumentative and polemic. It brings rational arguments to defeat and silence the opponents. The arguments do not appear to be of great interest to the faithful. He draws different conclusions from the premises of the opponents. Perhaps the pressure from the part of the Henanians, and the Monophysites⁹ might have forced Babai to make use of all the arguments in his arsenal against his opponents, who were a "menace" to his Church's doctrinal "purity".

7. Cf. above, p. 49ff.

8. Cf. above, p. 25-26.

9. Cf. above, p. 55ff.

T VII is totally polemic in spirit. It bases its attack on selected verses taken from the opponents.¹⁰ Its controversial tone and attitude lessens its importance, and value. Babai understands his opponents, at least some, with a biased attitude, inherited from earlier writers. That is very clear in his attitude to St. Cyril of Alexandria.

In *TG*, too, Babai tries to attack the Henanians and the Monophysites. His first opponents are the Henanians, who had a complicity with the Severians (Monophysites).¹¹

The *HC* is only an application of his Christological ideas in poetry for liturgical use, and to bring the liturgical tradition in accord with the doctrinal one. Its catchword likewise is, "one *parsopa* of Filiation in two natures, existing in two *qnome*."¹²

The *Creed of 612* does not use the expression, "in two *qnome*", but it is implied in it.¹³ Although the Persians used this expression already in 562/3 in the Byzantine court, it gained wider use only after the meeting of 612, as did also the concrete expression to designate the humanity of Christ; in his conflict with Henana and the Monophysites, Babai applied himself more and more to the study of Theodore and Nestorius and the other Fathers. He found a unanimity of doctrine in all the early Fathers in the citations of Theodoret which gave him courage to follow Theodore and Nestorius with confidence.

Art. III – Babai's Specific Contribution to the Christology of the Universal Church

With regard to the Diphysite Church of Persia, Babai was the first one to write a major Christological work. No author from among them before or after him dealt with the Christological questions so extensively as he did. For the Persians Babai's Christology was the Christology of their Church.

10. Cf. above, p. 24-25.

11. Cf. above p. 35.

12. Cf. above, p. 39.

13 Cf. above, p. 30-31.

Babai was influenced by several previous Christian authors. He clarified portions of his sources that were obscure, confusing or liable to misinterpretation by opponents. He tried to refute the accusations launched against the "Nestorian" Christological tradition.

Babai's Christology is built in great part on a sound exegesis and an interesting anthropology and it is less dualistic than that of Nestorius. Babai's synthesis revitalised the Syrian heritage. The Ephremic tradition, inherited by the Edessan School, was obviously present in Philoxenus and James of Sarug. For some time, it was superseded by the rich "rational" heritage coming from the Interpreter, Theodore. Making use of the mystical writings of Evagrius and other spiritual authorities, Babai made a synthesis of the rationalism of Theodore and the mystical traditions, making the Persian Christological system deeper and more solid.

Babai's Christology is Parsopic Christology, which Christology goes back way to Diodore of Tarsus. He presents a Christology which is as orthodox as the Christology of the Alexandrian tradition. His stress is on the Parsopa of Filiation of the Word: till the Incarnation, he speaks in terms of the "Word," and after the Incarnation in terms of "Parsopa" (Son or Christ). The concrete expression "man" for the humanity does not mean a duality of Filiation, but actuality and reality of the humanity assumed. The two qnome are indicative of the reality of the duality in Christ without confusion. The "homo-assumptus" was in the tradition of the Church.¹ When there are two independent qnome, then it becomes heretical. But as long as the two exist in the one parsopa, the one having dependence on the other, it is orthodox.

With the help of Babai's Christology, we are in a better position to understand Nestorius, Theodore and even Diodore. Babai had at his disposal almost all the works of these authors and his synthesis enables us to make a reevaluation of their positions regarding the union of the natures in Christ.

1. P. GALTIER, *Théodore de Mopsueste*, p. 164-166.

Babai's Christology can be considered as the best interpretation of the Antiochene position. He avoids Nestorianism (teaching of two sons, one natural and another adoptive son, joined together only externally and morally). He continued the Antiochene insistence of the perfectness of the human nature of Christ and the assumption of the form of servant by the Word of God.

In the One Universal Church of Christ, Babai's Christology has a definite position. If one tries to confront it with the Alexandrian Christology and regard it from that point of view, one may have doubts about it. But if one considers it as a particular Christology of a particular church, contributing to the richness of the one Catholic and Apostolic Church of Christ, then one would happily accept it as a particular Christology acceptable in the Christian Tradition. Babai's Christology expresses the very same truth, which the Cyrillian Christology presents to the Church. Although the same words meant different things to different people, in each context they are correct and the words must be accepted in the particular sense of each. St. Cyril must not be understood with the terminological significance of Theodore; nor should Babai be judged on the basis of the Christology of St. Thomas. Each one has to be taken in his own context; certainly after accepting the basic belief in Christ as God and man.

Today, after the Second Vatican Council, when there is ample room for theological pluralism, it is our earnest hope that Babai's Christology has a very significant place in the Universal Church of Christ.

Art. IV – Babai's Christology: A Point of Dialogue Between Christians

As far as could be ascertained, no official or unofficial dialogue between the "Nestorians" of today and other Christian Churches took place in the last twenty years. The main reasons are the following: 1) The weakness of the Nestorian Church: Today there are only a handful of "Nestorians" in Iraq, Iran, Turkey, U. S. A. and India. Numerically the Nestorian Church is very insignificant and lacks real scholars with an ecumenical outlook. Internal quarrels are harrassing them and political

oppression weakens them. 2) The Chaldean Catholic Church and the Syro-Malabar Church, both of the "Nestorian" family, take no sufficient interest in the theological traditions of the Persian Church. These two Catholic communities follow in general the theology of the Latin Church and so far have not taken any step to have a dialogue with the Church of the East (Nestorians) who by tradition belongs to the same ecclesiastical family. 3) The non-official Ecumenical Consultations between the theologians of the Oriental Orthodox and Eastern Orthodox Churches also have not reexamined the Nestorian question and have not yet undertaken a dialogue with the Church of the East.

We pray and hope that the Roman Catholic and the Orthodox Churches realize the importance of the particular tradition of Babai and his contribution to the Christology of the Universal Church, and open a dialogue with the Church of the East, the Nestorian Church. Such a dialogue will take us back to Diodore, Theodore, Theodoret, Nestorius, Ibas and the other Fathers from Persia. They are considered Saints by the "Nestorians" and a dialogue should lead to reconsider the anathemas pronounced against them by the various Churches. With regard to the removal of anathemas against the Saints of the Roman Catholic Church, the Oriental Orthodox Church and the Eastern Orthodox Church, the theologians have arrived at an agreement on the non-official level.¹ Such an understanding should take place in the case of the Nestorian Saints also. That means that there should be renewed studies on the life and works of these "saints" from an ecumenical point of view. Down through the centuries they were subject to severe criticism and unjust condemnations. Babai did not find these writers as unorthodox and heretical. For such studies there should be critical editions of all their available works and their translations in modern languages. History of theology and Church history pertaining to the "Nestorian Church" have to be rewritten in the light of the Ecumenical Consultations, without favouring the one or the other Church, as was done

1. Cf. *GOTR* 10, 2 (1964-65); 13,2 (1968); 16, 1-2 (1971); *WWS* 1 (1972); 2 (1974); 3 (1976).

in the past. Furthermore, the common people, used to condemnations of these "saints", should be educated in the ecumenical spirit and the condemnations should be removed from the liturgical books of the various Churches.

Even though the Nestorian Church has become numerically less significant, its Christological and other traditions are rich treasures for the one Church of Christ. A dialogue with the Nestorians and prompt action is absolutely necessary. Ecumenical dialogues are progressing unexpededly and the Churches are quickly realizing their common heritage. The Nestorian Church also must enter into this discussion. When the various Orthodox and Roman Catholic Churches are preparing to have new books on the history of the Church and of Dogmas, to forget the Nestorian Tradition would be a great loss for the one Universal Church of Christ.

Evangelical values are more important than the numerical strength of a particular group or Church. An ecumenism, taking into account the strength of Christian groups more than the evangelical values of their traditions, is suspect of being interested more in politics than in orthodoxy and is condemned to failure. So, even if the number of the "Nestorians" is small and they are unable to open a dialogue, it is the duty of the other Christian Churches to do so, to preserve and to make use of these liturgical and theological traditions for the Universal Church.

In connection with this Prof. V. C. Samuel's remark in the Geneva Consultation in 1970 is worth mentioning.

Charity and patience alone can bring us together again. In the last analysis, what is needed is not intellectual victory or earthly success, but a spiritual awakening to see the love of God who in His Only Son has redeemed the world.²

If the Churches are sincere with each other, they must be prepared to admit the errors of the past and to "correct them-

2. *Geneva Consultation in 1970*, in *GOTR*, 16, 1-2 (1971), p. 60.

selves with bitter penitence, sacrificing their self-esteem and reputations. The saving grace of the Church's sacraments does not forsake the quarrelling parts of the Church at these periods of disintegration."³

We also hope that by the time the major part of Christendom comes to realize the importance of the Christological traditions of the "Nestorian" Church, and begins to appreciate them, the Malabar Catholic Church in India will not throw away its rich liturgical traditions in the name of "adaptation and of renovation." The Malabar Church in India, according to very ancient tradition, received the Salvific Message from St. Thomas, the Apostle. The contact with the "Nestorian" Church of Persia enabled this Church to have a very ancient liturgy, that of Adai and Mari, called also that of the Apostles. It had the fortune to have the liturgy in East Syriac. The contact with the Latin Church in the sixteenth century further enriched this Apostolic Church. Although the activities of the Western missionaries resulted in the split of the Apostolic Church into several groups, this Church came into contact with several ecclesiastical traditions, and it was an added blessing to the whole context. Today this Church has the good fortune to have the riches of the Persian Chaldean Church, the Antiochene Syrian Church, the Latin Church and the Anglican Church. If one can combine these traditions in an organic way in the background of the rich Indian cultural heritage, the Apostolic Church in India can present something very positive and remarkable for the Universal Church at large and for the Hindu brethren in particular.

We pray also that one day the injustice and dishonour done to Diodore, Theodore and Nestorius will be rectified and they will be reinstated in the one true, Catholic and Apostolic Church of Christ for the glory of God, our Father.

3. *Addis Ababa Consultation in 1970*, in *Ibid.*, p. 251.

General Conclusion

Now comes the last part of our analysis of the Christology of Mar Babai, the Abbot of the Great Monastery of Izla. This work began with a study of his life and works and the political and religious background of the Persian Empire in the seventh century which enabled us to understand the whole of Babai. Babai received his theological and monastic training from the theological school of Nisibis and from the Great Monastery of Izla. The School was the very heart of Antiochene-Theodorian convictions and theology. Except for the period under Henana, the School continued the traditions of Theodore. At the time of the Henanian agitation, the Great Monastery assumed the leadership in the Persian Diphysite Church, defending its Theodorian traditions, confirming it in Diphysitism, and opposing the internal and external adversaries. From 608/609 to 628 it was Babai the Great who led the church during its conflict with the Henanians and Monophysites.

Under the influence of Nestorius and the other Antiochene writers, Babai opposed the "hypostatic and natural union" propagated by St. Cyril, "the one nature" by the Neo-Cyrellians (the Monophysites), and "the composite hypostasis" by the Neo-Chalcedonians (Justinian and others). Furthermore, he opposed the Theopaschism as professed by St. Cyril, by the Monophysites and by some of the Byzantine Emperors. His opposition to their Theopaschism was the result of his Antiochene theological inheritance and his understanding of the "hypostatic union".

Babai had to explain the title "Mother of God" (*yaldāt Alaha*) and had to answer the accusation of duality of sonship and quaternity instead of Trinity. His theological opponents misunderstood his position as from the time of Cyril.

Before discussing the Christology proper, there were explanations of the expressions *kyana*, *qnoma*, and *parsopa*, and

similar terms occurring in the subsequent discussion. The Babaian *kyana* and *qнома* were different from the Monophysite, Chalcedonian and the Neo-Chalcedonian uses of their equivalents in Greek, or the Monophysite use in Syriac itself. There was a great terminological misunderstanding among them.

After an analysis of his Christological terms, we proceeded to learn the nature of his exegesis, by presenting the exegesis of a few selected biblical passages. Since Babai wrote no commentary on the biblical books, it was necessary to go through all his extant works. Further, we presented Babai's doctrine on God, namely the unity and the Trinity, and found it to be an excellent piece of Christian literature and of theological reflection.

Babai explained the union of the two natures in Christ in accordance with the basic Antiochene Christology of Theodore and others. The Word of God assumed the man from us to his *parsopa* of Filiation and made him one Son with Him. The assumption and union were simultaneous and the man from us or human nature, though a perfect *qнома* like any man, has no separate and independent existence even for a moment, from the Word. Before the man received a human filiation, it was assumed by the Word and the Word gave its Filiation to it, so that there is only one Filiation for the Word and man. Word appeared through the man and operated among us through this nature assumed from us. The human nature of Christ can never exist by itself, but it exists only in the *parsopa* of the Word. It is created for the Word, for his manifestation to rational creatures and exists only unitedly and assumptively. To think of the human nature of Christ apart from the Word is an impossibility.

Babai would never say that the Word was born twice, or suffered or died. It is the man taken from us who suffered and died. But ultimately it is the Son who suffered and died. Babai had made thus a rational distinction between the Word and the Son. Until the Incarnation, he speaks in terms of Word; after the Incarnation, however, he speaks in terms of the *parsopa* which is common to both the Word and the man. After the

Incarnation, according to him, if one speaks only in terms of the Word, it would be indicative of the divinity alone. This is also an inheritance from the early writers. At no time was the divinity separated from the humanity. Jesus was not simply a man. In his sorrows, sufferings and death, the divinity perfected the humanity and it is in his humanity that Christ underwent all things. Babai was not against all kinds of Theopaschisms, and so did say Christ died, the Son died, and the Son of God died in his humanity for us and for our salvation.

The union is a great mystery and no term can adequately express it. So theologians use a variety of expressions and each of them expresses a part of the truth. The mystery is more than all these terms put together.

By analysing some of the important events in the life of Christ as envisioned by Babai, we saw that for him the ultimate subject of all the attributes is the parsopa of Filiation of the Word, which is also the parsopa of the humanity. It is the Son born twice, baptized at Jordan, suffered and died.

In closing, we hope that our study in some way could help the "Nestorians" to perceive and appreciate their own riches, and to begin a dialogue with the other Churches, with whom they are not in full communion. It might help scholars to know and appreciate the Nestorian Christology better. We pray that our aspirations bear ample fruit and that the Christology of Babai open a door for the Church of tomorrow.

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- ACO *Acta Conciliorum Oecumenicorum*, ed. SCHWARTZ, E., Berlin 1914 ff.
- AGWG *Abhandlungen der Königlichen Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen*, philologisch-historische Klasse.
- ACW *Ancient Christian Writers*, ed. QUASTEN, J. and PLUMPE, J. C., Westminster (Md.), London 1946 ff.
- ANF *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, Buffalo-New York.
- BKV *Bibliothek der Kirchenväter*, ed. BARDENHEWER, O., SCHERMANN, T., & WEYMAN, C., Kempten-München 1911 ff.
- BO *Bibliotheca Orientalis, Clementino Vaticana*, ed. ASSEMANI, J. S., 3 vols., Rome 1719-1728.
- BZ *Byzantinische Zeitschrift*, Leipzig 1892-1943; München 1950 ff.
- CH *Church History*, Chicago 1931 ff.
- COD *Conciliorum Oecumenicorum Decreta*, Freiburg 1962.
- CSEL *Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum*, Vienna 1866 ff.
- CSCO *Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium*, Paris-Louvain, 1903 ff.
- DHGE *Dictionnaire d'Histoire et de Géographie Ecclésiastique*, ed. BAUDRILLART, A., Paris 1912 ff.
- DOP *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, Cambridge (Mass.) 1941 ff.
- DS *Dictionnaire de la Spiritualité*, ed. VILLER, M., Paris 1932 ff.
- DTC *Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique*, ed. VACANT, A., MANGENOT, E., & AMANN, E., Paris 1903-1950.
- EHR *English Historical Review*, London 1886 ff.
- GCS *Die Griechischen Christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten Jahrhunderte*, Leipzig 1897 ff.
- GOTR *Greek Orthodox Theological Review*, Brooklyn (Mass.)
- Hs *Horae Semiticae*, XI tom., in XII vols., Cambridge 1903 - 1916.

- HTR *Harvard Theological Review*, Cambridge (Mass.) 1908 ff.
- ITQ *Irish Theological Quarterly*, Dublin, 1864 ff.
- JA *Journal Asiatique*, Paris 1822 ff.
- JTS *Journal of Theological Studies*, London 1900-5; Oxford 1906-49; New Series, Oxford 1950 ff.
- MAH *Mélanges d'archéologie et histoire*, Paris 1881 ff.
- NATCH MS *Nouvelles Archives des Missions Scientifiques*, Paris.
- NPNF *Nicene and Post Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church* ed. SCHAFF, P., & WACE, H., BUFFALO-N. Y., 1866-1900.
- OC *Oriens Christianus*, Leipzig 1901-41; Wiesbaden 1953 ff.
- OCA *Orientalia Christiana Analecta*, Roma.
- OCF *Orientalia Christiana Periodica*, Roma 1935 ff.
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- PS *Patrologia Syriaca*, 3 vols., ed. GRAFFIN, R., Paris 1894-1926.
- Rev. Bib. *Revue Biblique*, Paris 1891 ff. new series, 1904 ff.
- RGG³ *Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, ed. GALLING, K., Tübingen 1957 ff.³
- RHR *Revue de l'Histoire des Religions*, Paris 1880 ff.
- ROC *Revue de l'Orient Chrétien*, Paris, 1896 ff.
- Rso *Rivista degli Studi Orientali*, Roma 1908 ff.
- RSR *Recherches de Sciences Religieuses*, Paris 1910 ff.
- RSRS *Revue des Sciences Religieuses*, Strasbourg / Paris 1921 ff.
- SA *Studia Anselmiana*, Rome 1933 ff.
- SCC *Sacrorum Conciliorum nova et amplissima Collectio*, ed. Mansi J. D., Florence 1759-98; reprint and continuation, Paris/Leipzig 1901-27.

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- TU *Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur*, Leipzig/Berlin 1882 ff.
- Vc *Vigiliae Christianae*, Amsterdam 1947 ff.
- Ws *Woodbrooke Studies*, Cambridge (Mass.)
- Wws *Wort und Wahrheit*, Supplementary Issue, Vienna 1972 ff.
- ZDMG *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft*, Leipzig, 1847 ff.; Wiesbaden 1950 ff.
- ZKG *Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte*, Gotha / Stuttgart 1877 ff.
- ZKTh *Zeitschrift für katholische Theologie*, Innsbruck 1877 ff.
- ZNTW *Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche*, Giessen 1900 ff.

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